

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Housing Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on
Wednesday, 21 March 2018 at 3.30 p.m.

Portfolio Holder: Lynda Harford

Councillors in attendance:

Also in attendance: Anna Bradnam, Philippa Hart and Tim Wotherspoon

Officers:

Gill Anderton	Head of Housing (New Build)
Julie Fletcher	Head of Housing Strategy
Anita Goddard	Housing Operational Services Manager
Stephen Hills	Director of Housing
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer
Heather Wood	Interim Assistant Director of Housing (Statutory and Strategic Services)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Housing Portfolio Holder signed, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2017.

3. REVIEW OF SHELTERED HOUSING COMMUNAL ROOMS

The Housing Portfolio Holder considered a report detailing the work carried out so far to prepare for the review of the Council's 41 sheltered housing communal facilities, known as communal rooms.

The Portfolio Holder thanked the Tenant Participation Group for the contribution it had made to the review.

Those present considered several issues arising from the report, including the availability of appropriate resources, and concern about making sure that facilities currently available would remain available in future. The Portfolio Holder gave an assurance that the wider community would be consulted, and all views would be considered carefully. She accepted that the process might cause some concern among residents, but emphasised the benefits such review was expected to deliver.

The Housing Portfolio Holder

1. **approved** the project, the projected expenditure, the work undertaken to date and agrees to the project being rolled out in accordance with the draft programme which is estimated to be completed within a two year timescale;
2. **agreed** to a proposed allocation of £205,000 to be vired from the existing capital budget and recouped from realised increased revenue and capital receipts;
3. **agreed** to the proposed dedicated staffing resource to assist in managing and taking forward the project; and

4. **agreed** that a Deed of Variation should be included in all future leases of equity share properties to ensure that leaseholders are not in a position to block any change of use proposed for communal rooms on the sheltered housing scheme where they reside.

4. **SUB-REGIONAL HOME-LINK ALLOCATIONS AND LETTINGS POLICY - UPDATES AND AMENDMENTS**

The Housing Portfolio Holder considered a report on proposed updates and amendments to the Sub-Regional Home-link Policy to ensure immediate compliance with the Homeless Reduction Act and the General Data Protection Regulations, effective from April 2018 and May 2018 respectively.

The Head of Housing Advice and Options clarified the concept of intentional homelessness, and the solutions available to the Council.

The Housing Portfolio Holder **approved** the amendments to the Home Link and Allocations Policy attached as Appendix A to the report.

5. **SHARED OWNERSHIP - APPROACH TO RESTRICTED STAIR-CASING IN CAMBOURNE**

The Housing Portfolio Holder considered a report seeking a decision about whether to waive the restriction on the stair-casing of shared ownership properties in Cambourne, which is in a Designated Protected Area.

Following a short discussion, the Housing Portfolio Holder

1. **Agreed** to lift the stair-casing restriction on shared ownership properties in Cambourne; and
2. **Agreed**, on grant funded schemes, to apply to Homes England (previously known as the HCA) for a waiver of the restriction.

6. **STARTER HOMES AT NORTHSTOWE: HEADS OF TERMS FOR USE OF CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

The Housing Portfolio Holder considered a report seeking her approval of Heads of Terms setting out a framework for how South Cambridgeshire District Council and Homes England (formerly known as the Homes and Communities Agency) will work together to reinvest receipts realised through 'stair-casing' of the Northstowe Starter Homes.

The Housing Portfolio Holder noted that the Heads of Terms had been drafted following the completion, in December 2017, of a deed of variation to the Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for Northstowe Phase 2.

The Housing Portfolio Holder welcomed the opportunities presented by this initiative to realise a substantial profit that would be reinvested in the provision of affordable housing.

The Strategic Planning Portfolio Holder, responsible for overseeing development of new communities, paid tribute to the efforts of housing and planning officers, who had secured an outcome of such benefit to Northstowe.

The Housing Portfolio Holder **approved** the Heads of Terms attached as Appendix 1 to the report, noting that a legally binding Strategic Collaboration Agreement would be signed by both parties, and completed preferably by the end of June 2018.

7. AFFORDABLE HOMES SERVICE PLAN 2017/18 AND 2018/19

The Housing Portfolio Holder considered a report updating her about progress against the 2017-18 Service Plan, and seeking her approval for the 2018-19 Affordable Homes Service Plan.

Those present discussed several issues arising from the report, including the resource implications of the Homeless Reduction Act. A distinction was drawn between Strategic- and Service Risk Registers.

The Housing Portfolio Holder **approved** the Affordable Homes Service Plan for 2018-19 (Appendix 2 to the report) and noted the progress to date on existing projects within the 2017-18 Service Plan.

8. COUNCIL RIGHT TO BUILD VANGUARD WORK UPDATE

The Housing Portfolio Holder received and noted a report providing an end of year update on the Council's activity as a Right to Build Vanguard.

The Head of Development (New Build) summarised progress to date, and her aspirations for the future, such as the emergence of modular construction.

Paragraph 14 of the report was highlighted as the best way to promote self- and custom build: Robust Planning Policy,, working with Planning and larger developers on large growth and major sites as well as working with small and medium-sized developers across South Cambridgeshire to lever self build onto schemes. This mixture would play an important part in ensuring the supply of appropriate land for self- and custom build

9. TENANT PARTICIPATION GROUP

The Tenant Participation Group representative updated the Housing Portfolio Holder about recent developments concerning the conduct of TPG meetings and projects.

10. FORWARD PLAN

There was no discussion, but officers would continue to maintain an appropriate work programme.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A further meeting would be arranged in due course.

The Meeting ended at 5.32 p.m.
