

Cabinet Housing Panel
30 October 2017

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

* Reporting to Cabinet

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL CABINET HOUSING PANEL held on Monday 30 October 2017 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors J.Boulton (Chairman)
M.Perkins (Vice-Chairman)

M.Birleson, M.Cook, J.Cragg, S.Glick, M.Holloway,
H.Quenet, F.Thomson

CO-OPTED MEMBERS: Co-opted Members:-
Tenants' Panel Representatives

D.Fuller and R.Read

Independent Representative

R.Paris

ALSO PRESENT: Executive Member (Governance, Community Safety, Police and Crime
Commissioner and Corporate Property) (Councillor R.Trigg)

Pellings (I.Collins, Head of Employer Agent Services)

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Executive Director (Housing and Communities) (S.Russell)
Head of Community and Housing Strategy (S.Chambers)
Head of Housing Operations (S.Pearson)
Principal Housing Development Manager (J.Morton)
Housing Needs Service Manager (D.Murphy)
Private Sector Housing Manager (A.Luck)
Governance Services Manager (G.Seal)

32. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K.Holman and S.Smith (Independent Representative).

33. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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34. ACTIONS UPDATE

The status of actions agreed at the Panel meeting on 18 September 2017 in the report of the Executive Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) was noted.

35. AFFORDABLE HOUSING - PRODUCTS AND TRENDS IN THE MARKET PLACE

Presentation by the development architect (Pellings) on the different types of models available for the delivery of affordable housing in the Borough and to share ideas from other local authority areas.

In response to questions it was explained that Pellings averaged a procurement of 300-400 housing units per annum for different clients.

There had been a fluctuating use of pre-fabricated units. Once out of the factory and on-site there was no control, but a roll-out of new modular solutions was expected.

The Panel noted that the Housing Revenue Account had £110M Head Room (the amount which the Council could borrow) and it was estimated that this could fund the delivery of 640 new homes-over four years.

Further clarity was still awaited from Government policy statements.

(Note: The presentation has been circulated to Panel Members).

RESOLVED:

That the presentation from the development architect (Pellings) on the direct provision of social housing be noted.

36. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT OCTOBER 2017

Report of the Executive Director (Housing and Communities) providing an update on the Council's Affordable Housing Programme.

In response to a question about whether the open market purchase of properties was a more expensive option, it was explained that it was one of the delivery methods which could be used to reduce the risks of not securing the Council's affordable housing programme.

It was noted that the management of Council new build sites was progressing successfully.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the affordable housing programme be noted.

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37. THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW STATUTORY ENFORCEMENT POWERS FOR PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING

Report of the Executive Director (Housing and Communities) setting out the proposed policy for the implementation of the new powers together with a mechanism for calculating the level of penalty following the introduction of new statutory enforcement powers for private sector housing.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the policy and procedure for calculating the level of financial penalty be endorsed and recommended to the Cabinet for submission for consultation with key stakeholders.
- (2) That following consultation, the results of the consultation and the final draft policy document be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration and approval.

38. ROUGH SLEEPER PROTOCOL

Report of the Executive Director (Housing and Communities) updating the Panel on the approach to tackling rough sleeping locally and requesting that the revised protocol be endorsed.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the approach to tackling rough sleeping locally and the revised Protocol be noted and endorsed as set out in Appendix A to the report.

39. WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

The pro-forma which set out the Panel's work programme had been updated since the last meeting to enable forward planning of items to be considered to take place.

RESOLVED:

That the updated work programme be noted.

Meeting ended at 9.05 pm
GS