

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER, 2012 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Grice, Mrs. D. (Chairman)

Jones, Ms. J.L. Molineux, G.N.
Kraujalis, J.T.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F.W.C. Allen and Mrs. M.A. Davis, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder.

2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

There were no Interests declared.

3. Minutes

AGREED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October, 2012 be approved as a correct record.

4. Private Rented Sector Housing

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing (Enclosure 4.1 – 4.15 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Housing provided an overview.

Concern was expressed regarding the cost of private rented accommodation for families, and some landlords discriminating against households in receipt of benefits.

The Head of Housing considered that rents had been raised as a result of increased demand for private rented accommodation from households who would have previously purchased a property. However, mortgage constraints

and particularly the need for large deposits was constraining house purchases for certain households who were now renting in the private sector. It was hoped that when the housing market recovered rents would stabilise.

He explained that the Council currently worked in conjunction with the private sector to encourage landlords to accept households in receipt of benefits.

In response to a question concerning rents being increased, Julie Cope, Principle Housing Options Officer explained that there was no evidence to suggest that landlords were raising rents and simply wished to find good tenants. She indicated that many families experienced difficulties with accessing letting agents as many landlords would not accept families in receipt of benefits or those with a poor credit history. She advised that the majority of people housed through the Council would be in receipt of some form of benefit.

A Member expressed concern with regard to the situation for young single people under 35. She was keen to know the position with regard to shared properties and whether any support could be offered through the Council.

The Head of Housing referred Members to paragraph 5.31 of the report and the historic shortage of shared accommodation and the risks seen by landlords to renting to a "young single person". He advised that there were strict rules on houses in multiple occupation and advised that this could be considered as part of the item on private sector empty properties scheduled for the meeting on 19 March, 2013.

Members discussed a wide range of issues including how tenancies were monitored and the provision of additional accommodation for the under 35's, and it was agreed that this issue should be considered a priority for further investigation.

AGREED:

- (A) That Best Practice regarding the provisions of shared accommodation is researched and reported to a future meeting of the Housing Policy Development Committee
- (B) That the views of private landlords regarding the provision of additional shared accommodation be sought through the Landlord Forum
- (C) That Cabinet be requested to consider supporting the provision of private rented shared accommodation when the Landlord Incentive Scheme is reviewed

5. Place Priority Delivery Plan 2012-13 – Housing Actions

Consideration was given to the Performance Outturn for Quarter 1.

Members noted that Performance Outturn for Quarter 1.

6. Affordable Housing Delivery

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing (Enclosure 5.1 – 5.10 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Housing provided an overview and explained that if agreed the recommendations contained in the report would be considered together with proposals for the Community Infrastructure Levy by Cabinet on 17 January, 2013.

He reported that the Bromford Housing Group would be building 10 new homes at the rear of the Vine Inn, in Lion Street, Rugeley and the Council would have 100% nomination rights for these properties.

Members discussed the viability of providing the proposed amount of affordable housing on all sites, and it was explained that site constraints could necessitate a reduced amount in certain circumstances and that a developer would have the right to challenge the proposals, by appointing an independent assessment at their own cost.

It was also noted that the proposed affordable housing targets would be reviewed again in 2015 and 2021.

AGREED:

That Cabinet are recommended that the future Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Affordable Housing contains the following policies:

- (A) To seek 20% on site affordable housing on sites of 15 or more dwellings with a tenure split of 80% social rent and 20% intermediate tenure that meet the Homes and Community Agency Design and Quality Standards and Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. In exceptional circumstances i.e. a development of flats it may be more appropriate to accept a financial contribution.
- (B) To seek a financial contribution on sites of between 5 to 14 units (inclusive) as an alternative to on-site affordable housing provision based on the formula outlined in paragraph 5.18 of the report.

7. Revised Work Programme 2012-13 Municipal Year

Consideration was given to the Revised Work Programme 2012-13 (Enclosure 6.1 – 6.2 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Housing referred to item 4 and indicated that the presentation would only take place if the consultation document from the County Council was published prior to the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Policy Development Committee on 18 December, 2012.

A Member was pleased to see the anti-social behaviour toolkit as part of the

Work Programme. The Head of Housing indicated that he would liaise with the Legal Section in order to bring an interactive session to Members.

CHAIRMAN

(The meeting concluded at 5.18 p.m.).