

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 6 AUGUST, 2014 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Kraujalis, J.T. (Chairman)
Preece, J. (Vice-Chairman)

Allen, F.W.C.	Grice, Mrs. D.
Ball, G.D.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M. (Substitute)
Dixon, D.I.	

By invitation: Councillor Mrs. M. A. Davies, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. A. Allt and J.L. Jones.

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

No other declarations of interests were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March, 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Housing Priority Delivery Plan 2013-14 Outturn Performance

Consideration was given to the Housing Priority Delivery Plan 2013-14 Outturn Performance (Item 4.1-4.7).

Members of the Committee discussed the indicators where targets had not been achieved.

Re-housing the remaining households living in the Council's 167 Reema flats

Mr. I. Tennant, Head of Housing and Waste Management reported that there were 170 households that needed to be re-housed, with 167 being Council tenants. Tenants were given the choice of location, although this was dependent on properties becoming available.

He reported that all tenants had now been offered accommodation, although possession was also being sought in relation to one property. There were also currently 3 private sector flats which would be purchased, and where necessary the tenants would then be re-housed.

The Head of Housing and Waste Management explained that 3 properties had been sold under the Right to Buy scheme and used as private lettings. The landlords were aware that the Council's development partner was seeking to purchase those properties.

Percentage of Repairs Appointments Made and Kept

The Head of Housing and Waste Management explained that performance was 97% against the 98% target. This was due to a number of issues including tradesmen being unable to attend due to sickness, goods that were late onto site and appointments being cancelled.

Percentage of Secure Tenants Receiving a Tenancy Audit

The Head of Housing and Waste Management reported that the 6.5% target was set to high and a more realistic 2.5 per cent had been set for next year. Nevertheless, 3.65% of tenants received a tenancy audit.

In response to a question raised by a Member, the Head of Housing explained that a tenancy audit involved randomly selected tenants providing information and proof of their tenancy at a Council property.

Provide a Vulnerable Tenants Grass and Internal Decoration Scheme

The Head of Housing and Waste Management reported that 151 homes were re-decorated against a 160 target. The reduction was due to the need to decorate additional voids due to the social sector criteria.

Number of Households Re-housed to Private Rented Accommodation

It was reported that 58 households were re-housed in private rented accommodation against a target of 75. This was substantially lower than the previous year. It appeared that the housing market had improved and people were less likely to let properties.

The Head of Housing and Waste Management reported that many people who rented through the Council privately were those who were in receipt of benefit payments. He explained that help and advice was on hand through the Council's Housing Advice Team and measures were in place to help both the landlord and potential tenant.

Percentage of Homeless Decisions Determined within 33 Days

71% of homeless cases had been determined in the required timescale against a target of 75%.

It was reported that a new Homelessness Officer was now in post who would be responsible for helping to reach the target set for homelessness decisions.

Number of Empty Dwellings Brought Back to Use

It was reported that 1 dwelling had been brought back into use against a target of 6.

RESOLVED:

That the Housing Priority Delivery Plan 2013-14 Outturn Performance be noted.

5. Housing Priority Delivery Plan 2014-15

Consideration was given to the Housing Priority Delivery Plan 2014-15 (Item 5.1-5.8).

The Head of Housing and Waste Management reported that quarterly performance reports would be submitted to the Committee throughout the year, and the plan gave Members of the Committee an insight into what would be coming forward in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the Housing Priority Delivery Plan 2014-15 be noted.

6. Work Programme for 2014-15

Consideration was given to the Work Programme for 2014-15 (Item 6.1).

Prior to consideration of the Work Programme, the Head of Housing gave a presentation with regard to the Council's Sheltered Housing Schemes.

It was reported that the Council had five Sheltered Housing Schemes at:

- Caxton Court, Cannock
- Grace Moore Court, Chadsmoor
- Longford Court, Cannock
- St Barbara House, Rugeley
- Highfields, Rugeley

These provided a range of accommodation types together with communal facilities and weekly social activities.

The criteria for Sheltered Housing Scheme tenants included being over 55 years of age, an average age of 80 years, and most tenants would have at least one medical condition.

The aims and objectives of sheltered housing included:

- Providing independent secure accommodation
- Individual support plans for each tenant
- Preventing admission to hospital or residential care

As a result of the withdrawal of Supporting People funding for sheltered housing by Staffordshire County Council, there was a need to redefine the scheme service standards, and it was suggested that this formed part of the Work Programme for next year.

The Head of Housing and Waste Management reported that the next Committee meeting would be held at a Sheltered Housing Scheme within the District and also commented that items could be added to the work programme as and when required.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme for 2014-15 be noted.

7. Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

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8. Gas and Solid Fuel Servicing and Maintenance Contract

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Housing and Waste Management (Item 8.1-8.9).

The Head of Housing and Waste Management reported on the problems experienced in the past with the Council's Contractor and how improvements have been made.

RESOLVED:

- (A) That the performance information in respect of the Gas and Solid Fuel Servicing and Maintenance Contract be noted.
- (B) That a further report on the performance of the Council's Contractor in relation to the Gas and Solid Fuel Servicing and Maintenance Contract is submitted to the Housing Policy Development Committee during the 2015-16 Municipal Year.

CHAIRMAN

(The meeting concluded at 4.55 p.m.).