

Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee

Minutes

Thursday, 27 July 2017 at 18:30

Councillor Grant (in the Chair); Councillors Bird, M Coleman, Flaxman-Taylor, Pratt, Wainwright, Walch & Waters-Bunn.

Councillor Davis attended as a substitute for Councillor Williamson.

Councillor Plant attended as a substitute for Councillor Bensly.

Councillor Smith attended as a substitute for Councillor Mavroudis.

Mr T Chaplin (Manager, Housing Services), Mrs V George (Head of Housing), Mr R Read (Head of Community Development & Regeneration), Mrs E Penswick (Manager, Services for Older People) & Mrs C Webb (Member Services Officer).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bensly, Mavroudis & Williamson.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Flaxman-Taylor & Wainwright declared a personal interest in Item 5, Voluntary and Community Sector Support Services, as they were members of the Audit & Risk Committee. Councillor Pratt declared a personal interest in item 9, Remodelling Sheltered Housing, as she resided in a sheltered housing unit.

However, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, they were allowed to both speak and vote on the matter.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2017 were confirmed.

It was noted that in regard to minute 2, the Chairman reported that he was a member of the Great Yarmouth Sport & Leisure Trust and not the Sentinel Board.

4 MATTERS ARISING

In regard to minute 7, the Chairman reported that he would chase Building Control for a definitive response to the cladding at Havenbridge House.

In regard to minute 12, Councillor Walch was awaiting confirmation of the position of the Big Lottery funding. Councillor Waters-Bunn reported that Great Yarmouth Football Club were still awaiting confirmation of the outstanding amount owed so that they could begin to clear the debt. Councillor Plant requested that a duplicate invoice be sent to the club as requested. The Head of Community Development & Regeneration reported that he would action this matter.

Councillor Wainwright reported that the Forward plan had been omitted from the agenda. The Chairman requested that the Member Services Officer forward a copy of the forward plan to the Committee following the meeting.

5 VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR SUPPORT SERVICES

A Member requested that the budget reflected all grants which the Council had awarded and that this total amount should be reflected in the budget going forward. Councillor Wainwright reported that the Member was alluding to the

three year grant which had been awarded to Centre 81 which supported disabled people in the Borough.

The Chairman reported that the total budget amounted to £75,000. The Head of Community Development & Regeneration reported that he would bring a report to the next meeting detailing all grants awarded.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the report.

6 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Housing Manager reported that the Quarter 1 Performance report gave an update on current performance for April to June 2107, whereby progress was assessed against targets which were set at the beginning of the financial year. The report also gave an update on the position of key projects which were linked to the Corporate Priorities from The Plan 2015-2020.

A Member raised the issue of Universal Credit and its effect on HNO3, Great Yarmouth Community Housing Rent Collection Rate, claimants were struggling to pay the rent and feed their families and the local Food Banks were running out of food. The Housing Manager reported that the rents team were working hard to keep arrears down whilst offering support to tenants and it was hoped to maintain the collection rate of 98.84% achieved last year.

Members raised concerns regarding HN06 Average Time to Re-Let Local Authority Housing, as they felt that the figure of 51 days was too high. The Housing manager reported that they had been looking at the end to end processes of re-letting Voids and a Voids Policy would be reported to Committee in the coming months.

The Housing Manager reported that the harder to let properties skewed the figures, as did those properties which required substantial remedial works. A member suggested that a separate line be added to represent the longer term void properties to compensate for this.

In regard to HN01, Number of Households still in Temporary Accommodation after Two Months, a Member asked for the number of people involved. The Housing Manager reported that it was usually around 50, but he would check and report the actual figure in the next report.

In regard to HN04, Number of Evictions, the Head of Housing reported that legal advice had been sought to clarify the position of data protection around evictions and a protocol had now been established to inform Ward Councillors of any eviction pending in their ward via an encrypted email service.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the report.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was no other business as being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

8 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act.

9 BRL : REMODELLING SHELTERED HOUSING
(Confidential Minute on this Item)

The meeting ended at: 20:30