



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee

Minutes

Thursday, 10 March 2022 at 18:30

PRESENT:-

Councillors Grant (in the chair), Cameron, Candon, Flaxman-Taylor, Galer, D Hammond, Jeal, Martin, Smith-Clare, Talbot, Wainwright & Williamson.

Councillor P Hammond attended as a substitute for Councillor Price.

Mrs N Turner (Housing Director), Mrs K Blakemore (Strategic Director), Mrs Paula Boyce (Strategic Director), Ms Ria Frosdick (Executive Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Price and he is being substituted by Councillor Paul Hammond.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 8 November 2021 were confirmed.

4 MATTERS ARISING

Councillor Candon requested an update regarding the community representatives and the member briefing session which had been suggested at last Committee. The Housing Director advised that a briefing session is currently being arranged. Councillor Wainwright asked for these roles, and the type of feedback they provide from community reps could be explained prior to the next meeting. The Housing Director will look into this and advise.

Councillor Martin queried whether the e-zine newsletter for tenants/leaseholders had started being distributed as she hasn't received anything to date. The Housing Director offered her apologies as these have been sent out, but not to all, so she will make sure this is undertaken within the next week.

5 FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Wainwright voiced his concern that there was a lot of TBC on the Forward Plan. The Strategic Director advised that there are many agenda items which need to be worked through and work on the annual action plan is ongoing but we will endeavour to get more dates on the plan for the next committee date.

Councillor Williamson requested an analysis of the budget allocated to the management of the housing stock by GYN due to it being reported that £1 out of every £4 is being spent on this,

Following reviews and assessments of our housing stock, Councillor Williamson requested a list of key problems, where and what the problems are and what we are doing strategically to address them. The Housing Director advised that a new stock condition survey is being commissioned by the Property & Asset Management Team and she will find out the dates of this and advise accordingly. The Strategic Director also advised that an Interim Director for Housing Assets was joining the council in March as and will be tasked with bringing something to this committee in the near future.

Councillor Martin voiced her concern regarding making contact with anyone in Housing Options. She has frequently left voicemails, emails etc. and has had no response until she has escalated it, so residents would be finding this equally as frustrating. The Strategic Director apologised and advised that additional resource has been put into place and that an overview of the changes made can be brought to committee rather than specifics. The Executive Services Officer will distribute contact details for Housing Services Management Team including interim contact details.

6 OUTSIDE BODIES REPORTS

The Strategic Director presented the Outside Bodies report for consideration.

The Chairman reported that due to Covid there have been no meetings of the High school Foundation to report on.

Councillor Galer gave a verbal update for the Youth Advisory Board.

Councillor Wainwright and Councillor Williamson requested that in the future all reports are written reports rather than verbal reports so Members can consider these prior to the meeting.

Councillor Jeal was under the impression that those Outside Bodies not being attended would be removed from the list. The Strategic Director advised that a new process is being created for Outside Bodies going forward

RESOLVED

That the Committee note the update reports.

7 MIDDLEGATE ESTATE UPDATE

Middlegate Leisure and Recreational Improvements

The Housing Director reported on the scheme to improve recreational facilities on the Middlegate Estate. This followed a successful bid for funding with spend in 2022/23. She reported that contracts were being signed in March 2022, and that contractors would be on site by 31 March 2022. The contractor and design team have been engaged via the Scape Framework process, and that the contract should be signed imminently.

A presentation provided an update in relation to the recreational and leisure works on the Middlegate Estate. The main points were as follows:

- The Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) will be removed due to historic anti-social behaviour and replaced with a private and secure garden only available for residents in the surrounding homes.
- The poor quality play equipment and surfaces on Clarendon North, Clarendon South and Dorset Close will be removed and new sustainable play equipment and grass installed.
- The equipment installed on Clarendon North will be a wheelchair accessible play area.
- Due to issues in Dorset Close, the play area there will be enclosed.
- A physical activity course will be installed to promote movement through the estate.
- The designs have been approved internally and are now in the final stages in the Scape Framework.
- If all agreed, the plans will be shared with residents and what it means for them, including a schedule of works, changes to access whilst works are being undertaken and how residents can contact us with any issues.
- Works will take approximately 16-20 weeks to complete, subject to obtaining materials on time.

This was praised as a fantastic initiative and the residents will hopefully appreciate the changes made.

Councillor Martin voiced her concern that removing the MUGA completely will take away the only facility for older children in the area. The Strategic Director advised that facilities for older children would need further work and due to restricted timescales it hasn't been possible at this time. This will be picked up in the wider regeneration work

of the estate.

Councillor Williamson requested confirmation that a budget has been allocated to the maintenance of the new equipment and upkeep of the grassed areas. The Strategic Director confirmed that there is a dedicated budget allocated to maintaining play equipment but also some of the changes being made will free up some revenue. The work that GYBS currently undertake will be amended and allocated to this maintenance.

Councillor Paul Hammond voiced his concern that the new grassed area will need to be cut weekly during the summer months and the cuttings removed and not just left behind.

Middlegate Estate Masterplan Update

The Housing Director has received an indicative masterplan for the Middlegate Estate and explained that the council is looking at a fabric first approach to the buildings to make them affordable and sustainable. The requirement to deliver the scheme as a Net-Zero Carbon scheme will impact the layout of the amended master plan. The proposed level demolition has increased from prior levels due to the need to re-orientate some homes to deliver the scheme. There are also likely to be changes to central heating system given gas boilers will not be acceptable in new installations from 2025. The council is presently exploring other low carbon heating systems such as heat pumps for new homes on the Estate. Additionally, the building regulations will require further money be spent to achieve decarbonisation.

The next steps will be as follows:

- Finalise the master plan for the Estate.
- Agree on a heating solution for regeneration.
- Complete the cost analysis including identification of:
 - costs of delivering a fit for purpose housing mix
 - costs of delivering a Net Zero Carbon Scheme vs costs of meeting building regulations
 - impact on HRA business plan
- Presentation to Member Working Group on conclusions and recommendations
- Presentation to Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee
- Approach Government for required regeneration funding to deliver scheme.

RESOLVED

That the committee note the update.

8 HOUSING FIRST

The Housing Director advised that on 23 September 2021, this committee approved five recommendations to Full Council to support the delivery of a Housing First scheme, by acquiring and repairing five homes to accommodate rough sleepers with high or complex needs. The report explained that the Council had submitted a bid to the Homes England and Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme for both capital and revenue scheme to deliver the scheme. A confidential appendix to the report considered on 23 September 2021 provided information on the costs of the scheme and set out the parameters for the acquisition of properties for the scheme. The Council's bid for both capital and revenue

funding was successful and the Council has now purchased four properties with a fifth still in the legal process.

As a result of a change in the housing market, between bidding for the grant and being able to start to purchase properties, it was challenging to acquire homes. However, four flats and one house have been secured. Two of the flats have a shared access – but are within existing Council owned blocks. Works are starting shortly on the first four homes to bring them to the required standard. The first homes are expected to be available to be occupied from May.

The Chairman praised the Housing Director on a great piece of work.

RESOLVED

That the committee note the update to the Housing First scheme.

9 SUSTAINABLE WARMTH & DECARBONISATION

The Housing Director advised that on 30 November 2021, Policy and Resources Committee considered a report providing an update on the Council's bid to the Sustainable Warmth Competition. The competition provides funding for homes which were both on the gas grid through the Local Authority Delivery 3 or LAD3 programme and off grid through the Homes Upgrade Grant Funding or HUG. At the time this report was considered by Policy and Resources Committee only the LAD3 bid had been successful. Subsequently the funding awarded to the Council to support improvements in the energy efficiency of homes across the borough has significantly increased to a total of £5.87m. This funding will result in 408 homes across the borough benefiting from the installation of energy efficiency measures of which 321 will be owner occupied or privately rented homes and 87 council homes. The report provides information on the HUG and Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund grant awarded to the Council and how these monies will be used and targeted.

The report also sets out the Council's approach to decarbonising the Council's housing stock of taking a fabric first approach by improving the energy performance of the structure of homes – by increasing or improving insulation and/or replacing windows and doors. Such works deliver immediate benefits. The second part of the approach is to move towards clean heating systems – moving away from heating systems which are reliant on fossil fuels.

Councillor Wainwright queried how wards were selected for this. The Housing Director confirmed that it was those areas that are the worst performing with energy performance ratings of E or lower that were selected, and that it does not mean there aren't issues in other areas.

The Chairman advised this was a great success as many other local authorities were awarded a lot less.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the report and agreed:

1. To accept the Homes Upgrade Grant and Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund grant monies.
2. The prior completion of the Memorandum of Understanding to secure the

SHDF grant monies and completion of the Memorandum of Understanding for the HUG grant award.

3. The delegation of all decisions on the use and spend of the Homes Upgrade Grant and Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund monies in accordance with the requirements of the applicable Memorandum of Understanding to the Head of Property and Asset Management/Director of Housing Assets.
4. To the updating of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 capital programmes to reflect the HUG and SHDF spend.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business to discuss.

11 CONFIDENTIAL - MINUTES

The confidential minutes were confirmed.

The meeting ended at: 20:30