

MINUTES

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

21 MARCH 2018

Present:

Members:

Adeleke	
Armytage	Hearn
Banks	Fethney
Bassadone	Imarni (Vice-Chairman)
Conway	Mahmood (Chairman)
England	W Wyatt-Lowe

Councillor Griffiths (Portfolio Holder for Housing) Councillor Harden (Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Resident Services) and Councillor Marshall (Portfolio Holder for Environmental Sustainability and regulatory Services)

Officers:

Elliott Brooks	Assistant Director – Housing
Cynthia Hayford	Homeless Prevention and Assessment Team Leader
Natasha Beresford	Strategic Housing Group Manager
Oliver Jackson	Team Leader - Supported Housing
Kevin Mutio	Supported Housing - Lead Officer
Kayley Johnston	Member Support Officer (Minutes)

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

190 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Housing and Community OSC meeting on 22nd February 2018 were agreed by Members and signed by the Chair.

191 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies received

192 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was no declaration of interest.

193 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

194 **CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE
COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN**

None.

195 **Q3 HOUSING REPORT**

E Brooks presented the report high lighting SH10B on the rocket report, Page 8 and explained why they are showing red.

E Brooks was happy to take questions on the report.

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe referred to page 7, the different types of replacements shown. He asked can you please show the progression over months/years so we know how far we have come. He also asks what happens if you reject your bathroom do you have to wait longer than 6 months to reapply for it to be done again.

E Brooks said its sounds about right, they should be flexible about coming back but the programme is tight and sometimes they can only fit you in when possible so yeah they may have to wait 6 months. E Brooks also confirmed that they will add previous figures to the next report.

Cllr Silwal asked what the blue colour code was.

E Brooks said they are the ones that don't have targets they are for info only.

Cllr England asked, with the targets are you working towards the homelessness figures.

N Beresford said that the reason why they are red, they are working ready for the switch in preparation for the new legislative requirements. In June they will have a more detailed progress update for H&OSC.

Cllr Fethney applauded works which is taking place at the Heights and the work is very flexible there.

Cllr Adeleke referred to page 5, 202 could he please have clarification on the increase in numbers on temporary accommodation minus disabled what are the figures.

E Brooks said they currently use zero B&B's they use the general fund properties and HRA stock, temporary accommodation rent is coming back to us around one hundred and twenty thousand from 17/18 which went back into the general fund for MTFS.

N Beresford said that there are 88 clients in temporary accommodation as soon as the homelessness reduction act comes in, there is a chance that this could increase due to length of time officers are working with cases.

Cllr Mahmood referred to the service plan summary, staff turnover and the legal costs.

E Brooks said its peaks and troughs and it's an ongoing challenge. Supportive housing are taking on a challenge to tackle this.

M Brooks said that they are bench marking how much they will spend.

Cllr Mahmood asked if they are being proactive for adaptations for disabled tenants is a good idea.

N Beresford said that there is an independent reviewing officer full time for a fixed term 2 years.

196 **Q3 RESIDENT SERVICES REPORT**

M Brooks was happy to take questions on behalf of David Austin who gave his apologies.

Cllr Adeleke referred to anti-social behaviour, how wide spread is this and where are we with it.

M Brooks said he is not sure how accurate the figures are he will come back with exact figures.

Cllr England said is the reduction of staff in the adventure playground going to affect safeguarding.

Cllr Harden said that the staff are fully trained. If a child is under 8 then the parent now has to accompany them when they weren't before. He believes that there is no lack in safeguarding.

Cllr Hearn asked if this is a permanent thing or if it was just temporarily.

Cllr Harden said that they need to save more and don't want it to be closed down so at the moment this is the best way to resource it.

197 **PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS**

Cllr Marshall presented this report informing the committee that it will be going to cabinet next month.

Cllr Bassadone said what about the younger kids on scouters and is there a definition.

M Brooks said that the report wouldn't cover this it would need to be amended if you wanted to add that.

Cllr Imarni referred to page 8, camping in the water gardens. When we don't have a solution for people like him which makes terrible reading and we look heartless.

N Beresford said that we have no duty to assist him, he can't access public funds. This is a very difficult and complex case, there has already been two hundred and seventy thousand pound spent on this case.

Cllr Griffith said we have to be very careful with people, we don't have a legal responsibility and there are reasons he can't access public funds. We need to be careful and balance it out, you can bring in all the policies you want but it's not enforcement.

Cllr Adeleke said that the only concern is how we serve it to the public in the future, look at the issues Windsor had when they asked to get the homelessness of the streets for the royal wedding. With enforcement is it the officer who will be responsible.

Cllr Marshall said yes it can be the officers who issue a fixed penalty notice or a PCSO.

The next stage is a formal stage if its agreed at Council.

Cllr Marshall agreed to take note about Windsor.

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe noticed an observation on enforcement, highlighting the area. What is the perception on outer Hemel, that they don't see it being done? Can they cycle down the Water End Road instead of Leighton Buzzard Road as it's not on the map.

Cllr Marshall said she will re look at the map. Enforcement is looked at in these areas as there are more people there. Outline areas will not be over looked.

Cllr England There is no funding for enforcement it might help if we encourage people to be better citizens.

Cllr Marshall we don't have to throw loads of money behind it, the fact that it could happen could deter people, it would be a waste of people's money.

Cllr Mahmood twice in the last 6 months he has witnessed kids who have been deliberately kicking balls at people to get a reaction in town.

M Brooks said it will be added to the feedback, we could ask Cabinet for a 'No Ball Games' sign.

Cllr Harden said this requires a gentle conversation from authority like PCSO then the powers are already there.

O Jackson presented the report explaining that a new strategy had been drafted after 6 years.

Cllr Mahmood do you mean all older people in lease hold and general needs too.

O Jackson said we do have a responsibility to anyone we come into contact with.

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe said should we be replacing the over 65 age, and concentrate on how many people and how long they have had the disability. Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe said he has been working 8 years over that age limit so it's not just age.

O Jackson said age is for supported housing which is 60 plus. Consideration is closely given or if they are vulnerable adults, or 50 plus with a medical need on discussion. There have been no discrimination issues so far.

Cllr Fethney, what input of real numbers population rise is raising.

Cllr Griffith said we are a diverse community age is irrelevant but you have to have an age, 60 is a good age and an inclusive diversity.

Cllr Bassadone there are tenants that are alone in 2/3 bedroom properties is it good for those downsizing.

Cllr Banks referred to 2.6. There are senior people that have come to her regarding a chunk of garden being sold to neighbours. The letter that is being sent by the Council only tells them to go online but no mention of filling a form in.

E Brooks to feed this back to see what can be done.

Cllr Mahmood said that he had to print channel shift so he could understand, can you keep it simple as people don't know what it is. Also he asked could we not use the 'Older' people's strategy as it's too vulnerable.

E Brooks said that it is based to older people so we want it to say what it actually is.

Cllr Mahmood asked the committee if they were happy to agreed recommendations 1-7, the committee agreed.

199 **ISSUE OF LONDON BOROUGH'S HOMELESS ISSUES EFFECTING AREAS SUCH AS DACORUM**

The report was presented by N Beresford and Cynthia Hayford wrote the report.

They were both present and happy to take questions.

Cllr Imarni said that her understanding was that it wasn't so much of an issue.

N Beresford advised that it is an issue and they were aware of other authorities purchasing properties or working with Hightown in our Borough.

C Hayford said they were aware of Brent and Harrow doing this, this year there is an increase made and they are given a notification and that's all. They have a duty to notify us and that's all.

N Beresford said there is a duty to notify us but this doesn't always happen, London Borough are incentivizing clients a lot higher than what we can offer.

Cllr Adeleke referred to the point previously raised, his worry is that we can't stop the Councils buying, can you not find a gentleman's agreement.

C Hayford said there is nothing that we can do as Dacorum is a target area due to it's proximity to London.

Cllr Mahmood said it is a problem and Parliament need to address this.

N Beresford said that they only have a duty to notify us of placement we have no details of potential ASB issues that may arise etc and we end up dealing with the issues.

Cllr Mahmood said do we need to take this up with Parliament.

E Brooks said that Julie Still use to take it to Sir Mike Penning but now she is gone he doesn't know where it went and what stage it's at. Councillor Griffiths stated that she would raise this with Sir Mike Penning.

Cllr Adeleke asked if we could get this issue re looked at as it's going to cause a problem.

The Meeting ended at 9.20 pm