

MINUTES

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

5 DECEMBER 2017

Present:

Members:

Councillors: Armytage
Banks
Mrs Bassadone
Conway
England
Fethney
Imarni (Vice-Chairman)
Mahmood (Chairman)
W Wyatt-Lowe

Councillor Griffiths (Portfolio Holder for Housing)

Officers:	Elliott Brooks	Assistant Director - Housing
	Julie Still	Group Manager, Housing Development.
	Natasha Beresford	Strategic Housing Group Manager
	David Barrett	Group manager - Housing Development
	James Deane	Corporate Director - Finance and Operations
	Robert Smyth	Assistant Director - Performance, People and Innovation
	Kayley Johnston	Member Support Officer (Minutes)

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

19 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Housing and Community OSC meeting on 8th November 2017 were agreed by Members and signed by the Chair.

20 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Cllr Adeleke and Cllr Silwal.

21 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was no declaration of interest.

22 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

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

None

24 **JOINT BUDGET PREPARATIONS 2018/19**

James Deane presented an in-depth presentation providing information on the Budget detail for every area of the Council; this has also been made available to all Members in the report.

The Housing and Community OSC meeting started at 20:11 following on from Joint Budget.

E Brooks presented a presentation on housing to the committee.

E Brooks was happy to take questions.

Cllr Bassadone asked what the turnover was for housing staff.

E Brooks said it seems very low, but couldn't be sure on exact figures but they have lots of secondments so figures change due to that rather than turnover.

Cllr Mahmood said he was glad to hear about the garages and temp accommodation, this is very positive.

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe asked about recharges, How can the housing and community recharges be between minus 20 and plus 20%, how are they set out.

E Brooks said that it's to do with the number off staff based in the service.

J Deane added to that it depends on the time spent, it's tightly controlled and there is a legal ring fence.

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe asked if they had considered the risks of the grant.

E Brooks said its 27 minimum and there is a 2 year arrangement. We currently have the grant it's guaranteed for 2 years.

Cllr England said that he was in support of the garages as parking is an issue and some of the space could be used for parking.

Cllr Griffith said that she rents a garage and parks outside it but not all garages have that facility.

Cllr England said that he was aware that on private estates tenants are ticketed for parking outside garages.

Cllr Griffith asked if he had checked how much self-storages cost for the space the size of a garage so we could compare the costs.

E Brooks said he believed it was approximately £43 a week. Storage spaces have been spoke about as the 12% increase for a garage was expensive. There will be a point where tenants say enough is enough and won't want to pay no more.

J Deane said that garages are an income generator for the council and have made them 3 million.

Cllr Armytage asked if the void rate of 25% for ordinary garages was good.

E Brooks said some are in a very bad state and some are not even lettable, it seems about right not every garage can be up to scratch.

Cllr Bassadone asked if we could demolish bad garages and use them as parking bays instead.

E Brooks said he's not sure exactly where all the bad garages are. It is an option for James and Nick to consider.

J Deane said those sites would not be picked up on the report.

Cllr Mahmood refereed to page 27, shelf life on D2 homelessness.

N Beresford said its staff costs, it's the new post.

E Brooks added to that stating there has been an 80% increase in legal cost and explained the reasoning behind this.

N Beresford added to that saying that they are trying to look at getting an internal person just to deal with legal housing cases.

David Austin presented a presentation on Resident Services, Neighbourhood delivery.

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe said that there was an increase in budget at the adventure playground in previous years but the presentation said that the budget had degreased how does that work?

J Dean said that the budget papers were published before conversations had been held with staff and the reduction was shown in the published papers. The next report will change.

Cllr Imarni said that J Stills department is a growth area and under resourced which has an impact and is affecting the community and Councillors had agreed that they would like a Victim Support Officer.

Cllr Banks said that with the increase in homelessness people she can't believe that there is no growth.

Cllr Imarni said that residents don't have support and a support officer will reduce the time in lengthy cases. Cllr Imarni gave an example of a case that is currently taking over 5 years

J Still said there are extreme pressures on providing victim support for tenants and residents.

Cllr Imarni said it's a high priority.

J Dean said officers would discuss with the portfolio holder and bring an update to the second Joint OSC in Feb 2018.

Rob Smyth presented a presentation on performance people and innovation.

Cllr England said it's unusual to have something come back in house.

R Smyth said we have more control and a clearer idea of where we want to go, it works for us both.

Cllr Mahmood said is there no budget allowance for internet, web updates.

R Smyth said that licencing spend every few years we do invest.

Cllr England can you say how many bids

R Smyth said 2 bids on sports outcome.

Action: D Austin – Discuss with portfolio holder a potential growth bid for a Victim Support Officer.

Outcome: The report was noted.

25 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Add victim support update in Feb – Julie Still/David Austin.

The Meeting ended at 9.32 am