

MINUTES

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday 8 November 2023

Present:

Councillor Barry-Mears (Chair)
Councillor Capozzi (Vice Chair)
Councillor McArevey
Councillor B Link
Councillor C Link
Councillor Pringle

Councillor Banks
Councillor Barradell
Councillor Wyatt-Lowe
Councillor Johnson
Councillor B Williams
Councillor Pesch

Viewing Via Teams:

Councillor Tindall
Councillor Cox

Officers:

Natasha Beresford
Mark Pinnell
Darren Welsh
David Barrett
Kayley Johnston

Assistant Director - Housing Operations & Safe Communities
Assistant Director Property
Chief Housing Officer
Assistant Director - Strategic Housing and Delivery
Corporate & Democratic Support Officer (minutes)

Others:

Councillor Dhyani

Portfolio Holder – Housing & Property Services

HC/076/23 MINUTES

Cllr Banks advised that there were some minor amendments to the minutes from 11 October 2023 so they will be agreed at the next meeting.

HC/077/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mottershead Adeleke and Cox. Councillor C Wyatt-Lowe substituted for Councillor Adeleke.

HC/078/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

HC/079/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation. Councillor Tindall and Cox were viewing via Teams.

HC/080/23 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO A CALL-IN

None.

HC/081/23 Q2 BUDGET MONITORING

F Jump introduced the report to members explaining that the report provides details of the projected outturn for 2022-2023 as at quarter 2. The Councils position is reported to the Committee and is ongoing on a quarterly basis.

F Jump was happy to take questions.

Cllr Barradell referred to the HRA capital budget, section 10.3. He asked if they had an update on that. The review of the Housing Development project that the Council were undertaking.

D Welsh said that the Councils new build programme budget is reviewed annually through the Housing Revenue Account business plan, which is the long-term financial plan for the housing service. He confirmed that the HRA refresh is coming to the next overview and scrutiny meeting. He confirmed that they will share the new details around new builds then. At the moment figures previously agreed by the Council are currently within the business plan, he confirmed that there was one scheme previously in the programme which fell through because it was undeliverable, but confirmed the other schemes are currently progressing.

Cllr Barradell had a follow up question around the last quarter. The report said ' that the housing development programme is being reviewed and Cherry Bounce and garage sites are currently being put on hold' he asked for clarification.

D Welsh confirmed that they were new schemes, which are not in the current programme; he said that these would be reviewed as of the development future programmes. He confirmed that they are not currently in the programme which we are working to at the moment. He said that when they are worked up to in detail, a recommendation would be put through to Councillors to incorporate the programme.

The report was noted.

Cllr Dhyani arrive at 19:40

The report was noted.

HC/082/23 Q2 HOUSING REPORT

D Barrett presented the report to provide the committee with an overview of the housing services performance at quarter 2. He confirmed that it was a lengthy report and there has been challenges around repairs, which they are tackling as part of their high-risk areas.

D Barrett was happy to take any question.

Cllr Barry-Mears asked if it was just one property that was not gas safety registered.

M Pinnell confirmed that the reason why it is actually red is that it is either compliant or it is not. If you're not complaint then it's recorded as not compliant. He confirmed there are other authorities which report it differently. We however, record it as, if you have a CP11 then you are compliant, if you do not then it is not compliant. He confirmed that we are maintaining really good compliance on these properties.

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe made a comment to acronyms. She could not find a key and does not understand them so neither would the Public so we need to make this clear.

David Barrett said that he would take this on board and rectify this for next time.

Cllr Johnson referred to p18 the house mark scores; it talks about complaints and repairs. He said that they are very poor. He asked what action is being taken with this as complaints are a big issue within the Council.

D Barrett said it is a big issue and they are focusing on it. They have recently changed the process and how they are responding to the stage 1 and 2 complaints to make sure they are addressing the complaints that are coming in. The individual services are looking at action plans around the complaints that we are getting, to make sure the service is responding to the complaints. They are hoping to get an improvement.

Cllr Johnson asked what they are aiming for? as they seem to have a long way to go.

N Beresford said the aim is that they are working to 100% compliant. All assistant Directors meet at the DMT Meeting and focus on the scrutiny of complaints. She said up until a fortnight ago stage 2 escalation complaints were actually being led across the wider corporate leadership team so they were portioned out. She confirmed that there has been a revision to the process, which D Barrett has touched on.

The report was noted.

HC/083/23 DAMP AND MOULD POLICY

M Pinnell presented the report, introduction the new Damp and Mould Policy to Members to seek approval for the new report.

M Pinnell was happy to take questions.

Cllr Banks referred to 2.2 where you have listed the landlords responsibilities she asked if within the policy will we be looking for resident contribution, as some of it is caused by the residents. He said she believed that some of this is due to poor behaviours which are leading to the damp and mould.

M Pinnell said it was a good observation, he said that the driver isn't to blame anyone it's to work with them and help them out. He had purposely gone away with the ' you must'

approach. What he actually wanted to do was teach them and point out the do's and don'ts and educate residents rather than point the finger. The policy is high-level policy. He gave some examples of what he had seen and it's about educating them.

Cllr Cox referred to 2.1 Cllrs responsibility what is a reasonable time scale.

M Pinnell explained that we need to make a plan and then go back to see if it works, we need to have a review process to see if it is working because what will work for one will not work for another due to everyone's needs being different etc.

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe said she liked the report and found it interesting, she asked if we are putting more resources/funding into this to help get a faster and more effective response.

M Pinnell said that a paper was brought to committee last December and that was to allocate additional resource. He has now got 2 additional surveyors so this is being done quicker. The revenue budget pressure is a result of the work that we are doing with damp and mould, he confirmed that they do hold a cost pressure. He has the resources but it is putting additional cost pressures on the HRA.

Cllr Wyatt-lowe said she was glad that its included in the budget. She asked about time frames etc, she said it is very wishy washy. She said she cannot find a definitive time frame and asked has any thought been given about this to reassure tenants about the outcomes.

M Pinnell said that it does state about urgent and non-urgent time frames (section 2.1). It does state that if it is urgent they will send an inspector out within 48 hours and non urgent calls are inspected within 7 days. They have to get the surveyor out first to look at it then make a plan then committee to a time frame. They have also got smaller contractors to support Osborns.

She asked how many side wall properties do we have?

M Pinnell said Approximately 75 have been identified with solid walls. 7692 Cavity Wall, 533 Solid Wall, 1644 System Build

In the main, this data is based on visual surveys undertaken to date and we are confident that it is largely correct. However, we do continue to update our records as we complete new stock condition surveys, if any new information becomes available relating to construction type the figures may change slightly over time.

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe asked what financial measures would it attract to immediate those problems in that particular type of housing.

M Pinnell gave a real time example as they are currently working though some engineering with those. He said to do solid walls, EWI solid wall insulation, solar panels on the top are a circular of about sixty thousand pound per property.

The report was agreed by Members.

HC/084/23 ACTION PLAN

Housing points training which was cancelled the other day will be re arranged.

Adventure Playground - Julie Banks is happy to wait for the warmer weather and propose a Member Development Session. – **Action Point**

HC/085/23 WORK PROGRAMME

Cllr Barradell asked when Diane's report (communities) would be coming to group as it was taken off the agenda. – **Action NB**

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe said about the training meeting that was cancelled recently.
Cllr Dhyani apologised and said it would be re arranged. – **Action Cllr Dhyani.**

The work programme was agreed.

The meeting finished at 20:10