

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 20 March 2014 starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor B Hilton (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Bibby	E M H Ranson
S Brunskill	L Rimmer
R Hargreaves	M Robinson
K Hind	I Sayers
J Holgate	J Shervey
S Hore	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Regeneration and Housing and the Housing Strategy Officer

657 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Hill and R Newmark.

658 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

659 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

660 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

661 RIBBLE VALLEY HOMES

Committee received Christine Grimshaw, the Chief Executive of Ribble Valley Homes and Tony Dunne from Symphony Housing, who gave a presentation looking back at six years since the housing stock transfer to Ribble Valley Homes. She gave Committee the background information behind the stock transfer and highlighted the fact that there had been a good turnout (81.5%) with 86.2% of those voting being in favour of the transfer.

She commented that 14.8 million pounds of improvements had been made bringing properties up to the Ribble Valley standard agreed with tenants and also showed slides of a number of improvements which have been made, including those at Vale House, St Anne's Court and Bleasdale Court, Longridge. She then commented on the development and gave details of 15 purchase and repair properties, 8 empty properties which had been brought back into use, 4 mortgage rescue properties, 3 conversions from scheme manager properties, 8 new build properties at Henthorn, 6 new build properties for rent at Chipping and 8 new build properties for a mixture of rent and shared ownership at Sabden.

There were also other developments coming on stream at Carleton Place, Clitheroe; Chipping Community Land Trust; Parker Avenue, Clitheroe; and Whins Lane, Simonstone. In addition to the stock that Ribble Valley Homes owned, they had been instrumental in bringing 12 new rental properties to the market at Dunsop Bridge and were responsible for the management of 25 properties in Clitheroe on behalf of Contour Homes. In addition, there was the management of two properties in Longridge on behalf of private owners let at local housing allowance rates.

Discussion also centred around the future development plans for Ribble Valley Homes and their ability to ring-fence 2.2 million pounds over the next four years to carry out small scale development in its own right. Reference was also made to bids for funding on non-section 106 sites. Christine stressed that the performance of Ribble Valley Homes over the six years had been in the main in relation to small sites and with very much a local base, it was felt that they were still the local registered social landlord most recognised and most respected by tenants.

Members then asked a number of questions in relation to the presentation and Ribble Valley Homes links with the Symphony Housing Group were also stressed.

RESOLVED: That Christine and Tony be thanked for her informative presentation.

662 DEPRIVATION IN RIBBLE VALLEY

The Housing Strategy Officer presented her report which gave an overview of the levels of deprivation across the borough. She reminded Members that at their last meeting, they had requested this report which detailed deprivation levels and the impact of the Social Sector Size Criteria (SSSC) regulations across the borough. The information provided covered the following areas:

- Income to house price ratio in 2012
- Housing needs evidence taken from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the housing service demand
- Housing waiting list information
- Food bank usage
- Citizens Advice Bureau annual report
- Social Sector Size Criteria regulations

She highlighted a number of areas and pointed out that in deprivation terms, Ribble Valley was very low on the scale. Members then discussed the report in some detail, particularly around the importance or otherwise of food banks to the area and the impact which the so called 'bedroom tax' was having on the housing market.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

663 HOUSING SERVICE UPDATE

The Housing Strategy Officer presented her report which summarised the achievements of the strategic housing service over the past 12 months. In particular, she referred to the main areas which the service was involved in which

included the housing needs service, grant service, energy efficiency and affordable housing development.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

664 AFFORDABLE HOMES PROGRAMME

Committee were informed of the new Affordable Homes Programme 2015-2018. The Homes and Communities Agencies had released details of this new scheme.

2.9 billion capital funding had been available nationally to fund affordable housing over a three year programmed period 2015-2018. The programme sought to:

- increase the supply of new affordable housing for affordable rent and affordable home ownership; maximise the number of affordable homes delivered with the available grant funding supplemented by bidders own contribution;
- build homes that addressed demographic challenges facing social housing including the need for more one and two bedroom homes that match the needs of smaller households;
- maximise delivery within the programme period and deliver new homes by March 2018; and
- encourage providers with a capacity who do not currently develop or who could do more to bring that capacity to utilising the skills, expertise of existing delivery partners.

Details of the changes were highlighted to Committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

665 YEAR OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING 2014-2015 MID TERM REPORT

Committee received a report from the Partnership Officer on current activities being undertaken as part of the Year of Health and Wellbeing project.

The report detailed a number of specific outcomes:

- to become a dementia friendly Council by 2015 and encourage other Ribble Valley organisations to join the project;
- to promote healthier individual lifestyles and demonstrably reduce the costs of providing health care to Ribble Valley residents;
- achieve awareness of affordable warmth and healthy homes in Ribble Valley.

Details of the progress in relation to each of these areas was given to Committee and Members were most appreciative of the hard work which had been done by officers in regard to making this project the success it has so far been.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

666 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Committee considered an update report on the new schemes that had been approved for inclusion in the capital programme for this Committee for the following financial year 2014-2015. The schemes were as follows:

- Replacement of pest control vehicle - £11,000
- Landlord and tenant grants - £95,000
- Disabled facilities grants - £129,450
- Repossession prevention fund - £27,020

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

667 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S GENERAL REPORT

Committee received the general report of the Chief Executive which dealt with the following issues:

- clarification of dog day care licence conditions
- environmental health staffing issues
- Clitheroe Air Quality Management Area – update
- Radioactivity in Food and Environment Annual Report 2012
- Mobile Homes Act 2013

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

668 HEALTH AND WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP

Committee received the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership for the meeting held on Wednesday, 5 March 2014.

669 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be an Exempt Information under Categories 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

670 GENERAL REPORT – GRANTS

The Chief Executive submitted details of two disabled facilities grants, three landlord and tenant grants and two boiler replacement grants.

671 AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted an update on the affordable housing schemes in progress and proposed in the borough. These had been split into applications which had been submitted and were either approved or waiting determination subject to Section 106 Agreements being completed.

The minutes of a recent strategic housing group were also included for Committee's information.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Marshal Scott (414400).