

**HOUSING AND HEALTH SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**30 October 2002
5.30pm – 10.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor Liddle (Vice-Chair), Councillors, Bagnall, Bell, Benstead, Currie, James, Pinnington, Stebbings, Todd-Jones, Smart (alternate member)

ALSO PRESENT : Executive Councillor Housing And Health: Councillor Nimmo-Smith, Councillor Howell (for minute number 02/HH/28)

Tenant representatives: Mrs K Harris

Co-opted Members: Mr H Gault (Cambridgeshire Social Services)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**02/HH/21 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2002 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

02/HH/22 PRESENTATION: CAMBRIDGE HOUSE CONDITION & ENERGY SURVEY 2002 – KEY FINDINGS

At the beginning of the meeting the Committee received a presentation from Mr Jim Davies of the Consultants, Fordham Research Ltd.

Following his presentation, Mr Davies answered a number of questions from members and then there was a brief discussion in relation to the report (see minute 02/HH/23 below).

The Chair thanked Mr Davies for the presentation.

02/HH/23 HOUSE CONDITION & ENERGY SURVEY 2002 – KEY FINDINGS

The Committee agreed with the recommendations for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations.

02/HH/24 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Griffiths, Mr B Haywood and Mr T Sweeney (Tenant Representatives), Mr C Wiles* (Federation of Housing Associations) and Mr M Jones (Cambridge Multi Agency Accommodation Forum)

* Mr Wiles is the new representative appointed by the Federation of Housing Associations instead of Ms Forster.

02/HH/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Stebbings declared a personal interest in minute number 02/HH/31 as his mother was in sheltered accommodation and in minute number 02/HH/38 as he knew one of the owners; he remained in the room and took part in the discussions.

Councillors Pinnington and Stebbings declared personal interests in minute number 02/HH/30 as they were Council tenants. They remained in the room and took part in the discussion.

Councillor Bagnall declared a personal interest in minute number 02/HH/33 as a member of the Board of Cambridge Women's Refuge. She remained in the room and took part in the discussion.

02/HH/26 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Two members of the public addressed the meeting.

Mr Jon Green representing the Mill Road Improvement Group spoke about the Single Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2002/04 and the perceived ill effects of homeless people on the Mill Road area. He also circulated a letter which expressed similar concerns from the Glisson Road/Tenison Road Area Residents Association who were unable to attend the meeting.

The Chair thanked Mr Green for his comments and invited him to stay and hear the discussion about that agenda item (see minute 02/HH/29).

A member of the public addressed the meeting on the subject of Compulsory Purchase Orders (see minute 02/HH/38).

02/HH/27 **SERVICE PLANS**

The Executive Councillor underlined that the service plans would form the basis of revised plans in January 2003 for the budget process. The Committee considered the recommendations for each service plan in turn.

The Committee agreed with the recommendations for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations.

02/HH/28 **SUB REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY**

The report asked members to approve the Cambridge Sub-Region Housing Strategy (executive summary) and to support its submission to the Housing Corporation.

Councillor Bagnall informed the committee in her capacity as a member of the Regional Assembly that that body had set up a Housing Panel and in her view it was vital that the city had representation on it.

The Executive Councillor affirmed that there was a need for common ground amongst the various stakeholders for arguing the case for the sub-region as a whole and then for Cambridge city.

The Committee agreed with the recommendations for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations

02/HH/29 KEY DECISION – SINGLE HOMELESS & ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2002/04

The report presented the Committee with the draft Single Homeless & Rough Sleepers Strategy 2002-2004 on behalf of the Cambridge City Single Homeless and Rough Sleeping Partnership. While the City Council had a statutory obligation to take the lead, it was essential to work in partnership with other organisations. The partnership involved the police (for enforcement), health services (drug and alcohol, mental health, the Primary Care Trust) and social services. Key elements in the strategy were the repatriation of homeless people from other parts of the country, effective detoxification programmes and discouraging the public from giving money to beggars.

Councillor Howell expressed his concerns about whether the strategy would address the concerns of ordinary citizens as well as the homeless. In his view the 'local connection' policy had become watered down and there was a need for a national network to implement it successfully.

The Committee agreed with the recommendations (6 votes to 0) for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations.

02/HH/30 PROPOSED SCHEMES FOR MRA FUNDING 2003/04

The Committee took the opportunity to express its thanks and appreciation to the Director of Community Services for the work of clearing up after the recent gales. Staff from Housing Services and City Services together with the Fire Brigade helped residents to remove the debris.

The report presented the Committee with a detailed painting and repairs programme for 2003/4 and one to meet the Decent Homes standard for the period 2004/5-2008/9. They were also asked to consider that the £552k City Services' surplus repaid to the Housing Revenue Account Balances be used to clear the backlog of works held on Programme Priority 9 status.

Ward Councillors on the Committee expressed the appreciation of tenants about the improvements already in place.

The Committee agreed unanimously with the recommendations for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations.

02/HH/31 REVIEW OF COUNCIL OWNED SHELTERED SCHEME ACCOMMODATION

The Committee was asked to consider the possible use of £1.5 million from the Housing Revenue Account balances for investment in the housing stock to be targeted at modernising a sheltered housing scheme. The work was to be carried out on either Roman Court or Rawlyn Court bearing in mind the long term use of whichever was modernised. Tenants of the preferred option would be consulted before a detailed scheme and estimate for the selected project would be submitted for approval to the 12 March 2003 meeting of the Committee.

While it would be possible to invest in council houses, there would be very little return on the investment because of the rules for rent setting. The Committee considered the two options set out in the report.

The Committee agreed with the recommendations for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report and agreed that Rawlyn Court be chosen for modernisation and that officers explore separately what options there were for the future enhancement of Roman Court.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations as set out above.

02/HH/32 **REVIEW OF HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

The Policy needed to be reviewed because of developments in policy and practice in the past four years and because of the local shortage of housing. It also needed to take into account the developing sub-regional housing policy. It was acknowledged that the system needed to be seen to be fair in the allocation of accommodation, including to those with special needs.

The Committee agreed with the recommendations for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations.

02/HH/33 **MOVE ON ACCOMMODATION FOR SUPPORTED HOUSING PROVIDERS**

The report was the annual review of the number of Move-On properties made available to supported housing providers in the City in order to prevent hostel spaces from "silting up". The Committee was asked to comment on the recommendations for the quota for the next 12 months and the need to re-visit this in line with other Council policies such as Rough Sleeping, Homeless and the Allocation Policy.

The Committee agreed with the recommendations for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations.

02/HH/34 **HOME SAFETY AND THE ELDERLY SCHEME**

The scheme had been running since 1999 and it was intended to develop an integrated approach between the Council and the Primary Care Trust and to determine future funding arrangements.

The Committee agreed with the recommendations for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations.

00/HH/35 **APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

The Committee reviewed its co-opted members. It received a letter from Mr M Jones asking to be re-appointed as a representative of the Cambridge Multi Agency

Accommodation Forum. It noted that the Community Health Council had asked for representation of its successor body

The Committee agreed to re-appoint the tenant representatives and the Social Services representative and not to re-appoint the co-optees from the Cambridge Multi Agency Accommodation Forum and the Registered Social Landlords since their membership on this Committee would be a duplication of their representation. The Committee agreed to co-opt representatives from the Safer City Partnership and the Primary Care Trust.

The Executive Councillor noted the decision as set out above.

02/HH/36 **COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDERS (CPO) POLICY RELATED TO HOUSING MATTERS**

The Committee agreed with the recommendations for the Executive Councillor as stated in the report.

The Executive Councillor agreed to the recommendations.

02/HH/37 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

Resolved

To exclude members of the public from the meeting on the grounds that, if they were present, there would be disclosure to them of information defined as exempt from publication by paragraphs 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and set out in the Appendix 1 of Part 4B of the Council's Constitution.

02/HH/38 **THE USE OF COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER POWERS TO BRING THREE DWELLINGS BACK TO HABITABLE USE**

The Committee agreed to authorise in principle the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers to bring the properties identified in the report to habitable use and to request officers to prepare a project appraisal on each property to be submitted at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations as set out above.

The meeting closed at 10pm

CHAIR