

Time commenced - 6.00 pm
Time finished - 7.15 pm

COMMUNITY REGENERATION COMMISSION 12 JULY 2004

Present: Councillor Bayliss (in the Chair)
Councillors Blanksby, Brown, Chera, Lowe, Richards and Webb.
Canon MacDonald – Co-opted Member

01/04 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Gerrard.

02/04 Late items to be introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

03/04 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

04/04 Declarations of Interest

WITH regard to Minute 06/06, below, Councillors Bayliss, Lowe and Webb, declared personal interests, as they were all Council appointed Board Members of Derby Homes.

05/04 Call-in

No matters had been referred to the Commission in relation to a call-in of a decision.

Matters referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet

06/04 Housing Revenue Account Budget 2004/05 and Business Plan

Sue Glithero, Director of Policy, and David Enticott, Head of Technical Finance, presented a report to the Commission on the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2004/05 and Business Plan. It was noted that a revised management fee for Derby Homes and an additional £200,000 per year for ICT had been agreed. A working party had been set up with Derby Homes to discuss stock loss adjustments due to right to buy purchases. Variations to the management fee for stock losses would only take effect from 2006/7. A thirty year Housing Revenue Account Business Plan would be needed in the future, the Council was taking a prudent approach in its preparation of this Plan.

The Commission was advised that the report had been considered by Council Cabinet on 27 April 2004, an updated report would be presented to Council Cabinet on 20 July 2004. The changes were due to constant adjustments that were necessary.

Councillor Bayliss suggested that negotiations on the management fee start early in the year to allow time for any problems to be resolved.

In response to Councillor Blanksby, Sue Glithero explained that the price of right to buy properties had increased, but this had not decreased interest in buying homes.

Councillor Brown raised concerns of his constituents and asked about the future of the Spondon Housing Office. He was advised that a Best Value Review report had suggested reducing the number of cash offices, and possibly some of the lesser-used housing offices. A number of alternatives were currently being considered. It was agreed that when the Council was consulted on options, the Commission should be given an opportunity to input their views.

Resolved to note the report.

Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission.

07/04 Social Inclusion and the Physical Environment

The Commission considered the response of Council Cabinet to the Commission's report on Social Inclusion and the Physical Environment.

Resolved

- 1. To note the report.**
- 2. To ask Rob Davison, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer, to circulate the Council Cabinet minutes from 27 April 2004 to all members of the Commission as these gave the reasons behind Cabinet comments.**

08/04 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

The Commission asked to consider the following Key Decisions in the Forward Plan at the most appropriate time:

- Derby Community Safety Partnership Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and Action Plan (ref 156/03)
- Austin Neighbourhood Base Report (ref 189/03)

Items for Discussion

09/04 Housing and Council Tax Quarterly Performance

The Commission considered a report from Don McLure, Assistant Director, Revenues and Benefits, which gave the latest performance information. He explained that March and April had been the busiest period due to a number of seasonal recalculations and work related to the new Pension Credit System. Along with an increase in workload, a number of staff had left but they were being replaced by eight new starters who had just begun intensive training. The Commission noted that many customer service improvements had been made since January 2004.

Councillor Bayliss commended Don McLure and his team for their hard work and continuing improvements to the service. He raised concerns about staff turnover in the service but was advised that turnover was less of a problem than it had been. It was being proposed to have a rolling recruitment programme to keep up with the vacancies.

Resolved to note the report and commend staff in the Housing and Council Tax Benefit Service for their continued improved performance.

10/04 EQUAL ESF Community Initiative – Construction Skills Bid

Alec Shelton, Regeneration Manager, introduced a report on the EQUAL ESF Community Initiative. He explained that a joint bid from Derby, Nottingham and Leicester had been submitted to EQUAL. The £4 million bid aimed to combat discrimination and break down barriers to jobs by working with construction industry employers to meet skills shortages and increase diversity in the regions workforce. This was A second bid which built upon the work undertaken for an unsuccessful EQUAL Round 1 bid, submitted in 2001.

The bid would be executed in three phases.

- Stage 1 – Development Phase – 6 months
Setting up Strategic Partnerships across the three cities and identifying partners in at least two linked EU countries.
- Stage 2 – Implementation Phase
Target of 240 beneficiaries from the three cities between 2005 and 2007, 80 in each city who will access jobs in the construction industry.
- Stage 3 – Disseminate results to influence and change policy at regional, national and European levels.

Alec Shelton explained that the bid was intentionally cautious in its estimate of how many individual beneficiaries would be funded through the EQUAL initiatives. The bid aims to maximise the benefits to Derby people from the major investments in the built environment of the city over the next 4 to 5 years.

Councillor Richards asked whether any black and minority ethnic communities had been asked if they supported the project. He suggested that their views should be sought as part of the development phase.

Resolved to note the report and recommend that full consultation be undertaken with black and minority ethnic communities as part of the development phase of the Initiative.

11/04 Affordable Housing Development Programme 2004/2006

The Commission received an oral update from Sue Glithero, Director of Policy, and Ian Fullagar, Housing Strategy and Performance Manager, on the Affordable Housing Development Programme 2004/2006. They explained that Council Cabinet on 10 August 2004 would consider a report that set out the 2004/2006 development programme. The report would also explain how affordable housing was currently funded and how it would be in the future. It was noted that currently, the only viable way to fund affordable housing, was in partnership with housing associations. Now that Local Authority Social Housing Grant was no longer available, the Council needed to decide if it wished to continue making grants to housing associations.

Councillor Bayliss was keen to increase, by whatever means, the number of affordable housing units in the city. It was noted that section 106 agreements required affordable housing to be provided in developments over a certain size.

Resolved to note the report and the Commission reaffirm its previous recommendation to Council Cabinet that everything possible be done to address affordable housing demand.

12/04 Crime and Disorder in Young People Topic Review

Rob Davison, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer, introduced the Commission's final report on Crime and Disorder in Young People topic review. He explained that from August 2003 to March 2004, 9 meetings had been held to hear 22 witnesses.

Councillor Bayliss recommended that the report should be sent to the Chief Constable, the Director of the Crime and Disorder Partnership, Local MPs and the Home Office.

Canon MacDonald recommended that a press release should be drafted for when Council Cabinet considered the report on 10 August. Councillor Bayliss undertook to investigate the suggestion.

Resolved to:

- 1. approve the report resulting from the Commission's topic review on Crime and Disorder in Young People**
- 2. submit the report to Council Cabinet on 10 August 2004; and**

3. **authorise the Chair and Vice Chair to present the report on behalf of the Commission**

13/04 Portfolio of the Community Regeneration Commission

Resolved to note the portfolio of the Community Regeneration Commission.

14/04 Work Programme 2004-2005: Selection of Topic Reviews

Councillor Bayliss circulated a report to the Commission which detailed the suggestions that had been put forward last year as topic reviews. He recommended that Community Involvement and Consultation should be looked at as this had been ranked next highest to the previous review (Minute 12/04 above refers) and was significantly different to the subject matter of both previous reviews.

Resolved to recommend to Scrutiny Management Commission that the Community Regeneration Commission consider Community Involvement and Consultation as its next topic review.

MINUTES END