

Time began 5.03pm
Time ended 5.26pm

Housing and Advice Cabinet Member Meeting 18 March 2014

Present: Councillor Shanker
In attendance: Councillor Troup

05/13 Apologies

There were none.

06/13 Late Items

There were no late items.

07/13 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

08/13 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2013 were accepted

09/13 Older Persons' Accommodation and Support Strategy: Consultation

A report of the Strategic Director of Adults, Health and Housing was received by the Cabinet Member which contained a draft of the Accommodation Strategy which had been developed and focussed on the promotion of greater independence for older people through the provision of a range of good quality, affordable and appropriate housing options.

Key priorities for the strategy were to:

- improve the range, accessibility and specialism of information, advice and support services available.
- review the policy on older people under occupying social housing.
- promote the development of strategically located extra care schemes.
- enable easier access to services providing aids, adaptations and new technologies.

In order to ensure the strategy takes into account the housing aspirations and needs of Derby's older citizens and the views of other key stakeholders, a broad-based consultation was essential.

Councillor Troup asked why the consultation was being undertaken and what strategies were already in existence. It was reported that the Housing Strategy which was already in place was nearing completion; the proposed Older Persons' Accommodation and Support Strategy Consultation had been devised to consult the increasingly ageing demographic regarding their housing needs.

Councillor Troup questioned the affordability of the alternative housing which may be offered. The officer reported that Derby City Council's largest expenditure was adult residential care, therefore the key delivery item was housing fit for individuals needs which this consultation would identify.

The Cabinet Member questioned officers about how the consultation would be delivered, it was confirmed that a presentation would form part of the consultation, followed by round table discussions but details were to be finalised.

Resolved to:

- 1. consent to the consultation in principal.**
- 2. request more detail on the consultation process.**
- 3. request that information regarding the affordability of transferring to alternative accommodation be built into the process.**

10/13 Authorisation to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency

A report of the Strategic Director of Adults, Health and Housing was considered entitled "Authorisation to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency" which detailed the bid submitted in conjunction with Derby Homes and Futures Housing Group, into the Empty Homes Round 2 fund administered by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The bid was successful and therefore allowed, subject to agreement, the Council to draw down a total of £144,000 over the two years between 2013 and 2015 to enable 8 empty properties to be brought back into use.

There were around 3,300 empty properties in Derby, with around 1,600 having been empty for six months or more. The Council's Empty Homes team worked to bring properties back into use through a variety of approaches. Empty homes work was a key driver for the Council, as bringing empty properties back into use provides much needed residential accommodation for the city, addresses the neighbourhood blight caused by a minority of 'problem' empty properties and also generates income through the New Homes Bonus scheme and debt recovery.

The purpose of the report was to gain the necessary approval to enter into an Agreement with the HCA in order to draw down the grant funds allocated to the Council.

The Cabinet Member asked if all eight properties had been secured, it was confirmed that all eight properties were secured, five properties in Nightingale Road, two in Parker Street and one in Clarion Court. It was reported that the properties had to conform to the Homes and Communities Association regulations and would be managed upon their completion by housing associations.

Resolved to grant authorisation to enter into the Empty Homes Consortium Agreement 2012-2015 allocation (local authority led consortium), with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

MINUTES END