

ITEM 4

Time commenced – 4.00pm
Time finished – 4.50pm

ADULTS, HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMISSION **Monday 5 December 2011**

Present: Councillor Hussain (Chair)
Councillors Atwal, Radford, Russell and Shanker

In Attendance: Martin Brown – Housing Initiatives Manager
Tony Briggs – Empty Homes Manager
Henry Cipcer – Housing Renewal Manager
Cath Roff – Strategic Director, Adults, Health and Housing

55/11 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashburner and Webb.

56/11 Late items introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

57/11 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

58/11 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 October 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

59/11 Call-in

There were no items referred to the Commission in relation to the Call-in of a key decision.

60/11 Councillor Call for Action

There were no Councillor Calls for Action.

61/11 Health Scrutiny Updates on Extended Patient Choice

The commission received a report on Extended Patient Choice of Provider During 2012/13

Resolved to note the report.

62/11 Draft Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy 2011-2014

This item considered along with the Draft Private Sector Empty Homes Strategy 2011-2014 under minute 63/11

63/11 Draft Private Sector Empty Homes Strategy 2011-2014

The Commission received two draft reports; Draft Private Housing Renewal Policy 2011 – 2014 and Draft Private Sector Empty Homes Strategy 2011 – 2014. The reports were received from Martin Brown, Housing Initiatives Manager, Tony Briggs, Empty Homes Manager, and Henry Cipcer, Housing Renewal Manager.

It was reported that the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy served to target help across a range of housing related issues towards the more vulnerable residents within Derby and focused activity to improve quality and choice in the private housing sector.

It was reported that the Private Sector Empty Homes Strategy set out the Council's policy and procedure in relation to the return of private sector empty properties to the useful housing stock.

The Commission recognised the Decent Homes Standard and links to poorer health and asked whether there had been any changes to the Decent Homes Standard. It was reported that there had been no changes to the standard.

The Commission questioned the options available once a property had been identified as in need of improvement. It was reported that the Home Improvement Agency Service could be used to help some homeowners and private sector tenants to access funds. The Council could also offer minor works grants and look at re-housing for those renting privately. Although the first step was to offer help and advice to property owners, it was important to understand that enforcement action could be taken if necessary.

The Commission questioned whether the Rosehill Improvement Project would be re-instated and completed in the future. It was reported that the project had been put on hold as the money had run out. 70 per cent of properties had undergone some improvements but the area around the old Baseball Ground had received no assistance before the project was ended.

The Commission asked about minor works assistance. It was reported that when private homes fell into disrepair, the first step was for the Home Improvement Agency look at all the funding options available. £100,000 was set aside for the whole city and spending concentrated on repairs to boilers, roofs and electrics. Risk and security issues may also allow a minor work grant.

The Commission enquired whether the Warm Front Scheme was providing much help. It was reported that the scheme would end in April 2012 and that there was a large waiting list.

The Commission asked about the work carried out by Spirita Home Improvement Agency. It was reported that they concentrated on works to prevent trips and falls and to improve security and that positive customer feedback was being received. It was also reported that the Council's Handyperson Service was making savings and was also very appreciated by its clients.

It was reported that there were approximately 4000 empty properties in the city and that about 2000 had been empty more than six months. The Commission questioned whether all the properties that had been empty for more than a year had been dealt with. It was reported that the length of time a property had been empty was not the main factor and that the priority was to focus on properties that attracted anti-social behaviour and resident complaints.

Resolved:

- 1. to note the reports;**
- 2. to recommend that the Rosehill renewal project be given a high priority for recommencement should the funds become available in the future.**

64/11 Supporting People Grant Funding Reductions

The Commission received a report from Cath Roff, Strategic Director, Adults, Health and Housing, on Supporting People Grant Funding Reduction. The report set out the savings targets that were required and proposed the adoption of guiding principles to shape how the reductions would be strategically approached. The guiding principles set out a rationale that supported a strategic approach to managing the required service reductions.

The Commission agreed with the guiding principles as set out in section 4.7 of the report.

The Commission raised concerns that it would not have the opportunity to scrutinise the savings in terms of where the savings would be found and who would be affected. The Strategic Director, Adults, Health and Housing, confirmed that the Adults, Health and Housing Commission would be one of the key stakeholders to be consulted.

Resolved:

- 1. to support the guiding principles set out in section 4.7 of the report;**
- 2. that details on how the supporting people grant funding reductions are to be achieved be brought back to the Adults, Health and Housing Commission before they go to cabinet.**

65/11 Inclusive Preventative Older Indian Community Day Service

The Chair reported that Councillor Dhindsa had asked for this item to go to the Adults, Health and Housing Commission. As Councillor Dhindsa was unable to attend, the Chair suggested that the item be deferred to the next meeting of the Commission.

Resolved that the Inclusive Preventative Older Indian Community Day Service item be deferred until the next meeting of the Adults, Health and Housing Commission on Monday 23 January 2012.

66/11 Retrospective Scrutiny

There were no items.

67/11 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

The Commission identified the following item from the Forward Plan for consideration at a future meeting:

50/11 – Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan

68/11 Matters referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet

There were no items.

MINUTES END