

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

TUESDAY, 3RD OCTOBER, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor D Coupar in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, J Bentley,
A Gabriel, S Hamilton and K Ritchie

Tenant/Leaseholder

Mick Dodds
Tracey McGarry
Dennis Moody

Independent Representatives

Andrew Feldhaus

Co-opted Members

David Glew

16 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations.

17 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Timothy Woods, Matthew Walker and Chris Simpson

18 Minutes - 20 June 2017

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2017 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Minute No. 9 – Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Outturn Position – 2016/17

Amendment to second bullet point to read:

- Right to Buy – Total sales for the year had generated receipts of approximately £26.1 million of which £19.75 million could be retained by the Council

19 Update from the Tenants Representative

The Chair invited Tenant's representatives to provide any updates of feedback on issues affecting Council House Tenants. The following was highlighted:

- VITAL had been briefed on proposals to review the Housing Advisory Board and were supportive of the move to a themed workshop approach.
- HAP review - there had been a workshop involving Communities Team and the Project Investment Team.
- VITAL involvement in the summer galas and estate days.
- A film had been produced summarising activities and projects funded by the Housing Advisory Panels. There was also an annual written report.
- Details of schemes funded by the HAPs including the Money Buddies scheme and parenting programme course.

The Chair thanked the Tenant's representatives for their input.

20 High Rise Strategy Implementation Update

The report of the Chief Officer, Housing Management provided an update on progress which had been made regarding the implementation of the High Rise Strategy, which included the delivery of a number of initiatives including the following:

- The development and delivery of the standard housing management models;
- The development and delivery of the three enhanced management models;
- An update on communications and engagement with residents.

Jill Wildman, Chief Officer, Housing Management presented the report.

The following issues were highlighted:

- The High Rise Strategy was approved by Executive Board a year ago and an implementation plan had been put in place.
- Progress on the standard High Rise Management Model – introduction of inspections, staff training and action plans for each block.
- Lettings policy – this was due for consideration at October Executive Board.
- Community Safety/Anti-Social Behaviour – investment for CCTV.
- Cleaning – following Grenfell, ongoing block audits, work on standards and how to publicise these. Work with Civic Enterprise and Waste particularly where there are problems with waste and the introduction of extra checks.
- Investment strategy – Good progress was being made in delivery of the programme and the strategy was outlined in the report.

- Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility – projects were under way for the provision of heating and hot water to flats.
- Provision of free wi-fi.
- Enhanced management models had now been rolled out to 15 other blocks across the city following the successful pilot at Clydes and Wortley blocks.
- Retirement living model – a pilot of 3 blocks in East Leeds was being considered.
- Family friendly model and options for improvements.
- Fire safety – work continued with central government following Grenfell, and with other services who could contribute to fire safety.
- Resident engagement and communications.
- Establishment of the High Rise Strategy Board.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following was discussed:

- There was normally a one off charge for the removal of bulky waste. It was acknowledged that there was a need to develop a way of removal of bulky waste in high rise blocks so it was not left blocking stairways or corridors or becoming a fire hazard.
- Housing worked closely with Waste Management where there were problems in blocks with build-up of waste. Additional collections were carried out where necessary.
- Communication with tenants and having knowledge of who is living in the blocks.
- Measures to prevent anti-social behaviour and enhance security – as well as CCTV, housing officers received training, there had also been work with the Anti-social behaviour team. Problem areas had been targeted for intensive management.
- Parking – work was going on with parking services across all high rise blocks for resident parking and enforcement.
- Fire safety update – all blocks with cladding had passed safety tests. There was additional investment and the sprinkler programme would be rolled out.

RESOLVED – That the progress to date in delivering the High Rise Strategy be noted.

21 Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position: Period 4 2017/18

The report of the Head of Finance, Environments and Housing informed the Housing Advisory Board of the outturn position for period 4 2017/18 in respect of the Council's Housing Revenue Account.

Richard Ellis, Head of Finance Resources and Housing presented the report.

The following issues were highlighted:

- Income was projected to be £113k lower than budget.
- Higher levels of right to buy had resulted in lower levels of rent income.
- There had been an underspend of £355k on vacant posts.
- Additional spend of fire safety and community safety.
- There had been 184 units old under right to buy. This would generate receipts of £27.7 million.
- Rent arrears and collections have improved.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

22 HRA Capital Financial Position Period 4 2017/18

The report of the Head of Finance, Resources and Housing provided a financial position statement on the HRA Housing Leeds Capital Programme outturn period 4 for 2017/18. The report also included details of Housing Leeds & BITMO refurbishment programme together with the Housing Leeds Council House Growth Programme.

Richard Ellis, Head of Finance, Resources and Housing presented the report.

Issues highlighted from the report included the following:

- Spending to date was £22.4 million from a £65 million programme.
- There had been £0.9 million spend from the Environmental programme of £2.2 million.
- BITMO spending was currently at £0.4 million from an available £1.9 million.
- Council House Growth Programme - total spend was £3.0 million against an outturn projection of £27.9 million.

In response to comments and questions, the following was discussed:

- A request to keep the Board apprised of the Hugh Rise Investment Strategy due to constant changes due issues such as the installation of sprinkler systems.
- Use of capital for resolving parking issues - reference was made to use of garage sites and other options.
- Extra care programme – a report had been to Executive Board which suggested six sites that could be made available for the private sector to bring proposals for extra care schemes. There was £30 million in the current programme. It was proposed to have a cross party working group to consider the Extra Care Programme.
- It was noted that there had been low spending on door and window replacements. It was reported that this had now escalated and spending will be back on track for the year.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted

23 Performance Report

The report of the Director of Resources provided a summary of latest available performance against measures relating to the six Housing Leeds priorities. It provided performance data, supporting commentary and contextual information as well as signposting to relevant information contained in other reports on the Agenda.

Jill Wildman, Chief Officer, Housing Management and Simon Costigan, presented the report.

The following issues were highlighted:

- Environmental Improvements – 55 out of 83 schemes had now been completed and further detail was outlined in the report.
- Rent and Benefits – This had been covered in financial reports.
- Housing People – Homeless prevention work had been very effective with low numbers in temporary accommodation. Officers were thanked for the homeless prevention work and the low numbers in temporary accommodation compared to other cities. There had been some slippage in average re-let times due to a variety of reasons.
- Repairs – times for repairs remained above target and there had been improvement with overall satisfaction.
- Capital Programme – This had been covered in the financial reports.
- Knowing our tenants – 46% of annual home visits had been carried out. Use of IT solutions for more proactive work with tenants was highlighted.

With regard to disrepairs, it was reported that there was a slight increase in the number of live cases. There had been an increase in claims in September but the fast track process was working well. There was ongoing work in challenging cases. The Board was informed of the pro-active work which was being undertaken in order to prevent and reduce the number of claims.

RESOLVED – That the most recent performance information relating to the six Housing Leeds priorities be noted.

24 Housing Advisory Board Forward Plan

The report of the Service Manager, Intelligence and Improvement presented the Board's Forward Plan.

RESOLVED – That the content of the Forward Plan be noted and amended as appropriate.

25 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 21 November 2017 at 5.00 p.m.