

## HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

TUESDAY, 21ST NOVEMBER, 2017

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Coupar in the Chair

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

### 26 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations.

### 27 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Timothy Woods.

### 28 Minutes - 3 October 2017

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

### 29 Update from Tenant's Representatives

The Chair invited Tenants' representatives to provide updates and feedback on issues affecting Council House Tenants.

Tracey McGarry and Mick Dodds gave the Board an update. The following was highlighted:

- The role of VITAL in the past couple of years and their lead role in the tenant engagement framework.
- VITAL had had a strategic role on influencing strategy and policy. This had included the Asset Management Strategy, Lettings Policy, Housing Strategy and monitoring of the Star Action Plan.
- The role of VOLT and involvement in developing support models for sheltered housing.
- The role of volunteers with the Housing Advisory Panels in supporting environmental and community projects and use of the community payback scheme.
- Regional work with partners including TPAS and WYCAS.
- Other schemes and projects including Money Buddies and the Parenting Programme.

The Chair thanked Tracey and Mick for their update and the success of VITAL and the excellent work around tenant engagement.

### **30 Future Governance Arrangements for Council Housing**

The report of the Chief Officer, Housing Management outlined proposals for the future governance of Council Housing services in Leeds.

Mandy Sawyer, Head of Neighbourhood Services, Resources and Housing presented the report.

The following was highlighted:

- It had been identified that there was duplication of work for housing governance arrangements.
- Future governance arrangements would continue to be overseen by the following:
  - Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) – The Chair of the Tenant’s Scrutiny Board also sat on this Board and six monthly reports were received on housing issues.
  - Tenant’s Scrutiny Board.
  - VITAL – to continue their role as a consultative body, tenant engagement and performance reporting.
- It was proposed that there would be no further meetings of the Housing Advisory Board.

There was further discussion regarding the future role and influence of VITAL and how to keep them engaged with the Scrutiny Board and Senior Officers of the Council. It was proposed that VITAL representatives met with the Chair of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the proposals for the future governance of Council Housing and other housing activity as outlined in the report be agreed.
- (2) That the arrangements to wind down the Housing Advisory Board in it’s current format be agreed.

### **31 Proposals to Establish a Strategic Housing Partnership and Board**

The report of the Chief Officer, Housing Management shared proposals for the establishment of a Strategic Housing Partnership led by a Strategic Housing Board, with responsibility for providing leadership to the Housing Strategy and providing greater accountability in delivering the strategy across the wider housing and related sectors.

Mandy Sawyer, Head of Neighbourhood Services, Resources and Housing presented the report.

The following was highlighted:

- It was proposed that the partnership have representation from anyone in Leeds with an interest of supporting the development of the housing strategy. This could include Housing Association and Private Sector Housing representation.
- It was proposed to have a smaller Board to provide leadership to the Partnership and proposed membership arrangements were outlined in the report.
- Meetings of the Board would be held quarterly from Spring 2018. Meetings would be theme based with workshop style discussions. These themed meetings could have a wider attendance for more relevant engagement.
- VITAL would provide tenant representation.

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

- Engagement with non-council tenants, i.e. housing association and private rented sector.
- How to enable and influence the strategy by getting the right people and organisations together on a themed basis.
- It was requested that VITAL have up to three tenant representatives on the Strategic Housing Board.

**RESOLVED** – That the proposals to develop a Strategic Housing Partnership, led by a Strategic Housing Board be agreed.

## **32 Council House Growth Programme - Delivery of Extra Care Housing Project Update**

The report of the Director of Resources and Housing provided the Board with an update on the progress of the Extra Care Housing Project following approval of the Executive Board report in July 2017.

Mark Denton, Resources and Housing presented the report.

The following issues were highlighted:

- Addressing the needs of older people was a major priority of the Council and the Extra Care Housing project gave opportunity for people to get homes with extra care and support.
- The Executive Board decision for allocating sites and resources for the delivery of Extra Care Housing.
- The model used by North Yorkshire County Council which involved using contractors including providers of affordable housing.

- The procurement process for the delivery of Extra Care Housing for sites where land had been identified had now started.
- The possibility of using a model of Extra Care Housing which had properties for rent, sale and shared ownership which would assist with the viability of schemes.
- How the delivery of Extra Care Housing can financially benefit the Council financially as well as provide a better option for tenants to be cared for in their own homes.
- Projected savings were based on the comparisons between the cost of providing residential care and extra care housing.

**RESOLVED** – That the report and update be noted.

### **33 Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position: Period 6 2017/18**

The report of the Head of Finance, Resources and Housing provided an update regarding the revenue financial position for the Housing Leeds (HRA) service as at the end of September 2017.

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

The following was highlighted:

- Income was projected to be £172k lower than budget.
- There was a reduction in rental income of £367k due to higher right to buy sales.
- There had been an increase in £233k from right to buy sales.
- There had been slippage on the capital programme.
- There was an under spend on staffing.
- It was projected that 530 housing units would be sold which would generate receipts of £27.4m of which approximately £21m would be available to the Council.
- Rent arrears had reduced by £230k over the past 12 months.
- In response to a question, it was reported that projections for right to buy were made at the start of the financial year and based on previous years' sales.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

### **34 HRA Capital Financial Position Period 6**

The report of the Head of Finance, Resources and Housing provided a financial position statement on the HRA Housing Leeds Capital Programme outturn period 6 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 £33 million against a revised programme of £67 million.
- Planned works were now estimated at £48.2 million with £21.6 million spent to date.
- Responsive works were now estimated at £16.5 million with spend of £10.1 million to date.
- There had been £1.2 million spend from the Environmental Programme of £2.1 million.
- BITMO spending was currently £0.7 million from an available £1.9 million.
- Council House Growth Programme current spend was £5.3 million from a projection of £17 million for the year. Total spending was now at £37.4 million from an overall programme of £108.3 million.

Reference was also made to the ten year investment plan that was announced at Executive Board. This covered issues including the following:

- New builds
- Extra Care
- Improvements to high rise blocks
- Heating and insulation improvements
- Day to day keep up of stock.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

### **35 Performance Report**

The report of the Director of Resources and Housing presented a summary of the most recent performance data 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.

Emma Kamillo-Price, Performance and Governance Manager, Resources and Housing presented the report.

The following issues were highlighted:

- Environmental Improvements – 58 schemes that had been approved by the Housing Advisory Panels had now been completed. Further detail was outlined in the report.
- Rent and Benefits – This had been covered in financial reports.

- Housing People – Homeless preventions had increased with low numbers in temporary accommodation. Re-let times had improved and the number of void properties remained low
- Repairs – good performance with repairs done right first time, there had been problems with the new IT system which prevented reporting of repairs carried out by LBS.
- Knowing our tenants – Home surveys had shown that over 98% of properties were in fair or good condition.
- Disrepair – 207 open cases at the end of September down from 289 at the beginning of the year.

The problems encountered with the implementation of the new IT system were explained. Manual interventions had been introduced with a robust action plan should there be a future problem.

A service improvement plan had been put in place following lower customer satisfaction that had been expressed in East Leeds and updates could be reported to VITAL.

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