

SCRUTINY BOARD (HOUSING AND REGENERATION)

TUESDAY, 24TH JUNE, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor J Procter in the Chair

Councillors D Collins, P Grahame,
M Harland, M Iqbal, D Nagle, J Pryor,
A Smart and G Wilkinson

1 Late Items

There were no late items.

2 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

3 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor C Towler. Notification had been received that Councillor M Harland was to substitute for Councillor C Towler.

4 Sources of Work

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which provided information and guidance on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Board's terms of reference.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Best Council Plan – Plan on a Page
- Executive Board minutes from 2 April 2014.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting, Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Board Member (Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel), Councillor Richard Lewis, Executive Board Member (Transport and Economy), Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing, Phil Crabtree, Chief Planning Officer and Christine Addison, Chief Asset Management and Regeneration Officer.

The following sources of work were identified as potential areas for Scrutiny involvement:

- Review of lettings policy.
- Development of a new housing quality standard.
- The quality of private rented sector housing.
- Housing delivery and housing growth. Possible review of building capacity across the city.

- The Council's house building programme.

The Scrutiny Board also considered scrutiny work brought forward from the previous year for potential further scrutiny in 2014/15. These included:

- Work with furniture re-use organisations to provide cookers to tenants in need. Members were advised that site visits to furniture re-use organisations had been planned for the July Scrutiny Board meeting.
- Pre-decision scrutiny of the review of local lettings policies.
- Analysis of the outcomes of the programme of Annual Tenancy Visits.
- Rent arrears.
- East Leeds Extension and East Leeds Orbital Road progress.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report and contributions made during the discussion be taken into account when the Board is finalising its work programme and deciding its priorities.
- (b) That the Board receives reports on scrutiny work carried out from the previous year, early in the year in order to complete sign off issues where possible.

(Councillor Peter Gruen left the meeting at 1.55pm during the consideration of this item.)

5 Minutes - 25 March 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2014 be approved as a correct record.

6 Matters arising from the minutes

Minute No. 100 – Local lettings policies

The Scrutiny Board sought clarification regarding the role of Housing Services in relation to right to buy properties that had been sold on for private sector rental and not adequately maintained. The Director of Environment and Housing advised that the Council had limited powers, but that the concerns raised (a local issue concerning a fence in need of replacement) would be developed as a case study exercise and reported back to Members.

7 Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented the terms of reference for the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Board as agreed by Council on 9 June 2014.

RESOLVED – That the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference be noted.

8 Co-opted Members

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development sought the Board's formal consideration for the appointment of Co-opted Members.

The Board was informed that they could appoint the following:

- Up to five non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that does not go beyond the next Annual Meeting of Council; and/or
- Up to two non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that relates to the duration of a particular and specific scrutiny inquiry.

RESOLVED – To appoint co-opted members on an ad-hoc basis for any inquiries where it was deemed appropriate.

9 Protocol between the Tenant Scrutiny Board and Scrutiny Board (Housing and Regeneration)

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented the protocol concerning the relationship between the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Board and the Tenant Scrutiny Board for Members' information.

It was requested that the Board be provided with details of the specific wards that current Members of the Tenant Scrutiny Board represented and the method for selecting new Members of the Board.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the protocol be noted.
- (b) That the Scrutiny Board be provided with the information requested.

10 2013/14 Quarter 4 Performance Report

The Director of Environment and Housing and the Director of City Development submitted a joint report which provided a summary of performance against the strategic priorities for the council and city relevant to the Scrutiny Board.

The following information was appended to the report:

- A summary of performance at Quarter 4 across both City Priority Plan (CPP) and Best Council Plan (BCP) priorities.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Debra Scott, Head of Performance and Service Review
- Fiona McAnespie, Deputy Head of Policy, Performance & Improvement.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Concern regarding the low percentage of annual tenancy visits completed by Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation (BITMO). Members were advised that annual tenancy visits was a priority area for Housing Services and that the issue had been addressed with the organisation.
- The process for determining target milestones and whether some target milestones were in need of review, particularly when the target had been exceeded by a significant margin.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (b) That a detailed report on rent arrears be presented to the Scrutiny Board in September 2014.
- (c) That the Director of Housing and Environment be recommended to increase the performance target for the percentage of major adaptations completed within target timescales in light of the high performance achieved last year.

11 Work Schedule

The Board noted the draft work schedule and agreed that the Chair and the Principal Scrutiny Adviser be asked to incorporate the issues raised in the discussion under the sources of work agenda item.

RESOLVED – That the Chair and the Principal Scrutiny Adviser circulate a draft work programme for the Board's confirmation.

12 Date and Time of Next Meeting

- Tuesday, 29 July 2014 at 1.00pm (site visits to furniture re-use organisations)
- Tuesday, 23 September 2014 at 1.30pm (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 1.00pm)

(The meeting concluded at 2.55pm.)