

SCRUTINY BOARD (HOUSING AND REGENERATION)

TUESDAY, 11TH NOVEMBER, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor J Procter in the Chair

Councillors D Collins, R Grahame,
J Illingworth, M Iqbal, D Nagle, J Pryor,
A Smart, C Towler and G Wilkinson

37 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the November meeting of Scrutiny Board (Housing and Regeneration), particularly Councillor Campbell, whose appointment to the Scrutiny Board was subject to confirmation at full Council on 12 November 2014.

38 Late Items

There were no late items, although the minutes of the Board meeting held on 28 October 2014 were circulated separately to the main agenda pack.

39 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

40 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor P Grahame. Notification had been received that Councillor R Grahame was to substitute for Councillor P Grahame.

41 Minutes - 28 October 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2014 be approved as a correct record.

42 Matters arising from the minutes

Minute No. 32 – Update report on maximising re-use

Environment and Housing confirmed the inclusion of information about cooking facilities in the current Annual Tenancy Visit (ATV) form. The department would include detailed performance information on how this information had been used when they reported generally on ATVs at the February Board meeting.

Minute No. 34 – Monitoring of the Responsive Repairs Service

The Board received information about the tenants' insurance scheme. Further information was requested about how the scheme was publicised.

43 Request for Scrutiny

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented further information to enable the Scrutiny Board to decide how to respond to a request for scrutiny in relation to housing growth.

The following information was appended to the report:

- A copy of Mr Hall's request for scrutiny
- Recommendation tracking response – Affordable Housing by Private Developers.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Peter Boden, Edge Analytics
- George Hall, Scholes resident
- Jennifer Kirby, Aireborough Neighbourhood Forum (ANF)
- Clive Woods, Wharfedale & Airedale Review Development (WARD)
- Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel)
- Steve Speak, Deputy Chief Planning Officer, City Development.

The Chair provided background information to the request for scrutiny and invited Peter Boden to present his views on the latest population figures for Leeds and their implications in terms of projections for housing growth.

The key points were:

- There were 3 key elements to the analysis: births and deaths; internal migration; and international migration.
- Demographic analysis of Leeds had been extremely challenging and statistics had been subject to significant revision. International migration was the most difficult element to assess accurately.
- There was no population register apart from the census every 10 years. Some measures to undertake estimates in the intervening years but challenges associated with this.
- 2008 based population estimated 1m people living in Leeds by 2033. Latest projection estimated 861,000.
- Development of Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to inform trends and produce growth scenarios.
- Acknowledgement of other considerations aside from demographics which included, economic growth, previous under delivery and affordability.
- Further examination currently being undertaken of pupil numbers linked to population growth.

- Acknowledgement of new growth scenarios. Statistics constantly changing so important to keep monitoring.
- The impact of higher birth rates and increased life expectancy.

Questions and comments were invited and the main areas of discussion were:

- Job growth and the impact of people commuting from outside Leeds.
- Internal and international migration. Robust statistics for internal migration. International migration was more difficult to estimate.
- Consideration of the mix of housing needed in Leeds and how LCC developed policy to achieve this. Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) producing new set of housing assumptions in early 2015.
- The importance of retaining the student population in Leeds to maintain a skilled workforce and engagement with students about this.
- Suggestion that the Scrutiny Board considers the outcome of work being undertaken by Peter Boden on behalf of Children's Services, and also new information from DCLG which was currently expected in December/ January.
- Suggestion that the Sustainable Economy and Culture Scrutiny Board had a role to play in this work.
- Further consideration of George Hall's proposition that the recommendations of the Board's previous inquiry had not been adequately responded to or monitored.

RESOLVED –

(a) That in response to the request for scrutiny, the Board agrees to carry out further work covering the following issues:

- Consideration of George Hall's proposition that the recommendations of the Board's previous inquiry were not adequately responded to or monitored.
- Consideration of new information on population figures and their implications for housing growth (specifically the work that Peter Boden was currently undertaking on behalf of Children's Services, and also new information from DCLG which was currently expected in December/January)
- Consideration of the mix of housing needed in Leeds
- The interplay of jobs and housing growth
- Retaining the student population (to include engagement with students).

(b) That the Sustainable Economy and Culture Scrutiny Board be included as appropriate in the proposed work.

(Councillor M Iqbal left the meeting at 3.00pm during the consideration of this item.)

44 Housing Leeds Rent Collection - Technical and Small Arrears

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which provided further information on technical arrears and low level rent arrears.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Liz Cook, Chief Housing Officer, Environment and Housing
- Mandy Sawyer, Head of Neighbourhood Services, Environment and Housing
- Simon Swift, Service Manager, (Income Services) Environment and Housing
- Anna Tansley, Service Manager (Intelligence and Improvement, Environment and Housing.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Concern that more incentives were needed to encourage tenants to move to direct debit, where this was an appropriate option for them. The Board acknowledged that direct debit did not always suit the flexibility required by tenants.
- Confirmation of changes planned to the reporting of technical arrears. The Board asked to receive information about how arrears would be reported in future in response to their desire to exclude technical arrears.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (b) That the Board receives a revised format for arrears reporting.

(Councillor D Collins left the meeting at 4.25pm during the consideration of this item.)

45 East Leeds Orbital Road

The Director of City Development submitted a report which provided a progress update in relation to the East Leeds Orbital Road.

The following information was appended to the report:

- East Leeds Orbital Road timetable/programme
- Delegated Decision Notification (DDN) dated 14 March 2013 – Extension of Contract – Highways and Transportation Partnership.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Oliver Priestley, Manager of Engineering Projects, City Development.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted
- (b) That the Director of City Development be asked to attend the Board meeting in December for a further discussion.

46 Work Schedule

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which detailed the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2014/15 municipal year.

The following information was appended to the report:

- The Scrutiny Board's work schedule
- Minutes of the Tenant Scrutiny Board meeting held on 16 October 2014.

The Board briefly discussed undertaking some follow-up work in relation to contents insurance for housing tenants, particularly around marketing and brokerage aspects.

RESOLVED – That subject to comments raised at today's meeting, the work schedule be approved.

47 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 9 December 2014 at 1.30pm (pre meeting for all Board Members at 1.00pm)

(The meeting concluded at 4.50pm.)