



## GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Wednesday, 11th December, 2013 at 2.00 pm

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### MEMBERSHIP

#### Councillors

- D Blackburn - Farnley and Wortley;  
J Blake - Middleton Park;  
S Golton - Rothwell;  
P Gruen - Cross Gates and Whinmoor;  
G Harper - Hyde Park and Woodhouse;  
G Latty - Guiseley and Rawdon;  
A Lowe - Armley;  
E Nash - City and Hunslet;  
J Procter - Wetherby;  
M Rafique - Chapel Allerton;  
S Varley - Morley South;  
K Wakefield (Chair) - Kippax and Methley;

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# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p><b>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 15.2 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an appeal the press and public will be excluded).</p> <p>(*In accordance with Procedure Rule 15.2, written notice of an appeal must be received by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting)</p>	
2			<p><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>RESOLVED</b> – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:-</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
3			<p><b>LATE ITEMS</b></p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes)</p>	
4			<p><b>DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS</b></p> <p>To disclose or draw attention to any disclosable pecuniary interests for the purposes of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2000 and paragraphs 13-18 of the Members' Code of Conduct. Also to declare any other significant interests which the Member wishes to declare in the public interest, in accordance with paragraphs 19-20 of the Members' Code of Conduct.</p>	
5			<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence from the meeting.</p>	
6			<p><b>MINUTES - 28TH OCTOBER 2013</b></p> <p>To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2013.</p>	1 - 4
7			<p><b>ESTABLISHING A HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD</b></p> <p>To receive a report of the Director of Environment and Housing requesting the Committee to consider and make recommendations to full Council about the appointment of a Housing Advisory Board.</p>	5 - 10

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# Agenda Item 6

## GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

**MONDAY, 28TH OCTOBER, 2013**

**PRESENT:** Councillor K Wakefield in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, M Dobson (As Substitute for J Blake), S Golton, P Gruen, G Harper, G Latty, A Lowe, E Nash, J Procter, M Rafique and S Varley

Apologies Councillor J Blake

### **9 Appeals against refusal of inspection of documents**

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

### **10 Exempt Information - possible exclusion of the press and public**

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

### **11 Late items**

No formal late items were submitted to the agenda. However supplementary information in relation to Agenda Item 9 "Proposed Community Governance Review to Degroup Barwick and Elmet and Scholes Parish Councils" Minute No. 17 refers was previously circulated to the Committee.

3 representations had been circulated to the Committee from members of the public in relation to Agenda Item 11 "Facilities to be made available for reporting on Council Committee Meetings". Minute No. 19 refers.

### **12 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests**

No declarations were made.

### **13 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Blake. Councillor M Dobson was in attendance as substitute.

### **14 Minutes 18th June 2013**

**RESOLVED** – The minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> October were approved as a correct record.

## **15 Further review of the Plans Panel arrangements**

The Head of Planning Services presented a report of the Chief Planning Officer. The report provided a further update to the Committee on the operation of the Plans Panels from April to September 2013.

Members commented that minor issues identified when the new process began had been resolved. It was noted that there had been a recent increase in planning applications and that this had placed pressure on officers and Members. It was also noted that there had been progress on engagement between officers and ward members and that a protocol was due to be discussed at the Joint Plans Panel meeting on 14th November 2013.

Members commented that they would be supportive of City Plans Panels being scheduled on a fortnightly basis when required in order to reduce the length of meetings.

**RESOLVED** – The Committee resolved to:

- (a) Note the report and the further on going work to embed the plans panel arrangements;
- (b) Embed the Plans Panel Arrangements permanently as part of the Council's decision making framework; and
- (c) Hold a meeting between senior Members of groups to discuss how the Member / officer protocol will move forward prior to the Joint Plans Panel meeting.

## **16 Joint Review of Polling Districts and Community Governance Review of Parish and Town Councils - Final Proposals report**

The Head of Licensing and Registration presented his report. The report considered final proposals for the joint polling district review and community governance review of all parish and town councils. The report also sought to agree the final proposals for the polling district review to be published on 25 November 2013 and sought to agree the recommended final proposals for the community governance review to go to full Council in November 2013, and to be published on 25 November 2013.

Members considered the report and discussed the proposals.

**RESOLVED** – The Committee resolved to:

- (a) note that the summary of final proposals set out in Appendix A, attached to the submitted report, have cross-party support, note the comments from Electoral Working Group re proposal CGR4 and the additional evidence supplied in respect of that proposal and resolve to confirm all as final proposals;

- (b) note the final proposals set out in Appendix B of the submitted report which do not have full party support, and resolve to confirm all as final proposals;
- (c) note the summary of initial proposals set out in Appendix C of the submitted report to which no further comments were received during the second consultation phase, and resolve to confirm all as final proposals;
- (d) note that the final proposals agreed today for the polling district review will be published as part of the Council's Final Notice of Joint Review on 25 November 2013; and
- (e) agree that the recommended final proposals agreed today for the community governance review be submitted to full Council for final approval in 13 November 2013 before being published as part of the notice mentioned in resolution (c) above.

**17 Proposed Community Governance Review to degroup Barwick in Elmet and Scholes Parish Councils**

The Head of Licensing and Registration presented his report which considered whether a Community Governance Review for the degrouping of Barwick in Elmet & Scholes Parish Council be undertaken.

Members commented that a review had recently taken place and that the petition submitted had been done so without the knowledge of the Parish Council.

It was also noted by Members that the Parish Council were not in support of a review.

**RESOLVED** – The Committee resolved that a Community Governance Review should not take place.

**18 Functions in relation to the Late Night Levy**

The City Solicitor submitted a report which set out proposals to amend the constitution to reflect the designation of functions in relation to the late night levy as Council functions. The Committee were invited to recommend the proposed amendments to Council.

**RESOLVED** – The Committee resolved to recommend to full Council that the amendments to the Constitution, as set out at Appendices A, B and C to the submitted report be approved.

## **19 Facilities to be made available for reporting on council committee meetings**

The City Solicitor submitted a report which outlined the framework within which requests to record can be made and then determined; and set out the range of facilities made available by the Council to those wishing to report on the council's committees, boards and panels.

Members highlighted their concerns over the recording of licensing and planning meetings.

Members commented that councillors were not afforded the same indemnities as were enjoyed by MPs by Parliamentary Privilege. It was suggested that representations to be made to the Secretary of State raise this as an issue that might be further considered by Government, particularly where Members are considering planning and licensing matters.

Members highlighted the problems of selectively recording meetings and considered that ideally committee meetings be audio recorded by the Council and made available to the public.

The City Solicitor commented that the Secretary of State had recently announced his intention to legislate to give the press and the public new rights to film and report council meetings and that it might be advisable to wait and see how this develops before adopting a protocol.

**RESOLVED** – The Committee resolved to:

(a) reaffirm support for the webcasting of full council, and introduce mechanisms whereby, subject to the availability of equipment, meetings of Executive Board and scrutiny boards can be routinely audio recorded by the Council, with these recordings being made available to third parties on request;

(b) not grant permission to third parties to audio record meetings of planning and licensing committees, nor permit video recording on any committee, board or panel meeting, until clarity is received from DCLG on the issues raised;

(c) request a further report, once clarity is received from DCLG, and once the parliamentary process have been concluded for the Local Audit and Accountability Bill, setting out a protocol in respect of the recording of committee meetings; and

(d) That facilities management staff be consulted about the options of providing improved committee room facilities that would enable the Council to record all committee meetings.



**Report of**     **Director Environment and Housing**  
**Report to**     **General Purposes Committee**  
**Date:**         **11 December 2013**  
**Subject:**     **Establishing a Housing Advisory Board**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## Summary of main issues

To determine the governance structure and functions for a Housing Advisory Board as part of the integration of housing services into the Council.

## Recommendations

1. General Purposes Committee is asked to:
  - 1.1 Consider the recommendations of the Executive Board in relation to governance arrangements for a Housing Advisory Board.
  - 1.2 Make the following recommendations to full Council:
    - To appoint a Housing Advisory Board to discharge the functions set out in the terms of reference in appendix 1 of this report.
    - To appoint six Elected Members to the Housing Advisory Board.
    - To co-opt the following as voting members of the Housing Advisory Board, for the terms of office set out in paragraph 3 of this report:
      - Three tenants/leaseholders
      - Three people who are independent of the Council.
    - To agree that the Housing Advisory Board may select up to three non-voting co-optees, with some specialist skill or knowledge which would be of assistance to the Housing Advisory Board, to be appointed for a term of office which relates to a particular issue.
    - To approve the quorum for the Board to be 4, including two Councillors and 1 tenant/leaseholder voting co-opted member.

## **1. Purpose of this report**

To ask the General Purposes Committee to consider and make recommendations to full Council about the appointment of a Housing Advisory Board.

## **2. Background information**

2.1 The meeting of Executive Board 19 June 2013 Executive Board resolved to integrate housing management within the Council's Environment and Housing directorate.

2.2 The meeting of Executive Board on 17 July 2013 considered a report from Director Environment and Housing setting out implementation arrangements and outlining the proposed governance structures to be put in place, which included a Housing Advisory Board.

## **3 Main issues**

### **3.1 Housing Advisory Board**

3.1.1 It is proposed that a Housing Advisory Board is appointed by the Council as an advisory committee under Section 102(4) Local Government Act 1972.

3.1.2 The role of the proposed Board would be to consider and make recommendations to the Executive about major decisions and policies regarding the housing management service. All major decisions and policies regarding the new housing management service will be directed through the Board who will in turn make recommendations to the Executive for agreement. The Director of Environment and Housing will also seek direction from the Board on major decisions affecting the service.

3.1.3 The Board will appoint sub groups/working groups as required to assist in carrying out its role.

3.1.4 Principles which will inform the work of the Board will include:

- The best quality housing service should be delivered to all Council tenants;
- the service should be built around the needs of tenants, with a more locally focused approach to delivery where possible
- There should be clear accountability in decision making;
- Services will provide value for money;
- Services will be informed by, and be responsive to, local need;
- There will be consistency in policy direction;
- There will be no or minimal duplication of front line services; and
- Services will draw on the best expertise available.
- A commitment to driving real action and change to improve services in communities;
- Openness and transparency in the way in which the Board carries out its work;

- Inclusiveness in the way that it engages with tenants, other service users and the public.

3.1.5 The terms of reference for the Advisory Board are set out in appendix 1 to this report.

## **3.2 Membership**

3.2.1 It is proposed that full Council appoint six Elected Members to the Board. (Political proportionality provisions apply, so at present this would be 4 Labour, 1 Conservative and 1 Liberal Democrat).

3.2.2 It is also proposed that full Council appoint the following as co-opted voting members of the Board:

- Three tenants/leaseholders
- Three people who are independent of the Council and who can bring particular experience to the Board.

3.2.3 To promote continuity, it is proposed that co-optees within each category are initially appointed on 1, 2 and 3 year terms of office respectively, and thereafter for a three year term. Voting co-optees will have to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct.

3.2.4 It is also proposed that the Housing Advisory Board may select up to three additional non-voting co-optees, with some specialist skill or knowledge which would be of assistance to the Housing Advisory Board, to be appointed to the Board on an ad hoc basis, for a term of office which relates to a particular issue.

3.2.5 The Chair of the Board will be appointed by full Council.

3.2.6 Quorum - It is proposed that Council Procedure Rule 28.4 is amended to provide that the quorum for meetings of the Board will be four members, including two Councillors and one tenant/leaseholder member.

3.2.7 Substitutes - No substitute arrangements are proposed for Board members.

3.2.8 The shadow board, including current tenant representatives, were consulted fully in developing the best approach for nominating both independent and tenant members to be appointed as members of the Board. Tenant members will be drawn from representative groups including strengthened area panels and the Leeds Tenants Federation. This will ensure that they have the appropriate support mechanism in place to enable them to best represent the views of tenants, and ensure areas of concern can be escalated from local tenant groups through to the Housing Advisory Board for discussion.

3.2.9 The voice of tenants in the new service will also be improved through a more robust tenant scrutiny process, which will be strengthened by being more closely linked with the council's Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Board. The Tenant Scrutiny Board will provide independent, customer focused scrutiny which will robustly challenge policy practice and performance to ensure that Leeds City Council provides a high quality housing service that retains tenants at the heart of the organisation.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

The Executive Board, at its meeting 17 July 2013 considered governance arrangements for the Board, as detailed in this report. Other consultation was previously carried out with a number of citywide strategic partners (including the shadow Housing Advisory Board, which includes relevant Executive Members and tenant representatives). Engagement was also undertaken with the shadow housing advisory board, consisting of elected members, independents and tenant representatives which helped shape the role of the board and agree the process for nominating members.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity/Cohesion and Integration**

- As a local authority committee, the Housing Advisory Board will have to meet public sector equality duties,
- Council policies and City Priorities.
- The Board will help drive delivery of our best council and City Priority Plan objectives. It will have a role to play in developing an enterprising council and will link closely to existing partnership bodies.

### **4.3 Resources and value for money**

The proposed governance structure is based on the right arrangements to deliver high quality, efficient services that offer value for money to Leeds' taxpayers and tenants as approved by Executive Board meeting on 19 June 2013.

### **4.4 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.4.1 The recommendation being put forward takes full account of the updated guidance for Councils considering the future of their ALMO housing management services published by the Communities and Local Government Department (CLG) in December 2011.

4.4.2 The usual access to information provisions and procedural provisions will apply to the Board, as a formal council advisory committee. Meeting decisions will be made by simple majority, with the chair having a casting vote in the event of an equality of voting.

4.4.3 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information. It is not exempt from call-in.

### **4.5 Risk Management**

4.5.1 The Board will develop its own risk register.

## **5 Conclusions**

A Housing Advisory Board will provide strong leadership and support to housing management policy and practice.

## **6 Recommendations**

General Purposes Committee is asked to:

- 6.1 Consider the recommendations of the Executive Board in relation to governance arrangements for a Housing Advisory Board.
- 6.2 Make the following recommendations to full Council:
  - 6.2.1 To appoint a Housing Advisory Board to discharge functions as set out in the terms of reference in appendix 1 of this report.
  - 6.2.2 To appoint six Elected Members to the Housing Advisory Board.
  - 6.2.3 To co-opt the following as voting members of the Housing Advisory Board for the terms of office set out in paragraph 3 of this report:
    - Three tenants/leaseholders
    - Three people who are independent of the Council.
- 6.3 To agree that the Housing Advisory Board may select up to three non-voting co-optees, with some specialist skill or knowledge which would be of assistance to the Housing Advisory Board, to be appointed for a term of office which relates to a particular issue.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Housing Advisory Board<sup>2</sup>

In relation to the authority's role as housing authority<sup>3</sup>, the Housing Advisory Board is authorised:

1. To consider and respond to the Executive in respect of proposals or consultations relating to:
  - The Housing Investment Plan and the Housing Service Plan;
  - The Key Lettings policy; and
  - Major projects under the capital programme.
2. To advise the Executive on the strategic direction of housing management.
3. To carry out such policy development tasks as may be requested by the Executive or the Council;
4. To review performance and make recommendations to the Executive as appropriate;
5. To consider and advise on any other issue referred to the Housing Advisory Board by the Executive.

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<sup>2</sup> Appointed by the Council as an advisory committee under Section 102(4) Local Government Act 1972

<sup>3</sup> Excluding those functions which the authority has agreed, with the approval of the Secretary of State, that another person should exercise as agent of the authority.