

Minutes



Meeting Name:	Leeds Housing Board	
Date:	Monday 11 th March 2024	Time: 10.00-11.30
Location:	Microsoft Teams	
Chair:	Cllr Jessica Lennox (JL)	
Members Present:	Cllr Mary Harland (MH), Cllr Kayleigh Brooks (KB), Cllr Barry Anderson (BA)	
Attendees Present:	James Rogers, Director of Communities, Housing and Environment (JR), Gerard Tinsdale, Chief Officer, Housing (GT), Mandy Sawyer, Head of Housing & Neighbourhood Services (MS), Simon Baker, Policy Officer (Housing) (SB), Julia Preston, sector representative (JP), Mark Ireland, Head of Private Rented Sector (MI), Kerrie Murray, Head of Homelessness (KM), Adam Crampton, Head of Property Management (AC), George Munson, Senior Project Manager (GM), Kevin Brighton, Development & Improvement Manager (KB)	
Apologies:	Cllr Jools Heselwood, Helen Lennon	

Minutes

Item	
1	Introductions and apologies
1.1	JL welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.
2	Minutes of the last meeting
2.1	The minutes of the last Strategy session meeting, held in September 2023, were approved.
3	Housing Strategy meeting format – discussion item
3.1	MS proposed to the Board that in future each of the twice-yearly Housing Strategy session concentrate on three of the six themes of the Housing Strategy, to give more time for a detailed look at each theme, with a change to the format of the report that will focus on priorities for the next six months and the challenges that need discussion.
4.2	The Board was in agreement but requested a deep dive into three of the themes with a brief overview of the remaining three.
4	Housing Strategy Update

4.1	AC, GM and MI updated the Board on progress relating to the quality of public and private sector housing. AC mentioned the ongoing focus of decarbonisation in the capital programme and the number of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard. There is a need to take stock of and assess the ongoing programmes to see if, for example, new innovative technology is being utilised effectively and the right solutions are being used in the right areas.
4.2	GM noted the good work that has been done on decarbonisation over the past few years, but with regard to the equality between the public and private sector funding, it is getting more difficult to deliver whole neighbourhood solutions. Work is underway to support slightly more affluent private households to be able to access decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures, such as the One Stop Shop that is being launched.
4.3	<p>MI explained that the selective licensing programmes in Beeston and Harehills will cease as their 5 year programmes end, but a report is going to Executive Board considering whether to look at more selective licensing areas.</p> <p>The Renters Reform Bill is expected to become law this year, and conversations are ongoing with the government about what it looks like and how it can influence outcomes. MI also updated the Board on the DLUHC-funded pathfinder project that is underway in Leeds, which is engaging with consultants to look at criminality and how other LAs deal with it. A toolkit is being developed.</p>
4.4	CJ updated the Board on the latest affordable housing figures as contained in the report. The provision of affordable housing now stands at a ten year high, with the highest number of all Core Cities. However, as council stock continues to be sold via Right to Buy, with 600 forecast this year, overall numbers remain relatively constant.
4.5	The SHMAA is currently being reviewed and will be published in the spring, but will see a significant increase in the amount of affordable housing needed. In 2018 the SHMAA set the goal for AH, and the Affordable Housing Growth Programme is set to deliver 1200 by 2025. Brownfield Housing Grant money is supporting the delivery of a significant number of homes.
4.6	MS outlined the work being done to increase the supply of affordable housing, with the focus on those who need it most. A review of the Lettings Policy is underway, with 2500 responses the consultation received. A response has been submitted to a government consultation on proposed changes to allocations. The proposals will come to the Board for consideration before going to Executive Board for approval.
4.7	Collaborative work is ongoing with Housing Associations, so they can help meet the demand. The private rented sector remains hard to access but there has been investment in additional resource to maximise households moving into the sector.
4.8	BA asked about how we can access unspent WYCA funding. CJ outlined how we work with WYCA, and is only aware of brownfield funding that we could access.
4.9	KM briefed the Board of the report's main points. We continue to perform well in Leeds, because we accept applications at an early stage and perform well in

	relieving homelessness at an early stage though this is becoming more challenging as the private rented sector becomes more expensive.
4.10	A key priority is to reduce the number of young people, and work is ongoing with Children's Services in this area to support families in the right way to find accommodation.
4.11	Rough sleeping continues to pose a significant challenge, but we have high prevention rates. JP noted the excellent partnership working taking place but the impact of inflation will see a reduction in commissioned services due to increased costs.
4.12	KB then took the Board through the Thriving Communities theme. Areas highlighted included regulatory changes through the Social Housing Regulation Act and the Police and Crime Act. There is also a Criminal Justice Bill currently before the Commons, which all put pressure on ASB services and the police. Significant changes include the Community Trigger, policies and procedures being reviewed.
4.13	Funding has been secured from the Prosperity Fund, used to fund officers to work in the 12 high priority wards, linking with partners. A review of how we handle hate crime is being carried out.
4.14	Funding has been secured for three mediators, who teach mediation and have helped to resolve 93 cases to date. A training program is being rolled out to staff on the SARA training model.
4.15	MS then covered the significant amount of work which has taken place under the Improving Health Through Housing theme, touching on work such as the Health and Housing Breakthrough Project and the Marmot City work. The findings from the Marmot work will be brought to the Board at a future date.
4.16	Also highlighted was the partnership work going on between housing and health professionals to better understand overlapping areas of work and improve referrals and services. The hospital discharge project has to date supported 76 residents into their home or suitable accommodation. Good progress continues with adaptations, and a lot of work continues in regard to digitisation and understanding conclusively how they can be used effectively.
4.17	MS then moved onto the Child and Age Friendly theme. KM commented on work being done between LHO and children's social work teams including ensuring all families in temporary accommodation have cots and support offered for pre-school children.
4.18	MS then turned to the age friendly component. A lot of progress has been made with new extra care units, eg Gascoigne House which opened in November.
4.19	We are part of the APPG on sheltered housing, contributing our experience in rightsizing provision.
4.20	Accessible housing targets are being met, and we have are awaiting the response to the government's consultation on AH targets. In the interim we will continue with our own targets. JP highlighted work being done by Young Lives Leeds, of which she is co-chair, and funding received by GIPSIL for support for foster and kinship carers.

Next Meeting

Date:

Time:

Location:

Microsoft Teams