

# PLEASE NOTE VENUE

## **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA**



**Thursday 1 November 2007**

**at 2.00 pm**

**in the Red Room, Avondale Centre,  
Dyke House, Hartlepool  
(Raby Road Entrance)**

**MEMBERS: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:**

Councillors Alison, R W Cook, S Cook, Cranney, Gibbon, Johnson, Laffey, London,  
A Marshall, Worthy and Wright.

Resident Representatives:

Ted Jackson, Robert Steel and Iris Ryder

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

**3. MINUTES**

3.1 To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2007.

**4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE  
COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.

**5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA  
SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No items.

# PLEASE NOTE VENUE

## 6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No items.

## 7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

### **Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool**

7.1 Exploration of Viable Ways of Increasing the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool :-

(a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Presentation by the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services and Chief Executive of Housing Hartlepool.

7.2 Evidence from Registered Social Landlords with Housing in Hartlepool:-

(a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Verbal Evidence from representatives from Registered Social Landlords with Housing in Hartlepool (Subject to Response from Written Invitation).

## 8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

i) **Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 14 November 2007 at 3.30 pm at Owton Manor Community Centre, Wynyard Road, Hartlepool**

# **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

## **MINUTES**

27 September 2007

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm in the Avondale Centre,  
Dyke House School, Hartlepool

### **Present:**

Councillor: Shaun Cook (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob W Cook, Steve Gibbon, Frances London, Ann Marshall,  
and Edna Wright

Resident Representatives:  
Bob Steel and Iris Ryder

Officers: Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services  
Derek Gouldbum, Urban Policy Manager  
Mark Dutton, Housing And Regeneration Co-Ordinator  
Keith Lucas, Asset and Property Manager  
Joan Wilkins, Scrutiny Support Officer  
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present:  
Cath Purdy, Chief Executive, Housing Hartlepool  
Cal Carruthers-Watt, 50+ Forum  
Brian McBean, Representative from North Central Hartlepool  
Regeneration

### **27. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stephen Allison, Pauline Laffey and Gladys Worthy.

### **28. Declarations of interest by Members**

None.

### **29. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2007**

Confirmed.

**30. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum**

None.

**31. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

None.

**32. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents**

None.

**33. Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool – Evidence from the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services** (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Scrutiny Support Officer informed Members that representatives from the Regeneration and Planning Services Department were in attendance to provide a presentation in relation to the Forum's investigation into the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool. The Housing and Regeneration Co-ordinator and Urban Policy Manager gave a detailed and comprehensive presentation, which examined the changing housing needs across the town and explored possible ways of delivering increased availability through changes within the new planning policy framework and the disposal/use of Council land.

One of the main issues identified was land supply and availability and it was recognised that the Authority did not have a large bank of Council-owned land. It was recognised that the Council had positive strategic level working relationships with local Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and other key agencies, including English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation.

A discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised.

- (i) Would the provision of more bungalows release sufficient family homes? The Housing and Regeneration Co-ordinator indicated that although there was a high demand for bungalows the majority of demand was for family homes and this had been highlighted in the Housing Aspirations Study.
- (ii) If consideration were to be given to the release of greenfield land, where

would this be located? The Housing and Regeneration Co-ordinator informed Members that the Government had indicated that greenfield sites should not be identified where practicable and emphasis should be given to brownfield sites. A review of the local plan was currently taking place and greenfield sites may need to be examined in the future. It was noted that the allocations of business land would also be looked at pending the result of the Building Schools for the Future programme.

- (iii) Was there adequate housing for the residents displaced due to the demolition of the central area terraced housing? The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services indicated that the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) programme would provide a better quality of housing and improve the balance of the housing stock in the town. Emphasis was placed upon the importance of keeping the overall development rate up to ensure quality accommodation was available.
- (iv) Clarification was sought on the term 'best consideration' in relation to the sale of Council-owned land. The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services informed Members that this referred to achieving the highest possible value from the sale of Council-owned land. However this could be waived if balanced against other considerations of well being benefits to the town. Moreover, the only way to make the building of new affordable homes financially viable for registered social landlords was to provide land at less than market value.
- (v) Clarification was sought on how the shortfall in provision of social housing was determined. The Housing and Regeneration Co-ordinator advised that the shortfall identified had been calculated using a complicated Government set formula containing many variables. It was noted that this figure may be subject to modification over time.
- (vi) It was noted that there were 6000 existing planning permissions within the town; and these do not include provision for social housing? The Housing and Regeneration Co-ordinator informed Members that there was no requirement through planning approvals in place for the provision of social housing (primarily because of the state of the housing market at the time they were granted), although it was hoped that this could be made a condition of approval in the future.
- (vii) Members sought clarification on the implementation of the new planning policy framework? The Urban Policy Manager indicated that timescales for the implementation of this framework were determined by nationally defined procedures and that the normal timescale for the implementation of a Core Strategy would be approximately 4 years. Options for reducing this timescale were discussed and it was noted that the proposed supplementary planning document, could be prepared and approved within 12 months, though this did not have statutory status.
- (viii) The definition of Greenfield sites was questioned? The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services advised Members that the term Greenfield had a complex meaning defined in PPS3 but mainly related to land which had not been developed previously. Although an area could technically be allocated for business use, it could be classed as greenfield.
- (ix) Clarification was sought as to whether any profits made by RSLs? The Chief Executive of Housing Hartlepool informed Members that most

RSLs were charitable and non-profit making organisations. Such organisations do not make profits. Members were advised that Housing Hartlepool were subsidising the implementation of the National Affordable Homes Programme (NAHP) within the town. Attention was drawn to the importance of Council support for NAHP bids and the vital role which the level of land subsidy plays in the supply of affordable housing.

- (x) Members questioned the level of affordable housing proposed within the Victoria Harbour development? The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services noted that there was no requirement in the planning approval for affordable housing but that negotiations were being undertaken with the regeneration company and owner of this site in relation to the mix of housing such as shared ownership and rented accommodation though on a commercial land basis.
- (xi) The presentation recognised that consideration was being given to developing the east central area of the town around the Reed Street/Surtees Street area for affordable housing. A member had concerns about the lack of car parking facilities within this area for local businesses. The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services advised Members that there were other sites which could be examined for the provision of additional car parking facilities though this may not be at surface level and the car parking in the area was being managed. It was emphasised that the provision of “affordable housing” was a high priority.
- (xii) Concerns were expressed about the relocation packages and options available to residents from demolished properties. The Housing and Regeneration Co-ordinator advised that the although current relocation policy had proved very effective it was under review in the light of recent housing market changes and to ascertain if any improvements could be made to the way these schemes were delivered in the future.

### **Recommendation**

Members noted the presentation and discussion that followed which would be used to inform their investigation.

## **34. Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool – Feedback from the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Chair of the Scrutiny Forum informed Members that he attended the meetings of the North, Central and South Neighbourhood Consultative Forums in August 2007 as part of the investigation into the availability of good quality affordable rented accommodation in the town. Extracts from the minutes of the meetings were provided for Members information.

Clarification was sought on the term ‘tin houses’ used in the extract of the

minutes. The Chief Executive of Housing Hartlepool advised Members that there were properties constructed with a steel frame and external cladding at a number of locations across the town with the majority being in the ownership of Housing Hartlepool. An option appraisal had been undertaken by Housing Hartlepool which had identified that it would prove expensive to refurbish these properties to an appropriate standard. In view of this, Housing Hartlepool was therefore in the process of acquiring these properties where they were mixed with other stock they owned at Belle Vue with a view to future demolition and redevelopment.

#### **Recommendation**

Members noted the extracts of the minutes from the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums and discussion that followed which would be used to inform their investigation.

### **35. Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool – Evidence from Members of the Public** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

As part of the above investigation, an invitation had been extended to members of the public to attend today's meeting to submit evidence from a local perspective. It was noted that this was covered in the previous discussions at today's meeting.

#### **Recommendation**

The discussions were noted.

### **36. Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool – Evidence from Groups Representing Residents from Minority Communities of Interest or Heritage** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

As part of the above investigation and in an effort to expand the diversity and raise the profile of this investigation, the Scrutiny Support Officer had attended meetings of the Talking with Communities Group, the All Ability Forum and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) group in September 2007. At these meetings an invitation had been extended to all members of the groups to attend today's meeting to submit evidence of a local perspective to the Forum. Although there were no attendees from these groups at today's meeting, the All Ability Forum had identified that the provision of suitable "affordable housing" should be a high priority.

In addition to the above groups and invitation had been extended to the 50+ Forum, Hartlepool Carers and the Hartlepool Access Group to attend today's meeting and participate in discussions and a representative from the 50+ Forum was in attendance.

### **Recommendation**

The evidence and views of the above groups be noted.

## **37. Next Meeting**

Members were asked to note that as part of the investigation into good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool further presentations would be made by Housing Hartlepool.

SHAUN COOK

CHAIRMAN



## **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

1 November 2007



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** EXPLORATION OF VIABLE WAYS OF INCREASING THE AVAILABILITY OF GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE RENTED SOCIAL ACCOMMODATION IN HARTLEPOOL – PRESENTATION BY THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF HOUSING HARTLEPOOL – COVERING REPORT

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Members that the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services, and the Chief Executive of Housing Hartlepool, Cath Purdy, will be at this meeting providing a presentation in relation to the Forums investigation into the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 In accordance with the process agreed at the 'scoping' meeting on the 12 July 2007, the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services at the meeting on the 27 September gave the first of two presentations exploring viable ways of increasing the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool.
- 2.2 The Director of Regeneration and Planning Service's second presentation on this issue will today cover the issues of:-
- Improved Use of Existing Housing Stock;
  - Prudential Borrowing; and
  - Funding from the Housing Corporation/Regional Board.
- 2.3 During the course of the presentation further information will also be provided by the Chief Executive of Housing Hartlepool, Cath Purdy, in relation to the future of the Housing Programme (New build process, costs and funding).

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Member's note the content of the presentation and seek clarification on any relevant issues where felt appropriate.

**Contact Officers:-** Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
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### BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool – Scoping Report' Presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 12 July 2007.

## **REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

1 November 2007



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO THE  
AVAILABILITY OF GOOD QUALITY  
AFFORDABLE RENTED SOCIAL  
ACCOMMODATION IN HARTLEPOOL --  
EVIDENCE FROM REGISTERED SOCIAL  
LANDLORDS WITH HOUSING IN HARTLEPOOL  
(SUBJECT TO RESPONSE FROM WRITTEN  
INVITATION)

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### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that representatives from Registered Social Landlords with housing in Hartlepool have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing inquiry into the availability of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 As part of its investigation into 'The Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Social Accommodation in Hartlepool' the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum is keen to hear the views of Registered Social Landlords with housing in Hartlepool. To assist in obtaining these views a written invitation has been extended to all Registered Social Landlords in Hartlepool to attend today's meeting.
- 2.2 During this evidence gathering session with Registered Social Landlords it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-
- a) What are your views on the level, and standard, of provision of good quality affordable rented social accommodation in Hartlepool?

- b) What in your view are the main barriers to the provision of good quality affordable rented social accommodation within Hartlepool and what would you like to see done to overcome them?
- c) Do you have any other views/information which you feel may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of those members of the public in attendance at this meeting in relation to the questions outlined in Section 2.2 of this report.

**Contact Officer:-** Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
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