

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

18 December 2015

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: Stephen Akers-Belcher, Alan Clark, Rob Cook and Jim Lindridge

Officers: Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration
Nigel Johnson, Head of Housing
Sylvia Pinkney, Head of Public Protection
Andrew Carter, Planning Services Manager
Nomusa Malinga, Planning Information Officer
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services Officer

79. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor George Morris. Also from Councillors Jim Ainslie and Brenda Loynes as an invitation had been extended to all Members for this meeting.

80. Declarations of Interest

None.

81. Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2015

Received.

82. Housing Services (*Assistant Director, Regeneration*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To inform the Committee about the key areas of work that the Housing Services Team is responsible for.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Assistant Director, Regeneration provided a detailed and comprehensive presentation which comprised the following key areas of Housing Services:

- Housing Strategy and Policy
- Adaptations and Disabled Facilities Grant
- Housing Standards
- Housing Regeneration
- Housing Management
- Housing Advice and Options
- Homelessness
- Selective Licensing
- Social Lettings Agency

In summary, the Assistant Director, Regeneration highlighted that the service was continuously changing in nature to deliver services in a more proactive way with a view to further income generation.

A Member commented on the excellent work being undertaken to purchase empty homes across the Town and the Chair suggested that an informal meeting be arranged before the end of March 2016 to update Members of the Finance and Policy and Regeneration Services Committees on the actual breakdown of the funding spent on the programme, in particular in relation to the number of external contactors used and the value of those external contracts.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director, Regeneration indicated that work undertaken through Disabled Facilities Grants was carried out by in-house Teams wherever feasible and it was suggested that this may be an area that could generate further income in the future.

A discussion ensued on the issue of claw-back of any funding provided for adaptations undertaken in properties when those adaptations were no longer required, for example in instances where the person with the disability no longer resided at that property. The Head of Housing confirmed that there was the facility for the Council to place a charge on properties to recoup the funds utilised for the adaptation when that property was sold.

A Member sought clarification on Council Officers' continued involvement in the Belle Vue Area and the Head of Housing indicated that Officers worked very closely with other Departments to co-ordinate the Council's involvement in ensuring security and nuisance issues were dealt with in an effective and timely manner. In addition, it was noted that the Selective Licensing Schemes that had been introduced across the Town were working very well but Members were asked to report any incidents to the

Housing Services Team to ensure they were dealt with expediently.

Members were informed that work was ongoing progressing the housing of refugees and it was noted that Middlesbrough Borough Council was the Lead Authority on this issue and was co-ordinating this.

Decision

- 1) That an informal meeting of the Finance and Policy and Regeneration Services Committees be arranged to provide an update the actual breakdown of the funding spent on the programme, in particular in relation to the number of external contactors used and the value of those external contracts.
- 2) The content of the report and presentation were noted.

83. Local Development Framework Authorities Monitoring Report 2014/15 *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To request the Committee endorsed the 2014/15 Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR) attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report provided the background to the AMR which was produced annually by Planning Services on behalf of the Council. The AMR reviewed the progress made on the implementation of policies in the 2006 Local Plan and generally assessed their effectiveness and the extent to which they were being implemented.. The report provided an outline of the following key areas:

- Housing and Housing Policies;
- Economic activity, town centre, tourism and related policies;
- Natural Environment, waste, rural, conservation and related policies;
- Transport, leisure routes and related policies; and
- Neighbourhood Plans, Community Infrastructure Levy and duty to co-operate.

The Planning Information Officer clarified the statistics around the long term empty properties which showed that the number of empty homes brought back into over the previous two years use was increasing.

Decision

That the content of the report was noted and endorsed as part of the Local Development Framework.

84. Strategic Financial Management Report – as at 30 September 2015 (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods, Director of Public Health and Chief Finance Officer*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To inform Members of the 2015/16 forecast General Fund Outturn, 2015/16 Capital Programme Monitoring and provide details for the specific budget areas that this Committee was responsible for.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report outlined the overall financial position for the Council as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy Report submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee on 23 November 2015.

Specifically in relation to Regeneration Services and Public Health, the report included the overall budget position together with a brief comment on the reasons for the forecast outturn. Further details on the capital monitoring for 2015/16 was included at Appendix B.

Decision

The report was noted.

The meeting concluded at 2.50 pm

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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