



Minutes of the meeting of the SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE held on TUESDAY 3 OCTOBER 2006 at 7.30 PM

Present: Councillor Campbell (Chair)
Councillors Drewett, Exon, Hoyle, Latham, Long and Pugh
(substitute for Councillor Gerella)

Officers: K Page (Corporate Director - Neighbourhood Services), P Wharfe (Director of Housing Services), G Waghorn (Deputy Head of Finance), C Davies (Finance and Business Manager), T Chapman (Supporting People Co-ordinator), J Boorthroyde (Overview and Scrutiny Manager), C Powell (Overview and Scrutiny Officer) and G Lane (Committee Manager)

Also Present: Councillor Jury, P Willmott (Consultant), E Bobey (Vice-Chair of the Housing Forum), G Woolmore (Beanhill Residents' Association) and A Mercer (Eaglestone Residents' Association)

Apologies: Councillor Gerrella

**Number of
Public Present:** 2

SC10 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the Social Care and Housing Policy Development Committee held on 5 September 2006, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of 'Councillor Hoyle' amongst the list of 'Apologies'.

SC11 DECENT HOMES STANDARD

The Committee considered a progress report by the Director of Housing Services on the current programme to achieve the Decent Homes Standard for the Council's housing stock.

Members heard that current figures revealed that 61.5% of the Council's stock met the 'decent' standard and that the Council's entire housing stock would comply with the Standard by 2010.

Future challenges for the Council included the need to promote the continual improvement of the housing stock beyond the minimum requirements of the Decent Homes Standard and to improve the quality of those amenities not directly addressed by the Standard.

Members heard that, in contrast to Housing Associations, the Council provided a wide range of social care services and that the promotion of greater synergy between Council services would create opportunities to improve the quality of life of all tenants.

Officers acknowledged the successful innovations spearheaded by Housing Associations, including tenant consultation on contracting.

Members heard that planning law precluded the possibility of investing planning gain contributions generated by new developments in the improvement of the housing stock. The law required that these contributions be invested for the exclusive purpose of mitigating the loss of amenity caused by development.

The Committee stressed the necessity for local regeneration and expansion to be carefully coordinated, not managed in isolation.

Members stressed the need for joint-working between the Council and Housing Associations to improve the quality of local housing.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

SC12 SUPPORTING PEOPLE INSPECTION

The Committee considered a report by the Supporting People Co-ordinator on the pending Supporting People Inspection.

Members heard that the Supporting People initiative was developed as a complementary service to enhance and coordinate existing social care services. Supporting People offered a range of services, including the provision of accommodation and supported living options for clients with mental health and learning difficulties.

The Committee heard that the pending inspection would probably focus on the experiences of service users, including the use of customer focus groups, mystery shopping and questionnaires.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

SC13 BUDGET REVIEW GROUP

The Committee considered a progress report by the Chair of the Budget Review Group, Councillor Pugh, on the Neighbourhood Services Directorate and proposed Directorate actions.

Members heard that the Review Group considered the possibility of the Directorate recruiting agency staff with full criminal records

checks, rather than being dependent on pooled workers who did not possess criminal records approval due to national delays.

The Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services stated that consultation would be undertaken on any proposals to review and reconfigure the provision of sheltered housing at Kilkenny House.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Cabinet be apprised of the Committee's concern that the options for saving money proposed by the Budget Review Group would have an adverse impact on some of the most vulnerable people in the local community.
3. That the Cabinet be requested to bring forward clear proposals to ensure that any proposed options for saving money did not hit the most vulnerable in society.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9.25 PM