

Housing and Public Protection Policy Development Advisory Group
21 AUGUST 2017

Present: Councillors: Kate Rowbottom (Chairman), Alan Britten, Paul Marshall, Mike Morgan, Jim Sanson and David Skipp

Apologies: Councillors: Andrew Baldwin, Roy Cornell, Matthew French and Nigel Jupp

Also Present: Leonard Crosbie

6 **TO APPROVE THE NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The group approved the notes of the meeting held on 3rd July 2017.

7 **COMMUTED SUMS - AFFORDABLE HOUSING INVESTMENT POLICY**

The Head of Housing Services presented a briefing note on the updating of the Affordable Housing Investment Policy detailing the current position and the proposals going forward.

Three options had been identified on the use of the commuted sums to deliver solutions to those with the greatest housing needs whilst also providing financial or community benefit to the Council and its customers.

Members were asked whether they supported the options detailed in the Policy or for feedback on the proposals to deliver affordable housing.

Members considered the briefing note. They questioned whether a breakdown of the housing register figures in the District would help identify whether the demand was being met accordingly.

The Members also questioned the Council's plans for housing in the District for the next five years, this information could be useful when considering the Policy.

The Policy would be presented to Cabinet in November, if approved, it is envisaged using externally sourced expertise to support the delivery of the project as promptly and efficiently as possible.

The consensus of the Members was that this was a positive step in the right direction. The proposals were supported by the group and asked to be kept updated on progress over the coming months.

The group was keen to support the local economy and also to use local contractors when possible.

8 **PUBLIC HEALTH FUNERALS**

Members noted that the Council had received a letter from the Veterans Bereavement Support seeking support from the Council by working together when dealing with the death of a veteran who needs a public health funeral.

This would mean that the organisation could ensure that veterans do not have unattended funerals instead with selective mourners and representatives from the regiment in which they served.

There were no cost implications to the Council.

Members noted that the Council had already signed the Armed Forces Covenant.

The group fully supported this proposal subject to the deletion of A.3. in the Draft Policy regarding attendance at funerals. It would not be possible for a Council officer to attend the funeral service as a mourner of a non-former serviceman or woman.

Members supported this.

9 **PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY**

The Head of Environmental Health and Licensing presented the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy. This was reviewed on an annual basis. Members noted that there were no recommendations for changes this year.

Officers drew Members attention to the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) as the budget had increased significantly and there was likely to be an underspend. Members were informed that a project was being undertaken by WSCC with the district and borough councils to address this. Members were keen to be kept involved and monitor this project as it moved forward.

10 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION PORTFOLIO**

The Forward Plan extract for Housing and Public Protection was noted.

The meeting closed at 6.44 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN