

Community and Wellbeing Policy Development Advisory Group
10 MARCH 2020

Present: Councillors: Tricia Youtan (Chairman), Andrew Baldwin, Frances Haigh, Colin Minto, Roger Noel, Kate Rowbottom, Jim Sanson, Ian Stannard, Belinda Walters and James Wright

Apologies: Councillors: Chris Brown

17 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were received by the group.

18 **EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY**

The Group received an update on the Empty Homes Strategy, which had been introduced to encourage homeowners and landlords to bring empty homes back into use across the District. The number of empty homes had reduced from 700 to 400 since its introduction. This had been achieved partly due to new legislation that increased premiums on properties that had been empty for over five years by 200% and over ten years by 300%.

The Group noted the progress that had been made.

19 **UPDATE ON STRAY DOG COLLECTION AND KENNELING SERVICE PROCUREMENT**

The Head of Environmental Health and Licensing updated the Group on the recent tender process for the procurement of the Stray Dog Collection and Kennelling Service.

There had been no viable, suitably priced bids and therefore officers and the current kennelling service had come to an agreement for a fixed price contract for the next 24 months. The Cabinet Member confirmed that there would be a review of the service at the end of this period.

20 **MHCLG FUNDING FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS**

The Homeless Prevention Officer gave a presentation to the Group on the MHCLG Rough Sleeper funding, that had been awarded to HDC, Mid Sussex District Council and the charity Turning Tides to provide a range of interventions to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping across both districts.

The £317,717 award would help fund staff resources and training, and provide personalised support, both financial and with essential items such as clothing,

food and travel. Homelessness Forums were being set up across both districts to increase the impact of the funding and resources that have been secured.

The Group noted that the increased funding had already brought the number of rough sleepers down from 11 to six.

21 **HDC SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

The Community Development Team had undertaken a review of the Council's support for Community Partnerships in 2020. There were seven Community Partnerships across the district, which worked with partners to deliver projects and events to support their local economy.

The Head of Housing and Community Services outlined the proposal that would bring all the partnerships into line with each other, and create a project fund of £7,000 (nominally £1000 per partnership) to be bid for throughout the year. Opportunities to pool resources and reduce costs would be explored.

The Group noted the timeline for the proposals, which included consultation with the Community Partnerships, Parish Councils and Local Members. Once any comments received have been considered, the proposals would be signed off by the Cabinet Member at the end of March.

22 **APPLICATION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSENT TO DISPOSE OF LAND UNDER SECTION 32 OR 43 OF THE HOUSING ACT 1985 OR SECTION 25 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1988**

The Head of Finance presented the draft report on the application to the Secretary of State for consent to dispose of land. The report would be considered at the Extraordinary Council meeting scheduled for 17 March.

23 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE COMMUNITY MATTERS AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO**

The contents of the forward plan extract were noted by the Group.

The meeting closed at 6.50 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN