

**BUSINESS AND HOUSING POLICY COMMITTEE**

**11 February 2020**

Attendance:

Councillors

Hiscock (Chairperson)

Rutter  
Craske

Gottlieb  
Lumby

Deputy Members:

Councillor Horrill (Standing Deputy for Councillor Scott)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Learney (Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management) and Councillor Cutler (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Risk).

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Thompson (Leader and Cabinet Member for Communications) and Councillor Weir (Cabinet Member for Local Economy).

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Humby and Scott

Audio recording of the meeting

A full audio recording of this meeting is available via this link:

[Full audio recording](#)

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1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Humby and Scott and Councillor Horrill was in attendance as Deputy Member for Councillor Scott.

2. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

No disclosures of interest were made.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting TACT representatives: Mrs M Gill and Mr M Fawcitt and three members of the public.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2019**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 October 2019 be approved and adopted.

5. **TO NOTE THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2019/20**

RESOLVED:

That subject to the inclusion of an options paper for the future the use of the council depot site at Bar End, Winchester to be included as an item for the June 2020 meeting of the Policy Committee, the Work Programme for 2019/20 be noted.

6. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Representations from the public are set out under the respective item where the Chairperson also invited contributions from the TACT representatives which are summarised under the relevant minute below.

7. **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY BHP009**

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Risk, the Strategic Lead Transformation and Procurement and the Procurement Manager gave a presentation on the Procurement Strategy.

Members asked questions and raised various comments which were addressed by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Risk and the relevant officers.

RESOLVED:

That the following comments be considered by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Risk: collaboration with other organisations, including other councils; thought given to methods to involve Councillors in the procurement process and leverage technical expertise of Councillors in the subject matter being procured; strengthening the focus on social value and reflecting procurement and contract management more equally.

8. **REVISION AND UPDATE OF DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS POLICY BHP012**

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Risk and the Head of Revenues gave a presentation on the Revision and Update of the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, representatives of TACT addressed the

Committee as summarised below.

TACT representatives welcomed the report and asked whether the payment was a grant or a loan (it was clarified by the officers that it was a grant); whether it was short term assistance (assistance was short term and examples of types of assistance were provided); what merited 'exceptional circumstances' (examples were provided with each case evaluated on its own merits) and whether records were kept of the reasons for declining assistance (applicants had been declined as they did not meet the criteria of the scheme rather than through a shortage of finance).

The Committee asked questions and raised comments which were responded to by officers and by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Risk. At the conclusion of questions and debate, the Committee agreed that there were no particular matters that it wished to raise for Cabinet to further consider.

**RESOLVED:**

That the content of the presentation be received and the comments of the committee be noted.

**9. REVIEW OF DOWNSIZING INCENTIVE SCHEME - PRESENTATION**

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management and the Head of Housing Management gave a presentation on the Downsizing Incentive Scheme.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr Ian Tait spoke of the high quality of accommodation and care provided by St John's Winchester Charity for those downsizing and that the Charity would be building more accommodation in Colebrook Street, Winchester. He also welcomed the forthcoming appointment of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management as the Council's appointee to the Board of Trustees of the Charity.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, representatives of TACT addressed the Committee as summarised below.

TACT representatives gave their support to the report and commented that more could be made of the opportunity to promote downsizing to the council's upgraded sheltered accommodation and that visits could be arranged to view a 'show flat' to see what was on offer. Additionally, the £1000 ex-gratia payment for moving was not income based and this could be considered in future policy development. Comment was also made on the provision of adaptations for tenants with medical conditions and whether downsizing could provide a better outcome for some tenants.

The Committee asked questions and raised comments which were responded to by officers and by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management. At the conclusion of questions and debate, the Committee agreed that there were no particular matters that it wished to raise for Cabinet to further consider.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the presentation be received and the comments of the Committee be noted.

10. **HAMPSHIRE HOME CHOICE POLICY - PRESENTATION**

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management and the Corporate Head of Housing (Interim) gave a presentation on the Hampshire Home Choice Review.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, representatives of TACT addressed the Committee as summarised below.

TACT representatives welcomed the report and asked that the reasons for applicants not-bidding for accommodation be explored further; the definition of the Housing Hub and also ways to improve access to the allocation scheme for those not having access to a computer, including the requirement to include an email address on the application e-form.

Members asked questions and raised various comments which were addressed by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management and the relevant officers.

RESOLVED:

That the following comments be considered by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management: that the reference to Army Personnel be amended to Service Personnel and that further consideration be given to the application e-form to improve access.

11. **FIRE SAFETY IN COUNCIL HOUSING STRATEGY - PRESENTATION**

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management and the Corporate Head of Housing (Interim) gave a presentation on the Fire Safety in Council Housing Strategy.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, representatives of TACT addressed the Committee. In response to questions, the differences between buildings and contents insurance for tenants was clarified as was who would be responsible for repair following a minor or major fire in a council dwelling.

The Committee asked questions and raised comments which were responded to by officers and by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management. At the conclusion of questions and debate, the Committee agreed that there were no particular matters that it wished to raise for Cabinet to further consider.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the presentation be received and the comments of the Committee be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 9.15 pm

Chairperson