

CABINET COMMITTEE: HOUSING

Tuesday, 14 November 2023

Attendance:

Councillors
Westwood (Chairperson)

Cutler

Learney

Non-voting invited councillors

Councillors Batho, Horrill, Miller and Rutter

Non-voting invited TACT representatives

Mr D Chafe and Mrs M Gill

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Becker (Councillor Learney deputised)

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillor Wallace

Other members in attendance:

Councillor Pett

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received as noted above.

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait spoke regarding items 6 and 7 and his comments are summarised below.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2023**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 10 July 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

5. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements made.

6. **NEW HOMES PROGRAMME AND RETROFIT UPDATES (VERBAL UPDATE)**

Councillor Westwood announced that this standing update had been widened to include an update on the retrofit programme and this would be continued for future meetings of the committee.

The Head of New Homes Delivery gave a presentation on the new homes programme which was available on the council's website [here](#).

Ian Tait spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

He expressed disappointment regarding the recent decision of the Planning Committee to refuse the application to build eight new affordable homes at Dyson Drive, Abbots Barton given the great need for such new housing. He emphasised the long process the scheme had been through prior to the planning application, including a great deal of public and ward councillor consultation and a decision at Cabinet Member Decision Day in October 2021. He queried whether the Council would appeal against the decision?

Councillor Westwood responded to the comments made, including stating that the scheme would be reviewed to ascertain whether adjustments could be made to bring forward a new scheme which alleviated concerns expressed at the Planning Committee. The Monitoring Officer advised that as the landowner, the Council did not have the legal right to appeal the decision.

The Head of New Homes Delivery and Councillor Westwood responded to questions and comments raised by councillors and TACT representatives on the presentation as follows:

- a) The opportunity to learn from experience regarding the length of time taken at Southbrook Cottages to agree parking provision.
- b) Confirmation that the scheme at Sparsholt had been accidentally omitted from the presentation but was still progressing.
- c) Confirmation that the programme was for the provision of 1000 new homes over a ten year period.
- d) Confirmation that ward councillors would be consulted before wider consultation was undertaken in relation to Winecross Cottages.
- e) Possible future proposals in the West of Waterlooville area.
- f) Working with the South Downs National Park authority in relation to Dykes Farm.

The Energy Manager gave a presentation on the retrofit programme which was available on the council's website [here](#).

The Energy Manager and Councillor Westwood responded to questions and comments raised by councillors and TACT representatives on the presentation as follows:

- a) Clarification regarding the time period for the completed properties reports.
- b) How councillors could help promoting the scheme and alleviating some tenants' concerns. It was confirmed that the scheme included a comprehensive communications plan.
- c) Clarification of how the scheme was being rolled out, including the use of pilot schemes where appropriate.

RESOLVED:

That the updates regarding the new homes programme and the retrofit programme be noted.

7. **HOUSING STRATEGY 2023-2028**
(CAB3410(H))

The Corporate Head of Housing introduced the report and confirmed that the Strategy would be updated prior to final publication to include the most up to date statistical information.

Ian Tait spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

He generally welcomed the report but questioned whether it addressed the core issue of the shortage of affordable housing. He believed that the best way to achieve this would be for the council to find sufficient land to enable a new council housing estate to be built. He also emphasised that more housing could be supplied on existing sites if schemes were built to a higher density. He highlighted that a 2021 report (CAB3290) had allocated a £10m investment for new homes.

Councillor Westwood and the Head of New Homes Delivery responded to the comments made including highlighting the importance of the emerging Local Plan in prioritising affordable housing and the practical difficulties in terms of cost of land and rising building costs.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, Councillor Wallace addressed the meeting as summarised briefly below.

He welcomed the reference to the climate emergency and the commitment to greener homes but believed little progress had been made in recent years. He requested that more specific and measurable targets be set regarding the environmental measures to enable effective monitoring against progress and the process for monitoring the specific metrics be clarified. This should include the promoting measures to improve energy efficiency in private housing. He also requested that the recent declaration by the Council of a nature emergency be referenced

Councillors Westwood and Learney responded to the comments made, including confirming the intention to amend the Strategy to incorporate the declaration of a nature emergency. The Service Lead – Strategic Housing agreed to provide an update to committee members regarding the numbers of private households that had taken up the offer for energy efficiency upgrades as part of the HUG2 programme.

The Strategic Director, Corporate Head of Housing and the Service Lead – Strategic Housing responded to questions and comments from members on the following:

- a) Whether the proposed objectives sufficiently addressed issues facing tenants in the commercial rented sector market.
- b) Clarification that stipulating the percentage of affordable homes within new developments was for discussion within the formulation of the council's Local Plan and not within the remit of this committee.
- c) Proposals for the provision of retirement and older persons housing needs. It was noted that an update on this matter would be submitted to the Business and Housing Policy Committee in January 2024.
- d) Confirmation that the Strategy would be submitted for annual review by this committee.

The Committee agreed that an additional recommendation be approved (as set out in resolution 2 below) to ensure the Strategy was updated to reflect updated metrics and to reference to the Nature Emergency declaration.

The Cabinet Committee agreed the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Housing Strategy 2023-2028 be approved and adopted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director with responsibility for housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to correct any typographical errors, update metrics and statistics and to add to the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan (as set out in Appendix 2 of report CAB2310(H)) reference to the Nature Emergency declaration and action being taken.

8. **TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS**
(CAB3429(H))

The Housing Policy and Projects Manager introduced the report, outlining the methods used to collect responses and outlining the key issues raised by tenants. The report made service review recommendations based on the survey results.

The Housing Policy and Projects Manager, Strategic Director and Corporate Head of Housing responded to questions and comments from members and TACT representatives on the following:

- a) Proposals to address complaints regarding anti-social behaviour.
- b) A request that the breakdown of wards included within “rural north” and “rural south” be provided.
- c) The ARP client group.
- d) Proposals to address complaints regarding repairs and maintenance.
- e) Concern expressed by tenants regarding the cleanliness of communal areas and ideas regarding how tenants might be able to assist in monitoring of the cleaning contract. It was agreed that cleanliness of communal area be included as an additional area for action and improvement.
- f) The proposed new engagement model for under 35s. It was noted this would be part of the Housing and Engagement Communication Plan which would be submitted to the next committee meeting in February 2024.
- g) A request that a member briefing be arranged on the survey results. Councillor Westwood agreed to consider this further as part of a wider briefing for councillors on housing matters.
- h) A request that a delivery plan be produced to correspond with the service improvement and actions proposed.
- i) A request that all those that completed the survey be contacted and advised of the key findings and suggested actions.

The Cabinet Committee agreed the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the survey results be noted.

2. That the recommendations for service improvement and actions in section 12.5 of report CAB3429(H) be approved.

- a) Repairs & maintenance – actions to address outstanding repairs and improve performance in relation to listening to views
- b) Examine how the housing service can improve its approach to anti-social behaviour
- c) Investment in customer excellence training
- d) New engagement model to appeal to under 35 year olds
- e) Investigate differences in satisfaction levels across the different district areas through community engagement activities
- f) Improve complaints handling performance
- g) Communal areas kept clean and maintained.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the date of the future meeting of the Committee be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 1.00 pm

Chairperson