

CABINET COMMITTEE: HOUSING

Tuesday, 5 November 2024

Attendance:

Councillors
Westwood (Chairperson)

Cutler

Non-voting invited councillors

Councillors Clear, Horrill, Power and White

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Becker

Deputy Members:

Councillor Tod

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Becker, for whom Councillor Tod deputised, as noted above.

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Tod declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of agenda item 10 (Temporary Accommodation Plan & Pathways) due to his role as a county councillor.

Councillor Horrill declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of agenda item 10 (Temporary Accommodation Plan & Pathways) as her husband was a Trinity board member.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait spoke regarding items 7 and 9 and his comments are summarised under the relevant minutes below.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 5 February 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

5. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements made.

6. **TACT BOARD REPORT BACK**
(CAB3487(H))

Councillor Westwood introduced the report and welcomed to the meeting Lin Mellish (TACT Board member and resident).

Councillor Westwood and officers present responded to questions and comments raised by councillors on the report as follows:

- a) Whether formal minutes would be taken and reported back to the Cabinet Committee Housing, or if the current method of reporting would continue. It was confirmed that there would in future be an annual report of the TACT Board to the committee.
- b) How the views of tenants across the district would be ensured, particularly those in more remote areas.

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

RESOLVED:

That the matters that were considered at the first meeting of TACT board be noted.

7. **NEW HOMES PROGRAMME UPDATE (VERBAL UPDATE)**

Ian Tait addressed the committee during public participation as summarised briefly below.

Questioned the viability of the Council's Cornerhouse affordable housing scheme, highlighting that the proposed flats fall below the minimum space standards. He expressed concern that this could set a precedent for other housing providers to propose substandard housing and also that the Council seemingly had disregarded its own local plan policies regarding dwelling size. Inquired about the status of Dykes Farm, a site previously included in the future new homes programme. He emphasised its sustainable location and potential to deliver a significant number of homes.

In response, the Service Lead (New Homes) advised that the Cornerhouse proposal had recently been consented planning permission. There were to be further modifications to its overall design which would be presented to Members in due course. Regarding Dykes Farm, it was confirmed during the subsequent presentation to the Committee that there was further discussion underway with the landowner of the site regarding their requirements at the site. However, it was confirmed that the site remained in the programme.

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

The Service Lead – New Homes, Councillor Westwood and other officers present responded to questions and comments raised by councillors on the presentation as follows:

- a) The status of the Wine Cross (Boarhunt) development, noting its absence from the presentation.
- b) The forecast for registered provider housing in the West of Waterlooville MDA area.
- c) The impact of registered providers' financial constraints on the commencement of new developments.
- d) Whether there had been any assessment of the impact of the recent budget regarding provision of affordable housing.
- e) The exact location of some of the new homes developments as indicated on the map in the report.
- f) The council's ongoing relationship with registered providers and the likelihood of achieving projected numbers of units over the specified period.
- g) The criteria used to move sites from the 'to-do' list to the 'doubtful' list in the programme.
- h) The inclusion of the Central Winchester regeneration site in the list of potential sites for affordable housing.
- i) The council's rural strategy and its future plans for ensuring sustainable accommodation in villages.
- j) The repurposing of council-owned sites to maximise their potential, with specific reference to East Acre.
- k) The council's approach to ensuring that housing developments were demand-led and how this was monitored and measured.

RESOLVED:

That the update regarding the new homes programme be noted.

8. **RETROFIT PROGRAMME UPDATE (VERBAL UPDATE)**

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

The Retrofit Manager and other officers present responded to questions and comments raised by councillors on the presentation as follows:

- a) Were the experiences of tenants regarding the retrofit process being collected so to help to encourage wider participation?
- b) The handling of solid fuel systems in council houses and whether this fell under maintenance or retrofit programmes.
- c) Were void properties targeted for retrofitting to minimise disruption to tenants?
- d) Clarification was requested on the communication strategy with ward councillors regarding ongoing and upcoming retrofit works in their areas.
- e) Were any key learnings from the retrofit programme utilised to adapt the approach going forward?
- f) Further clarification was sought on the regular review of materials used for insulation, particularly in terms of environmental friendliness and fire safety.

It was agreed that a briefing for all councillors be arranged on the retrofit programme.

RESOLVED:

That the update regarding the retrofit programme be noted.

9. **TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PLAN & PATHWAYS**
(CAB3472(H))

Councillor Westwood introduced the report.

Ian Tait addressed the committee during public participation as summarised briefly below.

He addressed the meeting regarding the ongoing issue of residents being threatened with homelessness by their social landlords. He mentioned his role in advocacy for these individuals and expressed interest in the council's plans for 88 Sussex Street. The property, which required significant structural repairs, was previously mentioned to be relet as two

flats once the repairs were completed. He inquired about the status and timeline for these repairs.

Additionally, Mr. Tait highlighted the recent actions of Bournemouth Churches Housing Association, which had disposed of its Winchester properties that once provided temporary and supported housing for around 36 individuals. He emphasised the negative impact of this loss on the availability of temporary accommodation in Winchester and expressed his appreciation for the efforts of officers and the cabinet in addressing this issue.

Councillor Westwood and the Strategic Director responded to the comments made.

Councillor Westwood and officers present responded to questions and comments raised by councillors on the report as follows:

- a) The financial pressures on the council and the impact of budget measures addressing homelessness.
- b) The timing of new funding allocations for homelessness and the flexibility required to manage unknowns regarding grant continuations.
- c) The decision by Hampshire County Council to extend its funding until March 2026 and the status of the 29 bed spaces at Westview House and whether there were plans for another provider to take over the facility.
- d) The projected figures for the number of households requiring assistance and the basis for these projections.
- e) Further clarification was sought on the council's approach to assisted moves for under-occupying tenants and the potential for upgrading the assisted move offer.
- f) Further details regarding the proposed tenancy-ready officer post and its role in helping individuals move through to appropriate accommodation.
- g) Clarification was requested on the use of 82 Sussex Street as temporary accommodation.
- h) The change to the current move-on policy for households in council-owned temporary accommodation.
- i) The expansion of supported accommodation provision at Trinity and the expected throughput of residents.
- j) The amendment of the council's lettings policy in respect to sheltered accommodation and the impact on current tenants.
- k) The delivery of a housing-first model and the provision of support for individuals with high needs.

- l) Further clarification was sought on the housing pathways and the resources available to the housing options team to deliver the proposed changes.
- m) The impact of prisoner releases on homelessness services and the council's preparedness for such events.
- n) Consideration of other properties for temporary accommodation and the viability of using Barnes House (or obtaining a capital receipt).
- o) Further clarification was sought on the council's relationships with other organisations mentioned in the housing pathways and their role in delivering support.

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

RESOLVED:

That the following be agreed:

1. That 80-82 Sussex Street is re-purposed as temporary accommodation.
2. That the current move-on policy for households in council-owned Temporary Accommodation be amended.
3. That the expansion of the provision of supported accommodation at Trinity: Winchester be supported.
4. That the Council's lettings policy in respect of Sheltered Accommodation be amended.
5. That the revised move on policy for applicants residing at The Quakers be agreed.
6. That the council enter into negotiations with Hampshire County Council regarding the level of funding that the council require from HCC to support the households affected by the closure of Westview House in light of the social inclusion finding being extended until March 2026. The support required is outlined in recommendations 1.7 to 1.9 below.
7. That a housing first worker be established to support the delivery of an in-house housing first model.
8. That the role of the Complex Needs Navigator continue to be funded for 18 months.
9. That an in house 'tenancy ready post' be established to provide intensive support to help the individuals who are directly impacted

from the HCC funding cuts to be able to move on and successfully sustain their tenancy within a community.

10. That the temporary staffing posts of the Outreach Worker and the Strategic Housing Support Worker be extended until 31 March 2027.
11. That this strategy will be reviewed in twelve months in light of confirmed additional demand and the impact of proposals.
12. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director with housing responsibility in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to agree any further additional spending of the homelessness prevention grant reserve or the allocation of the 25/26 Homeless Prevention grant and any new or additional grants awarded to the council by Central government that support preventing homelessness and rough sleeping.

10. **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 12.05 pm

Chairperson