

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Homes & Communities Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, Notts NG24 1BY on Monday, 13 September 2021 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor T Wendels (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs R Holloway (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Mrs B Brooks, Councillor S Carlton, Councillor R Crowe,
Councillor Mrs L Dales, Councillor L Goff, Councillor S Haynes and
Councillor J Lee

ALSON IN
ATTENDANCE: Councillor Mrs P Rainbow

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor M Brock (Committee Member) and Councillor T Wildgust
(Committee Member)

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chairman, Councillor Wendels, invited the Committee to stand for one minute to remember the late Mrs Kathleen Arnold who had been a member of the Homes & Communities Committee.

The Chairman then welcomed Councillor Haynes and Councillor Wildgust to their first meeting of the Homes & Communities Committee. Although noting that Councillor Wildgust was unable to attend the meeting and had given his apologies.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND AS TO THE PARTY WHIP

NOTED that no Member or Officer declared any interest pursuant to any statutory requirement in any matter discussed or voted upon at the meeting.

21 DECLARATION OF ANY INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

NOTED that there would be an audio recording of the meeting undertaken by the Council.

22 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 JUNE 2021

AGREED (unanimously) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman welcomed everyone back to the second meeting this year in person and advised as we slowly return to the office, safely and in line with guidelines the reports would again be presented by a small number of officers, not necessarily the author and any unanswered questions would be followed up.

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Council supported anti-social behaviour week which took place in July. Each day during the week had a particulate

theme and local activities and media releases supported each of these. The themes for the week included partnerships, victims and frontline practitioners. Both Public Protection and Housing were involved in activities during the week.

The Chairman reminded the Committee of the Safer Streets 1 which was completed earlier this year with the only outstanding action being the opening of the Hub; the Chairman was delighted to say that the community resource was opened officially by Caroline Henry the new Police and Crime Commissioner and David Lloyd the Leader of the Council on 18 August 2021.

The neighbourhood policing Inspector and the Business Manager for Public Protection continue to meet each quarter to identify the local policing priorities for the coming quarter. The priorities for July, August and September were identified as anti-social behaviour, vehicle crime and rogue trading.

A lot of time and effort was expended on addressing a number of unauthorised encampments during the summer. In the main this was a single group that were intent on staying within Newark and moved from site to site. Officers responded quickly using the courts to secure possession orders to allow evictions to take place. Longer term solutions are being investigated to prevent future occurrences.

Hoarding is an issue that impacts on individuals within Newark and Sherwood. A district wide Hoarding Panel has now been established that brings together professionals from a number of partner organisations to provide a multi-agency approach to addressing local hoarding cases and working with the individuals affected.

The Chairman then updated the Committee regarding Broadleaves, the new Housing with Care facility which opened its doors in July; and have currently 11 residents enjoying the fabulous scheme.

Also newly opened is the Ollerton Office following a full refurbishment. It is no longer dedicated to just housing enquires – the advisors can assist with all council enquiries. There are self-serve computers so if customers need to access services online then they can do so. Due to the re-opening of this office, customer services are no longer delivering a service from Ollerton Town Hall, although ‘partners’ are still delivering a service from there on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

The Chairman lastly informed the Committee that the Community Lottery continues to grow and generates much needed income for the 51 good causes registered. The Lottery is currently forecast to generate £26.5k over the coming year and will continue to promote the lottery to local community groups, charities and residents to increase funds. Having had 2 big winners so far – receiving £250 each!

24 FORWARD PLAN - OCTOBER 2021 TO SEPTEMBER 2022

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for October 2021 to September 2022 with the Chairman inviting Members to put forward any items they would wish to be considered by Committee at a future meeting.

A Committee Member enquired as to bringing forward items on the Forward Plan as noted that they would be moving from the Committee system to a Cabinet. The Chairman noted this and it was requested if a report could be brought to the November meeting on the Homeless Winter Provision as well as Safer Streets Continued to either November or March Committee.

25 RECONSTITUTION OF WORKING PARTIES/TASK & FINISH GROUPS

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Elections & Democratic Services to consider reconvening the Working Parties/Task & Finish Groups established by the Homes & Communities Committee.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Committee determined that the Housing Advisory Group be reconvened and to review the membership of the group.
- (b) the Committee appointed the following representatives to the Housing Advisory Group – Cllr Wendels, Cllr Mrs Holloway, Cllr Crowe, Cllr Mrs Dales, Cllr Goff and Cllr Haynes. Cllr Mrs Holloway and Cllr Lee were also appointed as representatives to the Local Development Framework Task Group, if reconvened by the Economic Development Committee.

26 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME – ANNUAL REVIEW

The Committee considered the report from the Assistant Business Manager for Housing and Estate Management providing the annual update on the application of the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme and when appropriate, to recommend some minor amends to the scheme for Committee approval.

The report provided bandings and lettings data with tables showing the number of applicants by their bandings that were registered at the end of quarter 1 2021/22 and also the number of applicants on the housing register with the number of allocations that have been made throughout 2021/21.

The Committee thanked the Officers for the report and requested a change be made to recommendation (b) for delegated authority being given to the Chairman of the Committee rather than to the Director of Housing, Health and Wellbeing, noting that all Members are sent the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) Members noted the contents of this report which provides an annual update on the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme;
- (b) delegated authority be given to the Chairman of the Committee to approve any further minor amends required that do not require formal consultation, to ensure the Scheme continues to adhere to statutory requirements.

27 PHASE TWO CONSULTATION OF TENANT ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Housing and Estate Management updating Members on the progress made with regards to the consultation and implementation plan of tenant engagement in housing services.

The report reminded Members that in January 2020, the Homes & Communities Committee approved a root and branch review of tenant engagement following the re-introduction of the former Newark and Sherwood Homes into the general housing service.

In November 2020, a Tenant Engagement Officer role began working with tenants in housing services and phase one of the review, this then led to an additional Tenant Engagement Officer joining in August of this year.

The appendix to the report provided phase two feedback of the opportunities for involvement.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) Members noted the progress in the implementation of the Housing Services tenant engagement review.
- (b) Members supported the recommendation of the additional budget provision of £25k for 2022/23, which will be incorporated into the budget setting process, with full details of spend to be provided to the Committee.

28 CLIMATE EMERGENCY UPDATE

The Committee considered the report from the Environmental Policy and Projects Officer providing an update to Members on the progress of the climate Emergency Strategy and associated Action Plan.

The report advised that work has been underway to progress a number of the activities relating to this agenda, referring to Appendix 1 for the full report detailing all progress made towards the climate change agenda and to be taken to the Policy & Finance Committee on 23 September 2021.

The Committee discussed the report including electric council vehicles with Brunel Drive being the ideal place to store the vehicles and for electric charging. The Environmental Policy and Projects Officer did advise that the council vehicles are not due to be replaced until 2026/27.

The Committee thanked those involved on the progress provided so far.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Project update be noted.

- (b) further reports providing additional progress updates on Newark and Sherwood District Council's carbon reduction journey will be provided as required.

29 REVIEW OF PUBLIC REALM CCTV

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Public Protection reviewing the Council's existing public realm CCTV system, detailing the current coverage that exists across Newark & Sherwood. The report sets out how the system operates (including the shared arrangements with two neighbouring local authorities), the current costs of the system, its usage, all alongside a review of its overall value.

The report highlighted to Members that this was public CCTV and not the security of council buildings, a lot of data had been provided within the report. The Chairman noted the recommendations were positive with the right number of cameras in the right places.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) Members noted the content of the report with particular reference to the strong link between the location of the cameras and recorded crime; and that,
- (b) no cameras are removed from the CCTV network; and that,
- (c) the CCTV capital replacement programme is now implemented; and that,
- (d) the Business Manager for Public Protection works with the police to identify a performance measure that reflects the use of CCTV and crime investigation outcomes.

30 STAR SURVEY

The Committee considered the report from the Project Research Officer providing Members with the latest STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) Survey for 2020/21.

The report highlighted how the survey was conducted in March and April this year and surveyed 545 tenants by telephone. The report was provided in June. This work was conducted by an independent survey provider, Viewpoint Research.

A Committee Member enquired if disabled tenants were also included in the survey, it was explained to the Committee that tenants were chosen at random, this was noted and would be discussed with the external provider.

The Committee noted a lot of good results from the full report at Appendix 1.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) overall positive levels in satisfaction for housing services be noted.

(b) the full STAR report at Appendix 1 be noted.

31 HOUSING SERVICE COMPLIANCE QUARTER 1 OUT TURN PERFORMANCE

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Housing Maintenance & Asset Management providing an overview of compliance performance of the housing service for the quarter to the end of June 2021.

The report provided the Committee with assurance that homes are safe and services are of a high standard and meet legal and regulatory requirements as a landlord.

The performance included a summary of the Council's housing stock, and landlord responsibilities of building safety measures including fire protection, gas, asbestos, electrical and water.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

(a) the Committee noted the performance of the housing service compliance functions.

32 MEH LAD 2 GRANT FUNDING PROJECT - UPDATE

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Housing Maintenance & Asset Management providing Members with an update on the progress of the Midlands Energy Hub (MEH) Local Authority Delivery 2 (LAD 2) Grant funding Project to provide major energy efficiency improvement measures to 73 homes on low incomes.

The report explained that the MEH LAD2 funding provides an excellent opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of Council-owned homes and private sector homes in two priority areas.

The Committee noted that the deadline for completion of works had been extended from 31 December 2021 to 31 March 2022.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

(a) the project update be noted.

33 HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT (HECA) BI ANNUAL REPORT 2021

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Housing Maintenance & Asset Management informing Members and sharing the content of the annual submission for Home Energy Conservation to the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) (see Appendix 1). This report was submitted online on 31 May 2021 to comply with BEIS's deadline.

This report to be provided bi-annually and shares what energy conservation measures have been adopted to improve energy efficiency of residential accommodation within

the district. This covers measures across all tenures and not just the Council's social housing stock.

The Committee were advised that the submission had been written in collaboration with Officers from Environmental Health and the Environmental Policy and Projects Officer. The Vice-Chairman thanked the Officers for a detailed report providing more content than previously provided.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report be noted.

34 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY 2020/21

The Committee considered the report from the Housing Development Officer to provide the Committee with detail on affordable housing delivery across the district for the financial year 2020/21, along with a guide on future anticipated delivery.

An update was also provided on the progress being made to deliver the approved 5 year Council housing (*Housing Revenue Account*) development programme including progress on the Broadleaves Extra Care Scheme at Boughton.

The Committee discussed the report and noted how the Broadleaves Extra Care Scheme had come in under budget making a saving of £500,000.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Committee noted the affordable housing delivery and progress with the Council's five year development programme, making any observations as appropriate.

35 PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL INITIATIVE FUND 2020/2021 (CLEANER, SAFER, GREENER) ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report from the Health Improvement and Community Relations Manager providing Members with an overview of the Parish and Town Council Initiative fund awards for the 2020/2021 'Greener' themed rounds.

The report was the first to bring to the Committee outlining the composition of the panel, with a summary of those applications received and to then bring back to the Committee as an annual report.

The Health Improvement and Community Relations Manager and his team were thanked by a Committee Member who highlighted how funding can make a big difference. The Chairman was pleased to see that the bids were successful in meeting the criteria.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report and Appendix A be noted; and

- (b) the Parish and Town Council Initiative Fund 2021/2022 Annual Review be reported to Committee in 2022.

36 URGENCY ITEM – AFGHAN LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF (LES) RELOCATION SCHEME – JUNE 2021

The report provided the Committee with the urgency decision that had been taken with respect to the Afghan Locally Employed Staff (LES) Relocation Scheme.

This urgency item was required to secure delegated approval for the Council to accommodate two families in NSDC under the above scheme in order to meet the tight timescales that have been presented within the programme.

The Chairman also provided the Committee with an update advising that the Council had responded to a request made to all councils to help with the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). The Council having pledged to accept two families so far and are sourcing accommodation for them. The policy provides financial support for the family to help with housing and general integration and the Council are following their successful Vulnerable Persons Resettlement model to manage this programme locally. Case working support will be provided by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum and Nottingham City Council will be responsible for overall budget management as part of the Nottingham Partnership.

The first family arrived into temporary accommodation on 16th August and existing network of support for refugees has been deployed and they are settling well. They moved into their permanent accommodation last week and the local community were involved in their welcome relocating to Rainworth.

As they are expecting the imminent arrival of a second family, the government have announced 'Operation Warm Welcome'. This is a pledge to provide more wrap around support to these families and most importantly, it will give them automatic right to 'Indefinite Leave to Remain' on arrival. This removes all usual immigration barriers and they can apply for citizenship of the UK immediately.

The MHCLG have asked local authorities to increase their pledges where possible to house the thousands that are still in hotel accommodation in the UK. The Council are investigating the potential to increase their pledge to five families working with other local providers and private landlords in the district.

NOTED the Urgency Item – Minute of Decision.

37 HOMES & COMMUNITIES REVENUE AND CAPITAL FORECAST OUTTURN REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2022 AS AT 31 JULY 2021

The Committee considered the report from the Business Manager for Financial Services comparing the Revised Budgets for the period ending 31 March 2022 with the Projected Outturn forecast for the period, based on meetings with Financial Services staff and the appropriate Business Manager. These are based on four months' performance information on the Council's revenue and capital budgets,

including:-

- General Fund (GF) Revenue
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
- Capital Programme

The Members requested at the Policy & Finance Committee during February 2020 that reports were presented to individual Committee, for noting, for them to understand the financial position of their Committee.

The report provided the Committee with the Policy & Finance report to be tabled at Committee on 23 September detailing the forecast financial position to 31 March 2022 of the Council as at 31 July 2021.

A further report to be brought to the November meeting of the Homes & Communities Committee.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the contents of the report be noted.

Meeting closed at 7.59 pm.

Chairman