

Runnymede Borough CouncilHousing CommitteeWednesday, 6 March 2024 at 7.00 pm

Members of the Council present: Councillors M Nuti (Chair), A Balkan (In place of J Hulley), R King, I Mullens, M Smith, P Snow (Substitute) (In place of S Dennett) and S Williams.

Members of the Council absent: Councillors MK Cressey, M Darby, and N Prescott.

67 Notifications of Changes to Committee Membership

Cllr A. Balkan substituted for Cllr J. Hulley; Cllr P. Snow substituted for Cllr S. Dennett.

68 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 January 2024 were held to be correct.

69 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Cllr M.K. Cressey

70 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

71 CCTV Policy

The Interim Corporate Head of Housing outlined the new guidance for a CCTV policy from the Information Commissioner's Office. Residents would now follow a set of guidelines when using CCTV as outlined in the policy. However, if the CCTV became the subject of a neighbour dispute, the Council would ask the tenant to remove it.

Members were asked to approve an eight-week consultation period on the amended CCTV Policy.

Resolved that:

Members approved consultation with stakeholders on the revised CCTV Policy for Council Housing Estates.

72 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

The Head of Housing Solutions shared the updated Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy with members. She outlined the wider socio-economic context in which the strategy had been developed which had required the strategy to be reviewed. This had seen a wider group of people accessing services including those on steady incomes; those

under 35; those with complex issues and those fleeing domestic abuse.

She also shared successes of the current strategy including up to 80% of those identified as rough sleeping being helped off of the streets. She outlined how the new strategy aimed to improve links with charities that support those fleeing domestic abuse and those that support refugees; developing staff within the department; and building links with local landlords to ensure better use of the Council's housing stock.

Questions were raised over the disparity between the official rough sleeper figure used in the report and those that were known to use charities such as food banks. The Assistant Chief Executive (Place) explained the difficulties around capturing an accurate figure for rough sleeping and that the figure provided reflected a consistent methodology all local authorities apply nationally in order to report in compliance with DLUHC annual autumn "snapshot" requirements. This survey is coordinated with other boroughs to void duplication. Officers agreed to review the count for last year and feed back to the reporting charity.

73 **KPI Report**

The Interim Corporate Head of Housing outlined the contractor staffing issues that led to the disappointing figures in the KPI report including difficulty recruiting and subcontracting. However, the contractor has now fulfilled their recruitment needs and the numbers were now improving.

It was explained that the Decent Homes Compliance figure will decrease each April and increase over the year as upgrades are done until the following year when more properties fail until the current programme has cleared the backlog. The fire door programme is underway with Surrey Towers completed first. Asbestos surveys are completed when a property is void and prior to any kitchen or bathroom upgrades and so this percentage will continue to increase.

Members enquired about potential financial compensation that the Council may be entitled to because of the repairs and maintenance contractor's performance, and it was confirmed there are penalties in the contract for poor performance.

74 **Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan**

The Interim Corporate Head of Housing outlined the Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan with the caveat that it was modelled on current economic predictions. She outlined the five themes that ran through the plan. The Council had applied to the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund for match Government funding that would enable the Council to invest in measures to 169 homes. In addition to the current debt of £100 million, there was a potential for an additional £57million borrowing to facilitate compliance with statutory duties and provision of additional social housing. The loss of £50m over the 30 year plan due to the enforced rent decrease for 4 years, inflation and additional requirements coming out of new legislation had all contributed to this position.

Resolved that:

Members approved the Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan

75 **SO42 - Additional Resources in Housing Technical Services**

The Interim Corporate Head of Housing outlined the need for a Housing Maintenance

Inspector to deal with damp and mould.

(The meeting ended at 8.09 pm.)

Chair