

Runnymede Borough Council

Housing Committee

Wednesday, 5 June 2024 at 7.00 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors M Smith (Chair), R Davies (Vice-Chair), MK Cressey, J Furey, T Gracey, C Howorth, S Jenkins, P Mehta and C Parry.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors G Moudgil.

1 **Notifications of Changes to Committee Membership**

Cllr T. Gates substituted for Cllr G. Moudgil.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 March 2024 were held to be correct subject to the typo 'void' being changed to 'avoid.'

Apologies for Absence

None.

4 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

5 **Complaints Policy**

The complaints policy was outlined to members. Members asked about the procedure for tenants of housing associations to raise complaints. It was outlined that such individuals could raise complaints with the private sector housing team, but they should utilise their landlord's complaints process which will comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. They could also refer matters to the Ombudsman if they are not satisfied or have not received a response to their complaint. It was confirmed that an open dialogue around complaints would remain between the Housing Chair and the Standards and Audit committee who oversee complaints.

It was resolved that:

- i. Members approved the appointment of the Chair of the Housing Committee as the Council Member responsible for housing complaints.**
- ii. Members approved the revised Housing Complaints Policy.**

6 **Tenant and Leaseholder Strategy: Annual Update**

Members were updated on the tenant and leaseholder strategy. It was clarified that the Runnymede Council Residents Association (RCRA) was no longer in existence as it did not have enough members to meet the terms of reference. This group was not representative and the new strategy and the Engagement & Inclusion Officer are in place to

engage with as wide a group of tenants as possible.

7 **Mutual Exchange Policy**

The Mutual Exchange Policy was outlined to members who approved its implementation.

It was resolved that:

- i. Members approved the Mutual Exchange Policy.**

8 **Housing Fraud Policy**

The Housing Fraud Policy was outlined to members who approved its implementation.

It was resolved that:

- i. Members approved the Housing Fraud Policy.**

9 **CCTV Policy**

The revised CCTV Policy was outlined to members. Apparent discrepancies between reference to audio and visual CCTV in 5.4 and 5.5 of the policy were asked to be clarified within the policy. Queries were raised over the number of disputes between neighbours that were caused by CCTV. It was stated that the number of complaints across the entire stock was low but the use of CCTV could be an exacerbating factor in ASB disputes.

It was resolved that:

- i. Members approved the revised Housing CCTV Policy.**

10 **Performance Report**

The KPI and tenant satisfaction report was outlined and explained to members. Queries were raised over the declining asbestos metric (BS03), and it was explained that asbestos surveys are carried out when the property is vacant or when upgrades such as bathroom or kitchen are carried out. This figure is the number of surveys within the last 5 years. The Chair wished to pass on his thanks to the officer carrying out the Parkside project for personally contacting concerned residents.

11 **S106 Affordable Housing**

Trends in S106 affordable housing were outlined to members. Members asked what the Council intended to do with the £3.2 million it held in right to buy receipts. It was confirmed that they would be applied to acquisitions or new build properties as appropriate. Offices were asked to report on the length of time that Right To Buy receipts had been held and the level of commuted sums currently available.

Exclusion of press and public

13 **Housing Revenue Account Development**

Members were updated on the Housing Revenue Account Developments.

(The meeting ended at 8.31 pm.)

Chair