

Draft Minutes 21 May 2013

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **DECENT AND AFFORDABLE HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on Tuesday 21 May 2013 at 2.15pm

Present

Councillors: Mrs E M Andrews, W J Daw, P J Heal, R F Radford, Mrs J R Rendle and R Wright

Also Present

Councillors: R L Stanley and K D Wilson

Also Present

Officers: N Sanderson (Head of Housing and Property Services), C Yandle (Internal Audit Team Leader), C Fry (Housing Services Manager), D Snape (Supported Housing Manager), F Custance (Allocations Team Leader) and S M Coombs (Member Services Manager)

1 CHAIRMAN - ELECTION (Cllr R F Radford, Vice Chairman of the Council, in the Chair)

RESOLVED that Cllr P J Heal be elected Chairman of the Group for the municipal year 2013/14.

Cllr Heal took the Chair

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN - ELECTION

RESOLVED that Cllr W J Daw be elected Vice-Chairman of the Group for the municipal year 2013/14.

3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

4 MINUTES


The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 March 2013 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

5 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked the Group for electing him as their Chairman. He encouraged Members of the Group to visit void properties with officers to see how the Council's resources were spent.

The Chairman also drew attention to the training event for Members concerning tenants' housing complaints taking place on 30 May 2013 at 2.00pm.

6 QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE AND RISK FOR 2012/13

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a report*  [Minute 6 \[137kb\]](#) of the Head of Communities and Governance (HCG) providing an update on performance against Corporate Plan and local service targets within its remit for the 2012/13 financial year, together with an update on the key business risks.

The Internal Audit Team Leader indicated that the Quarter 4 figure missing from Appendix 1 relating to affordable homes was 33. She also drew attention to the scoring for the Right to Buy having been reduced in the risk register following the discussion at the last meeting.

Note: *Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes;

7 TENANCY SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2013/14


The Group had before it and **NOTED** the Tenancy Services Business Plan*  [Minute 7 \[103kb\]](#) for 2013/14.

The Head of Housing and Property Services indicated that this was the first of a number of plans coming to the Group that formed part of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. It indicated what work the Tenancy Services team would be undertaking over the next year, the risks and the budgetary implications. Budget figures would be provided in due course and it was **AGREED** that an update on the Business Plan be submitted to the Group in six months time.

A discussion took place about rent arrears. It was **AGREED** that the proposed traffic light system of letters to tenants about their arrears should be submitted to the Group at a future meeting.

Note: *Business Plan previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.


8 TENANTS' HOUSING COMPLAINTS

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a briefing paper*  [Minute 8 \[47kb\]](#) by the Housing Services Manager on the way in which the Housing Service investigated and responded to complaints.

The Service managed complaints in accordance with the corporate policy. This specified that there was a two stage procedure whereby the Service Manager would undertake an initial investigation with a view to resolving the issue. If the complainant remained dissatisfied then the matter was referred to the Head of Housing and Property Services.

Note: * Briefing paper previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

9 DEVON HOME CHOICE

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a briefing paper*  [Minute 9 \[45kb\]](#) by the Housing Services Manager on the review of Devon Home Choice (DHC) and the changes to the scheme that would be implemented in 2013.

The DHC Management Board were currently assessing the feasibility of centralising some administrative functions. MDDC Officers did not consider that such centralising would bring any advantages to Mid Devon.

Other changes that were being considered included:

- Allowing applicants to reset their own passwords, providing self-serve to enable them to check banding data and amending the system so that those people who did not bid were automatically removed from the housing register;
- The age at which two children of the same sex could share a room would be reduced from 21 to 16 to accord with the Housing Benefit regulations;
- Changing the income threshold for housing applicants;
- The possibility of maintaining a band (band E) for those in no housing need


Note: *Briefing paper previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

10 CARE SERVICES

Following reference back by the Full Council of the decision by the Cabinet to approve Option 1 (a no cross subsidy service) for the future of Care Services to the PDG and Cabinet, the Supported Housing Manager reported on the present position. He indicated that the number of staff in Care Services had been reduced and that consultation with tenants on the new system of targeted support would commence shortly. A permanent telecare sales officer had been appointed.

During discussion it was pointed out that the Council would need to decide whether it wished to have a no subsidy service or terminate the Service. It was suggested that a decision needed to be made by the Full Council in six months time following further consideration by the PDG and the Cabinet.

11 WELL PARKS, CREDITON - LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY

The Group had before it and **NOTED** the Local Lettings Policy*  [Minute 11 \[80kb\]](#) for the new development of 22 properties built by the Council at Well Parks, Crediton.

With regard to No.6 on the Policy the Allocations Team Leader stated that households with persons in employment would be included within the qualification criteria.

Notes: *Policy previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

12 START TIME OF MEETINGS

It was **AGREED** that meetings of the Group continue to start at 2.15pm.

13 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING - 16 JULY 2013

The following matters were suggested for the next meeting:

- Housing Business Plan;
- Financial Outturn for 2012/13;
- Programme of expenditure;
- Aids and Adaptations Policy;
- Cash Incentive Scheme
- New Homes Bonus;
- Update on Tenancy home checks.

(The meeting ended at
3.45pm)

RMAN

CHAI