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PEOPLE AND HEALTH OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2023

Present: Cllrs Cathy Lugg (Vice-Chairman), Tony Alford, Pauline Batstone, Jean Dunseith, Beryl Ezzard, Stella Jones and Howard Legg

Apologies: Cllrs Mike Parkes, Ryan Holloway and Rebecca Knox

Also present: Cllr Graham Carr-Jones

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Andrew Billany (Corporate Director for Housing), George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Sharon Attwater (Service Manager for Housing Strategy and Performance), Sarah Smith (Housing Strategy Lead) and Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer)

42. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mike Parkes, Ryan Holloway, and Rebecca Knox.

Vice-Chair in the chair.

43. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

44. **Minutes**

Proposed by Cllr Batstone, seconded by Cllr Ezzard.

Decision

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2023 be confirmed and signed.

45. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

46. **Councillor Questions**

There were no questions from councillors.

47. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

48. **Committee's Work Programme and Cabinet's Forward Plan**

The Senior Democratic Services Officer outlined the committee's work programme for the upcoming meetings on 6 February and 19 March 2024.

There were no comments on the work programme or Cabinet's Forward Plan.

49. **Home In On Housing - Dorset Council's Housing Strategy**

The Lead Member for Housing introduced the Housing Strategy which was a high-level document setting out the vision, aims and objectives for housing in Dorset. The strategy was developed over the past 12 months through a series of internal and external stakeholder engagement and a public consultation. The strategy would replace former district council housing policies, and a delivery plan would sit behind the strategic document.

The Corporate Director for Housing and Community Safety gave a presentation to the committee. The presentation, which is attached to these minutes, outlined: the development of the strategy; the visions and objectives; the key themes from consultation responses; how the strategy would be delivered; and the next steps for delivery.

Members discussed the report and asked questions of the officers and Lead Member. The following points were raised:

- Parts of Part 2 of the cover report, outlining the Housing Strategy, could be made stronger relating to the delivery of new affordable housing and the link to the Climate and Ecology Strategy. It was acknowledged that the Housing Strategy itself was detailed and strong, and the delivery plan work would cover those, and other, areas of priority.
- The council should be prepared, when viable and appropriate, to use its status as a registered provider to acquire homes when other independent registered providers do not.
- Some registered providers have sold homes, largely because they were in poor condition and were not economic to maintain.
- The council bringing empty properties back into use was welcomed.
- The delivery plan would be developed in various parts, with the overarching delivery plan to be developed in early 2024.

- The housing strategy and delivery plan would be reviewed and monitored, and aspects of that plan being brought to appropriate Council committees – including the Housing Board and specific reports to Scrutiny and Overview.
- A key part of the delivery would be determined through the Local Plan and associated policies across the range of Council policies.

Members thanked officers for their support in developing the strategy.

Proposed by Cllr Legg, seconded by Cllr Ezzard.

That the following be added to the end of paragraph 2.3 of the cover report: “As a Registered Provider we will seek to provide housing that is not currently provided by registered providers. We will also be open to consider s106 housing where no registered provider is identified.”

Proposed by Cllr Legg, seconded by Cllr Ezzard.

That the following be added to the end of paragraph 2.5 of the cover report: “which is in accordance with Dorset Council’s Climate and Ecological Strategy.”

Both amendments to the cover report were unanimously supported by the committee.

Proposed by Cllr Batstone, seconded by Cllr Ezzard.

Decision

That the Housing Strategy and its objectives, and the amendments to the cover report, be recommended to Cabinet.

50. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 10.54 am

Chairman

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Dorset
Council

Housing Strategy

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Minute Item 49



Home in on
Housing

Developing the strategy

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Build from existing policies



Research and analytics



Best practice and innovation



Internal engagement



Stakeholder engagement



Public consultation

Consultation overview

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Broad reach



2137 responses



Vision and
direction - 86.6%
in agreement



Aims &
objectives 84% in
agreement

Vision & Objectives

Our vision is to ensure our residents have access to affordable, suitable, secure homes where they can live well as part of sustainable and thriving communities.

- Housing Need - Enabling residents to live safe, healthy, independent lives in homes that meet their needs.
- Housing Supply - Driving the delivery of homes people need and can afford to live in.
- Housing Standards - Improving the quality, standard, and safety of homes.
- Prevention of Homelessness - Support, at the right time, to people in crisis to prevent homelessness.

Key themes

- Right infrastructure to support new housing development (e.g., road improvements, school places and GP capacity)
- Design of new and refurbished homes (e.g., to improve energy efficiency, reduce environmental impact, protect natural environment, and to be easier to adapt to changing needs)
- Need for more social and affordable housing for rent
- Housing of all types, price ranges and tenures to meet the needs of people in their local communities

- Managing the impact of Airbnb, holiday lets and second homes on availability of housing
- Homelessness (e.g., people who are at risk of losing their home or have already lost their home)
- Supporting affordable home ownership for first time buyers and working age people and their families/households
- Using resources – land, assets and enabling expertise for affordable housing
- Improving the standard of rented housing



Our residents said....

“We need homes which are genuinely affordable, environmentally sustainable, and homes where those who need it, can easily access comprehensive support and essential services. More housing to meet the needs of people in their local communities.”

“We need good quality homes, with the infrastructure to support them, where we want them. But we don’t want that to be at the expense of our green spaces”.

“We want housing to be sustainable, energy efficient, and of a good standard for everyone. We want homes to be safe and this means taking action against those who don’t meet standards.”

“We need the right kinds of support, and early intervention, to stop homelessness before it happens. We also want enough housing for people to help them move to somewhere else if they do become homeless”.

Delivering the strategy



Themes for the
Delivery Plan



Detailed
delivery and
transformation
plans



Housing Board
Oversight



Monitoring and
evaluation

Meeting our objectives – delivery plan

Increasing Housing Delivery

Right Place

Right Property

Data Insight & Development

Homes for Dorset residents

Dorset Landlords

Empty properties

Building healthy communities

Best use of Council assets

Social Housing

Best use of social housing

Supporting sustainable tenancies

Enhancing our temporary accommodation offer

Sustainable Homes & Developments

Accessible homes

New models of housing delivery

Funding

Next steps for delivery

- Delivering across Council priorities, as well as statutory responsibilities.
- Decent Housing a key component of a good life. Bad housing a key component of a challenging life. Getting this wrong costs the Council and the wider system (esp. Health) significant sums. (homelessness, social care, health, unemployment, poor educational achievement, etc.).
- Income stream from grants and rents. Top ups around housing benefit subsidy shortfall are the budget pressure. Maximising grants and rental income, but also investment to save through prevention, sourcing and managing cost-effective temporary accommodation, moving people on to settled housing.
- We are an enabling authority, providing much of this through partners. We need to intervene selectively and with a commercial focus – when it provides best value.
- A clear plan and robust performance management. Strong progress. Bucking the national trend by reducing temporary accommodation numbers.
- Transformation and gear shifts – Homes Dorset, Emergency Accommodation, Systems tailored to serve housing requirements.
- Maximise benefits to other, and related, Council priorities. Social Care and broader accommodation needs for adults and children. Climate impact/carbon footprint of homes. Knitted and aligned with Local Plan.