

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 26 September 2013

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Weldon (Chair), Penny Baker (Deputy Chair), Simon Clement-Jones, Sheila Constance, Richard Crowther, Qurban Hussain, Sioned-Mair Richards, Roy Munn, Robert Murphy and Diana Stimely (Substitute Member)

.....

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received and a substitute attended the meeting as follows:-

<u>Apology</u>	<u>Substitute</u>
Councillor David Barker	No substitute nominated
Councillor Denise Fox	No substitute nominated
Councillor Rob Frost	Councillor Diana Stimely
Councillor Philip Wood	No substitute nominated

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25th July, 2013 were approved as a correct record and, arising from their consideration, it was noted that the response to the public question regarding the Arbourthorne Fields Redevelopment Scheme, submitted by Mr. Martin Brighton, would be circulated to all Members of the Committee.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no petitions received or public questions submitted.

6. REVIEW OF THE PARTNER RESOURCE ALLOCATION MEETING (PRAM)

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Interim Head of Community Safety which provided details on the progress of the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM) and included feedback from a Local Government Association Review of PRAM, which had taken place in June, 2013. This was supported by a

presentation given by Simon Mitchell, Safer Neighbourhood Manager, during which he explained that PRAM had been introduced to the East of the City in August 2012, with the aim of improving the identification and support for vulnerable people experiencing anti-social behaviour. He also provided details of three case studies.

6.2 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- In situations where there was an obvious vulnerability, action should be taken straight away.
- It was hoped that, eventually, area-based services would deal with these cases.
- PRAM was presently operating in the East of the City, covering the area from Ecclesfield to Mosborough. It was hoped to extend it to the rest of the City, following the Local Government Association review.
- Attempts had been made not to be too prescriptive with the definition of “vulnerability”, so as to avoid the adoption of too narrow a view. However, it was considered that circumstances such as age, degree of isolation and situations where people were no longer getting a service which they had previously received, were important factors. It was essential that officers were sufficiently knowledgeable to identify vulnerability.
- Councillors could report instances of vulnerability to Safer Neighbourhood Officers, Neighbourhood Policing teams or the Council’s Housing Service. The 101 telephone number was a good place for picking up such intelligence, but reports of vulnerability tended to be simply referred on and there was no feedback, which created something of a gap in the system.
- A new Safer Neighbourhood Officer would be in place within the next two weeks in the Central area of the City.
- There was no reason to think that there was less vulnerability in the West of the City. The function of PRAM was to identify the most vulnerable individuals and then involve the necessary resources.
- Attempts were being made to get officers not to see PRAM as a first port of call, with an area-based forum being required.
- Officers would eventually be working all across the City to look at risk and vulnerability. It was felt that viewing these issues in terms of a reduction in anti-social behaviour was outdated, with a more forward looking approach putting the emphasis on issues such as social care and mental health.
- There was not much of a budget for this work, with a beg, borrow and steal approach being employed. There were no resources to deal with mental health issues and consideration was being given to how health professionals

could get involved.

6.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Simon Mitchell for his contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the report and presentation and the responses to questions;
- (c) approves the proposed City-wide development of the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting;
- (d) requests that:-
 - (i) efforts be made to improve relations between the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting and the Neighbourhood Action Groups;
 - (ii) a quarterly written report on actions relating to the development of the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting in other parts of the City be provided to the Committee;
 - (iii) an annual presentation on the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting be given to the Committee, with up to two additional partners to attend; and
 - (iv) a brief paper explaining what the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting was, including contact details for the Safer Neighbourhood Officers, be circulated to all Members of the Council; and
- (e) appoints the Chair, Councillor Chris Weldon, and Deputy Chair, Councillor Penny Baker, as the main points of liaison between the Committee and the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting.

7. SHEFFIELD HOUSING COMPANY

7.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Place, which provided a short history of the Sheffield Housing Company and an update on its progress to date. The report was supported by a presentation given by John Clephan, Regeneration Manager.

7.2 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- The properties for sale were generally more expensive than ex-Council houses in the surrounding areas. However, they were cheaper than some new build competitors. It should be noted that they were not subsidised. Initial sales activity showed that there was a healthy demand for these properties.
- Many of the buyers had benefitted from the Help to Buy Government

scheme.

- The average price on the Parson Cross development was up to £155,000 for a four bedroomed property and just over £100,000 for a two-bedroomed property.
- There were approximately 17 different types of property on offer.
- There had been a greater demand for the larger family homes since sales began.
- Phase 2 properties in the Fir Vale area would be located around the Earl Marshal School, near the temporary car wash. It was estimated that 60 homes would be delivered in this location. It was likely that more 4, 5 and possibly 6 bedroomed homes would be included in the mix for this site.
- Whilst the development agreement prevented the sale of these properties to bulk buyers, it did not prevent buyers from renting them out. In the light of this it was important to consider who the properties were marketed to. It should be noted that the properties were not freehold sales and any issues regarding renting could potentially be addressed through the management of the leases. It should also be noted that social landlords were able to bulk buy these properties.

7.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks John Clephan for his contribution to the meeting; and
- (b) notes the contents of the report and presentation and the responses to questions.

8. WELFARE REFORM - SEPTEMBER UPDATE

8.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the Welfare Reform, September Update; and
- (b) requests that it be circulated to all Council Members.

9. WORK PROGRAMME

9.1 The Chair, Councillor Chris Weldon, directed Members of the Committee to the circulated Schedule of Future Agenda Items covering the meetings up to 27th March, 2014.

9.2 In response to a question regarding the Kier contract, which ended in March, 2014, the Chair indicated that the Council's Procurement Service were already working with staff and tenants' representatives in relation to the new contract. A report would subsequently be produced, which the Committee would scrutinise to ensure proper practice and make any recommendations.

9.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee agrees the contents of the circulated Schedule of Future Agenda Items.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 28th November, 2013 at 2.00 p.m. in the Town Hall

This page is intentionally left blank