



Minutes of the Housing Rental Company Committee

30 October 2017

-: Present :-

Councillors Darling (S), Pentney, Robson, Thomas (D) and Tyerman

1. Election of Chairman/woman

Councillor Thomas (D) was elected Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

2. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor King.

It was reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Conservative Group, the membership of the Committee had been amended for this meeting by including Councillor O'Dwyer instead of Councillor Barnby.

3. Appointment of Vice Chairman/woman

Councillor Robson was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

4. Terms of Reference

The Director of Adult Services outlined the submitted paper which set out the terms of reference for the Committee.

Resolved:

That the terms of reference be noted.

5. Housing Strategy Progress

The Head of Partnerships, People and Housing presented the submitted report which set out the Housing Strategy Action Plan and provided members with an overview on the delivery the Housing Strategy to date. It was noted that funding had been secured to provide a Community Housing and Delivery Manager, who would be in post from 1 December 2017. Members were advised the Manager would analyse areas within the action plan to ensure its deliverability.

A number of challenges were made to progress and consistency of updates. Agreed RAG rated strategy would be a standing agenda item and that objectives

would change in accordance with current changes in national housing policy and opportunities for external resourcing of housing delivery.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

6. Business Plan Objectives and Project Plan - Operational Management

The Director of Adult Services advised following the decision in September 2016, where the Council agreed in principle to set up a wholly owned housing company, a Housing Rental Company (to include the Housing Development Company and a Holding Company) had been established and that a revised policy framework document had recently been approved by Council.

The Director outlined the key activities which had been undertaken since July 2017 and highlighted to members the Project Team created to support the establishment of the Housing Rental Company. The Committee were advised that three Company Directors had been approved and that the Directors had already had two Board meetings. External advice had informed the Council that it was necessary to set up a separate rental company and holding company in order to maximise financial benefits from the Housing Company's activities. It was also noted that there was no benefit in having charitable status for the Company's.

The Director of Adult Services went on to explain that the principle objective of the Housing Rental Company would be to support the objectives of the Council to enable ambitious and progressive delivery of the Housing Strategy and outlined seven objectives which could be included. Members discussed the objectives and suggested (v) be strengthened to 'unlock stalled sites particularly in around the town centre' and (vi) be strengthened to 'regenerating properties particularly in areas of deprivation'.

Resolved:

- (i) that, due to tax and administrative reasons the Committee were satisfied that the Company established two further companies as outlined with specific names and clear governance arrangements; and
- (ii) that the Housing Rental Company Committee become a consultee on planning applications with a view to support the Council's Planning Officers in tackling viability and increasing affordable accommodation.

7. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Prior to consideration of the item in Minute 8 the press and public were formally excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

8. Provision of Temporary Accommodation

The Executive Head of Community Safety presented the submitted exempt report which sought Members' approval to develop a medium/long term solution to the Council's physical accommodation requirements in relation to the Temporary Accommodation Service.

Resolved:

That the Housing Rental Company Committee in principle supports the purchase of the properties subject to a full business case and purchasing model (including a maximum price) being presented to the next meeting of this Committee.

Chairman