

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

9 February 2023

-: Present :-

Councillor Douglas-Dunbar (Chairwoman)

Councillors Barrand, Brown, Bye (Vice-Chair), Dudley, Johns, Chris Lewis and Loxton

(Also in attendance: Councillors Steve Darling and David Thomas)

35. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kennedy. It was also reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Conservative Group and Liberal Democrat Group, the membership of the Board had been amended to include Councillors Chris Lewis and Dudley in place of Councillors Foster and Atiya-Alla respectively.

36. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 11 January 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairwoman.

37. Draft Housing Strategy and Public Consultation

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Darling, introduced the revised Draft Housing Strategy, which had been updated following consultation, and the Housing Strategy Project Plan 2023-2024. Members asked the following questions which were answered by the officers in attendance and the Leader of the Council:

- What action was being taken to address shops which had been empty for a long period of time.
- How much social housing does Torbay need compared to the rest of the country.
- Preston Down Road had gone out to tender for a registered social provider, why had this information not been shared with Councillors. Members requested information on the tender for Preston Down Road to be circulated to all Councillors after the meeting.
- If a separate entrance was not available to premises above shops would that make it more difficult to lease those spaces for housing.
- What action was being taken to ensure that landlords maintain their properties to an acceptable standard to prevent tenants having to move out of their existing properties.

- A number of complaints had been received from members of the public relating to poor housing conditions e.g. damp and repairs how were these reported and what action could the Council take to support tenants.
- How do we identify homeless residents and how were they registered as homeless.
- It can be difficult for homeless people to access housing due to waiting to receive benefits what support was available to help them.
- Who was responsible for dealing with antisocial behaviour outside flats and what could be done to support residents facing issues with antisocial behaviour.
- The report refers to challenges of lack of local builders in the Bay, what was meant by this. Officers were requested to clarify this after the meeting.
- What was affordable rent compared to social rent.
- Was the Council taking enough enforcement action to improve the quality of homes.
- Had the population figures for Torbay been updated following publication of the latest census.
- Were the figures for the number of affordable homes to be delivered realistic.

Resolved (unanimously):

Recommendation to the Cabinet:

That the Cabinet recommends to Council:

- 1 that the Torbay Housing Strategy 2023-2030, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved, subject to the latest population figures being checked against the latest census data; and
- 2 subject to 1 above, the Cabinet approves the Housing Strategy Project Plan 2023-2024, subject to:
 - a realistic and attainable target for delivery of the number of affordable homes to be delivered each year; and
 - to include targets to deliver a private rented sector improvement plan to tackle disrepair and poor housing conditions, proactively target non-compliant landlords by and take appropriate action where standards are not being met (target 2.1) and include actions and targets for improving housing conditions in social rented housing.

Recommendation to Overview and Scrutiny Board:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Board monitors the delivery of the Housing Strategy Project Plan 2023/2024 as part of their Work Programme for 2023/2024.

38. Revenue and Capital Budget 2023/2024 - Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

The Board considered the draft report which had been prepared following the meetings of the Priorities and Resources Review Panel 2023/2024 held during January and February 2023. The Review Panel had considered the Cabinet's Revenue and Capital Plan Budget proposals for 2023/2024 and the report set out the Panel's views, conclusions and recommendations. The Board thanked all those involved in the review.

Resolved (unanimously):

That the report to the Cabinet on the Revenue and Capital Plan Budget 2023/2024 be approved.

Chairwoman