



Civic Centre,
Arnot Hill Park,
Arnold,
Nottinghamshire,
NG5 6LU

Agenda

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 10 March 2014**

Time: **5.30 pm**

Place: **Reception Room**

For any further information please contact:

Jane Ansell

Members' Services

0115 901 3627

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chair Councillor Mike Hope

Vice-Chair Councillor Gary Gregory

Councillor Steve Ainley
Councillor Patricia Andrews
Councillor Emily Bailey
Councillor Sandra Barnes
Councillor Krista Blair
Councillor Paul Hughes
Councillor Stephen Poole
Councillor Colin Powell
Councillor Suzanne Prew-Smith
Councillor John Truscott
Councillor Henry Wheeler

AGENDA

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- 1 **Apologies for Absence.**
- 2 **To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2013.** 1 - 6
- 3 **Declaration of Interests.**
- 4 **Scrutiny Work Programme 2013/14** 7 - 18

Report of the Senior Members' Services Officer

Including questions to the Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing on the 'Liaison with Public Health and CCG' area of her portfolio.
- 5 **Reports and Notices received by the Chair of Overview as required under Constitutional Law** 19 - 20

Item for information.
- 6 **Any other item which the Chair considers urgent.**

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MINUTES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday 9 December 2013

Councillor Mike Hope (Chair)

Councillor Gary Gregory	Councillor Paul Hughes
Councillor Steve Ainley	Councillor Stephen Poole
Councillor Patricia Andrews	Councillor Colin Powell
Councillor Emily Bailey	Councillor John Truscott
Councillor Sandra Barnes	Councillor Henry Wheeler

Apologies for absence: Councillor Suzanne Prew-Smith

Officers in Attendance: J Ansell, P Baguley, S Bray, A Gibson, C Mckenzie and D Wakelin

23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Prew – Smith.

24 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2013.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

25 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

None.

26 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

1. Rolling Programme of holding Portfolio Holder to Account.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Peter Barnes, Portfolio Holder for Environment, who, along with Corporate Directors Dave Wakelin and Stephen Bray, responded to questions on the following areas of his Portfolio:

Waste strategy, energy management and sustainability

Questions from Members and responses received:

a) Please provide a definition and examples of 'Sustainability' in respect of Councillor Barnes' portfolio.

Councillor Barnes circulated the Council's Sustainability Action Plan, which set out the key priorities and actions for which he is responsible, and highlighted the following initiatives and outcomes:

- **Installation of solar panels on the Civic Centre, Jubilee House and the Richard Herrod Leisure Centre:** Installation costs had been significantly lower than had been anticipated in the capital programme. A total of 58, 000 kg of Co2 and cash savings of 27,750 had been achieved so far.

Members requested that the breakdown of achievements be circulated to Scrutiny Members and promoted on the screens at the Civic Centre and Richard Herrod LC.

Members also requested that the Council work with Gedling Homes to install solar panels to rented properties as other Councils had done. Stephen Bray, Corporate Director reported that consideration is being given as to the best approach to this. He confirmed that work has been carried out in Killisick as part of an initiative to tackle fuel poverty, whereby Gedling Homes and Guinness Trust properties in the area had all benefitted from the installation of modern, eco efficient boilers. Additional improvements are planned using the Eco funding strand of the Green Deal to address 'hard to treat' houses with no cavity walls by applying an exterior skin.

The Corporate Director further reported that a similar scheme will be offered to neighbouring owner/occupiers in the area through the Energy Partnership, with residents paying a small proportion of the costs. The process is currently at the tendering stage.

Members requested that the two schemes be carried out simultaneously in order to reduce costs. This was confirmed.

- **Procurement of Electric Car, Eco – Driving training for staff and the purchase of a larger fuel tank at Jubilee House:** This initiative had resulted in savings of around £50, 000 and a marked reduction in ongoing fuel bills had been noted.

Members asked that consideration be given to the installation of a noise generator to the electric vehicle to improve public safety.

- **APSE Awards 2013:** The Council's Street Cleansing Team had come first in their category and 2nd in two other categories.

The Portfolio Holder and Scrutiny Members congratulated and thanked the team for their achievements.

- **Travel planning:** A partnership officer based at the Civic Centre will deploy funding to improve sustainable travel.
- **Boiler Scheme:** Individual households in the Borough that had met a need - based set of criteria had benefitted from new eco efficient heating systems.

- b) Given the recent news that 'millions of tons' of food items are being dumped, both by the retail trade and the public in general, what plans have GBC made to educate, facilitate, and hopefully help eliminate this wasteful attitude?**

The Portfolio Holder and Service Manager for Waste informed Members of the 'Love Food, Hate Waste Campaign' and shared a range of promotional items aimed at raising awareness of recycling methods and educating the public on eco -friendly shopping and cooking. These had been made possible due to a successful 20k funding bid to Veola, and were being used widely at Community events and festivals and in the Council's media.

The Council is working with local supermarket chains to address industrial food waste and to maximise influence with the retail trade and the public. Issues to address included 'buy one get one free' offers, promoting contributions to the Food Bank and the general distribution of food waste.

Members requested that the potential of anaerobic digestion and other methods of organic food recycling, including Social Enterprise involvement, remain under consideration.

- c) Should our development on future Housing be strongly advocating for example Solar Panels & Rain water/Grey water to be filtered and reused?**

The Portfolio Holder informed Members that this question relates to the Leisure and Development Portfolio and proposed that the question be referred to Councillor Pulk for a response.

As an interim response, Peter Baguley, Service Manager, Planning and Environment, confirmed that the Building Control Regulations are still catching up with the Sustainability agenda. He explained that any condition placed upon planning permission would require evidence in order to justify and minimise the cost to the developer.

2. Q2 2013/14 performance.

Stephen Bray, Corporate Director, gave an overview of Q2 performance and responded to questions from Members.

3. 2013/14 Scrutiny work programme.

Members reviewed the draft project scopes of the 'Homelessness and Hardship' and 'Reducing Unemployment in the Borough' in depth Scrutiny reviews.

A number of minor amendments were proposed and noted for inclusion in the final scopes.

RESOLVED:

- i. To thank the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Corporate Directors and Officers for their attendance.
- ii. To note the Q2 performance report
- iii. Subject to the agreed amendments, to approve the 'Homelessness and Hardship' and 'Reducing Unemployment in the Borough' project scopes.

27 LOCAL PLANNING DOCUMENT - ISSUES AND OPTIONS

The Chair invited Members to comment on the Local Planning Document – Issues and Options, which had been referred to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the formal consultation process. Members were advised that the consultation closes on 16th December.

Members made the following points to the Service Manager, Planning and Environment and Planning Policy Manager Alison Gibson:

That the online process for commenting on the document was not user friendly – specifically:

- Maps are in a separate file to the document
- There is a requirement to go through sections sequentially before being able to comment on the section of specific interest to the individual.

The Service Manager, Planning and environment confirmed that similar feedback had been received from other consultees and explained that whilst the Council is restricted to a considerable extent by the statutory regulations for planning consultations, nevertheless the department is in the process of changing its I.T. systems, which will provide the opportunity to improve accessibility.

Members requested clarification on a number of areas in the document and the Service Manager and Planning Policy Officer responded accordingly.

Members expressed the need for greater ongoing Councillor involvement in the development of Planning Policy.

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Cabinet that:

- i. the online process of consultation on key Planning Policy Documents is made more accessible
- ii. a cross - party working group with experience of dealing with planning matters is established to consider ongoing items of planning policy that are likely to be of significant impact in the Borough.

28 REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LOCALISM, PLANNING AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair reminded Members that the final report of the Localism, Planning and Housing Scrutiny Review had been circulated to all Scrutiny Members and members of the working group for comments and the recommendations referred for consideration by Cabinet on 12th September.

A response had been requested from the Portfolio Holder, Leisure and Development, which would be tabled at the next committee in March 2014.

RESOLVED:

To note the final report and recommendations of the Localism, Planning and Housing Scrutiny Review.

**29 REPORTS AND NOTICES RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR OF
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AS REQUIRED UNDER
CONSTITUTIONAL LAW**

Members considered a list of items referred to the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under the Constitution or Law.

These included:

Items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under
Contract Standing orders and Standing orders for dealing with Land

Notifications received where it has not been possible to obtain 3 quotations for a contract estimated to be between £10,000 and £50,000.

- Contract with Nottinghamshire Housing Advice Service in order to maintain continuity of housing debt advice service to Gedling residents.

RESOLVED:

To note the items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under the Constitution or Law.

30 ANY OTHER ITEM WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.

None.

The meeting finished at 7.10pm

Signed by Chair:
Date:



Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Subject: Scrutiny Work Programme 2013/14

Date: 10 March 2014

Author: Senior Members' Services Officer

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To introduce Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth, Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing, Hazel Buchanan, Director of Operations, Nottingham North and East CCG and Corporate Director Dave Wakelin, who have been invited to attend the meeting to take questions on the Public Health area of this Portfolio.

- i. To receive any wider questions that Members may have about Q3 2013/14 performance.
- ii. To provide an update on the 2013/14 Scrutiny work programme.

2. BACKGROUND

At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Monday 5th August 2013 Members agreed a programme of attendance by Portfolio Holders and relevant Corporate Directors at committee and also identified which areas of performance within each Portfolio they would like to examine. It was further agreed that questions for Portfolio Holders should be submitted in advance of each meeting, however 'ad hoc' questions may be put forward at the meeting itself.

This committee has elected to consider the following elements of the Health and Housing portfolio:

Public Health: Liaison with Public Health and Clinical Commissioning Group

Advance questions from Members were circulated prior to the meeting.

3. ONGOING PROGRAMME OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER ATTENDANCE

Listed below are details of the on-going programme of Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director attendance at Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The programme may be subject to minor changes.

- **Committee date: 12th May 2014**

Councillor Pulk: Leisure and Development Portfolio
Corporate Director: Paula Darlington

Services for review: the planning process and the town centres strategy

- **Committee date: 14th July 2014**

Councillor Fox: Community Development Portfolio
Corporate Director: Paula Darlington

Service for review: Neighbourhood working

- **Committee date: 29th September 2014 – details to be confirmed**
- **Committee date: 15th December 2014 – details to be confirmed**

2.3 Covalent Performance Monitoring Report: Quarter 3 2013/14

Members have the opportunity to review the quarterly Performance Digest which is available under “**Our priorities, plans and performance/performance management**”.

Summary of quarter 3 Performance

Overall performance continues to improve, with performance improving between quarters 2 and 3, following the trend seen between quarters 1 and 2. At the end of quarter 3, 18 of the 28 performance indicators suitable for quarterly monitoring are on target – of the remainder, 6 are at amber status and 4 are red. 51 of 53 actions in the Council Plan are completed or on target.

The two target changes recommended to Cabinet, relating to actions to the Community Infrastructure Levy, were both agreed.

4. IN DEPTH SCRUTINY

The in - depth working groups below are currently undertaking a 6 weekly cycle of evidence gathering meetings with Portfolio Holders, Corporate Directors, partners and stakeholders.

Reducing unemployment in the Borough

Working Group Members: Councillors Bailey (chair), Wheeler, R. Ellis, R. Allan, Gregory P. Andrews, B Andrews, Hewson, Hughes, Parr.

Latest meeting held: Thursday 30th January 2014

This meeting was attended by Councillor Pulk, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Development and Peter Baguley, Service Manager, Planning and Economic Development. Members received an overview of the work of the Gedling Employment and Skills Group.

1. Homelessness and hardship in the Borough

Working Group members: Councillors Lawrence (Chair), Weisz, Blair, Paling, Hope, P. Allan, Bexon, Hewson, Hughes, Parr.

Latest meeting held: Thursday 6th February 2014

This meeting was attended by Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth, Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing, and Alison Bennett, Service Manager, Housing and Localities. Members received an overview of schemes running in Priority Neighbourhoods as part of the Council's Localities work, as well as Borough-wide wide initiatives including the Loneliness and Dementia awareness campaigns. The working group plans to undertake a series of 3 project visits during March/April 2014.

A third review, 'Transport Links to the Borough' will commence in June 2014.

5. RESPONSES TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

The final report and recommendations of the Localism, Planning and Housing Scrutiny Working Group were considered by Cabinet on 14th November 2013. A joint response was received within 28 days from Councillor Pulk, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Development and Councillor Hollingsworth, Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing. Additional comments have been made by the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to recommendation 1. The response is attached for consideration.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Appendix A

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- Put forward relevant questions to the Portfolio Holder, Corporate Director and Director of Operations, NNE CCG.
- Raise any questions they may have regarding the Q3 Covalent Performance Monitoring Report.
- Note the Portfolio Holder and Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer responses to the Localism, Planning and Housing Scrutiny recommendations.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Response of Portfolio Holders and Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to the recommendations of the Localism, Planning and Housing Scrutiny Review.

**RESPONSES OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS TO SCRUTINY
RECOMMENDATIONS: LOCALISM, PLANNING AND HOUSING REVIEW**

Portfolio Holders:

Strand 1 recommendations: Councillor Darrell Pulk, Leisure and Development Portfolio

Strand 2 recommendations: Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth, Health and Housing Portfolio

The following recommendations of the Localism Planning and Housing Scrutiny Working Group were considered at Cabinet on **14 November 2013**, with a request that the Portfolio Holders for Leisure and Development and Health and Housing respond back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee within 28 days:

Recommendations

Strand 1 recommendations: Neighbourhood Planning, Site Specific Consultation on the Aligned Core Strategy, risk assessment of new powers for communities, member involvement in the National Planning Policy Framework

1. In the light of provisions in the Localism Act 2011 to free councillors to make their views known and act upon them, specifying that predetermination is no longer a valid charge in Council businesses, Members to be provided with further clarification of the difference between pre determination, pre disposition and bias as well as an explanation of the Impact Survey process (economic survey).

Response of Portfolio Holder: Partially accept

Comments

Planning Committee members have already had training on this, and a working group is to be established to further investigate the implications for Planning Committee.

Response of Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer: Partially accept

Comments

It is not correct to say that predetermination is no longer a valid charge in Council business. The Localism Act 2011 sought to clarify the rules on “predetermination” but has not removed it as a valid charge completely. What the Act stays is that if there is an issue about the validity of a decision as a result of an allegation of bias, a decision-maker is not to be taken to have had, or to have appeared to have had, a closed mind when making the decision just because-

- (a) the decision-maker had previously done anything that directly or indirectly indicated what view the decision-maker took, or would or might take, in relation to a matter, and
- (b) the matter was relevant to the decision.

Appendix A

This means that the concept of predetermination and bias (actual and apparent) remains, however the Act makes it clear that anyone seeking to challenge a decision on the grounds of bias will have to go further than simply relying on evidence that a decision-maker did something which indicated what decision they might take.

A briefing note was issued to all Members at the end of 2011 advising them of this and that when making decisions they are entitled to have a view and express it. However they must be prepared to reconsider their position after hearing all the evidence and the arguments at the meeting. They must take into account relevant considerations (giving them appropriate weight) and ignore irrelevant considerations. They must not have a closed mind and must not give the impression that their mind is closed. If they do so and take part in the decision, that decision may be challenged.

The briefing note made it clear that if a Member holds a particular view and feels that they are unable to listen to the evidence, take account of all relevant matters and be prepared to change their mind, they should not take part in the decision.

Whilst it is felt that the briefing note was clear about the continued application of the concept of pre-determination, it is apparent from the scrutiny review that all Members may not be clear that it is still a valid charge. It would therefore be appropriate to update and re-issue the previous guidance to Members so that it covers predetermination, pre disposition and bias.

2. Gedling Borough Council to publish some design guidance to mitigate the issue of resident's 'tarmac-ing' and paving over gardens.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Do not accept

Comments

The reason for not accepting this comment is that the Council is already working towards delivering it, as the emerging Local Planning Document and Development Management policies will provide the criteria against which this kind of development will be assessed once applications are made.

3. Identify and progress a route to develop long term and more ambitious aspirations, i.e. road development and Light Rapid Transport systems. There are obvious benefits in working with neighbouring authorities, which enables the Council to maximise transport planning.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Partially accept

Comments

As the progress made on the GAR demonstrates, this kind of cross boundary work is already happening. Officers will however be reminder of the need to maximise the benefits of looking at transport issues in this way.

4. Transport links are going to be crucial to the Council's growth policy – the Council should actively pursue opportunities to extend transport services

along the old railway lines in the Borough.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Partially accept

Comments

Whilst the development of these routes is encouraged, and safeguarded in the Local Plan, the development of these routes is expensive and cannot be funded by the Council alone. The Council will therefore continue to promote these as sustainable transport routes, and identify opportunities to bid for appropriate funding.

5. **National Planning Policy Framework Policy Area: ‘Requires good design’:** involves improving/retaining the character of an area. As the Council now has an Urban Design officer in place, there is capacity to do more in this policy area. The site specific consultation on the Aligned Core Strategy will address some issues of characterisation which should be further developed in the long term in a supplementary planning policy statement on characterisation.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Do not accept

Comments

The reason that this comment is not accepted is that the Council is already delivering an appropriate level of character advice. The urban design resource is equivalent to one officer per week, and is expected to cover design and conservation issues as well as commenting on planning applications and providing pre-application advice. In sensitive areas the policies in the emerging Core Strategy, emerging Local Planning Document and Development Management policies will provide an appropriate level of control over development which may compromise local character.

6. **ACS Policy 3 Green belt:** Members observed that the policy must be robust enough to halt ‘leapfrog’ development if necessary. It is recommended that after the ACS has been to the inspectorate, at the point where the Green Belt Policy has to be reviewed, the Council should take the opportunity at the same time to review the deleted environmental policies that were raised by Scrutiny as an area of concern during formal consultation on the ACS.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Do not accept

Comments

The reason that this comment is not accepted is that the Council has already undertaken this review. The policies deleted from the Local Plan were all assessed against extant national policy and not saved because they duplicated that guidance. The NPPF has since replaced the majority of that national guidance, but emerging Core Strategy, emerging Local Planning Document and Development Management policies will provide an appropriate level of control over inappropriate development

7. **ACS Policy 4 Growth:** Further investigate innovative approaches that could address the need for employment sites, i.e. economic development/sustainability initiatives that engage businesses, landowners and developers and bring in schools and apprenticeship schemes to establish incubation units.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Accept

Comments

This approach is being adopted by the Economic Development service, and the Employment & Skills Group.

8. **ACS Policy 4 Growth / Policy 8 Housing:** The Council should investigate opportunities through the Local Enterprise Partnership to access Structural Funds 2014 - 20 for the provision of affordable housing and the development of rural economic growth.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Partially accept

Comments

LEP funds are not expected to deliver affordable housing. Opportunities to promote rural economic growth are being investigated.

9. **ACS Policy 8 Housing:** Members recommended that an article is placed in Contacts highlighting the rights of tenants and responsibilities of landlords.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Accept

Comments

The Public Protection department is planning on placing an article on the 35 issue of the Contacts magazine to address this. In addition the Housing Needs Team also becomes involved with cases on an individual basis and the Service Manager for Housing & Localities hosts a regular landlords forum which provides information about a wide range of tenancy issues and also promotes good practice in the sector.

10. **ACS Policy 17 Biodiversity:** The policy should include flexibility to encompass new environmental scenarios, backed up by more specific policies around the impact of paved gardens. This would require a generic development policy stating a minimum area of a garden to be left grassed. Through the same policy, encourage developers to include planting schemes in their plans.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Do not accept

Comments

The reason that this comment is not accepted is that the relevant policies have been drafted to comply with statutory guidance about what, and what not, can be controlled. Policy 17 has been discussed at the ACS hearing and the Inspector has not raised any issues relating to it.

Policies requiring a minimum grassed area would conflict with other permitted development rights which allow development of this nature.

Developers are currently required to provide a minimum of 10% space and planting in housing schemes.

11. Continue to strengthen the working links between the Planning and Housing Strategy teams that have developed as a result of Localism Act.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Accept

Comments

These teams are now co-located in the same part of the building.

12. Further progress mechanisms for the Council and other public bodies to work together on planning matters, in line with the duty to cooperate on planning issues introduced by the Localism Act.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Do not accept

Comments

The reason that this comment is not accepted is that extensive work has already been undertaken to achieve this. As part of its ACS submission, the Council feels that it has actively sought to engage with other bodies to meet the Duty to Co-operate, including drafting Protocols with neighbouring authorities about developments with cross boundary implications are approached and how any section 106 payments are distributed to ensure that they meet the identified need. Whether those bodies chose to co-operate is beyond the Council's control.

13. Proactively view land allocation strategically across authority borders, whilst still making determinations at the local level.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Accept

Comments

The Borough Council is already seeking to do this, having drafted a protocol as to how it might be achieved. Some neighbouring authorities have agreed to this.

14. To whatever extent possible, establish individual diversity policies for each of the town centres in order to support their economic renewal. Investigate and if possible replicate approaches taken in other cities on to limit the setting up of loan companies in local town centres.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Do not accept

Comments

Unfortunately we do not have the resources to deliver this.

15. The Council should seek to establish clear mechanisms to encourage the involvement of Ward Members and local interest groups in the development of detailed local plans.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Do not accept

Comments

The comment is not accepted because the Council is already consulting in excess of the levels required under legislation. There have, and continue to be, extensive consultations on all new and amended planning policy documents.

16. Ward Members should be involved in local plans as soon the Council is approached.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Do not accept

Comments

The comment is not accepted because the Council is already consulting in excess of the levels required under legislation. There have, and continue to be, extensive consultations on all new and amended planning policy documents.

17. The Authority should establish a protocol and on-going process by which planning officers will work with Elected Members and the community.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Do not accept

Comments

The comment is not accepted because the Council is already delivering this. The Statement of Community Consultation sets out how the Council will engage with communities, and does so well in excess of that required under legislation. There are already protocols in place which set out how Planning Committee members will be included in the pre-application process, subject to probity issues.

Strand 2 recommendations: Housing Strategy and Welfare Reform

18. Include in the Housing Allocations Policy the proviso that wherever possible, and if preferred, that priority is given to rehousing within their host community those tenants that are required to downsize.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Partially accept

Comments

This recommendation is partially accepted as the revised allocations policy awards a priority to the tenants of social landlords looking to downsize. If they are moving to a property which is two bedrooms smaller then they will be placed

in band 1 (the highest priority banding), if their move will free up one bedroom, they will be placed in band 2. There is not a time restriction, and as applicants select the properties they are interested in, they should have the choice to remain in the same area. This is however dependent upon the availability of suitable properties and the level of need. A further factor which also needs to be considered is the financial impact on those residents with spare bedrooms as if they are claiming housing benefit their entitlement may be reduced and they may therefore have a pressing financial need to move more quickly, in which case they would need to be more flexible about their choice of areas. That said we do urge our social landlords to consider each case on its own merits, and we are aware that many social landlords have put considerable resources into informing their tenants about the impact of the bedroom tax and supporting them to find viable solutions, e.g. budgeting, moving to smaller properties.

19. The Housing Needs Team to investigate, support and promote the 'Homeswap' scheme – a national scheme which provides a standard for providers of housing who assist tenants with mutual exchanges.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Accept

Comments

This recommendation is accepted as our largest social landlord – Gedling Homes is a member of Home Swap and the Council's Choice Based Lettings system promotes National Home Swap Direct. This scheme is available to all council and housing association tenants and is a web based system which matches prospective tenants looking to exchange their homes. The Housing Needs Team also promote this as an option when they are working with people who wish to move.

20. Homelessness Strategy: It is recommended that Framework's Street Sleeping initiative and the Freephone number be promoted in the winter edition of Contacts, and that the wider referral options and services provided by the Housing Needs Team available are also widely publicised.

Response of Portfolio Holder: Accept

Comments

This recommendation is accepted as the current edition, (34) of the Councils' Contacts magazine has an article on 'Helping the Homeless' in the winter, on page 14, which includes both the councils office number, the Council's out of hour's number and the Nottingham Street Outreach team's number. Posters are also to be displayed promoting the Housing Needs Team and providing information on the support services available for those individuals experiencing problems with their housing.

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Reports and Notices received by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required under the Constitution or Law.

1. Items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under Contract Standing orders and Standing orders for dealing with Land

Notifications received where it has not been possible to obtain 3 quotations for a contract estimated to be between £10,000 and £50,000.

- Contract for Boiler Replacement Scheme (Stephen Bray, Corporate Director)
- Contract for the Installation of Voltage Optimisation Equipment (Stephen Bray, Corporate Director)
- Contract for the provision of Employment and Skills Support (Paula Darlington, Corporate Director)

Notification of decision to dispose of land or property other than the sale of council houses to sitting tenants pursuant to the right to buy.

- Gift of Land on Rutland Road to Nottinghamshire Community Housing Association for development (Alison Bennett, Service Manager, Housing and Localities)

2. Items referred to Scrutiny under the Budget and Policy Framework

- Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Treasury Strategy 2014/15 (Mark Kimberley, Corporate Director.)

3. Items where the Executive proposes to take a key decision without it being published (on the Forward Plan) for at least 28 days. (New Local Authorities Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

- None received

Please note that the above list may not be exhaustive; items may be referred at short notice to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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