

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 March 2021
5.30 - 6.40 pm

Present: Councillors Todd-Jones (Chair), Bird (Vice-Chair), Hadley, McGerty, Martinelli, Porrer, Robertson, Sheil, Johnson (Executive Councillor),

Tenant and Leaseholder representatives: Agate, Best, Powell-Hardy, Minns and Stevens

Officers:

Head of Housing Maintenance and Assets: Lynn Thomas

Head of Housing Development Agency: Claire Flowers

Head of Housing: David Greening

Committee Manager: Gary Clift

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

21/16/HSC Apologies

Apologies were received from Christabella Amiteye.

21/17/HSC Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

21/18/HSC Minutes - to follow

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January were unavailable and would be circulated to Members as soon as possible prior to being submitted to the June meeting.

21/19/HSC Public Questions

There were no public questions.

21/20/HSC Estates & Facilities Service Review and Compliance Update

Chaired by Diana Minns (Vice-Chair)

Matter for decision

To note the update on the Estate and Facilities Service Review and compliance related work.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Housing

To note the progress of the service review and compliance related work set out in the officer report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. How quickly will the remaining electrical testing take (para 4.3)?
- ii. How have the annual tests (other than for gas safety) been impacted by the Covid restrictions this year?
- iii. Could an update be provided on fire doors?
- iv. Could the figures in para 6 and 7 of the report section on fire safety be less opaque?
- v. Thanked the officer for the useful report.

The Head of Housing Maintenance and Assets said the following in response to Members' questions:

Electrical testing will roll into the next financial year. The only legal route the Council currently take with in gaining access to a property is for gas safety inspections. However, officers are looking at the Council's processes with the Compliance Manager, we will also be involving the new tenant liaison officer in addition to the Council's contractors who have liaison officer (to look at ways to improve access rates).

Over the last three years, no access to properties for investment work that included compliance and safety has been 10% 2018-19, 23% 2019-20 and 37% for the current year.

On fire doors, the Council is waiting for the Government's Fire Safety Bill to be passed (expected in the next few weeks) and the matter will be brought to committee when the detail of the legislation and changes to Fire Safety Orders is known.

A structure chart of the estates and facilities team will be provided to the committee for information

The Committee resolved by 10 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

21/21/HSC Combined Update on the Programme to Build New Council Homes Funded Through the Combined Authority and Work Toward Development of the New Council Housing Programme

Matter for Decision

The Officer's report provided an update on the programme to deliver 500 Council homes by March 2022 with funding from the Combined Authority, along with the new programme work for 2022-2032.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Noted the continued progress on the delivery of the Combined Authority programme.
- ii. Noted the work undertaken to date toward development of the new housing programme for 2022-2032.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Was there an update on Kingsway Medical Centre conversion?
- ii. Can Committee be updated with the Anstey Way and Ventress Close model of having a Custodian on-site.

The officers said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The Kingsway Medical Centre project was still on hold awaiting final settlement with insurers following the flat fire.
- ii. A report back to committee on the use of the Custodian model will be provided in due course.

Post meeting the Head of Housing proposed that as a full review of Housing First is planned by the end of 2021-22, and by this time there will hopefully be employed a number of custodians (as opposed to the one currently employed) the Council will be in a better position to evaluate the role's efficacy as part of a wider HF review. Therefore to bring a report to June 22 committee which covers all aspects of Housing First.

The Committee resolved by 5 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

21/22/HSC Decision Sheet

The meeting ended at 6.40 pm

CHAIR