

## Minutes

### The Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership

Tuesday, 26th February, 2013, 02.00 p.m. at River Tees Watersports Centre, North Shore Road, Stockton on Tees, TS18 2NL

### DRAFT: SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

#### **Chair:**

Dave Pickard (Vela Homes)

#### **Members:**

Michelle Street (Stockton Flats), Philip Addison (Western Area Partnership), Joanne French (Community Campus), Carolyn Downes (Keepmoat), Graham Scanlon (Keepmoat), Cllr Julia Cherrett (Stockton Council), Catherine Andrews (Hanover HA), Steve Simpson (National Landlords Association), Jim Scollen (Northern Area Partnership), Val Scollen (Northern Area Partnership), Lesley Conroy (Coast and County Housing), Sally Thomas (North Star Housing Group), Doug Ross (Tees Valley HG), Suzanne Fletcher (Central Area Partnership).

#### **Advisors:**

Regina Harrington (Stockton Council), Natalie McConville (Stockton Council), Melanie Howard (Stockton Council), Mike Chicken (Stockton Council), Jane Edmends (Stockton Council)

#### **Apologies**

#### **Members:**

Sue Thompson (Teesside Landlords Association), Sara Herrington (Endeavour HA), Chris Fixter (Jomast), Andrea Ainsley (Places for People), Paul Thomas (Central Area Partnership), Steven Walton (Anchor), Cllr Steve Nelson (Stockton Council), Barbara Watson (Coast and Country Housing)

#### **Advisors/ Observers:**

Susanne Gordon (Stockton Council), Caroline Wood (Stockton Council)

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ITEM/ISSUE	ACTION
<b>1. Welcome and Introductions</b>	
<b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>	
<b>3. Minutes</b>  <b>Comments and Decisions</b> Agreed as a true record.	
<b>4. Matters Arising</b>  Suzanne Fletcher gave an update on the status of the Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership on the Stockton Asylum Seeker Multi Agency Forum. A letter has been written to Jomast to ask them to re-consider the decision to withdraw the partnership's invite to the forum.	
<b>5. Community Energy Saving Programme</b>  Mike Chicken, Built & Natural Environment Manager, Stockton Council, updated the partnership on the Community Energy Saving Programme, which commenced in 2008 and ended at December 2012. The programme targeted areas of low income by focussing on the 10% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas in the country. There were 17 areas in the borough that met this criteria. The programme was not means tested and eligible measures included external wall and cavity wall insulation, boiler replacements, heating controls, fuel switching and new heating systems.  A DVD that has been produced to showcase the success of the programme in Stockton was shown. A number of questions on the following issues were asked, including: Noise – Compensation for noise wasn't offered. Returning to homes – If a household who originally refused the work, changed their mind, they could not request	Circulate to partnership members link to the video shown

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<p>the work now as there would be a significant expense to returning to one property. Crime – There has been no major issues with vandalism. The render is easily cleaned and it is hoped that it will contribute to a reduction in crime in these areas. Green deal finance – The Council has not joined the regional approach being taken on this. There are still a number of concerns that the Council has over how the deal will work in practice. Social Value – Is the Council looking to evaluate the social value impact of the scheme e.g. Reduction in hospital admissions, what households are using the money for that they save etc. There will be some research carried out at the end of March. They will also look to measure longer term improvements, e.g. are households still keeping their external areas tidy in 12 months time.</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Mike Chicken Built and Natural Environment Manager Telephone: 01642 528148 Email:mike.chicken@stockton.gov.uk</p>	
<p><b>6. Empty Property Update</b></p> <p>Lesley Conroy, Coast and Country Housing, gave an update on their role in the Empty Homes Project in the borough. It was anticipated that by the end of March 2013 20 units of accommodation ranging from 1 bed self-contained flats to 5/6 bedroom houses will have been brought back into use.</p> <p>Lesley gave a brief explanation of the scheme. It was noted that there had been hesitancy from some landlords despite being offered up to £20,000 per property to bring it back into use and for a registered provider to manage the property for a minimum of 5 years.</p> <p>The Housing Options service is offered nominations for the properties to assist housing need in the borough. It also takes into consideration the impact of welfare changes and the growing demand for smaller properties. The</p>	

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<p>scheme also employs apprentices in order to give them skills that can lead to further employment. Additional government funding is expected in March aimed at commercial and residential properties in town centres.</p> <p>It was asked whether changes to Council Tax exemptions would increase interest in the scheme from landlords. It is expected that it will. The Council is also looking to use legislation that can enforce sales of empty properties if there are debts of over £1,000 (e.g. from having to secure a property a number of times).</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Lesley Conroy Coast and Country Housing Email: lesley_conroy@cchousing.org.uk</p>	
<p><b>7. Refreshment Break</b></p>	
<p><b>8. Future Work Programme</b></p> <p>A review of issues presented to the partnership over the previous 2 years was tabled at the meeting. The partnership identified a number of issues that it should focus its future work programme on. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Activities of Registered Providers over and above providing social housing;</li><li>Fuel Poverty;</li><li>Levels of investment in the borough;</li><li>Housing and Poverty;</li><li>Publicity channels;</li><li>Welfare Reform;</li><li>Universal Credit;</li><li>Warm Homes Healthy People project;</li><li>Flood Response;</li><li>Town Centres Improvements;</li></ul>	<p>Develop issues proposed into a draft work programme to be agreed at the next meeting. Should partnership members have any additional suggestions for the work programme they should forward them to Jane Edmends.</p>

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Housing Need; Prison/Probation services.	
<p><b>9. Standard Item - Welfare Reform</b></p> <p>A copy of a recent presentation from the Council on Welfare Reform changes was tabled. Following the meeting a copy of a recent published Institute for Local Governance report on the impact of Welfare Reform on the borough would be circulated as would recent Department for Work and Pensions guidance on Personal Budgeting Support, which describes the approach to be taken to provide money advice and payment safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Linda Stephenson SBC Benefits Manager Telephone: 01642 526245 Email:linda.stephenson@stockton.gov.uk</p>	Circulate Institute for Local Governance report and DWP guidance to partnership members
<p><b>10. Stockton Renaissance Update</b></p> <p>An update of the items at the January Stockton Renaissance Board was tabled. This included: Medium term financial plan progress and strategy Stockton Communities Fund Minimum Unit Pricing Consultation Town Centres Update</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Dave Pickard Email: david.pickard@velagroup.co.uk</p>	

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<p><b>11. For Information: Sustainable Community Strategy Indicators – April to December 2012</b></p> <p>An update of the Sustainable Community Strategy indicators that the partnership are responsible for monitoring had been circulated with the agenda. Progress on the indicators was noted.</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Jane Edmonds SBC Strategic Regeneration Manager Telephone: 01642 526682 Email: jane.edmonds@stockton.gov.uk</p>	
<p><b>12. Any Other Urgent Business</b></p> <p>There was none.</p>	
<p><b>13. Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>4th June 2013, 2pm at River Tees Watersports Centre, North Shore Road, Stockton on Tees TS18 2NL</p>	