

Housing & Community Safety Select Committee

A meeting of Housing & Community Safety Select Committee was held on Thursday, 1st February, 2007.

Present: Cllr J Roberts (In the Chair), Cllr D T Brown, Cllr Mrs S Fletcher, Cllr M Frankland, Cllr T Laing, Cllr Mrs E A Nesbitt, Cllr R Rix, Cllr Mrs A Trainer, Cllr S F Walmsley, Cllr B Woodhead.

Officers: P K Bell, P J Mennear, J Trainer (LD); C Wood (DNS).

Also in attendance: Councillor Leonard (Cabinet Member for Housing) E Fletcher, T Monkhouse, D Pickard (Tristar Homes Ltd).

Apologies: Cllr Jones, Cllr Noble and Cllr Teasdale.

978 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Roberts declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.4 - The Development of Choice Based Lettings as she was a member of the Tristar Homes Management Board.

Councillor Woodhead declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.4 - The Development of Choice Based Lettings as he was a member of the Tristar Homes Management Board.

Councillor Trainer declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.4 - The Development of Choice Based Lettings as she was a member of the Tristar Homes Management Board.

Councillor Leonard declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.4 - The Development of Choice Based Lettings as he was a member of the Tristar Homes Management Board.

Councillor Brown declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.4 - The Development of Choice Based Lettings as he was a member of the Tristar Homes Management Board.

Councillor Frankland declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.4 - The Development of Choice Based Lettings as he had a family member that worked for Tristar Homes Ltd.

Councillor Mrs Nesbitt declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.4 - The Development of Choice Based Lettings as she had a family member that worked for Tristar Homes Ltd.

979 The Development of Choice Based Lettings

Members considered the options that were available in order to create a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) policy for the Stockton Borough.

The areas of discretion regarding the development of a CBL policy had been set out in a table in order to range them alongside the main points from the evidence received so far, including the site visits.

Members also considered the "summaries of evidence received" and other background information that had been provided throughout the review, in particular the DCLG report "Monitoring the Longer-Term Impact of Choice Based Lettings". Much of the best practice and guidance previously distributed by the Government and others had been incorporated within its proposed Code of Guidance, which had been published in January and distributed for Members attention.

A summary of key points from DCLG report "Monitoring Longer Term Impact" were detailed for Members attention.

It was proposed that once Members had decided on the options available, the results would be incorporated into the final report on the Committee's work in the form of a proposed new allocations policy for Stockton Borough.

The options were outlined in a table which had been distributed for Members.

Members discussed each of the discretionary policy options that were available to them. Members then agreed the policy that they felt should be included in a Choice Based Lettings Scheme for the Borough. Members also agreed to adopt the Suspension Policy (suspension from the general CBL scheme) as proposed by Erimus Homechoice. These policies would be incorporated into the final report which would then be considered by Cabinet.

Members asked C Wood to report back on how SBC planned to respond to the Respect Agenda in particular with regard to how problematic households can modify their behaviour in order to enable them to access accommodation and maintain their tenancies.

Members agreed that the Sub Regional issues and the implementation options should be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The various discretionary policy options be agreed and incorporated into the final report.
2. The Suspension Policy as proposed by Erimus Homschoice be recommended for adoption and included in the final report.
3. The Sub Regional issues and the implementation options be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

980 Work Programme 2007/08

Members agreed that this item should be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.