

Housing & Community Safety Select Committee

A meeting of Housing & Community Safety Select Committee was held on Thursday, 4th September, 2008.

Present: Cllr Mrs Allison Trainer(Chairman), Cllr Julia Cherrett(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Mrs Liz Nesbitt, Cllr Bill Noble, Cllr Bill Woodhead

Officers: Jane Edmends (DNS) Peter Mennear, Sarah Whaley, Kirsty Wannop (LD)

Also in attendance: Chris Smith (Erimus Housing), Angela Lockwood (North Star Housing), Kathryn West (Anchor Trust)

Apologies: Cllr Jackie Earl

HCS 21/08 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mrs Trainer declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.5 –Review of Registered Social Landlords as she was a member of the Tristar Management Board.

Councillor Woodhead declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.5 –Review of Registered Social Landlords as he was a member of the Tristar Management Board.

Councillor Gibson declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.5 –Review of Registered Social Landlords as he was a member of the Tristar Management Board.

Councillor Mrs Cherrett declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.5 –Review of Registered Social Landlords as she was a member of the Tristar Management Board.

Cllr Bill Noble declared a declared personal/non prejudicial interest in agenda item 5- Review of Registered Social Landlords, as a tenant of a Registered Social Landlord.

HCS 22/08 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 12th June 2008 - For Singnature

Minutes of the 12th June 2008 were signed by the chairman as a correct record.

RESOLVED that the minutes were signed as correct record.

HCS 23/08 Minutes for the meeting held on 10th July 2008 - For Approval

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 10th July 2008.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2008 be forwarded to Council.

HCS 24/08 Review of Registered Social Landlords - to receive evidence from representatives of the following Registered Social Landlords: Anchor Trust, Endeavour and Erimus Housing.

Members were asked to consider the evidence provided by representatives of Endeavour Housing, Anchor Trust and Erimus Housing in relation to the review of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

The Committee were presented with the following key points by each RSL:-

1. Where the RSLs started and where they were currently at.
2. Why some RSLs had formed group structures.
3. What schemes the RSLs had withing the borough
4. What future plans they had.
5. Homelessness

Erimus and Tees Valley Housing had joined together to form Fabrick Housing Group. These RSLs both had stock in the sub-region and were based in Middlesbrough. The formation would allow for efficiency savings to be made. As a general rule, future development in the Tees Valley area would be carried out by Erimus, and any development outside the area would be carried out by Tees Valley, with the overall strategy controlled by the parent group. However, if one partner could offer a specialist service then this would be considered for a particular area, and any current development that has been committed to by each landlord will be seen through. It was reported that tenants would not see any significant change at the local level.

Endeavour and Teesdale RSLs had formed North Star Housing Group. One main reason was that Teesdale had been set up following stock transfer and would have been too small to have operated on its own. The arrangement provides Teesdale with the autonomy it still requires. Future group changes may occur should it be suitable for all parties.

Anchor Trust concentrate on the provision of housing for people over 55. Currently the organisation are reviewing their future strategy and undertaking wide ranging research. Members had previously received a copy of the 'Anchor2020' summary of this work.

The RSLs agreed that more rented housing was needed. This was important to help tackle homelessness, as in the current climate people are more reluctant to move from their current rented housing and this leads to a shortage of accommodation. Members noted that it was important to prepare for the aging population, and for increasing flexibility in tenures.

It was reported that RSLs are working in partnership to tackle issues such as employability. The working relationship between RSLs and Stockton Borough Council was felt to be very good, and A.Lockwood praised the Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership. The RSLs needed to continue to work closely with the local authority to see what is needed for the area. Members felt that it was important for RSLs to have a presence on the ground in areas where they have properties, and that tenants and members need to know who to contact when necessary.

RESOLVED that the information be noted

- 25/08** - to review the project plan in respect of the current review
- to discuss ideas for future review topics

Members considered the Work Programme of the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted.