

Housing & Community Safety Select Committee

A meeting of Housing & Community Safety Select Committee was held on Thursday, 16th October, 2008.

Present: Cllr Mrs Allison Trainer (Chairman), Cllr Julia Cherrett (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Jackie Earl, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Bill Noble, Cllr Bill Woodhead

Officers: Julie Nixon, Jane Edmonds, Julie Higgins (DNS), Sarah Whaley, Peter Mennear (LD)

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllr R Gibson, Cllr Mrs Liz Nesbitt

HCS 30/08

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mrs Trainer declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item no.4 –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.4 –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.4 –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 no. 4- Review of Registered Social Landlords, as a tenant of a Registered Social Landlord.

HCS 31/08

Draft Minutes of the meeting dated 25th September 2008

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2008.

RESOLVED that:

the draft minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2008 were approved with the following amendment:

Cllr William Woodheads declaration of interest was removed.

HCS 32/08

Review of Registered Social Landlords

Consideration was given to the draft report for the Review of Registered Social

Landlords (RSL's).

Members were presented with the list of draft recommendations as outlined in the report and these were agreed subject to the following amendments:

- It was requested that the RSL information contained within the Members' induction packs be kept up to date.
- It was also recommended that regular meetings should be encouraged between Ward Members and RSL patch officers to help and aid in better communication.
- Members requested that the results of the annual review of the Preferred Partner Framework should be reported to Housing and Community Safety Select Committee.

In addition Members asked that section 2.5 of the report be changed to reflect the RSL's who didn't reply to the Committee's survey and that they be listed alongside those RSL's which did respond.

Members asked whether it was possible to monitor completions of affordable housing that had been arranged as part of S106 agreements, for relevant ward members. Members were informed that Housing Services could provide the information in terms of what had been agreed, at the point of agreement, but information regarding completions would need to be requested from the Planning Service. The Housing Strategy and Development Manager suggested that the Housing Service would in future advise ward members of any planning obligations within their ward that included an affordable housing element and the new Affordable Housing Team could provide information on the number of properties accessed by applications on the Affordable Home Ownership Register.

Members asked for clarity when information on the national housing situation would be provided to them as there seemed to be confusion surrounding funding of central government announcements, in terms of what would be the local impact of an announcement, compared to the national. It was confirmed that as soon as this information was available it was being forwarded to Members.

RESOLVED that:

the draft report be agreed subject to the suggested amendments being incorporated into the Committees final report on RSL's, prior to submission for consideration to Cabinet.

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

Members were reminded that the next review topic for the Committee would be a review of Neighbourhood Policing/Neighbourhood Watch/Outward facing aspects of CCTV.

The Trainee Scrutiny Officer also distributed the draft 'Don't Suffer in Silence' leaflet which contained community safety contact numbers, that had been requested at a previous meeting of the Committee. Members were asked for comments regarding the content prior to it going to print. Members made the following requests:

- Domestic Violence contact details be included.
- The Security and Surveillance Centre 'make safe' number be published with an explanation as to what the number should be used for.

In addition, Members raised concerns in relation to incidents of drinking in public in the Parish Gardens in Central Stockton, and also the issue of cycling on pavements. Members suggested more regular representation from Stockton Borough Council's own Community Safety Officers and the local Police so those type of issues could be discussed in the presence of the relevant officers with the power to have an impact on improving such issues. The Committee were reminded that it had been previously agreed for the District Police Commander to attend the Committee on an annual basis in order to provide yearly updates on police performance. Members were also informed that it was current practice for relevant officers to be invited to attend particular meetings in order to provide information on specific topics, for example as witnesses during a scrutiny review, rather than attend all meetings as a matter of course.

RESOLVED that:

the work programme be noted and that arrangements be made for the District Commander (or representative) be requested to attend the Committee on a more regular basis.