

## Environment Select Committee

A meeting of Environment Select Committee was held on Monday, 9th September, 2013.

**Present:** Cllr Nigel Cooke(Chairman), Cllr David Wilburn(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Derrick Brown, Cllr Ray McCall, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Cllr Bill Woodhead.

**Officers:** Jane Edmends(DNS), Kay Glew, Dave Pickard, Nik Turner(Vela Group), Chris Joynes(Fabrick), Chris Smith(Erimus Housing), Graham Birtle and Kirsty Wannop(LDS)

**Also in attendance:**

**Apologies:** Cllr Steve Walmsley

### **1 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Ray McCall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in the item titled Review of the Performance of Housing Providers and he was a Vela tenant.

### **2 Minutes for Signature-3rd June 2013**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June 2013 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **3 Draft Minutes-15th July 2013**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2013.

AGREED the minutes be approved.

### **4 Review of Performance of Housing Providers**

Members considered evidence provided from Vela Group and Erimus Housing.

Dave Pickard provided the Committee with information on Vela Group which included the following:-

- Vela Group was continuing with the potential merger with Fabrick. Tristar would remain an independent housing provider if this was to go ahead.
- Offer promises which Vela Group made were not an issue and didn't see a problem in meeting them.
- Welfare Reforms were having a financial impact of around £500k but again this did not affect appear to offer promises.
- Vela Group had a strong efficiency agenda and was anticipating saving of 3% each year for the next 3 years.

Chris Smith provided the Committee with information on Erimus Housing which included the following:-

- In 2006 a small scale transfer took place of 6 sheltered housing schemes. 3 of the schemes were refurbished which was done very quickly after the transfer. The other 3 schemes took longers as they needed to be demolished and redeveloped. 2 of the 3 schemes had now been demolished and redeveloped but there was 1 site which caused issues and work was being done on this.

Members highlighted concerns following their earlier visit to Wrensfield Court where tenants could use small plots for growing vegetables and/or plants but showed little motivation in doing so.

It was highlighted that in some areas there had been problem neighbours and this needed to be addressed during the allocation process of tenants. Dave Pickard from Vela Group informed Members that they work quickly to deal with problem tenants.

The Committee thanked officers for the site visits which had taken place.

AGREED that the information be noted.

## **5 Work Programme**

The work programme for the Committee was noted.

## **6 Chair's Update**

The Chair updated Members that the Fuel Poverty Partnership would have its first meeting at the end of September 2013.