

**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD**

**Monday, 24th February, 2014**

**Present:** Cllr A G Sayer (Chairman), Cllr D J Trice (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Ms J A Atkinson, Cllr Mrs B A Brown, Cllr C Brown, Cllr D J Cure, Cllr Mrs S Luck, Cllr M Parry-Waller, Cllr Miss S O Shrubsole and Cllr Mrs C J Woodger

Councillors O C Baldock, Mrs P Bates, P F Bolt, N J Heslop, B J Luker, Mrs S Murray and M R Rhodes were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs J M Bellamy, D W Smith and Ms S V Spence and from Cllr Mrs J A Anderson (Cabinet Member for Housing).

**PART 1 - PUBLIC**

**SH 14/1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct. However Councillor N Heslop referred to a potential interest in any items that might have implications for the Bridge Trust on the grounds that he was a member of its Board.

**SH 14/2 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the meeting of the Strategic Housing Advisory Board held on 11 November 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**SH 14/3 GLOSSARY**

The Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health submitted a glossary of terms used within the reports to the Advisory Board.

**MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET**

**SH 14/4 HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY 2014-2016**

The joint report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health and the Cabinet Member for Housing set out details of proposed changes to the Housing Assistance Policy to reflect the recent Overview and Scrutiny Committee review of the Policy. The Board was reminded that the Policy allowed the Borough Council to encourage home owners to improve their homes while providing financial support for the most

vulnerable and most in need and particular reference was made to Home Improvements funding, the Warm Homes scheme and Home Safety Assistance. Members noted that the proposed changes aimed to target the available assistance to reflect the Council's key strategic priorities.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the revised Housing Assistance Policy, as detailed at Annex 1 to the report, be commended to Cabinet for approval.

#### **SH 14/5 PREFERRED PARTNER STATUS FOR GOLDING HOMES**

Decision Notice D140020MEM

The joint report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health and the Cabinet Member for Housing set out details of a proposal to include Golding Homes in the list of Preferred Registered Provider Partners operated by the Borough Council.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the inclusion of Golding Homes as a Preferred Registered Provider Partner to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council be endorsed.

#### **MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

#### **SH 14/6 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SUPPLEMENTARY STATUTORY GUIDANCE DECEMBER 2013**

The report set out details of the provisions of "Providing social housing for local people: Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England" which had been published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 31 December 2013.

#### **SH 14/7 THINK HOUSING FIRST: KENT-WIDE HEALTH INEQUALITIES ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING**

The report provided an update on the recently launched health inequalities action plan "Think Housing First" which had been developed by the Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing) and the Kent Housing Group to set out the role of the housing sector in reducing health inequalities across Kent. The Board noted that "Think Housing First" aimed to raise the profile of housing in addressing health inequalities in Kent and welcomed the key objectives of the Action Plan set out at Annex 1 to the report.

#### **SH 14/8 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING UPDATE**

The report provided updates on the Disabled Facilities Grant funding and Better Care Fund, the Energy Company Obligation Programme, the

Coldbusters Scheme and the Better Homes: accessible housing framework. Attention was drawn to a number of key changes to the Energy Company Obligation Programme arising from the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and the probable adverse impact on funding available for the Kent and Medway Warm Homes scheme.

#### **SH 14/9 STRATEGY AND ENABLING UPDATE**

The report provided an update on progress made by the Council's Registered Provider (RP) Partners to provide new affordable homes within the Borough and described the progress on various housing strategy initiatives. Particular reference was made to the Homes and Communities Agency's Prospectus for the new Affordable Homes Programme bidding round 2015-18 and the possible effect of the proposed affordable rent at 80 per cent of market rent on affordability and accessibility for those households in housing need.

#### **SH 14/10 HOUSING NEEDS UPDATE**

The report provided an update on the activity of the Housing Options team. It was noted that the number of households seeking housing advice remained significantly high as a result of the economic downturn.

#### **SH 14/11 EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS**

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health set out details of external consultations responded to since the last meeting of the Advisory Board.

#### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

#### **SH 14/12 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chairman moved, it was seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That as public discussion would disclose exempt information, the following matter be considered in private.

#### **PART 2 - PRIVATE**

#### **MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

#### **SH 14/13 SERVICE OF STATUTORY NOTICES**

**(Reason: LGA 1972 Sch 12A Para 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)**

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health set out details of statutory notices served since the last meeting of the Advisory Board.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm