

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

Monday, 20th July, 2015

Present: Cllr M O Davis (Chairman), Cllr M A C Balfour, Cllr D J Cure, Cllr Mrs S M Hall, Cllr S M Hammond, Cllr D Keeley, Cllr D Markham, Cllr Mrs A S Oakley, Cllr L J O'Toole, Cllr S C Perry, Cllr T B Shaw and Cllr Ms S V Spence

Councillors P F Bolt, Mrs J A Anderson, N J Heslop, Mrs P A Bates, T Bishop, B J Luker, M Parry-Waller and T C Walker were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms J A Atkinson, V M C Branson, R W Dalton and M R Rhodes

PART 1 - PUBLIC

HE 15/8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest 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.

HE 15/9 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the notes of the meeting of the Housing and Environment Services Advisory Board held on 1 June 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

HE 15/10 EXTRA CARE ACCOMMODATION

The Head of Strategic Commissioning at Kent County Council (Christy Holden) presented details related to its Social Care Accommodation Strategy, which identified how the provision, demand and aspiration for housing, care and support services would be met for adult social care across the County. The ambition was for people to remain living independently in their own home receiving the right care and support. However, if that option was no longer suitable the right accommodation solutions had to be in the right places across the county.

A presentation raising awareness about Extra Care Housing provided by the Development Director at Orbit Housing (Maggie McCann) and the Development Manager at Orbit Housing for Extra Care Housing (Lorraine Mansfield) detailed what extra care was and the wider, positive benefits to health and wellbeing as a result of independent living and an integrated approach to social care. It was noted that Orbit Housing

had delivered extra care housing across a number of its operating areas with the most recent in Deal.

Schemes were designed specifically for the over 55s to enable independent living in a safe and secure environment in a self-contained unit benefiting from a range of communal facilities, access to care and support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To strengthen close links with the local community some facilities would be open to the public including restaurant, coffee shop, hairdressers and internet availability. Shared Ownership and Help to Buy options were also available.

In response to concerns raised by Members regarding funding contributions it was explained that there would be no additional financial burdens on district and borough councils as schemes were funded by Central Government. Additionally, a fixed cost care package was offered tailored to an individual's requirements and level of support. This had the potential to create savings on the overall social care budget as the County Council were paying a combined cost of accommodation and care in one place rather than a split price for the two elements.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

HE 15/11 'LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE' CAMPAIGN

Decision Notice D150056MEM

The report gave details of the past successes and future initiatives involved in the Love Where You Live campaign which was launched in 2011 in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy. The Cleaner Borough Campaign Action Plan for 2015/16 was also presented for consideration.

Particular reference was made to the Love Kent Hate Litter campaign which would run from 13 July to 13 September 2015. It was reported that further community initiatives and events had been confirmed in addition to those set out in Annex 1 to the report.

The Street Monitor Scheme and Guidance Booklet had been revised and provided details of online report forms, email contacts and telephone numbers for the various agencies concerned. It also gave guidance on the most common issues raised by residents. The longer term ambition was for this booklet to be available on the website with live links to online report forms.

RECOMMENDED: That the projects and progress across a wide range of Cleaner Borough Campaign and Love Where You Live initiatives be noted and endorsed.

HE 15/12 STREET SCENE ACTION PLAN

Decision Notice D150057MEM

The report provided an update on progress with a range of 'street scene' initiatives and projects currently being implemented within the Borough. The annex to the report showed progress in respect of the on-going Street Scene Action Plan.

Reference was made to the measures being taken to implement a programme of signage cleaning within the Borough, including signs on Borough Council owned land, street signs and those welcoming the public to the Borough. In addition, the Borough Council would work with colleagues in Kent County Council Highways to notify and carry out cleansing of their road signs.

Finally, in response to questions raised by Members the Leader reiterated that the Borough Council remained committed to Haysden and Leybourne Lakes Country Parks and that significant activity of both these facilities would be reported to the Communities Advisory Board when appropriate.

RECOMMENDED: That the approach outlined in the report be endorsed and the projects and progress against a wide range of street scene related initiatives be noted.

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

HE 15/13 HOUSING SERVICES UPDATE

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health advised of key issues following the parliamentary elections of 7 May 2015. The Queens Speech, presented to Parliament on 27 May 2015, outlined forthcoming legislation and a number of proposals would have implications for the Housing Service and other key areas of the Borough Council's responsibilities, including Planning, Community Development and Financial Services.

Measures related to housing and welfare reform were summarised in the report with particular reference given to the removal of housing benefit entitlement for 18-21 year olds, freezing working age benefits for a further two years, further reduction to the benefit cap of £20k for families and £13,400 per annum for single person households and the pay to stay proposal for higher earning tenants. It was predicted that these changes would significantly impact on low income working families and those affected by the benefit cap in terms of affordability of housing.

In addition, it was reported that social housing rents would be reduced by 1% year on year for four years from 2016. Whilst this measure was

good news for tenants it would impact significantly on the forecasted rental incomes for social housing providers. This reduction in rental income had the potential to negatively impact on current and future affordable housing development programmes. The full implications of which would emerge over time.

Officers would provide further updates to future meetings of the Advisory Board as the policy detail emerged and the implications became clearer.

In response to concerns raised regarding disabled facilities grant and potential delays in securing funding, Members were assured that the service processes were being reviewed to improve any backlog. Further information on any Kent County Council Occupational Therapist backlog would be shared once it was available.

Members expressed concern around the Right to Build and the Right To Buy initiatives due to the potential increased demand for housing development and a shortfall in housing stock.

HE 15/14 WASTE AND STREET SCENE SERVICES UPDATE

The report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services detailed arrangements for refuse, recycling, street cleansing and public convenience cleansing over the Christmas 2015/16 holiday period and these were noted by Members.

In addition, an update on a number of projects and initiatives within the service was provided. Attention was drawn to the Borough Council's successful bid for funding for the WEEE Saturday Service which enabled this to be maintained until the end of September 2016.

Alternative arrangements for the provision of a recycling bank following the closure of Homebase in Tonbridge were being explored.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

HE 15/15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman moved, it was seconded and

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

PART 2 - PRIVATE

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

HE 15/16 PAPER SUPPLY CONTRACT

(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

Decision Notice D150078MEM

The report sought endorsement of the Borough Council's supply contract arrangements for the material collected from the kerbside paper recycling service.

RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the approach set out in the report be noted and the paper supply arrangements with Veolia up until February 2019 be endorsed; and
- (2) the Principal Solicitor be authorised to complete a sale contract with Veolia on the terms indicated in the report.

The meeting ended at 9.20 pm