

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES and HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

25 July 2016

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on affordable housing provision within the Borough.

1.1 Affordable Housing Delivery in the Borough

- 1.1.1 Officers continue to work in partnership with the Council's Registered Provider Partners to ensure a forward supply of affordable homes in the Borough. Set out at **[Annex 1]** is a monitoring spreadsheet showing the completed schemes for the previous and present financial year, along with the development programme up to 2017-18 that have an existing planning permission.
- 1.1.2 Members will be pleased to note that the Mill Hall scheme with 46 Affordable Homes in Aylesford is about to be completed by Hyde Housing. This features 18 Affordable homes for rent to households on the Council's Housing Register including a very welcome 5 homes for Social Rent. Hyde are also completing 8 affordable homes on Kings Hill, where we have managed to negotiate six for Affordable Rent at 65 per cent of Market Rent and two are for Shared Ownership. For those homes with rent levels less than 80 per cent of market rent, preference will be given to economically active households on the Housing Register.
- 1.1.3 Since the last meeting of this Board, Abbeyfield Kent Society (AKS) have successfully obtained planning permission to redevelop their existing provision in Wateringbury at the Greenstead scheme. This means that by working closely with officers, AKS have now successfully achieved planning consent to modernise all three of their sites within Tonbridge & Malling, leading to over 100 new affordable extra care homes in the borough.
- 1.1.4 Although for the time being, the borough maintains a healthy and diverse programme of affordable housing supply, a cautionary note is still very much required in terms of the position moving forward. Members will recall previous Board reports describing the emerging and continuing challenges to the provision of affordable housing including:

- National changes to planning policy redefining Affordable Housing to include Starter Homes
- Duty on Councils to promote Starter Homes
- Significantly reduced grant funding
- Welfare reform
- Housing reform including extension of the Right to Buy and Pay to Stay
- Stricter affordability criteria
- Increasing private sector rents

1.1.5 Whether taken singly or as a combination they pose an extremely challenging environment and a real threat to the Council being able to robustly carry its role as the Strategic Housing Authority in order to address the housing need of its residents. A letter encapsulating these challenges and highlighting our concerns is being drafted from The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing, to our local MPs.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 None arising from this report.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 None arising from this report.

1.4 Risk Assessment

1.4.1 Not applicable.

Background papers:

Nil

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