



Housing Policy Working Party
Draft Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday
1st March 2017 at 2pm in the Kasen Room

Present

Councillors	Tony Boto (Chair)	CllrTB
	Helen Harrison	CllrHH
	Richard Lewis	CllrRL
	Sarah Peacock	CllrSP
	Steven North	CllrSN

Also in attendance

Executive Director	Sharn Matthews	SM
Planning Policy and Conservation Manager	Richard Palmer	RP
Housing Strategy and Delivery Manager	Carol Conway	CC
Housing Services Officer	Louise Bagley	LB
Environmental Protection Manager	Jenny Walker	JW
Housing Officer	Aine Cooper	AC

Present for item 1

Consultant	Richard Turkington	RT
Consultant	Jon Watson	JWt

Present for item 2

Community Partnerships Manager	Mike Greenway	MG
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		<u>ACTION</u>
1.	Housing Mix Project – Presentation by Consultants Richard Turkington and Jon Watson	
1.1	The difference between housing need and demand was noted, with need defined as meeting the basic requirements of households and demand meeting people's aspirations	

	<p>and preferences.</p> <p>Stage 1 – baseline report has 3 key aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice review • Policy review • Market review <p><u>Practice review</u> – the economic impact of housing can be assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In relation to the construction of housing • The impact on an area of new occupiers <p><u>Policy review</u> - Policy 30 encourages attractive housing opportunities to allow households to downsize. East Northamptonshire is one of the most affordable places within an hour of London, making the area well placed to develop larger homes. Transport links are key due to the large number of commuters.</p> <p><u>Market review</u> – this highlighted the need to provide suitable properties to provide options for people to downsize, as currently only 10% of older people downsize (not including those that need supported accommodation). Average sale price of a detached house is in the region of £315k. New builds account for 15% of all sales. It was noted there is a compressed market with little difference in value between 2 and 4 bedroom properties meaning it isn't worth selling due to poor return. Must ensure local need is met at right kind of cost.</p>	
1.2	<p>It is hoped the Rushden Lakes development will lead to much localised employment and aid in the retention of localised spend.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Chair or Vice Chair and RP will meet with consultants to discuss part 2 of the project, potentially progress an employers study and report back to the WP in April.</p> <p>The scope for premium self/custom build will depend on location.</p> <p>The presentation will be circulated via email to members of the Working Party.</p>	<p>RP/TB</p> <p>RP/CC</p>
2	Domestic Violence – Provision of Services Update	
2.1	<p>MG provided an update on the provision of services for victims of domestic violence. £590k has been secured for the county from the DCLG funding stream for the next financial year but there is no funding for future years.</p> <p>Services for abuse victims are to be put on a more sustainable footing. Changes need to be made to refuges as they are not safe places and can pose a risk to victims who may let perpetrators know where they are located.</p> <p>Secured within the bid is a support worker based in each district for the next twelve months. They will look at how services should change and at move-on arrangements.</p>	

	Northampton Women's Aid is currently looking into setting up a male refuge. There is also to be more emphasis on target hardening to provide extra security measures for victim's properties.	
3.	Apologies	
3.1	Apologies were received from Paul Bland.	
4	Minutes of the Meeting of 18th January 2017	
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that the Homelessness Grants Panels had its initial meeting, and after visiting some projects will make their recommendations following a meeting next week. JW is arranging transfer of funds from ENC to LGSS to exchange and complete next week on two property purchases. The Carnegie St compulsory purchase has been completed and is due to be processed. <p>The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.</p>	
5	Matters arising	
5.1	There were no matters arising not covered on the agenda	
6	Updates	
6.1	Housing	
6.1.1	No updates not covered on the agenda	
6.2	Welfare Reform	
6.2.1	No updates to note	
7	Housing White Paper	
7.1	CC had prepared a presentation outlining the details of the White Paper. It was noted that a report would be going to Planning Policy Committee on 15 th March, and that the WP would want to include comments on the housing related questions. It was agreed that these questions would be circulated to the WP, and any comments could be added before a combined draft response goes to P&R in April.	
8	Clawback Policy	
8.1	CC gave an overview of previous discussions of the clawback policy. There has been no further guidance from the government in respect of the VRTB. More pilots are to	

	<p>be carried out but it will not be rolled out until 2018 at the earliest.</p> <p>It was agreed that as clawback requests were usually complex and different circumstances they should continue to be taken to P&R until clarification regarding VRTB is received from the government, at which point the position will be reviewed.</p>	
9	Work Plan Update	
9.1	Updates to the work plan were noted.	
10	Risk Review	
10.1	Risk 4 – The Homelessness Reduction Bill will increase duties on the council, particularly in respect of non priority homeless people, leading to an increase in homelessness applications. It was therefore agreed that the 'Likelihood' element of the risk should be increased to level 4 i.e. 'very high', resulting in a total risk score of 8.	
11	AOB	
11.1	There was no other business.	
12	Next and future meetings	
12.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12th April 2017 • 17th May 2017 • 5th July 2017 	
	The meeting concluded at 15.48pm.	