

DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE BOARD MEMBER, HOUSING NEEDS

Wednesday 15 February 2012

COUNCILLOR PRESENT: Councillors McManners.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Alec Dubberley (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer), Rob Kindon (Corporate Assets) and Steve Sprason (Head of Corporate Assets)

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

17. PUBLIC ADDRESSES

None.

18. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES

Councillor Gotch had submitted five questions after the deadline for receipt of questions. The Board Member advised Councillor Gotch that a written response would be provided after the meeting.

Following the meeting the questions are now included with the minutes:

(1) Is the Portfolio Holder aware that planning applications for housing on council owned garage sites have been submitted without due consideration of necessary replacement car parking? This problem applies to at least 19 of the applications. If parking cannot be provided, how would withdrawal of the applications [as has happened at David Walter Close] affect the total of affordable houses?

Answer: Applications for outline planning permission were submitted on 4 sites within the City based upon information available at that time. Further information has since become available resulting in a review of some applications and possible revisions.

In respect of the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 2012-15 the sites referred to form Phase 2. OCC are committed to providing 46 units under this phase from a potential 93 already identified. This does not include 12 unappraised garage sites and other possible sites that may become available.

As stated in s28 and Appendix 3 of the report the intention is to avoid inclusion of such sites in the AHP if possible.

Appraisal work is continuing on a number of potential development opportunities.

The final selection of Phase 2 sites will take place towards the end of 2012.

(2) At 14 and 15 David Walter Close there are 14 garages of which 10 are occupied by 9 cars and 2 motorbikes, and a similar scenario applies at 33 David Walter Close where 12 garages are proposed to be demolished. It is possible to provide replacement parking, but at some cost, and with some residents' opposition.

Answer: Following receipt of feedback for the two David Walter Close sites the applications have been withdrawn pending scheme reviews and possible revisions.

(3) Of the 19 extra garage plots [appendix 3] 7 have been considered to date, and yield "only" 12 houses. Has replacement parking been considered for all or any of these sites? And was such parking provision considered at Leiden Road?

Answer: Appraisal of numerous sites including garage sites is ongoing and parking provision is just one of a number of issues considered.

(4) Who briefed the application surveyor to ignore replacement parking, and at what cost in abortive fees?

Answer: Applications were submitted based on then currently available information. Applications withdrawn can be resubmitted without incurring further fees.

(5) Since smaller plots-- planned for 2/3 bed houses -- can often provide for 4/5 bed houses, at proportionately less cost, and there is an urgent demand for larger social houses, should at least some of these smaller sites be proposed for council retention -- not open market sale. I know of one family at Cuttleslowe, with 5 children, living, disgracefully, in a 2 bed social house. Can a financial analysis be ordered quickly to retain some smaller sites to be used for social houses? And the effect on the budget overall and affordability?

Answer: The type and tenure mix of the properties in the AHP was agreed with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) as part of the bid process. Grant funding was awarded on that basis of that mix with the AHP running to March 2015.

This report relates to the AHP only and to properties that will be supported by the Affordable Homes Grant awarded by HCA under their 2011-15 grant regime.

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan may permit additional affordable homes to be developed in the years following the AHP. The need for new build will have to be balanced against the requirement to generate capital receipts.

Option appraisals are continuing to take this matter forward.

19. AFFORDABLE HOME PROGRAMME 2012-2015

The Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) setting out information on the Council's affordable homes programme for 2012-15

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the proposed Affordable Homes Programme 2012-15 as detailed in the report.
- (2) Authorise the Head of Corporate Assets to negotiate and complete the New Framework Delivery Agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency.
- (3) Authorise the Head of Housing and Communities to undertake the decant process of Bradlands under Phase 1.
- (4) Authorise the Head of Corporate Assets, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing Needs, to approve the final selection of sites for Phase 2 and Phase 3.

The meeting started at 1.00 pm and ended at 1.25 pm