

STRATEGIC HOUSING PANEL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL 2013 at 5:00pm

Present: Councillors George Clements (Chairman); Reg Heathcote; Alan Jacob; Sam Pollen and Peter Stephenson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Paul Whalley.

Officers: Debbie Cochrane, Housing Services Manager; Julie Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy and Clive Willoughby, Member Services Technical Support Officer.

Also present: Tom Barlow, Cumbria Affordable Warmth Project

SH 34/12 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2013 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SH 35/12 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Peter Stephenson declared a non-pecuniary interest in all Agenda which referred to Home Group due to being a Home Group tenant.

SH 36/12 Order of Agenda

It was agreed that Agenda Item 7 would be taken before Item 6.

SH 37/12 Cumbria Affordable Warmth Project

Tom Barlow, Cumbria Affordable Warmth Project, provided the Panel with a presentation on the work that had been undertaken by the project and also the direction in which it was going.

Questions were asked during the session and Members were advised that if they had further enquiries, they could contact the project via the following website – www.cumbriawarmhomes.org.uk

Members requested a copy of the presentation slides, if available.

Mr Barlow was thanked for his presentation.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be received.

SH 38/12 End of Year Performance Report

The Housing Services Manager provided the Panel with performance details for the Housing Services team covering the period April 2012 to March 2013.

This covered the areas of Housing Advice, Rent Deposits, Full Homeless Applications, Prevention, MARAC – Domestic Violence, Disabled Facilities Grants, Empty properties, Unfit Properties, Overcrowding & Immigration Inspections and Rent Deposit Property Inspections.

RESOLVED – That the Report be noted.

SH 39/12 Cumbria Rural Housing Trust - Service Level Agreement

The Panel considered the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and monitoring arrangements between Copeland Borough Council and Cumbria Rural Housing Trust.

During the discussion, it was clarified that in this SLA, 'Rural' was regarded as everything outside of Whitehaven.

It was also clarified that within the 'Purpose' section of Appendix A, paragraph 2 should read:-

"The Council will provide £3,000 of funding to Cumbria Rural Housing Trust (CRHT) to enable CRHT to support communities that have a need for affordable housing (and/or local housing) and to identify potential solutions to meet that need.

Members made comment on the SLA.

RESOLVED – That the SLA and Monitoring Arrangements be agreed, subject to the requested amendments being made.

SH 40/12 Service Plan 2013-14

The Housing Services Manager provided Members with an overview of the Service Plan 2013-14.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SH 41/12 Welfare Reform

The Housing Services Manager provided the Panel with a verbal update on Welfare Reform. A leaflet titled 'Welfare Benefits: the reform timeline' was also distributed to Members.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

SH 42/12 Discretionary Housing Payments

The Housing Services Manager advised Members that this report had been included for information only.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SH 43/12 Year 3 Strategic Housing Action Plan

The Housing Services Manager advised the Panel that the draft Year 3 Strategic Housing Action Plan was being issued for comment.

RESOLVED – That the update be received.

The meeting closed at 6:55pm

Chairman

Date