



BOROUGH OF POOLE

COUNCIL HOUSING OPTIONS APPRAISAL WORKING PARTY

20 July 2009

The Meeting commenced at 6.00p.m and concluded at 6.50p.m.

Present

Councillors Ms Atkinson (Chairman)
Brooke and Trent and Walton
Mr R Aggett
Mr B Constance
Mr A Khan
Ms H Ross (Vice-Chairman)

Officers attending

Cally Antill	Head of Housing and Community Services, Borough of Poole
Ravinder Bains	Housing Contract Support Officer, Housing and Community Services, Borough of Poole
David Mullany	Project Manager, Housing & Community Services, Borough of Poole
Carmelina Brown	Head of Housing Management, Poole Housing Partnership
Adam Richens	Senior Finance Manager, Borough of Poole
Robin Ingleton	Head of Finance, Poole Housing Partnership
Bill Shaw	Head of Best Value and Performance, Poole Housing Partnership
Tracey Mitchell	Democratic Services, Borough of Poole

(This Meeting had directly followed a training session led by Steve Partridge of the Housing Quality Network (HQN), that had focussed upon the implications of the Government consultation paper on the National Housing Finance System for council housing).

27. WELCOME

The Chairman, Councillor Ms Atkinson welcomed everyone to the third Meeting of this Working Party that had been set up by the Council's Cabinet to oversee the 'Housing Options Appraisal' that would be deciding how best to guarantee sufficient investment in the Housing Stock in the future.

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE





Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bulteel and Wilkins, Dorothy Dyson, Richard Hickman, Lloyd James, Joe Logan, Jan Thurgood and Simon Terry.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were made.

30. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the last Meetings held on 9 February 2009 and 30 May 2009, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

31. REPORT ON CONSULTATION WITH RESIDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

David Mullany, Project Manager, Housing and Community Services, presented a Report and accompanying appendices that summarised the results of two pieces of consultation that had taken place with residents and stakeholders respectively over their needs and aspirations for future service delivery. The Report was asking the Working Party to note these comments for future reference when it had reached the stage of selecting its preferred option for service delivery.

In summary, David Mullany reported that the feedback received from residents during the consultation exercise had indicated that most people had concurred with the high level of satisfaction and the priorities identified in last year's Residents' Survey and that residents were keen to see further improvements in the quality and range of services. In respect of feedback received from Stake-Holders during the consultation exercise, he reported that Stake-holders had recognised that continued investment in homes was needed and that the organisation should be 'Outward Looking' and that the Stake-Holders remained committed towards continued partnership working.

During exploration of the following themes, David Mullany highlighted that: -

(i) Consultation with Residents had: -

- Been built on the results of the comprehensive Residents' Survey undertaken during 2008.
- Involved a series of meetings with residents in working groups, panels, Roadshows and sheltered housing Annual General Meetings that had taken place between January and March 2009, at which residents were asked



their priorities for the future and their views of the Service. Another purpose of the consultation during this phase had been to raise awareness of the project.

- A newsletter explaining the project that had been produced by the Specialist Resident Adviser had been sent out to all residents.

(ii) Consultation with Stakeholders had: -

- Involved the despatching of two questionnaires to principal stakeholders that had been accompanied by an analysis of the stock by location and type, a profile of residents, and the report on residents' aspirations arising from the first consultation phase. As very few completed questionnaires had been received, follow-up phone calls were made to the external stakeholders, so that the questionnaires were completed by phone.

During the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised: -

- Ray Aggett stated that it was very important to remember that Residents were also Stake-Holders.
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- David Mullany acknowledged this and explained that stakeholders had excluded residents in this instance because the residents had been consulted separately.
- Councillor Brooke expressed concern that the Appendix relating to the schedule of events that had taken place during the consultation phase involving residents had not included meetings at all sheltered housing schemes.
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In response, David Mullany explained that the Residents' consultation exercise had essentially been a reality check on a previous consultation and had never been intended to cover all residents. The consultation exercise had sampled opinion across a number of meetings

Carmelina Brown, Head of Housing Management, Poole Housing Partnership, added other schemes had been able to feedback points raised at their various meetings.



- In response to Councillor Ms Atkinson's question over whether the conclusions of these consultation exercises had been discussed with residents and Board Members, David Mullany confirmed that the outcome of the consultation with resident had been shared with the residents panel but there had so far been no opportunity to share the results of the stakeholder consultation with residents. The results would be presented to the PHP Board in due course. not been shared with residents yet, but was shortly to be presented to the Board.

RESOLVED that the Working Party notes the comments made by Residents and Stakeholders over the 'Housing Options Appraisal' project and that these consultation results be forwarded to the PHP Board and Residents' Panel for consideration as soon as possible.

31. PROJECT PLAN/FORWARD PLAN/FUTURE WORKING PARTY MEETINGS

David Mullany, Project Manager, Housing and Community Services, presented a report and accompanying Project Plan Chart that summarised the latest progress that had been made against phases one and two of the Housing Options Appraisal Outline Project Plan for since the last Meeting of this Working Party. This report also notified the Working Party of forthcoming actions and events.

During his introduction, he reminded the Working Party that as the Government's announcement on its review of the housing subsidy system had been delayed from March/April 2009, some aspects of the Project Plan had fallen behind schedule. He reported that the Government was now expected to release a consultation document on its preferred option for the future of council housing finance, entitled 'The reform of Council Housing Finance' on 21 July 2009. This would be followed by a consultation period for feedback to Central Government that would close on 27 October 2009. Consequently, this had affected the Poole Options Appraisal because it had not been possible to be certain of what options were to be available until the Government had completed its review. In consequence, the Working Party would need to meet again after the full financial options of the Government's forthcoming announcement had been considered. It was noted that Steve Partridge of the Housing Quality Network (HQN) would be present at the next Meeting of this Working Party.

In summary, David Mullany reported that: -

- Phase 2 of the Options Appraisal Project was near to completion;
- With regard to Action Point 10 of the Project Plan relating to 'Analysing data on housing needs/Complementary Strategies, a draft document had been prepared,



but would need to be reviewed to take account of the Central Government review. Therefore, a Report would need to be taken to the next Meeting of this Working Party for consideration.

During the ensuring discussion, the following points were raised: -

- Councillor Ms Atkinson stated that it was imperative that the next Meeting of this Working Party took place during September 2009, in order for the Working Party to influence the response to the consultation issued by Government and to take into account any views expressed by the Local Government Association.
- The Vice-Chairman, Helen Ross stated that it was very important that all future scheduled Meetings of this Working Party were not subsequently cancelled because of a lack of expected Government Guidance, as this would create anxiety and a lack of Trust amongst residents and Stake-Holders over the reasons for the cancellation of such Meetings, in terms of a misconception developing that the Working Party was trying to hide 'Bad News' from residents. (The other Working Party Members concurred with this view).

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The Working Party notes the latest progress made towards completing the Housing Options Appraisal Project and;
- (ii) The next Meeting of this Working Party takes place at 4pm on Monday 28 September 2009 at the Civic Centre, (exact venue to be confirmed).**

CHAIRMAN