

## **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

# **HOUSING AND HOMES O&S COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING**

**1400 hours on Tuesday 6 March 2018, Committee Room 6**

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### **Present:**

Councillor Victoria Quinn (Chair)

Councillors Gurdial Singh Atwal, Roger Harmer, Penny Holbrook, Mohammed Idrees, Mary Locke and Margaret Waddington

### **Also Present:**

Councillor Karen McCarthy

Councillor Gareth Moore

Uyen-Phan Han, Planning Policy Manager

Mike Heath, Assistant Director, Waste Management

Pete Hobbs, Service Head, Private Rented Services and Tenant Engagement

Rob James, Service Director, Housing

Jacqui Kennedy, Corporate Director, Place

Lisa Morgan, Head of Law (Place)

Jayne Power, Research & Policy Officer, Scrutiny Office

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

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### **1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chairman advised the meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.birminghamnewsroom.com](http://www.birminghamnewsroom.com)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Matthew Gregson, Gary Sambrook and Ron Storer.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

### **4. ACTION NOTES – 20 FEBRUARY 2018**

(See document No 1)

The Chair updated Members on the outstanding actions.

- The notes were agreed.

## **5. UPDATE ON WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Jacqui Kennedy (Corporate Director, Place) and Mike Heath (Assistant Director, Waste Management) attended to give Members a verbal update.

The following were among the main points raised:

- The green waste service had gone live the previous day, with 59,659 customers. The service has started well and everyone who is a live subscriber has been sent a sticker which must be put on the bin or it will not be collected;
- On operational matters, the number of missed collections has reduced since the last update to Committee and data is being used to identify any hotspots and find out why some roads are being consistently missed;
- Waste collection rounds are being changed and management and the Trades Unions will be holding a workshop to finalise the new rounds;
- The Service Improvement Board had met for the first time last week and a workshop was being held the next day to discuss service improvement;
- With regard to the accessibility of data sets, Members were advised that making the data publicly available was being looked into and that the latest set of data, including missed collections for February, would be forwarded to them;
- The Chair asked, given the commitment to weekly bin collections for the next 4 years, whether residents can have faith that they will now get their bins collected every week and Members were told that the new model will be a 5 day working week and the workforce are involved in drafting up the new rounds and productivity levels.

### **RESOLVED:-**

- The following information to be provided for Members:
  - (i) Latest set of data (specific request for missed collections in February);
  - (ii) Statistics underpinning the graph of missed collections.

## **6. WORKING WITH HMOS – EVIDENCE GATHERING**

(See document No 2)

This was the first session for the inquiry and Members heard evidence from Rob James (Service Director, Housing), Pete Hobbs (Service Head, Private Rented Services and Tenant Engagement), Uyen-Phan Han (Planning Policy Manager), Lisa Morgan (Head of Law, Place), Councillor Karen McCarthy and Councillor Gareth Moore.

The focus of this session was on what we already know about HMOs in Birmingham, the current plans for housing mix and the role of HMOs, the planning and regulatory tools available to the City Council and how these should be used.

The following were among the main points raised:

- The Chair gave the background to the inquiry, including the Committee's previous work on the private rented sector and the City Council motion which

highlighted the need to work with HMOs, how existing mechanisms are used and what gaps there might be;

- The background research on comparators with other LAs shows that there is not one model common to all and over half of the nine cities included in the research have a city-wide Article 4 Direction in place;
- One Member pointed out that it was important to note the issues are different in different parts of Birmingham, with HMO provision in some areas being driven through supported housing and there is therefore a need to include this sector in the inquiry;
- In Stockland Green, a market rent not-for-profit company has been set up and has opened its first two shared living properties which are regulated;
- The Chair pointed out that the motion had called for covenants to be placed on all future new builds and asked whether there are any covenants in the Right to Buy process; Lisa Morgan (Head of Law, Place) responded that this had been raised with a colleague and enquiries were being made around how much use we make of covenants;
- Members discussed the mechanisms available to the council, in particular Article 4 Directions, and comparator authorities where city-wide Article 4 Directions are in place;
- Members were advised that Article 4 Directions do not prevent HMOs coming forward, it just means that planning permission is required for change of use and therefore the planning policy which sits alongside is just as important;
- Members were further advised that the Birmingham Development Plan provides the over-arching policies and the HMO policy is in saved policies, which will be included in the Development Plan Document which is currently being developed;
- One Member stressed the importance of having an evidence-based city-wide strategy;
- Members were told that the Private Rented Services team is working with colleagues in Revenues & Benefits with the aim of having a database which identifies all private rented properties.

**RESOLVED:-**

- The evidence received was noted;
- A second evidence gathering session will be arranged for the new municipal year.

**7. WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18**

The Work Programme was noted.

**8. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**9. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

None.

**10. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

Agreed.

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The meeting ended at 1658 hours.