

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING AND HOMES O&S COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING

1400 hours on Wednesday 20 September 2017, Committee Rooms 3&4

Present:

Councillor Victoria Quinn

Councillors Gurdial Singh Atwal, Andy Cartwright, Matthew Gregson, Roger Harmer, Des Hughes, Mohammed Idrees, Mary Locke, Ron Storer and Margaret Waddington

Also Present:

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

Jacqui Kennedy, Corporate Director, Place

Tracey Radford, Service Integration Head – Landlord

Darren Share, Acting Director for Waste Management

Jayne Power, Research & Policy Officer, Scrutiny Office

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

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) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Penny Holbrook and Gary Sambrook

3. ACTION NOTES – 25 JULY 2017

(See document No 1)

- The Chair referred to the information which had been circulated giving a ward by ward breakdown of those who have not re-registered for the new Allocations Scheme and said that she would send to Members the percentages which she had worked out;
- Councillor Gregson requested that Committee Members receive an update on the timeline for the Homelessness Strategy and also an update on the Housing Strategy.

RESOLVED:-

- Members to be provided with written updates on both the Housing Strategy and the development of the Homelessness Strategy.
- The Action Notes were noted.

4. WASTE UPDATE

(See document No 2)

Jacqui Kennedy, Corporate Director, Place, attended to give Members an update on the current situation and contingency plans, following the last update to Committee in July.

The following were among the main points raised:

- Following the earlier court ruling, the strike was now in abeyance from the following day;
- Although there had been regular updates for elected Members these had not been held in public and therefore it was important to have this update at Committee;
- Members felt that communication with residents had not been good and that this needed to be improved and information with regard to collections should be clearer;
- The Chair requested information on the cost of the industrial action, together with projected cost implications of the additional tonnage to landfill and an explanation of the cost implications in terms of lost revenue around tonnage of recyclate compared to normal volumes;
- In terms of productivity, benchmarking had been carried out with 80 other Local Authorities on a like-for-like basis with regard to residual waste;
- An offer was made by the Chair for this Committee to assist by carrying out any overview work which might be helpful.

RESOLVED:-

- That the following information be provided to Members:
 - The cost of the industrial action;
 - Projected cost implications of the additional tonnage to landfill;
 - Explanation of cost implications in terms of lost revenue around tonnage of recyclate compared to normal volumes.

5. SELECTIVE LICENSING

(See document No 3)

Pete Hobbs, Service Head, Private Rented Services and Tenant Engagement, attended for this item.

The following were among the main points raised:

- In total, there are around 68,000 private rented properties in Birmingham, of which 1900 have to apply for a licence;
- The Housing Act gives Local Authorities two additional powers: (i) Additional Licensing for HMOs and (ii) Selective Licensing for all private rented sector (PRS) properties, to improve standards;
- The Joint Cabinet Member report of 4 August contained heat maps of those areas within the city relevant to 19% concentrations of PRS and it was on this basis that the decision was made to take forward Stockland Green and Soho wards in the first phase;
- The Stockland Green consultation has started and is on the BeHeard website;
- Briefings have been held with Members in Soho ward;
- Members stressed the importance of keeping in mind the need to look at areas, not ward boundaries and were told that the outcome of the consultation will give a number of options and may evidence that concentrations of PRS properties extend beyond the boundary of a ward;
- Going forward, one possibility to support the rollout of Selective Licensing is the Controlling Migration Fund and the Council is preparing a bid to support rollout in areas where migration is an issue;

RESOLVED:-

- That this item be scheduled into the work programme after the Stockland Green consultation ends (January?)

6. TENANT ENGAGEMENT

(See document No 4)

Tracey Radford, Service Integration Head – Landlord, attended for this item.

The following were among the main points raised:

- Tracey Radford explained that she had been tasked with reviewing the Tenant Engagement Strategy and would like to obtain the views of this Committee;
- There are a number of challenges – policies and practices, cost effectiveness, succession planning, ensuring representation cross-tenure and updating practices with regard to engagement (eg social media) – and the proposal is to review the whole framework;
- Members requested that timescales be provided, together with a clear idea of what the Committee's role would be and likely outcomes;
- There needs to be an emphasis on getting people engaged and Members pointed out the importance of obtaining views from all local people – including young people – and broadening membership of HLBs;
- The Chair requested that a meeting be arranged outside of Committee to discuss timescales and possible contributions to the review.

RESOLVED:-

- That the methodology, timeline and milestones for the review of the tenant engagement strategy be brought back to a future Committee meeting.

7. WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18

(See document No 5)

- The Chair requested that an update on the Allocations Scheme be brought back to Committee urgently.

RESOLVED:-

- An update on the Allocations Scheme to be requested for the next meeting;
- The Work Programme was noted.

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

None.

9. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Noted.

11. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

Agreed.

The meeting ended at 1602 hours.