

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

16th March 2022

Present: Councillor James Stanley in the Chair

Councillors B. Amos, Bisset, Collins, Denham, Hassan, S. Hodgson, Johnson, Lamb and Riaz (Vice-Chair)

Officers: Lloyd Griffiths, Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Communities
Tom Mountford, Head of Homes and Communities
Richard Osborne – Interim Private Sector Housing Manager

40 Appointment of Substitutes

None.

41 Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made:

Councillors Hassan, Riaz and Stanley – Review of the Housing Enforcement Policy (Minute 45) – As landlords in Worcester City.

Councillor Bisset declared an interest in the same item as the landlord of a property outside the Worcester City area.

42 Public Participation

None.

43 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 26th January 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

44 Purple Flag Status

The Chair informed Members that this item had been deferred until the next meeting of the Committee in June as Samantha McCarthy was not able to attend. The Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Communities added that a briefing note on this item will be circulated to Members in due course.

45 Review of the Housing Enforcement Policy

The Committee considered a report on a review of the substantive Housing Enforcement Policy because of recent legislative changes. The Interim Private Sector Housing Manager presented the report and explained that the Policy had been updated to reflect recent legislative changes, and to bring together currently separate Policies.

He highlighted the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) requirements that are set out in Regulations and the available enforcement mechanisms.

Officers responded to questions from Committee Members. In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- Reference was made to how the Policy can be made accessible and inclusive in terms of issues such as language, format, access to face-to-face communication and advocacy. Officers were asked if this can be raised with the relevant Corporate Director.
- It is planned to carry out a private sector housing stock survey. This periodic piece of work has been delayed due to Covid, but will be picked up again and the findings will be presented to this Committee. There is also some relevant data available through the SWDP Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- Officers can provide some information on the Council website to explain what support is available to landlords and what happens if they do not comply.

RESOLVED: That the Committee approve the draft Housing Enforcement Policy 2022, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

46 Proposed Committee Performance Scorecard for 2022/23

The Sub-Committee considered the proposed content of the Communities Performance Scorecard for 2022/23. The Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Communities presented the report and summarised the main points, including Key Projects and Activities, new Projects and current projects that have been removed. He highlighted two proposed amendments to the proposed Performance Indicators:

- Community Recovery Strategy – Transfer to the scorecard for Health and Wellbeing Committee
- Perdiswell 3G Artificial Pitch Development – Add to the Performance Indicators for this Committee.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- Reference was made to Asset Based Community Development Outcomes. The Corporate Director explained that a paper or presentation on this topic can be provided at the June meeting of the Committee.
- There are 3 Performance Indicators that include elements related Housing Enforcement. There will be a report back in time to demonstrate what has been achieved in respect of the various strands of the Enforcement Policy and overall progress.
- The Corporate Director advised that it is possible to provide information regarding numbers on the Housing Waiting List, but interpreting the data is not straightforward and care needs to be taken with the narrative. Officers can look into developing a meaningful indicator.

- As part of the implementation of the Housing Enforcement Policy Officers will look at how information can be recorded to evidence how the work of the Private Sector is driving up the quality of Private Sector Housing generally in Worcester.

RESOLVED: That the Committee agree the proposed content of the Communities Performance Scorecard for 2022/23.

47 Any Other Business

None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00p.m. – 8.09p.m.

Chair at the meeting on
8th June 2022

This page is intentionally left blank