

Environment Select Committee

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2022 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, BYTHESEA ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Jerry Kunkler (Chairman), Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Dr Brian Mathew, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr Bill Parks, Cllr Rich Rogers, Cllr Iain Wallis, Cllr Derek Walters and Cllr James Sheppard

Also Present:

Cllr Phil Alford, Cllr Nick Botterill, Cllr Tamara Reay and Cllr Richard Clewer

132 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mel Jacob, Bob Jones MBE, Charles McGrath, and Dr Nick Murry.

133 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2022 were presented for consideration, and it was,

Resolved:

To approve and sign the minutes as a true and correct record.

134 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Iain Wallis declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 139 – Update on the Homeless Strategy – by virtue of being trustee of a homelessness charity in Devizes.

135 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman provided details of meetings attended on behalf of the committee and briefings received from officers, including on the re-mobilisation of Salisbury City Hall, the new term Highways Maintenance Contract, and on Parish Stewards.

On 24 November 2022 there would be training provided by the Centre for Governance & Scrutiny to support members undertaking scrutiny of financial arrangements and performance.

There would also be a visit for the Committee to the Materials Recycling Facility at Calne on 18 November 2022.

136 **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements submitted.

137 **Update on Wiltshire Housing Development Partnership**

A verbal update was received from Councillor Phil Alford, Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets, and Asset Transfer, along with Richard Walters, Head of Major Projects, and Claire Moore, Housing Enabling Lead. The Housing Enabling Team works in partnership with registered providers of affordable housing to facilitate a range of affordable homes to meet the needs of Wiltshire residents.

Details were provided of the work of the team to deliver the Wiltshire Housing Development Partnership. It manages the relationship with registered providers and helps provide affordable housing by purchasing units delivered by developers secured through s106 planning obligations, or developing affordable housing on small 100% affordable housing sites.

The Committee discussed the report and the update provided. It was explained that 11 registered providers were currently part of the partnership, both larger national and smaller regional providers, and the council's own residential development team. Meetings were held quarterly, with a focus on key themes and priorities such as climate change and rural housing delivery.

In response to queries it was explained that the partnership is focused on developing new housing stock, and that any concerns with existing affordable housing stock would need to be reported to the responsible body. Details were sought on the application process to be a registered provider, which it was confirmed included seeking information on customer satisfaction and other details.

There was also discussion of former sites of affordable housing exiting the market, and whether this had been taken into account when monitoring progress toward the target of delivering 650 homes per year. Additional points raised included taking account of future running costs in any affordable housing build, and quality level that could be required beyond that delivered through s106 obligations.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was,

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the content of the report;**
- 2) **To receive a further update in 12 months;**
- 3) **To receive an update on the net figures of affordable housing delivered through the partnership.**

138 **Update on the Forthcoming Private Sector Renewal Strategy**

A verbal update was received from Councillor Phil Alford, Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets, and Asset Transfer, and Nicole Smith, Head of Housing. A Private Sector Renewal Strategy deals with providing support and assistance to ensure that the private sector housing stock is kept in good condition and meets the needs of occupants

It was explained that the Private Sector Renewal Strategy had been developed in 2019/20, but reprioritisation during the Covid-19 pandemic had led to a delay as other significant work was taken forward. In the next few months there would be a focus on development of the allocations policy in particular due to the impact of cost of living, with work on the Private Sector Renewal Strategy aiming to be completed toward the end of 2022.

It was then,

Resolved:

- 1) To note the verbal update**
- 2) To receive further updates as the strategy developed**

139 **Update on the Homeless Strategy 2019-2024**

A report on the Homeless Prevention Strategy Action Plan was presented by Councillor Phil Alford, Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets, and Asset Transfer, along with Emma Legg, Director of Ageing and Living Well, and Nicole Smith, Head of Housing.

Details were provided on the report, including the completion of 40 out of 49 actions set out in the Action Plan, with additional actions agreed and completed beyond the 49 as originally set out. Updates were provided on the five priorities of the action plan: To reduce rough sleeping, to identify and prevent homelessness at the earliest possible stage, to ensure services are designed to prevent homelessness or support those who are homeless, to ensure those who are threatened with homelessness or who are homeless can secure and keep a suitable home, and to maintain effective strategic direction and partnership working.

The Committee discussed the report and updates, noting there had been significant funding from central government in particular for rough sleeping, but that this was only confirmed until 2025. Details were sought on provision of temporary accommodation and where these were located, and wherever possible for there to be sufficient accommodation to meet the local homeless need, as being housed in another community could add to pressures on a person.

There was discussion of working with other local teams and services, the development of the housing team including specialists in drug and alcohol support and domestic abuse, work with the refugee team, any additional arrangements to deal with the winter period, the focus on multi-agency work to address issues, and local connection of those sleeping rough or homeless.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was,

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the progress made on the Homeless Prevention Strategy Action Plan;**
- 2) **To receive a further update in 12 months;**
- 3) **To be provided with a map showing rough sleeper accommodation in Wiltshire;**
- 4) **To be provided with figures for refugees being accommodated in Wiltshire**

140 **Climate Emergency Task Group**

Councillor Tony Jackson, on behalf of the Task Group, presented the latest report on the activities of the Climate Emergency Task Group. A forward work plan for the Task Group had been agreed, with a review of the climate change adaptation plan, examination of zero-carbon housing and addressing the climate emergency in respect of the Local Plan process included.

The Committee discussed the update and planned future work of the Task Group, with a request made regarding work on the impact on and with tenant farmers on climate adaptation.

Resolved:

To note the update from the Climate Emergency Task Group.

141 **Forward Work Programme**

The Forward Work Programme for the Committee was presented for consideration, and it was,

Resolved:

To approve the Forward Work Programme.

142 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 4 January 2023.

143 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 - 11.45 am)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kieran Elliott of Democratic Services,
direct line 01225 718504, e-mail kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114 or email
communications@wiltshire.gov.uk