
Event: Housing Joint Overview and Scrutiny Review Group

Place: Board Room, Kennet District Council, Devizes

Date: Wednesday 11 June

Time: 10.30am

MINUTES

Attendance: Cllr Janet Giles (Kennet District Council), Cllr Nina Phillips (North Wiltshire District Council), Cllr Mike Fowler (Salisbury District Council), Cllr Pip Ridout (West Wiltshire District Council), Cllr Pat Rugg (Wiltshire County Council)

Officers: James Chamberlain (Senior Democratic Services Officer, Salisbury District Council).

13. Apologies

There were none

14. Minutes of the last meeting

Councillor Fowler raised the following points with reference to the minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2008:

- Has the legal consultant mentioned in Minute 9 been appointed yet?
- What flexibility do local authorities have with regard to spending government housing grants? It was noted that although eco-homes and life-time homes were important, given the chronic shortage of homes in the county these grants could be better utilised to meet this need.
- Where do the four councils, particularly Salisbury District Council, stand with regard to councillor representation on Housing Associations? Members noted the need to ensure that Wiltshire Council will be adequately represented on the various Housing Associations in the county, and that representatives (whether councillors or not) have the relevant experience to carry out their role effectively.

Councillor Fowler also informed Members that Salisbury District Council's Care Connect team had recently been examined by Telecare Services Association and had received an excellent report.

Resolved - that 1) the minutes of the last meeting be approved as a correct record; and 2) the scrutiny officer contact the relevant housing officers to answer the above questions and report back to Members.

15. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman updated Members on the last meeting of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Transition Board (JOSTB) on 30 May 2008, at which she had presented a progress report on the housing review. Overall, Members of JOSTB were satisfied with the work achieved to date, but the Chairman noted that more precision as to the future direction of the review was required (see minute 16 below). Members of the review group also asked to be sent hardcopies of all future JOSTB agendas and minutes.

Resolved – that 1) the above be noted; and 2) the scrutiny officer make the necessary arrangements for hardcopies of JOSTB agendas and minutes to be sent to Members of the review group.

16. Terms of Reference and Progress of the Review

Members considered the previously circulated report of the scrutiny officer, which set out the review's terms and reference and the progress made to date on achieving them. Members noted that while risk assessment and performance management would be covered over the next few meetings (see minutes 17 and 18 below), it would be necessary to schedule consideration of desired service provision standards and recommendations for preferred service delivery arrangements (points 2 and four of the terms of reference) for later meetings.

Resolved – that the above be noted

17. Housing Performance Indicators

Members considered the previously circulated performance data from the Wiltshire County Council Performance Manager (Frontline Services), and Mandy Bradley (Kennet District Council). Councillor Ridout also shared with Members the performance information she had received from Graham Hogg (West Wiltshire District Council). Members noted that the new performance management regime, introduced from April 2008, contained a new set of performance indicators, and that it would therefore be more meaningful to consider performance from the first quarter of the 2008-09 when this data becomes available in late July/early August.

Resolved - that the above be noted

18. Housing Work Group Risk Register and Issues Log

Members consider the previously circulated risk register and issues log of the Housing Work Group. Members noted that with regard to risk 1, the likelihood was currently assessed as unlikely, yet at a previous meeting they had been informed that it was unlikely that savings would be met by Vesting Day. According to the issues log, a paper from Carlton Brand on benefits realisation had gone to JIT. Members requested a copy of this paper for their next meeting. Overall Members considered that the level of detail provided in the "Current Control Measures (Actions)" column was insufficient for them to make an accurate assessment of the steps being taken to mitigate the risks identified. Given that the action assigned for all risks was for the Housing Work Stream to monitor and report through changes on issues, it was agreed that the review group required access to all relevant documents reflecting this monitoring process.

Resolved – that 1) the risk register and issues log be noted;
2) officers provide more detail on the measures being taken to mitigate each risk, and clarification as to the assessment of the savings being made by Vesting Day, in time for the next meeting of the review group; and
3) officers provide the paper by Carlton Brand on benefits realisation for consideration at the review group's next meeting

19. Date of the Next Meeting

Committee Room 1a, Kennet District Council at 10.30 am on Friday 11 July 2008