

# **RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 23 January 2023

## **Present:**

Councillor Tony Owen (Chairman)  
Councillor Keith Onslow (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Jonathan Andrews, Will Connolly,  
Tony McPartlan, Chris Price, Will Rowlands, Shaun Slator  
and Mark Smith

## **Also Present:**

Councillor Yvonne Bear, Portfolio Holder for Renewal,  
Recreation and Housing PDS Committee  
Councillor David Cartwright QFSM

## **40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Christine Harris and Councillor Alison Stammers and Councillor Jonathan Andrews and Councillor Mark Smith attended as their respective substitutes.

Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe and Ermond Berisha, Youth Representative.

## **41 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman proposed that Councillor Keith Onslow be appointed Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year. This was seconded by Councillor Will Rowlands, put to the vote and CARRIED.

**RESOLVED: That Councillor Keith Onslow be appointed Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year.**

## **42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Tony Owen declared an interest in relation to Item 10a: Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio Draft Budget 2023/24 in that he was in receipt of a pension paid by the Pensions Insurance Corporation.

Councillor Mark Smith declared an interest in relation to Item 9a: Future of Community Resource Centres in that he was a member of the Bromley Library Service.

**43 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE  
PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

Two questions for oral reply were received at the meeting. A copy of those questions with the Portfolio Holder's responses can be viewed at Appendix A to these minutes.

**44 MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2022**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

**45 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME  
Report CSD23017**

The report set out progress against outstanding actions from previous meetings.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

**46 HOLDING THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING  
PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO ACCOUNT**

**A HOUSING, PLANNING & REGENERATION PORTFOLIO  
PLAN UPDATE - 2022/23 Q3 UPDATE  
Report HPR2023/003**

The report presented the 2022/23 Quarter 3 update to the Housing, Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Plan.

In considering workstreams within the Portfolio Plan, a Member expressed concern regarding application criteria for food vouchers as those who had previously applied were not eligible for the current round. The Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration explained that Government advice was that food vouchers must be targeted at those who had not benefitted from previous rounds but that a range of support was in place for all struggling households in Bromley, including welfare and crisis funds. A Member queried whether an increase had been seen in the use of Section 21 notices to evict tenants from private rented accommodation and the Assistant Director: Housing advised that this had not been the experience in Bromley and that the Local Authority worked with landlords to maintain existing tenancies wherever possible. Another Member reported that the phone waiting times for the Housing Options Service had been raised as a concern by Citizens' Advice Bromley. The Assistant Director: Housing confirmed that this was an identified issue within the service and that steps were being taken to improve call waiting times, including modal shift to online forms and e-mail.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director: Culture and Regeneration confirmed that there were currently no uncommitted funds within the scheme to deliver improvements to shopping parades. A review was being undertaken on the deliverability of the agreed work programme which could free up some funds and an update would be provided to Members in early Summer 2023. Another Member asked about the backlog in processing Planning Applications and was advised that this had largely been resolved with only twenty cases remaining unallocated. A Member noted an action to review the potential for commercial and community uses of disused park buildings and the Assistant Director: Culture and Regeneration advised that responsibility to deliver this work sat within the Sustainability, Green Services and Open Spaces Portfolio.

The Committee requested that the Project Tracker be presented in a more readable format in future reporting.

**RESOLVED: That the progress on the actions associated with the Housing, Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Plan for Quarter 3 of the 2022/23 financial year be noted.**

#### **47 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

The Committee considered the following report for which the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing was recommended to take a decision:

##### **A CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - QUARTER 3 2022/23 Report FSD23009**

The report presented the capital programme monitoring position for Quarter 3 of the 2022/23 financial year and the revised capital programme for the four-year period 2022/23 to 2026/27 which had been approved by the Council's Executive at its meeting on 18 January 2023.

The Head of Regeneration provided an update on the work being undertaken towards the redevelopment of the Walnuts and West Wickham Leisure Centres which would include extensive public consultation of which details would be announced in February 2023. It had become clear that the planned redevelopments would require some form of closure of the leisure centres, but it was hoped to limit this to a maximum of 12-months and to stagger the planned redevelopments so that the Walnuts and West Wickham Leisure Centres were not closed at the same time. It was definite that temporary leisure facilities could not be provided during any closure period due to the significant costs involved.

With regard to the proposed redevelopment of Chislehurst Library, a Member underlined the need to consider accessibility and public toilet provision as part of any planned scheme. The Head of Regeneration advised that the Capital

Programme reflected the previous Property-led scheme and that this had now been superseded by the Operational Property Review. Library maintenance and works projects would be developed in response to the findings of the Operational Property Review and this would include consultation where appropriate. In response to a question from another Member, the Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration advised that contingency spend was not necessary for Local Authority-owned buildings identified for disposal.

**RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to note and acknowledge the changes put to the Council's Executive on 18 January 2023.**

#### **48 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

The Committee considered the following reports on the Part 1 (Public) agenda for the meeting of the Council's Executive on 8 February 2023:

##### **A FUTURE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES Report HPR2023/010**

The report recommended the permanent relocation of the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre to St Paul's Cray Library and the temporary relocation of Mottingham Community and Learning Shop to Mottingham Library with the service including a one-day-a-week session at St Edward's Church subject to a twelve-month trial to be reviewed after six months. The report also asked the Council's Executive to transfer management of these services to Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) by way of a Change Control Note to GLL's overarching contract and the secondment and/or TUPE of staff depending on the consultation outcome.

The Chairman notified the Committee of a correction to Recommendation 2.3 in the published report in that it was sought to "*Delegate any further decisions on the transfer to GLL to the Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services and the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing*" and this was noted by the Committee.

The Chairman expressed his intention to deal with the proposals for the two Community Resource Centres separately and invited Councillor and Ward Member David Cartwright to address the Committee with regard to the proposals for the Mottingham Community and Learning Shop.

Councillor David Cartwright advised that whilst he and his ward colleague, Councillor Will Rowlands agreed there was a need to relocate the Mottingham Community and Learning Shop, it was crucial that this provision remained close to the Mottingham estate. The service primarily provided early intervention services and support to the residents of this area, including elderly and disabled people as well as those facing multiple challenges, and

the current proposal would move this provision away from the community it served. Underlining the Local Authority's responsibility to serve its residents, Councillor and Ward Member Will Rowlands proposed an additional recommendation:

*2.2 (ii) To note the need for the Mottingham Resource Centre to be situated in close proximity to the existing location on the Mottingham estate (an area of social and economic deprivation) and continue to search for an alternative site during the 6/12 months trial in case the library site does not prove suitable. Furthermore, that Officers consider the implications and feasibility of extending the time available at St. Edward's Church, during the trial period, from one day to two days per week, if required, to provide increased local availability of facilities and resources to the elderly, disabled and vulnerable who reside on the Mottingham estate.*

Councillor Will Rowlands moved that the above additional recommendation be approved. The motion was seconded by Councillor Sean Slator, put to the vote and CARRIED.

The Chairman invited Councillor and Ward Member Chris Price to address the Committee with regard to the proposals for the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre.

Councillor Chris Price paid tribute to the dedication of staff who had made a success of the temporary relocation of the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre at St Paul's Cray Library but expressed significant concerns with regard to permanent relocation. The number of customers accessing the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre had reduced significantly during the temporary relocation and it was felt there was insufficient space for either service to provide a full service offer should this arrangement be made permanent. A significant majority of respondents to the consultation had expressed a preference for the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre to return to its established location on Cotmandene Crescent and further work should be undertaken to review the viability of this supported by a robust maintenance plan. Councillor Chris Price also requested a further consultation be undertaken to fully capture the views of all stakeholders.

In response to the points raised, the Assistant Director: Culture and Regeneration advised that the option for the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre to remain in its established location had been previously discounted due to the ongoing and significant issues impacting the building which had resulted in multiple closures of the service and equipment damage. The report considered by the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee on 16 November 2022 had not included the option of the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre remaining in its current building and the Committee had agreed the actions recommended by that report. A number of alternate sites had been considered with St Paul's Cray Library being identified as being both the most suitable location and the only option

within the St Paul's Cray area. Planned refurbishment works at St Paul's Cray Library would address existing issues with the building condition as well as delivering the more flexible space required to enable both services to deliver their full service offer. The Cotmandene Community Resource Centre would also benefit from sole use of the library space on days when the library service was closed. The Portfolio Holder further underlined that the funding for the refurbishment works was linked to the permanent relocation of the Community Resource Centre and that any delay to agreeing this could result in the service operating within temporary relocation arrangements for a longer period. A Member asked that a commitment be made to ensure service users were not disadvantaged as a result of the planned relocation and the Assistant Director: Culture and Regeneration confirmed that the new arrangements would be widely publicised and closely monitored. Another Member advised that Councillor and Ward Member Colin Hitchens had asked that his support for the planned relocation to St Paul's Cray Library be reported to the Committee.

Councillor and Ward Member Chris Price proposed an amended recommendation be agreed with regard to Cotmandene Community Resource Centre:

- 2.1 Continue to review options for the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre and St Paul's Cray library for a six-month period and undertake further consultation with staff in both organisations and within the community again.*

Councillor Chris Price moved that the above amended recommendation be approved. The motion was seconded by Councillor Tony McPartlan, put to the vote and FELL.

**RESOLVED: That the Council's Executive be recommended to:**

- 2.1 Agree the permanent relocation of the outreach services at Cotmandene Resource Centre to St Paul's Cray Library, including the transfer of management services to GLL by way of a Change Control Note to GLL's overarching contract and the secondment and/or TUPE of staff depending on the consultation outcome;**
- 2.2 (i) Agree the temporary relocation of the outreach services at Mottingham Learning Shop to Mottingham Library, with a one-day-a-week session at St Edward's Church, subject to a twelve-month trial, to be reviewed after six months. These services are to be transferred to the management of GLL rather than the Council by way of a Change Control Note to GLL's overarching contract and will include the secondment and/or TUPE of staff;**
- 2.2 (ii) Note the need for the Mottingham Community and Learning Shop to the situation in close proximity to the existing location on the**

**Mottingham estate (an area of social and economic deprivation) and continue to search for an alternative site during the six to twelve-month trial in case the library site did not prove suitable. Furthermore, that Officers consider the implications and feasibility of extending the time available at St Edward's Church during the trial period from one day to two days per week, if required, to provide increased local availability of facilities and resources to the elderly, disabled and vulnerable who reside on the Mottingham estate;**

- 2.3 Delegate any further decisions on the transfer to GLL to the Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services and the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing;**
- 2.4 Agree the disposal of the Cotmandene building for sale or rent subject to a further report from Property; and,**
- 2.5 Note the expected capital cost of the move is £594k, which is within the Operational Property Review (OPR) allowances for the two library sites, and that the budget be approved as part of the OPR process with a requirement for this project to report to the OPR Board until completion.**

**B PROCUREMENT OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR THE  
CRYSTAL PALACE PARK REGENERATION PLAN  
Report HPR2023/007**

The urgent report provided an update on the delivery of the Crystal Palace Park Regeneration Plan and requesting approval for the procurement of multi-disciplinary consultancy services for the capital schemes.

**RESOLVED: That the Council's Executive be recommended to:**

- Note the contents of this report, namely information regarding the procurement of the multi-disciplinary consultancy services for the next stages of the Regeneration Plan at Crystal Palace Park; and,**
- Approve the procurement of the multi-disciplinary consultancy services to replace AECOM noting that the Regeneration Plan is already on the Capital Programme, with funding secured for the works required under the shadow S106 agreement.**

**C CHANGING PLACES TOILETS  
Report HPR2023/011**

In March 2022, the Local Authority was awarded £220k grant funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to deliver four Changing Places facilities at agreed locations across the Borough with

the use of funds and associated procurement approach agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing on 5 October 2022. This report sought formal approval to accept and spend the grant monies in line with parameters of the funding application, together with approval for contract award for the associated works.

**RESOLVED: That the Council's Executive be recommended to:**

- **Approve the allocation and spend of the Changing Places Fund grant monies which total £220k, in line with the interventions set out in the funding application and within this report, to enable the delivery of four Changing Places facilities across the borough before 31 March 2024;**
- **Approve award of contract, via exemption to competitive tender, to Rise Adapt for the delivery of two modular Changing Places units (situated at Crystal Palace Park and High Elms Country Park) at an estimated value of £145,500. Award of contract will be subject to confirmation of management and maintenance agreements as set out in 3.19 – 3.20;**
- **Approve the distribution of funds to Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) and MyTime Active to deliver Changing Places Toilets at the PRUH and The Pavilion Leisure Centre; and,**
- **Delegate authority to the Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing to agree any changes to the delivery of Changing Places programme within the boundaries of the grant funding available and legal contract with DLUHC.**

**D REPLACEMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL CASE MANAGEMENT IT SYSTEMS**  
**Report HPR2023/012**

The report sought approval to draw down funds from the Council's Technology Fund for one-off costs associated with the replacement of the Planning and Building Control Case Management IT Systems.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director Planning and Building Control advised that the planned new systems would provide a replacement for both back-office case management activities as well as a new public facing planning portal. The requested funds did not include costs associated with the procurement of new Planning and Building Control Case Management IT Systems which would be subject to a further report.

**RESOLVED: That the Council's Executive be recommended to agree that funds totalling £402,307 be drawn down from the Council's Technology Fund.**

**E LOCAL LONDON SUB-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP  
Report HPR2023/008**

The report sought authority for the Local Authority to join the *Local London* sub-regional partnership which brought together local authorities primarily to access funding. The Local Authority had been a nominal-member of *Local London* for several years to access devolved employment and skills programmes and full membership would enable Bromley's businesses and residents to benefit from the full range of funding programmes.

Whilst not objecting to joining *Local London*, the Vice-Chairman underlined the need for reassurance in a number of areas, including the annual contribution and insurance clause. The Head of Economic Development confirmed that Legal Services had reviewed the Inter Authority Agreement, including the annual contribution and insurance clause, and had identified no concerns which was set out in the report. The annual contribution had remained the same since the establishment of *Local London* and there was therefore seemingly no appetite from other local authority members to increase this contribution in the short to medium-term. Additionally, by joining *Local London*, the Local Authority would have access to new funding streams that would total significantly more than its annual contribution.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Economic Development explained that the 12-month notice period to exit *Local London* reflected the nature of funding which was often delivered via schemes with a minimum one-year duration. The Local Authority would be able to raise any concerns on the Inter Authority Agreement with *Local London*, and the Local Authority had already been approached to provide feedback. A Member requested that the worst-case exit cost be provided to the Council's Executive to support its decision making. Another Member requested an annual update be reported to the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee in advance of membership renewal, and this was agreed by the Committee.

**RESOLVED: That the Council's Executive be recommended to:**

- **Approve the Local Authority to join *Local London* and sign the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) for the *Local London* Sub-Regional Partnership so as to establish joint arrangements with the *Local London* Authorities including the formation of a Joint Committee with its terms of reference as set out in the IAA;**
- **Approve the annual membership fee, currently £50K per annum, for the duration of Bromley's membership, noting interdependencies with UK Shared Prosperity 3-year period (Paragraph 3.7) and *Local London's* current strategy period 2022-2025 (Paragraph 3.5);**

- **Delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing to determine continuing membership annually on review of value added;**
- **Appoint the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing as the Local Authority's Member at the *Local London* Joint Committee with authority to make decisions where there are no direct implications for the Local Authority's finances (Paragraph 3.14) and appoint the Leader to be the Reserve Member; and,**
- **Note the benefits of joining *Local London*, as set out in Paragraphs 3.8-3.13.**

## **F HOUSING DELIVERY UPDATE**

This report was withdrawn and would be considered at the next meeting of the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee on 21 March 2023.

## **49 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS**

### **A RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO DRAFT BUDGET 2023/24 Report FSD23010**

The report considered the Portfolio Holder's draft 2023/24 Budget which incorporated the future cost pressures, planned mitigation measures, savings from transformation and other budget options reported to the Council's Executive on 18 January 2023. Members were requested to consider the initial draft budget being proposed and to identify any further action that might be taken to reduce cost pressures facing the Council over the next four years with a view to the Council's Executive making recommendations to Council on the 2023/24 Council Tax levels. There were still outstanding issues and areas of uncertainty remaining and any further updates would be included in the 2022/23 Council Tax report to the meeting of the Council's Executive on 8 February 2023.

In response to a question from a Member, the Director of Housing, Planning and Regeneration confirmed that the Local Authority continued to progress Phase 2 of the Meadowship Homes Scheme which was a joint venture with Orchard and Shipman. The Scheme aimed to acquire approximately 250 properties for use as social rented accommodation to help address homelessness and temporary accommodation pressures and where possible, properties were acquired within or close to the Borough. The Vice Chairman observed that the Scheme was partly funded by a £67m finance facility from Pensions Insurance Corporation (PIC) and asked for further details regarding the loan. The Head of Finance: Adult Social Care, Health and Housing confirmed that although there was limited market data available for this type of transaction, work carried out in relation to Meadowship Homes 2 provided confidence that a competitive rate had been secured and that further details

would be circulated to Members following the meeting. Another Member was concerned that the Council's Executive had recently agreed a 7% increase in social housing rent levels for the 2023/24 financial year and the Head of Finance: Adult Social Care, Health and Housing advised that even with this increase, social housing rent levels for Bromley remained well within the local Housing Allowance level.

**RESOLVED: That:**

- **The update on the financial forecast for 2023/24 to 2026/27 be noted;**
- **The initial draft 2023/24 budget be noted as a basis for setting the 2023/24 budget; and,**
- **The Council's Executive be recommended to note the comments of the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee on the initial draft 2023/24 budget at its meeting on 8 February 2023.**

**B LOCAL PLAN REVIEW: ISSUES AND OPTIONS  
CONSULTATION  
Report HPR2023/004**

The report provided details of the proposed 'Issues and Options' Local Plan consultation. This report had also been considered by the Development Control Committee at its meeting on 10 January 2023 and the recommendations had been supported.

In considering the report, the Chairman highlighted the importance of ensuring that housing development in Bromley did not negatively impact the established character of its communities. The Head of Planning Policy and Strategy confirmed that extensive consultation would be undertaken on the proposed 'Issues and Options' Local Plan with a view to maximising the response by members of the public and other stakeholders.

**RESOLVED: That:**

- 1) **Details of the proposed Local Plan 'Issues and Options' consultation be noted, including the example section provided at Appendix 1; and,**
- 2) **It be noted that the final decision to approve the 'Issues and Options' draft for public consultation will be for the Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration, in discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing.**

**C COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY: SPENDING  
Report HPR2023/006**

The report provided an update on the collection of the London Borough of Bromley Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and set out a possible spending approach for the 'neighbourhood proportion' (NCIL)

In response to a question from a Member. The Infrastructure Delivery Team Leader confirmed that whilst it was planned to take a ward-based approach to the 'neighbourhood proportion' of the Bromley Community Infrastructure Levy, this would include reviewing the impact of any spend on neighbouring wards.

**RESOLVED: That:**

- 1) The 'key principles' to guide the appropriate expenditure of NCIL be noted; and,**
- 2) The intention to convene a 'Neighbourhood CIL Spending Review Panel' to have an input on the expenditure of NCIL receipts be noted.**

**D THEMATIC SESSION: HOUSING SCHEMES AND THE  
REVENUE ACCOUNT**

The Committee received a presentation from Michelle Bowler, Head of Housing Schemes on Housing Schemes and the Revenue Account. The presentation is appended to the minutes at Appendix B.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Head of Housing Schemes advised that in becoming a Social Landlord, the Local Authority was entering a heavily regulated area and would need to agree Tenancy and Residential Asset Monitoring Strategies and Tenancy Management and Rent Setting Policies which would be supported by Member consultation. Another Member queried the fault reporting process and the Head of Housing Schemes confirmed that clear processes were in place for residents to report and address faults and that regular meetings were held with providers to discuss and resolve any arising issues, including repairs and complaints.

The Committee thanked the Head of Housing Schemes for her excellent presentation.

**RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.**

**50 RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING INFORMATION  
BRIEFING**

The items comprised:

- Digital Infrastructure Work Plan Update

**RESOLVED:** That Information Items be noted.

**PART 2 (CLOSED) AGENDA**

**51 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

**RESOLVED** that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business referred to below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

**The following summaries  
refer to matters involving exempt information**

**52 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2022**

The exempt minutes of the meeting of Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee on 16 November 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

**53 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF PART 2 (EXEMPT) EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

The Committee considered the following reports on the Part 2 (Exempt) agenda for the meeting of the Council's Executive on 8 February 2023:

**A PROCUREMENT OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR THE CRYSTAL PALACE PARK REGENERATION PLAN - PART 2 (EXEMPT) APPENDICES**

The Committee considered two Part 2 (Exempt) appendices for Item 9b: Procurement of Consultancy Services for the Crystal Palace Park Regeneration Plan.

The Meeting ended at 9.13 pm

Chairman

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## RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE 23 JANUARY 2023

### QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY WITH ANSWERS

#### 1. From Mr Andy Richardson to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

With regard to Item 9a: Future of Community Resource Centres:

1. With reference to paragraph 3.3, apart from the flooding issue which should be sorted out through building insurance and proper maintenance, why is the existing Cotmandene Community Resource Centre building no longer suitable?

#### Reply:

*It is no longer tenable to operate the service from this site due to the number of issues experienced which have caused the service to be disrupted. In the past year alone the site has been subjected to two sewage leaks and five waste water leaks into the building, with two further outside. This is on the back of leaks in previous years which have resulted in the closure of the building on numerous occasions. The leaks being experienced in the building are due to the adjacent properties, particularly above the shop, and therefore the Council has no control over these or the steps being taken by the owners to fully rectify. The Council has already claimed on its insurance numerous times in relation to rectifying the leaks to date but cannot prevent recurrence. This is why in the November committee report remaining at the existing site was not an option to be taken forward for consideration*

#### Supplementary Question:

Is this proposal a ploy by Bromley Council to get the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre building sold?

#### Reply:

*No. It is because we cannot be sure we can continue to provide this extremely valued community service from the current site due to the number of outages experienced.*

2. With reference to paragraph 3.34, can you confirm what is meant by 'current service provision'? Is it the limited service the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre presently provides from the library OR the more extensive service they were providing from their original building before the flood?

**Reply:**

*The intention is that the full service will be restored. The library site will be remodelled to make better use of the space creating a dedicated area for the resource centre service. Accessibility will also be improved with an accessible toilet installed at the library.*

**Supplementary Question:**

There was a public consultation on the proposal for the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre but this proposal also impacts library users. Will users of St Paul's Cray library be consulted on this proposal?

**Reply:**

*There is no intention to reduce the service at St Paul's Cray Library, indeed there are plans to expand and increase the facilities the library can offer with an investment of over £250,000 in the library building linked to this proposal. Library users will not be affected except during the short period of redevelopment works.*



# Housing Schemes & Housing Revenue Account



1



## Introduction

Michelle Bowler – Head of Housing Schemes

## Agenda

- Overview of role & responsibilities
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
- Regulatory Compliance - Strategy, policy documents & consultation
- Update on new Housing Developments
- Next Steps



2



**Head of Housing Schemes - Brief overview:**

- Oversee new and existing Bromley owned housing stock
- Creation, implementation and monitoring of associated strategies, policies and processes.
- Compliance and Governance with the Regulator of Social Housing (ROSH)
- Housing specification and procurement tender exercise for the Housing Management Contract
- Training existing staff/Scoping resources needed to successfully manage the Housing Revenue Account

3



**Housing Revenue Account – HRA**

- A specific Landlord account containing income and expenditure arising from a housing authorities landlord functions
- Bromley Council closed the Housing Revenue Account in 1992
- Re- opened Housing Revenue Account and registered as a social landlord in September 2020
- Enables Bromley to acquire/access grant funding, increasing the supply of social and low-cost housing for those in the greatest need
- Allows Bromley to better set the rate and pace of additional affordable supply. Ensures ongoing control, directly meets statutory rehousing duties

4



**Regulatory Compliance - Strategy, policy documents & consultation**

- Regulator of Social Housing (ROSH) is an executive non-departmental public body
- Promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector, able to deliver and maintain homes of appropriate quality that meet a range of needs
- Regulatory Objectives – Economic objective & Consumer objective
- The Regulatory framework is made up of 7 standards

<p><b>Three Economic Standards</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Governance &amp; financial viability</li> <li>2. Value for Money</li> <li>3. Rent standard</li> </ol>	<p><b>Four Consumer Standards</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Homes standard</li> <li>2. Tenancy Standard</li> <li>3. Neighbourhood &amp; Community Standard</li> <li>4. Tenant Involvement &amp; empowerment</li> </ol>
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5



**Tenancy Strategy**

- **Why** - Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to have a tenancy strategy
- **Aim** - This strategy identifies areas of best practice and guidance to all social landlords operating in Bromley
- Details a clear policy on the type of tenancies that will be granted, tenancy sustainment, affordability and the discharge of homelessness duty.

**Residential Asset Management Strategy**

- **Why** - The Regulator of Social Housing's Decent Homes Standard and the Council's landlord responsibilities requires the management of its social rented housing assets.
- **Aim** - The strategy sets out its expectation around the valuation, compliance with building legislation and the long term preservation of the asset. This will lead onto a full strategy and 30 year plan in the next 12 months.

6



**Tenancy Management Policy**

- **Why** - The tenancy strategy places an obligation on the Council to have a policy which sets out the management of tenancies for the duration of their lifecycle.
- It complies with the Regulators Tenancy Standard and the Council's tenancy agreements

**Rent Setting Policy**

- **Why** - In line with the Regulator of Social Housing Rent Standard, this policy sets out the framework for setting new rents, annual rent reviews and rebasing rents when a property is relet.
- Compliance with the legislation around the main rent products is critical and the policy also covers the rectification and remediation if necessary in the event of non compliance.

7

**New Housing Developments**



Chris Whitty Place BR7



Kevin Fenton Mews BR1



George Grove Road SE20

8



### Next Steps

- Statutory Consultation
  - Tenancy Strategy – RP and stakeholders
  - Tenancy Management Policy - tenants
- Rent Setting Policy – no consultation as the setting is compliant with the legislation governing the rent products.
- Residential Asset Management Strategy – no consultation, this will be deferred to the full strategy and 30 year plan in the next 12 months.
- Finalise the documents; evidencing how consultation has influenced the final versions in an accompanying report.
- Final documents to be presented at PDS

9

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## RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE 23 January 2023

### Item 9a: Future of Community Resource Centres

#### Speech by Councillor Will Rowlands, representing Mottingham Ward

“Since our last meeting, the need for the learning shop in Mottingham has remained the same and I’m sure the same applies for St Paul’s Cray.

Mr Chairman, Committee.

May I first thank you for the chance to present the amendment Infront of members tonight and I speak also on behalf of my colleague Cllr David Cartwright.

The topic under discussion presents a moment when party politics should be put to one side and our Council Motto should take centre stage. Our desire to **SERVIRE POPULO**, to serve the people is the one thing, regardless of if we are Conservative, Labour, Lib Dem, or Independent, that brought us to the point where we are here to serve our residents as their elected representatives.

Whilst we accept that the temporary change in location from the Mottingham shops current home is Both urgent and unavoidable, for us to simply sit back and watch a service, designed to serve an area of **social and economic deprivation** be removed indefinitely from the area without a thorough assessment of all alternatives would be in breach of our Motto. We would be failing to serve the people.

If you look in the public gallery, you will see two members of staff who currently run the MCLS, two of the most dedicated people I have ever had the pleasure to know. They work tirelessly supporting some of the most socially and economically deprived residents in the ward of Mottingham, with a wide ranging provision of services, from help finding a job, to dealing with bailiffs, from helping resolve an issue for a Social Housing tenant, to helping someone fill out an application which will help them rebuild their life, in fact, never in the Mottingham Community, was so much owed, by so many, to so few. Our most important asset within the structure of services the Council is able to provide is our staff. Without them, we wouldn’t be able to help in an area of social and economic deprivation, and in turn, they need to be as accessible as possible to the very people they are so dedicated to helping. It is our duty to **SERVIRE POPULO** and we must support our residents, staff and the wider service in order for this to be achieved. That is why, on behalf of myself and Cllr Cartwright I propose the amendment in front of you.”

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