

## APPENDIX 2

### MINUTE OF THE A&C PDS MEETING - 27 SEPTEMBER 2011

#### ADDRESSING RISING HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING NEED AND ASSOCIATED BUDGETARY PRESSURES

##### Report ACS11053

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report providing an overview of the current housing market supply and need position within Bromley. The report also outlined the initiatives and direction proposed to address the current mismatch between housing need and supply which was resulting in increased usage and cost of temporary accommodation with associated budgetary pressures. The report detailed a range of current and proposed initiatives which would seek to minimise the use of more expensive forms of temporary accommodation and thus seek to reduce the projected budget overspend. The Committee considered a range of issues including:

- **The data used in identifying trends.** The Head of Housing Need reported that the Department had gathered a significant amount of data for the trend analysis and paragraph 1.5 of the report provided a summary of this data. A detailed breakdown of the data could be provided to Members. Councillor Julian Grainger requested to see a monthly plot of the data that had been gathered.
- **Identifying homes for use in more affordable parts of the Country.** The Assistant Director (Housing and Residential Services) reported that some Homes & Community Agency funding had been used jointly by the South East London Boroughs through Housing Associations to purchase properties around the Kent coast. A Member highlighted that tenants within the private sector expected to move to properties in a number of geographical locations dependant on their available budget and individual circumstances. It therefore stood to reason that tenants in the social rented sector should be expected to adjust their expectations to fit with the budget available and their individual circumstances, and in certain cases this should mean considering properties in less expensive areas of the Borough or the Country. In response it was noted that under current housing/homeless legislation this could only be addressed by the Council with tenants and homeless families on a voluntary basis.
- **The payment in lieu.** The Assistant Director (Housing and Residential Services) reported that some of the payments, received by the Council in lieu of affordable housing, had been invested in the Crown Meadow Court project whilst some funds had been used to support development for learning disability projects. By utilising funds received in lieu of affordable housing in partnership with Housing Associations, the fund produced more properties due to the greater proportion of the capital cost being borne by the Housing Association and repaid through the

rental income stream. Meanwhile, purchase of existing properties generated supply more quickly than funding new development.

- **The supply of housing across the Borough.** A Member suggested that one of the key issues facing the Local Authority was that not enough properties were being built across the Borough. In response, the Assistant Director (Housing and Residential Services) acknowledged that less properties were currently being built but that in the current economic climate developers were not building houses as less people could afford to obtain a suitable mortgage or have the required deposit than prior to the recession. A Member stressed the importance of encouraging Councillors sitting on the Planning Sub-Committees to recognise that there was an increasing need for residential properties. The Assistant Director (Strategy and Performance) reported that this report would be forwarded to the Development Control Committee for consideration.
- In response to a question about household growth the Assistant Director (Housing and Residential Services) reported that a significant proportion of the population of Bromley were first time home occupiers and those suffering from marital breakdown and this impacted on the supply of housing in the Borough.
- A Member requested a statistical breakdown of the individuals on the housing register.

The Committee recommended to the Portfolio Holder that the inclusion of the theme of locating properties in less expensive areas of the Country in the strategy, and that the report be submitted to the Development Control Committee for information in consideration of the Core Strategy on Affordable Housing.

**RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:**

- a) Agree the continued strategy and initiatives for 2011/12 as detailed in paragraph 1.18 of the report, the range of housing duties and needs in Bromley and to deal with increased pressures on the service and budget.**
- b) Approve the pursuance of the proposed initiatives and direction as outlined in paragraph 1.19 of the report and in particular the work around seeking use of empty Council buildings as temporary accommodation and the potential for using other forms of temporary accommodation – e.g. mobile homes,**
- c) Approve the proposals for use of Payment in Lieu funds as detailed in paragraph 1.22 of the report aimed at contributing supply options to help address the issues raised in this report.**

- e) Note and support the ongoing work of the Empty Homes Officers to contribute to the supply and help address the budget pressures and for the additional financial benefits as per paragraphs 1.26 to 1.28 of the report.**
  
- f) Support the proposal to make a spend to save bid for a person to see through the work on the range of proposals and initiatives on increasing supply to reduce the pressures and spend on Bed and Breakfast accommodation;**
  
- g) Support the proposal to make a bid for LBB capital to ensure sufficient funding for grants to bring empty properties back in to use with the aim of such grants to be in the form of loans to reduce the pressures and spend on Bed and Breakfast accommodation and increase the financial benefit to the Council from the New Homes Bonus.**
  
- h) Agree to the inclusion of the theme of locating properties in less expensive areas of the Country in the strategy,**
  
- i) Agree that the report be submitted to the Development Control Committee for information in consideration of the Core Strategy on Affordable Housing.**