

HOUSING CABINET

RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by Councillor Steve Wylie as the Cabinet Member for Housing at a special decision meeting held on Friday 15 June 2012 at 9.00am in the Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

Also present was Councillor David Horne as opposition spokesperson and apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Steve Wemyss, opposition spokesperson.

9 Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 1)

There were no clear declarations of interests, however, Councillor Horne did declare that he had a personal but non-prejudicial interest in that he had historically purchased his property in the 1960's.

10 Reinvigoration of Right to Buy and One for One Replacement (AI 2)

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE HEAD OF HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND CHIEF OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION (SECTION 151 OFFICER))

Nick Haverly introduced the report which set out on the impact on the Housing Revenue account and sought approval to sign up to the agreement to retain receipts for use for replacement homes. He drew members' attention to the figures within the report on page 5 which set out the comparisons of the old and new discount rates and the loss to Portsmouth City Council. It was anticipated that the loss would be for approximately the first 32 sales.

A deputation was then made by Graham Heaney in a personal capacity. He stated that he felt that the title of the scheme as "Reinvigoration" was not accurate and the One to One Replacement is misleading as the amount that is recouped by the council is limited. He referred to the CLG Select Committee's report findings of 23 April which had expressed concerns regarding the provision of new housing and he asked would the properties subsequently built be affordable? He also felt that the national scheme would mean that areas like Portsmouth would be subsidising other areas. He asked the cabinet member to give consideration to writing to the Housing Minister to draw attention to the CLG Select Committee's report findings.

Maria Cole a member of the Residents Consortium then asked questions on the report which were answered by Nick Haverly, Jo Bennett and Nigel Selley who were all present, regarding the involvement of Registered Social Landlords and the council's own plans for acquiring and building new properties. Jo Bennett reported that there would be reports to the next couple of Cabinet Member for Housing Decision Meetings regarding redevelopment opportunities. Nick Haverly confirmed that it was anticipated Portsmouth would have a net reduction in housing stock but there would be income accrued by the acceptance of the scheme. Councillor Horne then asked questions regarding negative housing subsidy.

Councillor Wylie as Cabinet Member reported that the forthcoming Housing Asset Management Plan would look at the options available for redevelopment for the Housing Service. He confirmed that he had already written to ministers to lobby them but was willing to pursue this. He was very disappointed with this as a way forward as he believed there were other ways to incentivise people to move to the private sector rather than lose parts of the housing stock, which he wished to add to rather than reduce.

Representation by opposition spokesperson, Councillor Wemyss was circulated to all present at the meeting. Councillor Wemyss welcomed the extension to the Right to Buy to encourage people to take responsibility for their own lives and the area in which they lived and welcomed the Government's proposals to replace the homes sold on a One for One basis.

Councillor Wylie referred to the previous consultation with tenants when they had been asked whether they wished to stay with the city council's management and 99% of respondents had indicated that they had wished to do so. Councillor Wylie stated that he did not like having to take the decision with regard to the Right to Buy as it was set out and so he would add to the recommendations.

The Cabinet Member for Housing asked that it be recorded that it was with a heavy heart that he took the following **DECISIONS**, he

- i) Noted the impact that the increase in Right to Buy discount has on sale proceeds and resources available for reinvestment**
- ii) Approved the signing of the Department for Communities and Local Government's one for one replacement agreement, confirming Portsmouth's contribution towards the provision of national one for one replacement**
- iii) Requested that officers bring a future report looking at alternative schemes to incentivise and help people with their aspiration of owning their own home within the private market, which will reduce the loss of council owned housing.**
- iv) Confirmed that he would write to the Housing Minister, drawing to his attention the findings of the Communities and Local Government's select committee on the financing of new housing supply and requesting that this be taken into account for future housing policies.**

The meeting concluded at 9.40 am.

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Councillor Steve Wylie
Cabinet Member for Housing