

HOUSING EXECUTIVE

NOTES OF THE DECISIONS taken by Councillor Hugh Mason as the Executive Member for Housing, at his decision meeting of Tuesday 18 March 2008 at 4.00 pm in the Guildhall, Portsmouth. Councillor Jim Patey (Group Spokesperson) was also in attendance but Councillor Mike Park (Group Spokesperson) sent his apologies for absence.

7 Declaration of Members' Interests in accordance with Standing Order No 14 (AI 1)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

8 Reviewing Portsmouth City Council's Affordable Housing Programme (AI 2)

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY HOUSING)

Alan Cufley presented this item reporting that Portsmouth were on target with the delivery of affordable housing and there were now more social rented properties from the new build programme. Councillor Patey asked whether there needed to be more consideration on social mixes in problematic areas; Margaret Geary responded that the affordable housing helps to address this with developers being asked for a greater tenure mix. Councillor Mason welcomed the positive message of the report with the provision of affordable housing and the increase in social renting sector.

DECISION:

That the report be noted.

9 Homelessness Strategy (AI 3)

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY HOUSING)

Ivan Western presented his report which identified how there had been progress since the first strategy had been produced in 2003 with increased preventative work and ongoing pressures on temporary accommodation that provided challenges. Councillor Mason was impressed with the strategy which widened options, with greater emphasis on prevention and tackling the issues with young people.

DECISION:

That the Executive Member for Housing endorsed the strategy.

10 Amendment to the Financial Assistance Policy for Private Sector Housing (AI 4)

(REPORT BY THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY HOUSING)

Roy Scanlon introduced his report which outlined the broadening of the scope and choice of measures available to residents gave greater emphasis on encouraging energy efficiency, bringing more private sector rental properties up to standard and increasing use of previously empty properties. Councillor Mason welcomed the imaginative development of the policy and commended Roy Scanlon, Housing Renewals Manager on the imaginative development of the policy and the staff of the Housing Renewals team for their commitment to improving the city's housing.

DECISION:

That the Executive Member agree the broader range of assistance packages to be introduced on 1 April 2008, as detailed in Appendix A of the report.

11 Council Housing Maintenance and Improvements and Housing IT Business Software 2008/09 (AI 5)

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE REPAIRS MANAGER)

Meredydd Hughes introduced his report and outlined the new way of assessing planned maintenance using local knowledge of both staff and residents as well as detailed surveys not just relying on historical data. Owen Buckwell reported that this gave greater flexibility to the area housing managers to allocate funding for necessary works and it gave greater encouragement to the professional advancement of the surveyors. Members expressed interest in hearing back on the progress of the new system.

DECISIONS:

- (1) That the area programmes and allocation of finance for the funding of the revenue budgets for repairs and maintenance of dwellings be noted;**
- (2) That the capital budgets listed in Appendix B and Appendix C commencing in 2008/2009 be approved and the local authority Housing Manager be authorised under the Financial Rules, Section B14 to proceed with schemes within the funds approved;**
- (3) That the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources and Services' financial appraisal be approved for the capital programme – global provision.**

12 Telecare in Portsmouth – ‘Moving into the Mainstream’ (AI 6)

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE DEPUTY HEAD OF
HEALTH IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE)

Margaret Geary presented the report which had also been considered and approved by the Executive Member for Health & Social Care that morning at his meeting at which two very impressive service users had attended to give their views of the benefits of the scheme, increasing their independence and confidence to live on their own.

DECISIONS:

- (1) The proposal outlined in the report to expand the use of Telecare including development of an in-house responder service was approved;**
- (2) Authority was delegated to the Strategic Director for Health, Housing & Social Care in consultation with the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources & Services to implement the scheme and choose the best option for meeting customer demand;**
- (3) The financial appraisal submitted by the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources & Services was approved;**
- (4) Discussions would be initiated with Portsmouth PCT regarding joint investment into the development of Telecare.**

The meeting concluded at 4.45 pm.

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Councillor Hugh Mason
Executive Member for Housing.

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