

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING

NOTES OF THE DECISIONS taken by Councillor Steven Wylie as Cabinet Member for Housing, at a special meeting held on Thursday 14 January 2010 at 9.00 am.

Also present

Councillor Jim Patey (Spokesperson)
Councillor Mike Park (representing Jim Fleming)

Apologies – Spokesperson Councillor Jim Fleming was away and so had tendered his apologies and with agreement of Councillor Wylie was represented by Councillor Park at the meeting.

1 Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 1)

There were no declarations of interests directly relating to the items under discussion. Councillor Steve Wylie did point out that some of the housing would be built within his ward, but this was of no direct personal or pecuniary interest to him.

2 Forward Plan Provision (AI 2)

DECISION:

The Cabinet Member noted that this decision is a Key Decision for the purpose of the Forward Plan but was not included in the Forward Plan for January 2010 but that the necessary steps had been taken to publicise this.

3 Watts Road Car Park Development (AI 3)

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE HEAD OF HOUSING MANAGEMENT)

Jeff Short and Alison Cloutman presented the report explaining the background to chasing this site, which was not a greenfield site and as a car park it attracted government funding. This model would be used for other small sites to be developed in the city. They further reported that there was a good mix of tenure for the development to build six houses (two 5 bedroom, four 4 bedroom) and six flats (one 3 bedroom disabled person's unit, three 3 bedroom and two 2 bedroom), which fitted in with the demand for larger family homes. The financial appraisal was noted and the fact that it was estimated that the scheme would bring in £2.1m over the three-year period to the Housing Revenue Account thereby outweighing the capital investment and giving residents new homes.

Councillor Patey welcomed the report and the building of council houses and asked regarding the position of properties to be renovated. Jeff Short reported there would be a report going to the Cabinet Member for Housing's meeting on 2 February dealing with empty and residential properties.

Councillor Wylie reiterated that as well as the development at Southampton Road the authority bought flats which used to be in Council ownership. Councillor Park was representing Councillor Fleming, who wished to be assured of the value for money of the scheme, but was supportive of the principle. Councillor Wylie reported that this scheme would be helping meet the local demand for family homes.

Jeff Short and Alison Cloutman further reported that the infrastructure did not come under the HCA grant, but there would be close consultation with the area housing office regarding the car parking and design, including landscaping works. Alison reported that the grant had been approved on Monday that week. Jeff Short wished to place on record his gratitude to colleagues in Legal Services, Finance, Planning and Democratic Services for their support in bringing this report together within a short timescale. He further reported that Procurement were involved in the project and the necessary financial checks would be undertaken before the contracts were placed. It was stressed that the houses should be retained by Portsmouth City Council although under the right to buy, if these were bought after ten years, the Council would retain the capital receipt. It was also stressed that the scheme had the added benefit of being built to a level four code of sustainability, ensuring the provision of quality homes for Portsmouth residents.

Councillor Wylie thanked all the team for undertaking the work to bring this to fruition and he was pleased to be able to endorse the scheme.

DECISIONS

That subject to achieving a start on site by 31 March 2010

- (1) the scheme to provide 12 new build family homes at the Watts Road site at a cost of £1,655,850 be approved;**
- (2) authority to determine the final scheme design be delegated to the Head of Housing Management;**
- (3) the changes to the Housing Investment Programme detailed in the financial appraisal were approved;**
- (4) the Strategic Director and Section 151 Officer's financial appraisal was approved.**

The meeting concluded at 9.25 pm.

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Councillor Steven Wylie
Cabinet Member for Housing