

## HOUSING CABINET

RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by Councillor Steve Wylie as the Cabinet Member for Housing at his decision meeting held on Tuesday 29 January 2013 at 4.00 pm in the Guildhall, Portsmouth.

Also present were party spokespersons Councillors David Horne and Steve Wemyss.

### **1 Apologies for Absence (AI 1)**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **2 Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 2)**

There were no declarations of members' interests.

### **3 Council Housing Budget 2013/14 (AI 3)**

(TAKE IN REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND  
HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER)

Nick Haverly introduced the report and wished to place on record his appreciation to the tenants and leaseholders for their contributions which had been greatly appreciated and to his colleagues in Housing Management and Financial Services. The consultation this year had used both traditional and modern means to reach residents. He reported that recommendation (iv) may need amending (it was later removed) due to the ongoing government consultation on HRA capital receipts on the Right to Buy scheme.

A deputation was then made by Pat Stoddart objecting to the extent of the consultation process. Maria Cole, a member of the Residents' Consortium then made suggestions regarding the use of laundry tokens and in support of the heating charges being kept down in Tipton and Edgbaston Houses.

Comments were then made by the party spokespersons. Councillor Wemyss agreed that it was premature to make a decision on the right to buy element in light of government proposals. With regard to the consultation process, he also had some concerns and felt it should not be for the city council to sub-contract this consultation process to the Residents' Consortium (although they should be fully involved in the process) and suggested that in the future there could be a link within the House Talk magazine to a site with more detailed papers. He welcomed that the new funding arrangements meant that the city council was no longer subsidising other councils and praised the housing stock in Portsmouth.

Councillor Horne asked that in future there be more public sessions at the housing offices such as Paulsgrove and it was reported that there had been sessions held at Wecock Farm and Leigh Park as well as some category 2 schemes in Paulsgrove. It was reported that there had been 597 responses and officers had provided a breakdown of these responses to Councillor Wylie that day which was shared with the party spokespersons and would be made available to the residents.

Councillor Wylie thanked everyone for their input and their comments and would ask that there be further consideration as to how consultation should take place the following year.

**DECISION:**

**The Cabinet Member for Housing approved:**

- (i) All new rents and charges to be effective from 4th April 2013 or such other date as determined by the Head of Housing Management (HHM) in consultation with the Head of Financial Services (HFS).**
- (ii) Dwelling rents for next year were set at this meeting as option 3 (three years of steady increases), as set out on page 6 of the report.**
- (iii) General Service Charges were set at this meeting in accordance with option 3 as set out in Appendix 8.**
- (iv) Mobile home license fees as shown in Appendix 12 were approved.**
- (v) Garage and parking site rents as shown in Appendix 12 were approved and authority to let garages at reduced rents where demand is low was delegated to the Head of Housing Management (HHM) in consultation with the Head of Financial Services (HFS).**
- (vi) Charges for Sheltered Housing Service Charges and Supporting People Charges for next year were set at this meeting in accordance with option 3 as set out in Appendix 9.**
- (vii) The method of calculating Sheltered Housing charges be reviewed in consultation with residents during the forthcoming year.**
- (viii) Heating Charges were set at this meeting in accordance with Appendix 10 (for full cost recovery).**
- (ix) Laundry Charges were set at this meeting in accordance with the option 1 in Appendix 11 for the first year, followed by option 3 for the following three years.**
- (x) Revenue budgets for 2012/13 and 2013/14 be approved and authority given to the HHM in consultation with the HFS to amend the budgets to reflect the latest available information prior to finalising budgets for 2013/14.**
- (xi) The relevant Managers be authorised to incur expenditure in 2013/14**

#### **4 Refurbishment of former Pinnacle Properties (AI 4)**

(TAKE IN REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES)

Jo Bennett presented this report and explained how there had been difficulty in gaining access prior to the purchase of this portfolio properties due to the client group and she explained how the refurbishment works would take place. This had been very successful so far in improving quality of life for the residents. Maria Cole from the Residents' Consortium wished to comment that she was supportive of the refurbishment and the need in this case justified the increase in cost. Councillor Wylie reiterated that this project had given stability to these residents and so this represented greater value for money, especially as it was an alternative to moving residents elsewhere. He wished to thank Jo Bennett's team for how they had carried out this work with the residents and their families.

#### **DECISION:**

**Approval was given to increase the scheme cost of purchasing and refurbishing the Pinnacle Properties by £498,300, to a total of £1,616,300.**

#### **5 Wingfield Street & Westminster Place Refurbishment (AI 5)**

(TAKE IN REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES)

Steve Groves introduced this report regarding the reinvigoration of these buildings and reported on the timescale with this going out to contract for an envisaged 12 month completion and they hoped to be on site in September. Councillor Wylie welcomed this scheme.

#### **DECISIONS:**

- (1) Approval was given to tender the works based on a budget estimate of £2,100,000 including a £200,000 allowance for contingencies and unforeseen works.**
- (2) Following a full tender evaluation authority to enter into contract with the preferred bidder was delegated to the Head of Housing and Property.**
- (3) The financial appraisal was approved.**

## **6 Angmering & Dale Park House Refurbishment (AI 6)**

(TAKE IN REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES)

Steve Groves introduced his report which outlined similar works taking place and Maria Cole wished to register her support for the scheme which increased the comfort for residents. Councillor Wylie was pleased that this was another refurbishment scheme and was proud that Portsmouth City Council was looking after its stock and was in a position to bring forward more of these schemes now.

### **DECISIONS:**

- (1) That approval was given to tender the works based on a budget estimate of £550,000 including a £55,000 allowance for contingencies and unforeseen works.**
- (2) That following a full tender evaluation authority to enter into contract with the preferred bidder is delegated to the Head of Housing and Property.**
- (3) The financial appraisal was approved.**

## **7 Exclusion of Press and Public (AI 7)**

### **DECISION:**

**That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information Act, 1985), the press and public be excluded for the consideration of the following item:-**

**Item 8 - Refurbishment and provision of refuge accommodation on the grounds that it contains information defined as exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 under paragraph 2 relating to Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.**

## **8 Refurbishment and provision of refuge accommodation (AI 8)**

(TAKE IN EXEMPT REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES)

It was noted that this was a fully exempt report and therefore as Maria Cole had asked to make a deputation in support of the work to help vulnerable women and children it was agreed that she could remain for discussion of this item if the members and officers did not refer to any of the exempt information contained within the report which might give rise to information likely to reveal the identity of an individual or the location of properties.

Jo Bennett presented the report and undertook to provide information to Councillor Wemyss regarding schemes helping men fleeing domestic violence. She reported on work taking place with the education service regarding liaison with local schools affected.

**DECISION:**

**Approval was given for the refurbishment of properties as set out in the exempt report.**

The meeting concluded at 5.00 pm.

JW/DMF  
30 January 2012  
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