

HOUSING & SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing & Social Care Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday, 8 March 2018 at 3pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Darren Sanders (in the Chair)
Alicia Denny
Leo Madden

31. Apologies for Absence. (AI 1)

Councillors Colin Galloway, Gemma New and Steve Wemyss sent their apologies for absence.

32. Declarations of Members' Interests. (AI 2)

The Chair declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest: he is a member of Milton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which oversees the Neighbourhood Plan covering Langstone and St James Hospital sites.

33. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2018. (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record.

34. Review into models of supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities and whether similar provision can be extended to others with a support need. (AI 4)

Claire Upton-Brown, Assistant Director of Culture & City Development asked the panel to note that:

The Local Plan Review had just started and the council is examining the different evidence bases to understand housing need. This evidence must be up-to-date and relevant. Approximately 20% progress has been made.

Previously the evidence for housing need had not been broken down into categories.

Strategic sites, those that can support more than 250 dwellings, are reviewed to see if different housing needs can be accommodated as part of the site specific policies.

The council is required to demonstrate that any plans are evidence-based, deliverable, realistic, viable and compatible with other plans.

As the plan is for a minimum of 15 years, it is important that it is not too prescriptive.

All Local Plans that are going to examination are monitored by the council. Guildford council has drafted a policy for well-designed, special sites. It has encouraged generic, evidence-based on housing need. Bedford Borough

Council took a different approach. Its policy on housing mix for sites with more than 100 dwellings must include an element of special learning disabilities or health needs. Islington council is using its Housing Strategy to identify how to deliver specialised housing need. None of these plans have been submitted for examination, so the Inspector had not determined whether these are sound policies.

The new local plan will look at evidence of housing needs and how these might be accommodated.

In response to questions, she clarified the following points:

The Planning Committee considers the use of the land and not the needs or possible behaviour of the potential tenants or owners of a building.

In November 2013, NHS Property Services announced that it would release the St James' Hospital site. The council approached the Homes and Communities Agency which enables good planning. This site posed significant challenges including the infrastructure, a listed building and the landscape which need to be dealt with in order to achieve the best outcome for the whole site. The HCA acquired the site during phase 1. This took longer than expected. The council worked with all the organisations involved including Milton Neighbourhood Forum in order to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. This dovetailed with other work. The planning application will come to committee. It is not possible at the moment to say whether the council could insist that a minimum number of supported housing units be built on the site. She is very keen that the site retains health care facilities as there is evidence of demand for care users.

There are many competing objectives for land use including: environmental, housing, retail, employment, commercial and health services.

The draft National Planning Policy Framework had recently been published and proposes many changes. She needs to read it fully to understand the full implications.

The panel noted that:

Although a community centre was wanted in Tipner, none was put in. Better relationship with the landowners on SJH site.

The council should insist that developers include supported living accommodation on this site.

It could be easier to convert small, infill sites around the city could be used for supported living accommodation.

Residents can be apprehensive when planning applications are submitted in their vicinity for supported living accommodation.

The council could make a spend to save investment to build or convert more supported living accommodation.

In response to questions, Alison Cloutman, Supported Housing Business Partner, Property and Housing explained that:

There is a huge demand for flats with specialist accommodation and more supported living accommodation is required.

She would welcome a number of units being reserved for affordable housing and a proportion reserved for the supported living portfolio provided that it was viable for the development.

Converting business or retail premises can cost more than building a new building. However, many conversions have been carried out including a former public house and a rehabilitation unit.

She would recommend a maximum of 12-15 flats in one road in order to avoid the risk of developing ghettos.

If all the residents at a shared supported living accommodation that the panel visited earlier that day, decided that they wanted to move to independent accommodation, there would be a wait.

Action

It was agreed that a list of Property demands from Adult Social Care would be shared with the panel once Alison had received it.

The meeting concluded at 4:50pm.

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Councillor Darren Sanders
Chair