

Housing and Community Services Committee

Wednesday 3 November 2010 7.30pm

Council Chamber
Runnymede Civic Centre, Addlestone

Members of the Committee

Councillors H W V Meares (Chairman), J M Edwards and P Taylor (Vice Chairmen);
J R Ashmore, R J Edis, P A Francis, Miss M N Heath, S M Mackay, P S Sohi and
Mrs G Warner

AGENDA

Notes:

- i) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- ii) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Mr M L White, Department of Administration and Leisure Department, Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425623). (Email: malcolm.white@runnymede.gov.uk)**.
- iii) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr B A Fleckney on 01932 425620. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on www.runnymede.gov.uk.
- iv) In the unlikely event of an alarm sounding, members of the public should leave the building immediately, either using the staircase leading from the public gallery or following other instructions as appropriate.

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বাঙলা

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اردو

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Polski

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LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

PART I

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PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection.

- a) Exempt Information
(No reports to be considered under this heading)
- b) Confidential Information
(No reports to be considered under this heading)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| TERM | EXPLANATION |
|------------------------------------|---|
| ACC | Surrey County Council Adults and Community Care Services, formerly known as Social Services. |
| ALMO | Arms Length Management Organisation. This is an organisation established to manage Council stock. The properties remain Council owned and tenants retain their secure tenancies. |
| BME | Black and Minority Ethnic Groups. This is a collective name used by various bodies. |
| CAA | Comprehensive Area Assessment. A way of assessing local public services in England. It examines how well councils are working together with other public bodies to meet the needs of the people they serve. CAA is a joint assessment made by a group of six independent watchdogs including the Audit Commission. The Government announced the abolition of the CAA powers in June 2010. |
| CLG | Communities and Local Government. Government department responsible for local government and housing functions. See the CLG website at www.communities.gov.uk . |
| DFG | Disabled Facilities Grant. This is a grant made available to disabled persons to provide adaptations to their property. Dependent on the type of work, it is a mandatory grant. The amount of grant awarded is subject to a test of resources of the disabled person. |
| DHCS | Director of Housing and Community Services. |
| DWP | Department of Work and Pensions (Government Department) |
| ESP | Existing Satisfactory Property. This scheme involved working with a Housing Association to purchase low cost housing in the private sector. Originally the scheme involved the repurchase of ex-Right to Buy Council properties. However, the scheme was broadened to include any low cost housing in the Borough. |
| GOSE | The Government Office for the South East. This is the local office of the Office of the Government. Its role previously included development of the Regional Housing Strategy. |
| HMO | House in Multiple Occupation. In general terms this is a property that is let to three or more tenants. However, for an exact definition reference must be made to the Housing Act 2004. |
| HOMES AND COMMUNITIES AGENCY (HCA) | This is the National Housing Agency for England. It is a Government Agency and has replaced the Housing Corporation. |
| HRA | Housing Revenue Account. This is a statutory account that sets out the expenditure and income arising from the provision of social housing by the Local Authority as a landlord. Expenditure in the HRA includes repairs and improvements, and management expenses. Income is mainly from rents. HRA subsidy is a significant item in the HRA. |
| INTERMEDIATE HOUSING | This is housing that costs less than market housing but more than social rental housing. It can be shared ownership, homebuy or intermediate rented accommodation. |
| LDF | Local Development Framework. A folder of local development documents that outlines how planning is managed in an area. |
| LSP | Local Strategic Partnership – Leads on the Community Strategy. |

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| NROSH | The National Register of Social Housing (NROSH) is a system for collecting social housing data on individual properties directly from local authorities and housing associations. |
| PFI | Private Finance Initiative. A long-term contractual private/public partnership under which the private sector takes on the risks associated with the delivery of public services in exchange for payments tied to agreed standards of performance. |
| PPG3 | Planning Policy Guidance. This is Guidance issued by the Secretary of State detailing National Planning Policy within existing legislation. There are many examples of Guidance and PPG3 is the one that is the most relevant to housing. This sets out the requirements relating to the provision of affordable housing. |
| RARP | Runnymede Accommodation Referral Panel. This group has been established to assess the accommodation requirements of people with mental health, learning disability and physical disabilities. The group considers each individual case and makes a recommendation as to the level of support required. Representatives on the group include the following: Officer from the Borough Council's Housing Department. Officer from the Community Support Team (Social Services). Officer from the Community Mental Health Team (Social Services/Health). Occupational Therapist. |
| RCRA | Runnymede Council Residents Association, formerly the Tenants' and Leaseholders Services Group. This group was formed in February 1999. The members of the group are Council Tenants and Leaseholders. They meet prior to each Housing and Community Services meeting to consider policy and management issues that impact on Tenants and Leaseholders. |
| RP | Registered Provider. This is a new name for a Registered Social Landlord or is a Housing Association which is entitled to bid for Social Housing Grant. The RP is established for the purpose of the provision, construction, improvement or management of social housing and is a not for profit organisation. |
| RTB | Right to Buy. The regulations that allow Council tenants to purchase the freehold or leasehold of their home. |
| SAP | Standard Assessment Procedure. This is the Government's procedure for assessing the energy efficiency of a property. |
| SHG | Social Housing Grant. This is the main public subsidy paid to Registered Social Landlords by Central Government, through the Homes and Communities Agency to finance new homes. It can be used to pay for rented schemes as well as low cost home ownership schemes. |
| TENANTS COMPACT | This is a requirement of Central Government. It entails developing an agreement between the Council and tenants or voluntary organisations about the way in which they will be consulted on the services they receive or deliver. |
| TSA | Tenant Services Authority. This is a Government body established to set standards and monitor performance of Social Landlords. |

1. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman will read the Fire Precautions which set out the procedures to be followed in the event of fire or other emergency.

2. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE

3. MINUTES

To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 September 2010. These Minutes were included in the October 2010 Summons/Minutes Book.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

If Members have an interest in an item please record the interest on the form circulated with this Agenda and hand it to the Legal Representative or Committee Administrator at the start of the meeting. A supply of the form will also be available from the Committee Administrator at meetings. Members who have previously declared interests which are recorded in the Minutes to be considered at this meeting need not repeat the declaration when attending the meeting. Members need take no further action unless the item in which they have an interest becomes the subject of debate, in which event the Member must leave the room if the interest is personal and prejudicial.

6. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY (DHCS)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To approve a Homelessness Strategy for the Borough.**

2. Background Information

2.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 placed a duty on local authorities to publish a Homelessness Strategy and to review this at least every 5 years.

2.2 The Council first adopted a Homelessness Strategy in July 2003 and this was reviewed in November 2006. The Government issued directions that any authority that had obtained an excellent rating under CPA was no longer required to complete a Homelessness Strategy. The CPA regime has now been abandoned by the Government, however, with many changes taking place that will impact on homelessness it is felt prudent to still produce a revised Strategy.

3. Report

3.1 Attached at Appendix 'A' is a comprehensive Homelessness Strategy. This looks at a range of issues, including the current level of homelessness, the links to housing advice and the housing register, the estimated temporary accommodation requirement and the many achievements since the last Homelessness Strategy was published.

3.2 The report also highlights the key challenges for 2010 – 2013 and sets out an action plan for managing these challenges.

4. Equality Issues

4.1 To comply with Equalities legislation it is necessary to consult on the draft strategy and then it will be necessary to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. The consultation has now begun, however, it may not be possible to produce a completed EIA by the time of the meeting. If this is the case, then Members are asked to agree the current draft, subject to consideration of any adverse comments or significant omissions that are identified during the consultation. If made, these will be reported to the next meeting of the Committee, when changes to the proposed Strategy will then need to be considered.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 Section 12 of the Strategy sets out the resource issues relating to the Strategy. This does not, of course, factor in any decisions that the Council may have to make about the local funding of housing services arising from the Government's Spending Review.

5.2 Appendix 'C' presents a letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government regarding the settlement for housing contained in the Spending Review. In his letter, the Minister announces that homelessness grant has been protected. Runnymede received £44,000 in homelessness grant in 2010/11.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Changes in the economy and housing supply are impacting on the Council's Homelessness services. The long term effect of these need to be considered. Officers have, therefore, compiled a comprehensive Homelessness Strategy that examines the current issues and sets out an action plan for managing the key challenges.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) Members indicate any alterations required to the Strategy;**
- ii) a further report be brought to the January 2011 meeting incorporating the comments from the consultation on the Strategy and any amendments required by Members.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

RBC Homeless Strategy and Departmental files.

7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING TARGET (DHCS)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To advise the Committee of the progress that has been made towards meeting the Affordable Housing target.**

2. Background Information

2.1 In December 2006, the Council adopted a new Housing Strategy which had the delivery of 500 Affordable Housing units over a period of 5 years (from December 2006 to December 2011) as one of its main targets.

3. Report

3.1 As at 11 October 2009, the total number of Affordable Housing units delivered against the above target amounted to 327. There are also currently 58 units under construction, the majority of which will be completed within the next 12 months. Details of these are set out in Appendix 'B'.

3.2 It is now almost 4 years since the target was set and, using an average of 100 units a year, 400 units should have been provided to date. Due to circumstances beyond the Council's control this is not currently the case and, although it is anticipated that 385 units will be provided by March 2011, there are few schemes emerging after that. Exempt Appendix 'A' sets out possible schemes i.e. 51 units to the end of the target period and all other possible completions after 2011.

3.3 The tables in Appendix 'B' and Exempt Appendix 'A' show the source of the land i.e. if it was private, Council or other public. A total of 202 of the 385 (52%) completed and under construction were as a result of the Council selling land or redeveloping Council housing.

3.4 Officers are continuing to meet with Registered Social Landlords and landowners to press for the schemes in Exempt Appendix 'A' to be completed, but, as the sites are often in private ownership it is difficult to guarantee results. It is therefore necessary to look for other opportunities to try and provide more affordable units and address the potential shortfall in the target.

3.5 Legal agreements are being finalised for the Homebuy Scheme with Catalyst Housing Group. This scheme, which is being funded by the Council, will help an estimated 16 families who work or live in the Borough, to be housed. It is a relatively new scheme and has therefore taken longer than anticipated to commence, however, it should be possible to launch the scheme prior to Christmas so that applicants can take up the opportunity in the New Year.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The Government has announced that the overall capital budget for new affordable housing will be reduced by 7.4%. This will have an impact on the availability of funding for future Affordable Housing as the Council has been successful in receiving large amounts of grant from Government in previous years.

4.2 Appendix 'C' presents a letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government regarding the settlement for Housing contained in the Spending Review.

5. Legal Issues

5.1 The complex legal issues with the Catalyst Housing Group on the terms of the proposed scheme have resulted in a delay with the launch. Matters to be resolved included the payment and repayment of grant, the level of funding to be given to specific households and the affordability criteria for entry into the scheme.

5.2 It is proposed that the success of the scheme will be reviewed in 12 months.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 An EIA has already been completed for the Catalyst scheme and no further Equality Impact Assessments are required.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The Council has enabled 327 Affordable Housing units to be delivered since the target to achieve 500 units was set in December 2006. There are also 58 units under construction. Due to factors beyond the Council's control performance is currently below target and it will be necessary to consider all available opportunities to increase the number of units completed, although that may be hampered by the lack of social housing grant.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

Housing and Community Services Committee, November 2009 and June 2010
Housing Strategy Statement 2006

8. SERVICE PLAN – HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES 2010/11 (DHCS)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To make the Committee aware of the progress on the Housing and Community Services Service Plan.**

2. Background Information

2.1 The Council produces a wide range of Strategies and Plans for its various services. Each of these contains a number of targets that need to be met. Some years ago the Council decided that it would be wise to bring all of the targets together in one Service Plan.

- 2.2 Service Plans are a fundamental part of performance monitoring and are reported to each of the Service Committees twice a year. The targets within the Plan are assigned to specific managers and are used in appraisals to assess performance.
- 2.3 The Housing and Community Services Plan embodies action points from the Sustainable Communities Strategy, the Housing Strategy, the Private Sector Renewal Strategy, the Older Persons Strategy, the Empty Homes Strategy, the Equalities Action Plan, the HRA Business Plan and the Risk Management Plan. Once approved the targets within the draft Homelessness Strategy (contained elsewhere in this Agenda) will also be incorporated.
- 3. Report
- 3.1 Attached at Appendix 'D' is a report setting out the current performance against each of the targets within the current Service Plan. Those targets that are now marked with a tick will be removed from the next published plan.
- 4. Financial Implications
- 4.1 The resource implications for each target are outlined within the Service Plan and reports are brought to Committee if there are any specific resource implications that arise from delivering a particular target.
- 5. Equality Impact Assessment
- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken if new policies or procedures are required in relation to any specific target.
- 5.2 Performance on the achievement of actions within the equalities action plan will be provided at the meeting.
- 6. Conclusions
- 6.1 A comprehensive Service Plan has been established and progress has been made on a number of targets.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

the Committee notes the performance within the Service Plan and confirms whether the measures proposed to address any shortfalls in performance are considered satisfactory.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

9. BATHROOM REFURBISHMENTS – SELECTION OF CONTRACTORS (DHCS)

- 1. Purpose of Report
- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the shortlist of contractors to undertake the refurbishment of bathrooms in Council owned properties.**
- 2. Background Information
- 2.1 The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan provides for the upgrading of older bathrooms within the housing stock and budget provision has been made. However, Standing order C3.3 requires that the shortlist of tenderers be approved by Committee if the value of the contract is likely to exceed £100,000 in value.

2.2 Officers have been working with a small group of tenants to establish exactly what we will and will not undertake as part of a bathroom upgrade. It has also been agreed with the group that the programme will be identified from stock data, selecting those properties most in need of refurbishment. This is likely to result in properties in the programme being peppered throughout the borough. It is anticipated that approximately 150 bathrooms will be upgraded each year.

3. Report

3.1 The following shortlist has been taken from Constructionline in accordance with Standing Orders.

3.2 The procurement process used will be in line with standing orders for contractors and will embrace the best value principles. There will be prescribed measurement of the quality element of tender submitted as part of the overall assessment. The tender process will be as outlined in HM Treasury Procurement Guidance Notes to ensure the issues of probity are addressed. The RCRA will be part of the assessment process.

3.3 The following contractors meet these requirements and are considered suitable to carry out the bathroom improvements. A summary of their relevant experience has been included for the Committee's information.

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Kinraig Construction Limited | Kinraig Construction specialise in doing kitchen and bathroom refurbishments within social housing environments. They were one of the contractors who recently completed the kitchen programme and are well thought of by staff and tenants. They are presently involved in a series of Partnership arrangements for kitchen and bathroom refurbishments. These are with Bracknell Housing Group, Sentinel Housing Group & Southern Housing Group. |
| Saffron Contract Services | Saffron Contract Services are a relatively small contractor in comparison to many of the multi nationals and are locally based in Woking. They are the second contractor involved with our kitchen programme and are well thought of by staff and tenants. They have recently been involved in kitchen refurbishment projects for Woking Borough Council and Guildford Borough Council. |
| Masco Onestep, | Masco Onestep are a large company operating nationally. They are presently working in partnership with William Sutton Housing Trust, Ragland and Hanover Housing Association and have successfully tendered for the LCH (London Housing Consortium) Kitchen and Bathroom framework arrangement. They have yet to complete any local projects, but with depots now being established in both North and South London, they are looking to expand their business within the M25 corridor. |
| Clairglow Heating Ltd | This contractor is also known to RBC, producing excellent results through the Heating and Rewiring programmes that have been in place for several years. Like many companies, Clairglow has diversified from their core business to also specialise in kitchen and bathroom refurbishments. They are presently involved in bathroom refurbishments contracts for, Keniston Housing Association and Sentinel Housing Association. Previously they have done similar works for Runnymede. |

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| Lakehouse Contracts | Lakehouse Contracts operate from three offices of which two could support this contract. They are currently partnering with the following social housing providers:- East Thames Housing Association, Family Mosaic Housing Association, Richmond Housing Partnership - providing a range of services including kitchen refurbishments. As a company they have now made inroads into the South East and have opened a satellite office in the Sevenoaks area. |
|---------------------|---|

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The contract term will be for two years. There is financial provision within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan for these works.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The contract is a works contract but one which is below the threshold for full compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006. Nonetheless, substantial compliance is expected to be demonstrated. Selection of contractors from Constructionline meets this objective and is in accordance with the Council's standing orders for contracts.

6. Equality Implications

6.1 An Equality Screening Assessment has been completed (Appendix 'E) and Officers can see no specific equality issues in respect of this contract. Whilst the refurbishment of bathrooms will be disruptive, and may have a greater impact on some residents such as the elderly or disabled, it will be a requirement of the contract that no resident will be left overnight without a working toilet or water supply. Additionally, the successful contractor will be expected to have particular regard for residents with special needs when undertaking the works.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Standing Order C3.3 requires the approval by Committee of the selected shortlist of tenderers as the value of the contract exceeds £100,000. Officers are therefore seeking approval of the above list.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

the shortlist be approved by the Committee in accordance with Standing Order C3.3

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

10. FINANCIAL MONITORING STATEMENT (DF)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To inform the Committee of the latest financial projections for the 2010/11 financial year for Housing and Community Services.**

2. Background Information

2.1 The Financial Monitoring Statement was introduced to all Committees in September 2006 to inform Members of the current financial position of the services under the remit of each Committee. This Committee receives two statements, one for Housing services and the other for Community Services.

- 2.2 Each statement reflects an updated position based upon the 2010/11 estimates approved by this Committee in January.
3. Report
- 3.1 The two statements at Appendix 'F(i) ' and 'F(ii)' are split into three distinct parts:
- Projected budget and forecast
 - Savings still to be delivered
 - Current year key budget indicators
- 3.2 The Projected budget and forecast sections show the anticipated variations in the current year's budget. These variations are categorised as approved changes and other potential changes. Implications for the following three years are included for completeness so that the full-year effect of any changes can be seen.
- 3.3 The achievement of the revenue reductions programme approved by the Council is one of the Council's key performance indicators. Savings targets not yet achieved are reported in the second section of each statement. These savings are all incorporated into the projected budget and forecast figures in section one.
- 3.4 The final section sets out the key budget indicators for the significant areas of this Committee's budget. This indicates the actual income received set against the amount expected (the budget) for the period covered by each statement.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

None stated.

11. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

If the Committee is minded to consider any of the foregoing reports in private, it is the

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following reports under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the reports in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in appropriate paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(TO RESOLVE)

PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection.

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)