



MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SCRUTINY PANEL

FRIDAY, 30 MARCH 2007 10.00 AM

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Yvonne Gibbins
Councillor Stephen Hewerdine
Councillor Albert Victor Kerr

Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew (Chairman)
Councillor Bob Sandall
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Mary Wheat

OFFICERS

Housing Solutions Manager
Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Support Officer

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor Mrs Radley

91. MEMBERSHIP

The Panel were informed that Councillor Kerr was substituting for Councillor Howard for this meeting only.

92. APOLOGIES

None received.

93. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

94. ACTION NOTES

The action notes from the meeting held on Monday 5th March 2007 were agreed.

95. PRIVATE SECTOR FINANCE ASSISTANCE POLICY

Members had been circulated with a briefing note which summarised the report which had previously been before the DSP and which was again going before Cabinet on 2nd April 2007 for approval. The briefing paper simplified what schemes were available in the private sector housing and what assistance was available. The Housing Solutions Manager said that he would not be looking for "customers" as work was already in place for people to be identified by officers carrying out work for warmfront and he outlined how this worked. The

Housing Solutions Manager then briefly highlighted each scheme available on the briefing paper. Members felt better informed following the Housing Solutions Managers explanation of how the system worked and agreed that the policy be forward to Cabinet for approval.

Conclusion

That the Private Sector Financial Assistance Policy 2007/08 be submitted to Cabinet for approval.

96. SKDC TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION CHARGING POLICY

The Housing Solutions Manager referred to the recent growth in bed and breakfast and how the council was under an obligation to find accommodation for homeless people. The introduction of a charging policy was to enable him to access the benefit system so that a portion of the costs could be recovered. Member had expressed grave concern at the last meeting of the DSP that vulnerable members of society would be expected to pay these costs. The Housing Solutions Manager explained how the charging policy would operate and the reasons behind the introduction of such a policy and that for the vast majority of people who accessed temporary accommodation especially vulnerable people these costs would be paid for by the benefit system. A lot of work had been done between the Housing Solutions Section and the Benefits Section with regard to the charging policy.

Following the Housing Solutions Managers explanation of the reasons for the introduction of the policy and how it would work the Panel were happy that the policy be forwarded to Cabinet for approval.

Comments made about the content of the Equality Impact Assessment which was appended to the original report had been amended accordingly and members were happy that this also be forwarded to Cabinet.

Conclusion

That the SKDC Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy be forwarded to Cabinet for approval on 2nd April 2007 together with the Equality Impact Assessment pro-forma.

97. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Panel were informed that the next meeting of the Panel would be in the Gallery at the Guildhall on 27th April at 10.00am. Items to be discussed were the designated drinking areas and the financial aspect of Building Control Services.

The meeting closed at 10.50am.