

Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Chorley Community Housing

Tuesday, 10 June 2008

Present: Councillor Mike Devaney (Chair) and Councillors Alistair Bradley, Harold Heaton and Rosie Russell

Also in attendance: Councillors Kevin Joyce and June Molyneaux

08.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Marion Lowe.

08.02 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No Members declared an interest in respect of items on the agenda.

08.03 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions from members of the public.

08.04 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Task Group considered an extract of the report submitted to Executive Cabinet on 29 May 2008 on the performance of key partnerships.

The report monitored those promises made to tenants by Chorley Council and contractually agreed and delivered by Chorley Community Housing. The report for the year reported all 6 themes as being on target, but did not include evidence to back up these claims.

Members discussed the need to focus on key areas of the contract and evidence that customers are receiving the services they have been promised.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

08.05 SCOPING EXERCISE

Members discussed several areas where issues had been raised and these were fed into the scoping document.

The Group **AGREED** the following:

Objectives:

To investigate and evidence that the service promises made by Chorley Council and provided under contract by Chorley Community Housing are being delivered to tenants. We agreed to focus on:

- Delivery of home improvements, including the modernisation of empty housing and it's return to use.
- Service improvement,
- Tenant involvement in decision making and
- Regeneration, including the supply of 40 affordable / rented homes per year, in addition to those provided by windfall developments from private developers.

Desired Outcomes:

To have documentary evidence that the services delivered to our customers meet those promised by Chorley Council.

To make recommendations in areas where improvements are required, if any.

To identify any barriers Chorley Community Housing face in delivering their services and any solutions Chorley Council can provide.

Terms of Reference:

To consider themes within the objectives identified.

To make recommendations, if appropriate.

To report findings and recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Documents/evidence:

Delivery of home re-improvements

Details of properties vacant as in need of refurbishment.

What are the timescale for getting the properties into habitable use.

Offers available and take up.

Service improvement

CCH actual targets and performance for repairs response, benchmarking information.

Equality and diversity issues: are customers' needs being met?

How are houses allocated?

Tenant involvement in decision making

Survey information from Chorley Community Housing and Councillors' contact with tenants.

Regeneration

Progress on the provision of affordable housing units.

Witnesses:

Chair of the Chorley Community Housing Board – Ann James.

Managing Director of Chorley Community Housing.

Chorley Council officers:

Assistant Chief Executive – Gary Hall.

Corporate Director of Governance - Andrew Docherty.

Strategic Housing Manager – Zoe Whiteside

Consultation/Research:

Delivery of home re-improvements

How are the targets constructed i.e. if an offer for improvements isn't taken up.

Service improvement

What has been the impact on staff transferred from Chorley Council?

Tenant involvement in decision making

If there is no survey information available on the views of a cross section of tenants the Task Group may commission a survey.

To be considered: Chorley Community Housing newsletter to tenants and minutes of community meetings between Chorley Community Housing and tenants.

Regeneration

Progress on the provision of affordable housing units.

Site Visits:

Visit to properties where repairs and or improvements have been carried out.

08.06 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Group **AGREED** the next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 9 July 2007 commencing at 6.30pm.

For the next meeting information on the contract with Chorley Community Housing was requested. Members undertook to bring back any further feedback from constituents and potential witnesses. The Chair agreed to speak to Councillor Terry Brown regarding his contact and to make contact with Chorley Community Housing.

Chair