

Minutes of **Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Select Move 2021**

Meeting date **Thursday, 2 December 2021**

Committee Members present: Councillor June Molyneaux (Chair), Councillor Sarah Ainsworth (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Steve Holgate, Hasina Khan, James Nevett and Kim Snape

Observers present: Councillor Peter Gabbott

Officers: Jennifer Mullin (Director of Communities), Rachel Stewart (Housing Solutions Manager) and Matthew Pawlyszyn (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Christine Turner

1 Declarations of Any Interests

No declarations were made.

2 Background Information - Select Move

Councillor Molyneaux was appointed Chair of the Task Group, with Councillor Sarah Ainsworth being appointed Vice-Chair.

Members received a report from Rachel Stewart, Housing Solutions Manager that provided background information to enable Members to effectively scope the Task Group and to build upon the previous review that was conducted in 2014. Members were informed of the recent activity undertaken with Select Move.

- The Civica system had been upgraded for the operation and delivery of the Select Move partnership and register, which hosted a range of benefits.
- The three local authorities involved, Chorley, South Ribble and Preston, agreed for the recruitment of a Select Move Coordinator, which would allow a single point of contact for Members.
- In the two months, Rachel had been in post, the main focus had been to review the service and improve access for customers. Issues have remained with resources and the Council required the use of short term agency staff.

3 Scoping of the Review

Using the report from Rachel Stewart, and information from the 2014 Select Move Task Group, Members of the Task Group considered the scope of the inquiry and discussed objectives, outcomes, and who they wanted to interview as part of the review.

The Chair highlighted that an objective of the Task Group was to work on and build from the Task Group that took place in 2014, as complaints had been received that indicated that the recommendations made were no longer being adhered to, and changes had been made to Select Move without any consultation or announcement to Members. It was desired that Select Move worked for the benefit of the people of Chorley, which was not currently the case.

Issues raised and information sought included:

- Quotas of properties that could be listed without being featured on Select Move, it was noted that it had in some areas increased to 25%, which resulted in a significant number of properties in sought after areas were not on Select Move.
- Communication between Select Move towards customers and Members, i.e. banding and changes to the service without the knowledge of members.
- Statistical information including but not limited to the number of properties in each ward, the monitoring of Select Move customers housed in Chorley from outside the borough, the number of customers at each banding, and the length of time people were using the service.
- Concerns with the inaccessibility of the service to some, including, but not limited to those without computer access or technical literacy. It was noted that due to Covid-19, significant levels of Council services were not fully operational. It was recalled that previously, a booklet of properties was made available every week, detailing the available properties.
- Lack of photos was raised by Members, as users were often required to bid blind for properties. In response, it was argued that providing identifiable images raised safeguarding concerns, and that viewings of properties only took place when the property was empty.

Members wished to extend invites to the following witnesses for the Task Group:

- Jennifer Mullin – Chorley and South Ribble Shared Services Director of Communities
- Councillor Peter Gabbott – Executive member for Homes and Housing, and counterparts from South Ribble Borough Council and Preston City Council, to compare and contrast issues in partner areas.
- Chorley Council Councillors
- Member of Parliament for Chorley.
- Select Move Coordinator (once in post)
- Select Move Partners
 - Accent Foundation
 - Chorley Community Housing LTD (Merged with Jagsaw Homes North)
 - Community Gateway
 - Onward Homes
 - Sage Housing
 - Your Housing
 - Great Places
 - Progress Housing Group

- Places for People
- Together Housing
- Select Move customers

The Scope document will be returned to Members at the next Task Group meeting, for any additional information, amendments, and to be agreed.

4 Date of the Next Meeting

Thursday 6 January, 6:30pm.

Chair

Date