REGENERATION AND HOUSING PANEL

Monday, 21st September, 2015

Present: Councillor Clare Cleary (in the Chair), Councillors Mohammad Ayub and Tony Dobson

Apologies Wendy Dwyer and June Harrison

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dwyer and Harrison. There were no substitutions.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest submitted at the meeting.

3 Minutes of Last Meeting held on 20th July 2015

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Regeneration and Housing Panel held on 20th July 2015 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

Agreed - That the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.

4 Housing Renewal Funding

The HMR Programme Monitoring Officer submitted a report to inform the Panel on progress with the 2015/16 Housing Renewal Programme. She reported that the top three projects for East Accrington were making slow progress and that it was anticipated that the Clusters of Empty Homes programme would begin to improve within the next couple of months. She explained that the spend chart was slightly under but was expected to begin to pick up. In respect of output she reported that 5 homes had been acquired in total (4 in West Accrington and 1 in East Accrington).

Councillor Dobson indicated that he was concerned about the quality of the projects and that the Council were getting maximum value for money. The Head of Regeneration and Housing reported that none of this funding had been subject to deadline spending and so they had not needed to make rushed decisions. He reported that they had got good value for money on improvement to properties which were of a very good standard.

Agreed - That progress of the 2015/16 Housing Renewal Programme be noted.

5 Woodnook Update

The Head of Regeneration and Housing presented a report to update the Panel on progress with the regeneration of Woodnook. He reported on Phase 1 of the project and pointed out that Place First had appointed DJ Hughes in place of Southdale to finish the remaining properties on Augusta Street. He reported that the first 12 properties were completed, 11 were occupied and 14 finished and referred to the success of the project so
far and a huge demand for the housing. He reported that they were finishing works off on Augusta Street and that there were plans to demolish the residual block on Booth Street. He reported that works were on schedule.

The Head of Regeneration and Housing updated Members as follows:
• the first 10 properties on Phase 2 had been finished and were let and occupied.
• work would next begin on the properties based in the location of Clements Street.
• the Phase 1 face-lifting scheme had almost been completed
• the second tranche on Phase 2 would begin once all legal documentation had been completed.
• there were two environmental schemes to be completed.
• Lancashire County Council’s proposed pedestrian crossing was currently being consulted on.

Councillor Dobson expressed concern that rental levels had increased from the first completed and let properties and asked if this trend was likely to continue. The Regeneration and Housing Manager reported that it was unlikely that rents would continue to increase.

Agreed - That the report be noted.

6 West Accrington Update

The Head of Regeneration and Housing reported that they had held a formal meeting with Keepmoat and that progress with Project Phoenix Phase 2 was going well. He reported that the current Phase was due to be finished in about 8 months, that they were in discussions with them on the next phase and that a CPO was being prepared for land off Savoy Street should it be required. Over the last month he reported that he had been made aware of problems with street lighting on the Haslam Homes site and reported that Keepmoat were in discussions with Lancashire County Council with regards to adoption of the street.

Councillor Ayub referred to the development of the Mosque and was informed that they had started to build the Mosque which was expected to be completed by December 2016. He reported that Barnfield Construction Ltd. was carrying out the work.

Agreed - That the report be noted.

7 Housing and Environmental Standards

The Environmental Protection Manager submitted a report to update the Panel on actions taken by the Environmental Protection Team in relation to land and buildings that are detrimental to the amenity of the area during the period 8 July 2015 to 7 September 2015. He provided a progress report on sites and prosecutions/legal cases.

Members requested progress reports on:
• flats on Willows Lane
• Baileys
• A hole on Burton Street
• Complaints from the neighbours of a property on Royds Street due to fly-tipping

The Environmental Protection Manager reported that they were in discussions with the owners of the flats on Willows Lane and that they had communicated with the owners of Baileys but had seen no further progress. He reported that Lancashire County Council
were dealing with the hole on Burton Street and the HMR Programme Monitoring Officer reported that the property on Royds Street was one owned by the Council and the rubbish had been removed from the back yard. She reported that fencing at the property on Royds Street had been repaired twice in the past and that the Council’s Legal Services were considering who was responsible for replacing the fencing.

Councillor Dobson referred to the importance of bringing the property back into use.

**Agreed** – That the report be noted.

**8 Increasing Housing Supply**

The Head of Regeneration and Housing submitted a report to update the Panel on bringing forward new housing developments across the Borough. He drew the Panel’s attention to an increase in enquiries and planning applications for housing and reported on key progress with the strategic Huncoat sites. He gave a progress report on the following items:

- the Huncoat masterplan and Lancashire County Council’s agreement in principle to allow access from site.
- Morris Homes being considered by the land owner as the preferred developer for the Huncoat site.
- the submission of the planning application for Lyndon Playing Fields to Planning Committee.
- consideration of a small bungalow scheme on land near to the new Health Centre.
- the unsuccessful Foxwood Chase planning appeal.
- the Hill Top site planning application consent.
- progress on legal issues with Clayton Triangle.
- The acquisition of former Woodnook Mill site by Place First.
- brownfield strategies and HCA’s consultation with the Government.

**Agreed** – That the report be noted.

**9 Market Hall Update**

*Exempt Information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)*

The Town Centre Manager submitted a report to inform the Panel on the current trading issues being experienced in the Market Hall and the challenging conditions facing traders.

**Agreed** – That the report be noted.

**10 Urgent Business**

Selective Licensing

The Head of Regeneration and Housing referred to selective licensing and informed the Panel that they had been successful in three prosecutions of Landlords who had not been licenced. He indicated that they had released an article in the press to ensure that people were aware that the Council would prosecute those breaching the regulations. He reported on the Council’s success in a case were a landlord had challenged two conditions (carbon
monoxide detectors and 5 year electrical safety certificates). He pointed out that the Landlords could make an application to appeal the decision and that they had 28 days to do this.

Agreed - That the report be noted.

11 The Time and Date of Future Meetings:

Agreed - That the next meeting of the Regeneration and Housing Panel be held on Monday, 23rd November 2015 at 10 am.

Signed: .........................................................

Date: .................................................................

Chair of the meeting
At which the minutes were confirmed