
REGENERATION AND HOUSING PANEL

Monday, 18th July, 2016

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

Apologies Jean Battle, Joyce Plummer and Helen McCue Melling

72 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor Plummer and Councillor Battle and Helen McCue-Melling. There were no substitutions.

73 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

74 Minutes of Last Meeting held on 23rd May 2016

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Regeneration and Housing Panel held on 23rd May 2016 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

75 Housing Renewal Funding

THE HMR Programme Monitoring Officer submitted a report on the progress of the Housing Renewal Programme for 2016/17. She provided the meeting with an update on the total spend on regeneration projects for 2016/17 to date and the total budget allocated for the year. She referred members to details of spending as set out on page 2 of the report. She provided information on spend and progress for the Spring Street facelifting scheme and pointed out that the report now contained information about the Pendle Street project.

Discussions were held on the schemes established for improvements to empty properties in the Woodnook area.

Resolved - **That the Panel note progress of the 2016/17 Housing Renewal Programme.**

76 Woodnook Update

The HMR Programme Monitoring Officer submitted a report to update the Panel on progress with the Woodnook regeneration project. She reported that work had been completed on 38 dwellings and were very popular. She informed the meeting that one property was in the process of being acquired through compulsory purchase but the result of a Public Inquiry held on 11th May 2016 was still being awaited. She provided the meeting with details of the works on Phases I & II of the empty homes projects. She pointed out that Phase I facelifting had been completed with the exception of four properties on Nuttall

Street which were subject to legal action and final snagging work which was due to be undertaken. Phase II facelifting was behind schedule due to the weather. Sixty dwellings were being brought back into use with 10 having been completed and Phase II of the empty homes project involved a further two awaiting connection of services. She reported that a further 22 dwellings would be completed within the next 6 months. Planning applications had been submitted for Booth Street which would be considered by the Planning Committee on 21st July.

Resolved - **That the report be noted.**

77 West Accrington

The Head of Regeneration and Housing reported on progress with new house building in West Accrington. He reported that Keepmoat had made good progress on Phase II having constructed 80 of 103 properties. He reported that 70 properties had already been sold and completed. He informed the meeting that Phoenix II was scheduled for completion in October 2016. In respect of Phoenix I he reported that a new planning application had been submitted for 56 new houses at the back of the site but there had been a delay in progress in the Phase because of the need to acquire one of the properties through compulsory purchase. He reported that subject to approval the development would start in Spring 2017. He pointed out that the development would not be prevented because the property will be acquired through compulsory purchase or development would take place with potential land excluded. He informed the Panel that there was an outline planning application for 31 properties on Steiner Street and explained that development was subject to Keepmoat getting gap funding. He pointed out that if funding was not secured then the site would be put on the open market and another house builder sought or gap funding would have to be found by another source.

Resolved - **That the report be noted.**

78 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 were detrimental to the amenity of the area during period 2 May to 30 June 2016. He indicated that the report provided details of cases on 58 sites and informed the Panel of unusual cases of an unauthorised display structure for which they had used legal powers for the first time and of a property that had to be cleared of waste due to the occupants having mental health issues.

Members of the Panel thanked the team for their hard work and requested that the following properties be investigated or works chased up:

- Printer Public House
- Moscow Mill, shops on Spring Street
- 51 Willows Lane & 88 or 90 Richmond Street for water leaking from one property to the other,
- the Bridge Inn, Church Street
- Hyndburn Project shop across from Accrington Town Hall
- the space occupied by the former Conservative Club.

The Environmental Protection Manager indicated that he would chase up or investigate the concerns raised by the Members as listed above.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

79 Community Protection Orders

The Environmental Protection Manager submitted a report to brief the Panel on the provisions available under Part 4, Chapter 1 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the Act) and how these powers could be used to deal with environmental blight and low level nuisances. He advised the Panel that the new powers could be used on anti-social behaviour and nuisance and pointed out that the main benefits for the Council were that they could issue fixed penalty notices for untidy back yards which would have a greater impact than taking someone to court. In addition he reported that there had been an increase in the maximum amount that they could charge a person under these powers. He referred Members to 3.4 of the report which gave the definition of a person having a detrimental impact on the area.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

80 Accrington Town Centre and Market Hall

The Town Centre Manager submitted a report to provide the Panel with an update of issues surrounding Accrington Town Centre and markets. She reported that monthly meetings with the Arndale Centre are being held and it had been reported that a major retailer would be taking over two units in the Arndale Centre. She pointed out that retail interest in the units had increased due to the completion of the new bus station and the new Police Station scheduled for opening in August. She reported that the Food & Drink Festival and the Beside the Sea Side event had both been good but pointed out that the Council's financial support for the Food & Drink festival would be withdrawn with it becoming a commercial event. With regards to the indoor and outdoor markets she pointed out that consideration was being given to ways of attracting new traders. She reported that traders had complained about a number of issues caused by the temporary car park on Peel Street but they were working to resolve these. She explained that a meeting with the traders had been very productive.

Members contributed to discussions about increasing trade within the town centre and the Market Hall. The Head of Regeneration and Housing pointed out that a firm of Architects (IBI Group) had been appointed for the town centre and would be looking at ways of improving the public realm. He reported that new town square plans would in be place for the start of next Summer.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

81 Increasing Housing Supply

The Head of Regeneration and Housing reported on progress in increasing housing supply in the borough. He reported on the impact of the vote for Brexit and the effect of this on House Builders and consequent development in the borough. He pointed out that there was a potential, in the short term, for less interest in building in Pennine Lancashire. He referred to progress with sites currently ear marked for development in the borough including:

Lyndon Playing Fields – interest from housing developers had been placed on temporary hold whilst the market settled down.

Parker Street, Rishton – planning consent had been acquired for 75 homes and a Section 106 Agreement in place but issues had arisen relating to materials and landscaping proposals.

Clayton Triangle – a report had been submitted to Cabinet requesting that consideration be given to revoking the emergency decision to sell the land to one specific developer. He reported that should the decision be revoked then the site would be placed on the open market.

Steiner Street – the HCA had been requested to fund gap for development of the area.

Huncoat – The Council’s application for Housing Zone status was still awaited. In the meantime the Planning team were currently reviewing the land allocations within the Local Plan. A report would be brought to a future meeting to update Members on plans for the Huncoat area.

He informed the Panel that in May 2016 the Housing & Planning Act received Royal Consent. He pointed out that this was new legislation and an extension of ‘Right to Buy’ with provisions around the sale of higher value vacant housing. He also reported that major legislation had been introduced on starter homes with a new Government initiative to help affordability although full rules with regards to eligibility and repayment still had to be written. He also referred to changes around the provision of mandatory rents for high income social tenant and advised that there would be a lot of new regulations drawn up. Leaflets were circulated to Members to provide more details.

Resolved - **That the report be noted.**

82 Urgent Business

Appointment of Solicitor

The Head of Regeneration and Housing informed the Panel that the Council had agreed to appoint a Solicitor to work on properties being acquired under compulsory purchase to ensure that there was capacity to deal with the workload. Subject to appointment, this would accelerate the CPO’s for Pendle Street and West Accrington.

83 The Time and Date of Future Meetings:

Resolved - **That the next meeting of the Regeneration and Housing Panel be held on Monday, 19th September 2016.**

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
At which the minutes were confirmed