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# REGENERATION AND HOUSING PANEL

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**Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2015**

**Present:** Councillor Cleary (in the Chair); Councillors Cox, Dawson, Dobson, Grayson and Plummer.

**In Attendance:** Mark Hoyle (Head of Regeneration and Housing)  
Helen McCue-Melling (Regeneration and Property Manager)  
S. Whittaker (HMR Programme Monitoring Officer)  
Ian Halliday (Environmental Protection Manager)  
Rob Grigorjevs (Head of Town Centre Development)

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## 1. Apology for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dwyer, Harrison and Haworth. Councillors Plummer and Dawson acted as substitute representatives on behalf of Councillor Dwyer and Harrison, respectively.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 No declarations of interest were submitted.

## 3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

3.1 The Minutes of the last meeting of the Regeneration and Housing Panel held on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2015 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

## 4. Housing Renewal Programme

4.1 The HMR Programme Monitoring Officer submitted a report to give an update on progress with the 2014/15 housing renewal programme. She reported on the amount spent and the amount remaining within the budgets for 2014/15 and indicated that £1.79 million would be carried forward. Reference was made to appendix one in respect of homes which have been acquired or were being brought back into use and that they were in line to achieve those targets set for East Lancashire and Accrington.

**Agreed - That progress be noted for the 2014/15 Housing Renewal Programme.**

## **5. Empty Homes Funding**

- 5.1 The HMR Programme Monitoring Officer submitted a report to give an update on progress with the Empty Homes funding schemes. The Head of Regeneration and Housing reported that they were running two empty homes programmes for the same period, one of which was the Clusters Empty Homes Scheme and the other was the Empty Homes Programme (across Pennine Lancashire). He reported on how both schemes were funded and the criteria for those applying for it.
- 5.2 The Head of Regeneration and Housing reported that the Pennine Lancashire Empty Homes Scheme was led by Rossendale Borough Council who was also the accountable body for the funding. He advised the Panel that Rossendale's agent, a company known as AAW, had gone into administration but reassured the Panel that Rossendale Borough Council remained responsible for the programme and for any properties or works where AAW had been involved and would be taking responsibility for all legal contracts and finishing of works.
- 5.3 Members of the Panel sought clarification and wanted to ensure that Hyndburn Borough Council was not directly affected.
- 5.4 The Head of Regeneration and Housing clarified that Rossendale Borough Council would be taking all legal and financial responsibilities for those properties where AAW had been involved including a small number in Hyndburn.

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

## **6. Woodnook Update**

- 6.1 The Regeneration and Property Manager submitted a report to update the Panel on progress with the regeneration of Woodnook neighbourhood. She reported that Phase 1 of the Woodnook programme was scheduled to carried out improvements by Greendale to properties on Augusta Street and Royds Street. Demolition had taken place to properties on Royds Street and Booth Street. The handover of the first five properties on Augusta Street was due in May and she indicated that PlaceFirst had received a good response. The first ten properties had been completed in Phase 2 and subsequently let. The next phase was due to start in early Summer. Funding had been acquired for the renewal of street signs within the Woodnook area and Highways had been allocated funding from Lancashire County Council for a pedestrian crossing on Nuttall Street.
- 6.2 Members of the Panel agreed that the Woodnook area was looking better but it was suggested that roads were re-tarmacked. Concern was expressed that work on some of the properties had stopped.
- 6.3 The Regeneration and Property Manager reported that there were structural problems with several properties and that Building Control was dealing with the structural issues under the Building Act and once these issues had been addressed work would re-commence.

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

## **7. Housing and Environmental Standards**

- 7.1 The Environmental Protection Manager submitted a report to update Members on actions taken by the Environmental Protection Team in relation to land and buildings that were detrimental to the amenity of the area during the period 10 December 2014 to 6 March 2015. He reported on the amount of interventions that had been actioned and those that were ongoing across the borough. He indicated that those sites which had been subject to prosecution were shown in the report.
- 7.2 Members submitted the following comments/concerns in relation to a number of premises within the report and the Environmental Protection Manager commented on each.
- 7.3 The Environmental Protection Manager reported that properties that did not pay their fines could be subject to having costs recovered by the Council through enforced sale of the property.

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

## **8. Accrington Town Centre Update**

- 8.1 The Head of Town Centre Development submitted a report to update the Panel on the Town Centre and Markets. The Panel were informed that times were difficult for the Town Centre with companies moving into and out of town centre shops and that work on the new bus station was imminent. He reported that plans were also due to extend the click and collect service currently offered. He indicated that a wedding festival and drinks festival were planned over the course of the forthcoming year which should increase footfall. A review of the outside market would be taking place and the value of the indoor market was being protected with further investment. A leaflet was being circulated by Scott Dawson to promote the click and collect service in the market hall after a survey had revealed that people were unaware of it.
- 8.2 Members commented that:
- car parking was important to the viability of the market and should be considered within plans
  - that Hyndburn should no longer have the existing outside market, as this had proved unsuccessful for many years, but suggested that market stalls were set up on Broadway instead
- 8.3 Members were informed that:
- Highways restricted their ability to create further car parking facilities.
  - it was important for the market to continually update and refresh itself to ensure that it attracted footfall.

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

## **9. Increasing Housing Supply**

- 9.1 The Head of Regeneration and Housing submitted a report to update the Panel on bringing forward new housing supply across the Borough. He reported that the property developer interested in the Huncoat site had pulled out and talks were now being undertaken with new developers. Talks with developers had also been undertaken on the Clayton Triangle site, it was anticipated that an outline planning application would be submitted in May for Lyndon Playing Fields subject to the outcomes of environmental testing. A further public meeting would be held to consult on development plans on the Rishton sites and Hill Top was almost ready to be considered at a future Planning Committee. In addition progress had been made on the Phoenix developments with properties selling and further interest in two new sites on Woodnook, including the development of apartments.
- 9.2 Comments from Councillors included:
- surprise expressed at the support for the proposed building of apartments
  - there was a lot of public opposition to the development on Lyndon Playing Fields
  - the attendance at the Rishton sites consultations had been very good and they were pleased with news of the developments for the area
- 9.3 The Head of Regeneration and Housing advised that the loans market had begun lending again which had previously slowed-down the building of apartments. In respect of Lyndon Playing Fields he reported that Cabinet had agreed to dispose of the Playing Fields subject to a number of conditions including planning consent, legal contracts and the arrangements for Great Harwood Rovers. Work was currently in progress.

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

## **10. Time and Date of Next Meeting**

**Agreed - That the next meeting of the Regeneration and Housing Panel be held on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015 at 10 am.**