



HOUSING SELECT COMMITTEE

Meeting: Thursday, 14 January 2016 at 6.30 pm in the Municipal Buildings, Glossop

Present: Councillor A McKeown (Chairman)

Councillors Atkins and Perkins (substitute for Grooby)

Tenant/Independent Members – K Smith

16/28 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
(Agenda Item 2)

Councillor Atkins declared an 'other' interest in any item (reason: stepson is High Peak Borough Council tenant).

16/29 **MINUTES**
(Agenda Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2015 be approved as a correct record.

16/30 **ADULLUM HOUSING – PRESENTATION**
(Agenda item 5)

Susan Wolton and Alison Gilbride from Adullum Housing were in attendance to present an overview of the work of Adullum Housing and the projects funded by High Peak Borough Council.

Particular reference was made to a number of schemes including:-

- Safe – Housing and Support for young people aged 18 and in the High Peak comprises 13 units of accommodation in Buxton and New Mills together with floating support
- Leaving Care Accommodation Service – 4 staffed hubs for care leavers (2 in High Peak with 5 units in each) – aimed at those leaving care of looked after and offers support to move into independent accommodation in the community with floating support
- High Peak Bond Scheme – facilitates access to private rented accommodation through the provision of a bond guarantee to landlords and includes a package of support including getting housing benefit claims up and running and having properties checked and photographed prior to tenancies commencing. The scheme aims to minimise the risk of repeat homelessness. Bonds are in place for either 6 months (single persons) or 12 months for families, and the aim is that if the tenant's circumstances improve then they can save to replace the bond.



- Prepare to Place Scheme – people are given one to one support to work through an accredited tenancy preparation course which covers the key skills needed to maintain a tenancy. Once completed they get access to the bond with increased levels of support to help them sustain the tenancy with the aim of reducing the cycle of homelessness.

A number of case studies were also circulated for members' information.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that demand for the services had decreased at the moment, and that this could be for a number of reasons including the increased number of providers within the area or that children were living at home for longer.

It was noted that this was the first in a series of presentations to be made to the committee by various providers over the coming months.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received with thanks.

16/31 **LANDLORD ACCREDITATION SCHEME**
(Agenda item 6)

The Committee received an update around the Landlord Accreditation Scheme. The refreshed scheme was to be re-launched on an Alliance-wide basis with a single set of principles at the end of January.

In order to be accredited under the scheme, landlords are required to work with the Council and to undertake that the properties they let are maintained and repaired to a particular standard and to be fair and equitable in their tenancy management practices. In order to encourage landlords to participate in the scheme, grants may be for particular works in certain circumstances. The refreshed scheme had been trialled with Fairfield Road Landlords and grants had been made available for environmental and amenity improvements.

It was noted that the scheme would be subject to the Right to Rent regulations due in January, and that Landlords would have to demonstrate that they have a mechanism in place to meet the new obligation of satisfying themselves that tenants have a right to rent in the UK.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

16/32 **SYRIAN REFUGEES RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME**
(Agenda item 7)

The Committee received an update on the council's contribution to the national programme for the resettlement of Syrian Refugees.



The scheme is funded from the overseas aid budget, and 20,000 refugees are in need to re-settlement over a five year period, which equates to 27 per top tier authority.

High Peak Borough Council is working jointly with DCC and the other districts and the role of the borough council is to identify suitable accommodation to offer to house five single older refugees in vacant and hard to let properties from the council's own stock within the first year of the programme. DCC will provide a resettlement service and a grant of £8,520 per refugee is available and will be used mainly for the resettlement service but can be drawn down if costs are incurred.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

16/33

PAY TO STAY – FAIRER RENTS IN SOCIAL HOUSING
(Agenda item 8)

The Committee considered the Council's response to the Government's Pay to Stay consultation around proposals for high income tenants in social rented housing to pay up to a market rent.

The definition of high income was set at £30,000 per household outside of London, and the additional rent generated would be returned to central Government to contribute to deficit reduction, but housing associations would be able to keep the additional rent to contribute to new housing.

The main points of the Council's response was outlined at paragraph 7.2 of the report and included issues such as synchronising additional rent payment with other benefits in order to maintain incentives to work; the need to ensure that those subject to additional rent were not then eligible to benefits or credits as a result and queries around how to ascertain the market rent for a council property, how accurate income data would be collected and how changes in circumstances would be dealt with.

RESOLVED:

That the Council's response to the consultation paper be noted.

16/34

SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
(Agenda item 9)

It was noted that Peaks and Plains would be making a presentation to the next meeting of the Committee around the Buxton Empty Homes Scheme, reports on homelessness prevention and the Housing and Planning Bill were subject to DCC and Parliament work cycles.

RESOLVED:



That the Select Committee Work Programme be noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.30 p.m.

CHAIR