

Minutes of the Meeting of the COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 24 November 2022

PRESENT -

Councillor Alex Coley (Chair); Councillor Christine Cleveland (Vice-Chair); Councillors Bernice Froud, Luke Giles, Christine Howells, Debbie Monksfield, Julie Morris, Phil Neale, Guy Robbins and Steven McCormick (as nominated substitute for Councillor Peter Webb)

Absent: Councillor Peter Webb

Officers present: Clare Lawrence (Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration), Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Annette Snell (Housing Operations Manager), Arjan de Jong (Strategic Housing Manager) and Dan Clackson (Democratic Services Officer)

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests were made in respect of any items of business to be considered at the meeting.

12 QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no questions had been received from members of the public.

13 HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY

The Committee received a report outlining the results of the consultation on the draft Homelessness Review, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan, and recommending the adoption of Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2027.

The following matters were considered by the Committee:

- a) **Single-person homelessness:** The Housing Operations Manager confirmed a key focus of the strategy is to reduce rough sleeping and homelessness for single-persons. She explained the Council is looking to acquire government funding to develop supported accommodation and is working closely with groups such as 'Surrey Adult Matters' and 'Bridge the Gap' to provide accommodation and support for people with multiple complex needs.

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- b) Enforcement orders:** The Head of Housing and Community explained that enforcement orders require specific circumstances to be presented to landlords – a property needs to be empty for two years and to have a significant case of anti-social behaviour associated with it. He confirmed that no properties in the borough currently fit the criteria for an enforcement order.
- c) Relationship with Rosebery housing association:** The Head of Housing and Community explained that the Council has a close relationship at a managerial and operational level with Rosebery housing association and its parent company, Peabody. The Housing Operations Manager explained that Rosebery provides a large portion of the Council's temporary accommodation, and that the Council has nomination rights to their vacancies.
- d) Multi-agency forum and annual review:** The Housing Operations Manager explained that the multi-agency forum, as mentioned at paragraph 2.26 of the report, is made up of statutory and non-statutory partners, with non-statutory partners including CNB, Age Concern, housing providers (such as Mount Green and Rosebery), etc., and statutory bodies including child services, adult services, mental health teams, etc. The multi-agency forum is intended as a means of keeping track of action plan delivery and to be informative on the homelessness needs of the borough. The Chair elaborated that an annual update report on the Strategy and Action Plan will come to the Committee for yearly review.
- e) Local Plan evidence and the Homelessness strategy:** The Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration explained that the recent evidence base on the Local Plan highlights the challenges surrounding the increasing need for affordable housing, but the broad objectives of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy are unlikely to change as a result of any changes in evidence surrounding that need. Officers will keep an eye on the evidence as it emerges, and changes will be reported to the Community and Wellbeing Committee through an annual review.
- f) Placement process:** The Housing Operations Manager explained that applicants are prioritised through the Housing Allocation Policy and that the Council puts out weekly advertisements of available properties on the 'Homechoice' System. The Council also works with private landlords through the private sector leasing scheme to provide tenants with temporary accommodation.
- g) Private landlords:** The Head of Housing Community explained that through the private sector leasing scheme the Council has been building strong relationships with the private landlords, founded on trustworthiness and reliability, and the provision of support for tenants with special requirements. He explained that since its inception the scheme has saved

the Council a substantial amount of money, and landlords have been renewing their contracts.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Notes the outcome of the consultation with range of stakeholders, service users, staff, and residents.**
- (2) Adopt the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan 2022-27.**

The meeting began at 8.30 pm and ended at 9.12 pm

COUNCILLOR ALEX COLEY (CHAIR)