

Notes from the Housing Strategy Sounding Board Monday 20 May at 15.00hrs

Present:- Councillors Ros Kayes, Teresa Sewell, Geoff Petherick, Michael Goodman, Ray Nowak

Officers:- Chris Branch, Strategic Housing Policy Officer, Kate Hindson, Director of Communities, Hilary Jordan, Spatial & Community Policy Manager, Geoff Joy, Head of Housing Improvement, Martyn Pearl, Housing Service Manager, Miriam Smith, Head of Housing Solutions, Elaine Tibble, Democratic Services Officer

Also attended;- Sarah Durrans, Synergy and David Aldwinckle, Director, Magna Housing

The Housing Service Manager introduced the report and advised that they were halfway through the timeline and aimed to progress by theme groups and consultations. To date there had been 12 meetings with around 130 people with a good range of views.

The purpose of the Sounding Board meeting was to get a steer on whether the understanding and the initial response was correct.

5 year plan firstly to cover 6-12 months with ongoing re-dressing of issues if needed in subsequent years;-

Aim following report to Policy Committees to produce partnership document to go out to public consultation.

Challenges ahead – less new builds, lower re-lets, bedroom tax resulting in more transfers, changes in benefits,

Powerpoint presentation;-

How the council will work with partners to deliver.

Key priorities

Fuel poverty

Health efficiency – need to look at the higher priorities, ie is cold and fuel poverty more significant than damp? Need to have a health impact assessment.

Support the private rental sector

Support people who want to move in order to care for elderly relatives, if NHS support this there will be savings on care costs. Get health and social care partners involved.

Need to develop the link with health strategy and housing.

Over 50% stay over 5 years in the private rented sector – tenant ready scheme, rent deposits, rent advance, want Gold Standard for homeless service – homeless prevention grant about to go to Management Committee.

Looking at a secondment to work with the private rented sector

4pm The Director of Communities left

Big issue – not paying rent direct to landlords, the idea is that people on benefits should become responsible for their own payments.

Neighbourhood plans were discussed

Universal credit – on-line

Do we need to look at more targeted support

High number of rent deposits don't get paid back – cap rent deposits?
DWP suggest there will be a cap. Cllr Petherick to forward information.

Local voluntary groups – work with NEETs

4.30pm Cllr Kayes left

Partnership – form relationship with DCC (adult and children's service) and NHS.
Landlords in Weymouth,

Areas needing work – how far should the partnership approach be taken –
partnership can be time consuming so results would need to be delivered. The
objective is to have enough properties to meet demand.

Need to concentrate on what is to be delivered

How will it be done and what our objectives are

Send papers to partners for their input

Go to public consultation

When got outcomes agreed need to put strategy in place.

Suggest to Policy Committee that this is done through a sounding board from Policy
committee members.

Duration of meeting 15.00hrs – 16.55