

MEMBER COMMITTEE

Meeting: 17 February 2020

At: 2.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Wendy Wild (Chair) in the chair; Councillors Chris Gordon, John McGahan, Wendy Meikle and Amanda Peers.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on the 14 October 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

The following interest was declared:-

Personal Interest

Councillor

Interest

Wendy Wild

Any item on the agenda relating to foodbanks as a Trustee of Chelwood Foodbank.

3. URGENT DECISIONS

No urgent decisions were reported.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public were invited to put questions to the Chair on any matters within the powers and duties of the Committee, subject to the exclusions set out in the Code of Practice.

No public questions were submitted.

5. STOCKPORT HOMES GROUP'S COLLABORATION WITH B4BOX

The Director of Property and Maintenance Services (Stockport Homes) submitted (copies of which had been circulated) providing an report to update on the progress made to date in relation to Stockport Homes Group's collaboration with B4Box and to outline future proposals for the new contract.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- It was commented that this was an important project that had generated much interest across Greater Manchester and one that could set a footprint for further social value contracts across the construction industry.
- In response to questions regarding the project's connections with local schools, it was stated that the project was closely connected with Stockport College and Werneth School and that further opportunities for educational links were being looked in to.
- The Committee was reassured that participants in the project who didn't immediately enter accredited training were being tracked to ensure that the project was beneficial in the long term. For instance, many of these participants were said to have had moved on to other employment elsewhere.
- The project was commended for its social impact and it was suggested that the report could be presented to a future meeting of the Stockport Disability Forum.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Deputy Chief Executive be requested to place an item on the agenda for a future meeting of the Committee providing an update on the operation of the scheme.

6. MUTUAL EXCHANGE SERVICE UPDATE AND FORWARD PLAN

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Support (Stockport Homes) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on the development and promotion of Stockport Homes' Mutual Exchange Service.

The following comments were made/issues raised:

- The service was highly valued by those people who did not have need to move status, whilst simultaneously bringing significant savings for Stockport Homes in comparison to costs associated with voids.
- Over 50% of transfers were now done by means of mutual exchange which had resulting in savings of approximately £370,000 making Stockport Homes within the top 5% of organisations that operated a mutual exchange scheme.
- Members welcomed the report and noted the importance of the scheme and the flexibility that it provided to tenants to move within and outside the Stockport area.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE UPDATE, JANUARY 2020

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Support (Stockport Homes) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which provided an update on the Youth Provision delivered by Stockport Homes.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- The range of activities available to young people was welcomed, with particular regard to the teaching coping strategies and the holiday kitchen. The availability of these services to people other than just council tenants was also welcomed.
- Concern was expressed in relation to the loss of qualified youth workers as part of the youth serviced previously provided by the Council and whether staff and volunteers

were suitably qualified to deliver the range of services being offered or to meet the expectations of service users.

- It was suggested that many councillors maybe unaware of the range of services being provided to young people by Stockport Homes and that awareness could be raised either through briefings to the Area Committees or an all-member presentation at a Full Council Meeting.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That consideration be given to finding an appropriate mechanism to inform councillors of the breath of services being provided to young people in the borough by Stockport Homes.

8. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE

The Assistant Chief Executive (Stockport Homes) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on Stockport Homes' performance against corporate indicators.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- While the report provided a positive picture of corporate performance, full detail could not be given as it was the middle of the quarter and thus relied on slightly outdated information from the previous September.
- Of the 18 corporate indicators, 15 were said to be in a positive green status, whilst 3 were given amber status and had room for improvement. However, members were reassured that each of these amber indicators were expected to be closer to target by the end of the year.
- It was also stated that some corporate indicators had been affected by an unusually high number of void properties requiring major works.
- It was noted that corporate performance was effectively scrutinised and challenged by Stockport Homes' own Customer Monitoring Group before its consideration by the Member Committee.
- Members noted the positive impact on performance provided by the new telephony system used by Stockport Homes.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. FINANCIAL MONITORING UPDATE

The Director of Resources (Stockport Homes) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) to update members on Stockport Homes' financial performance to November 2019.

A discussion took place in relation to the removal of a government borrowing cap that had meant that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was now able to do some new-build borrowing. However, this was not sufficient to fully fund the new-build programme and as such this would still need to be split between the HRA and Stockport Homes' Group.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. MEMBER COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT

The Assistant Chief Executive (Stockport Homes) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) to update members on issues not included in other reports but which are likely to be of interest.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Members praised the positive working relationship between Stockport Council and Stockport Home.
- 20% of tenants had moved over to Universal Credit, but 65% of these people were in arrears. Members were informed that money advisors were working closely with these individuals to minimise the potential negative impacts that the shift to Universal Credit could have.
- Stockport Homes, using funding from Homes England, intended to purchase six former Right to Buy flats to accommodate people who have struggled in other forms of accommodation or with homelessness. Stockport Homes hoped to purchase a further six if they could be identified on the market.
- The Committee thanked officers for their interesting and informative reports.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Deputy Chief Executive be requested to include an item on a future meeting of the Committee in relation to Stockport Homes' work to tackle homelessness..

The meeting closed at 3.31 pm