

## **MEMBER COMMITTEE**

Meeting: 1 July 2024

At: 2.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Mark Roberts (Chair) in the chair; Councillors Anna Charles-Jones, James Frizzell, Colin MacAlister, John Taylor, Matt Wynne and Dickie Davies (substitute).

### **1. MINUTES**

The minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 12 February 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Members enquired about the report relating to 'high rise blocks'. In response, it was stated that the draft terms of reference for 'high rise blocks' would be submitted to the next meeting.

The Chair advised that normally when reports are requested they would be submitted within two cycles, as a result the report would be submitted to the next meeting.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

The following Personal Interest was declared:-

| <u>Councillor</u> | <u>Interest</u>                                  |
|-------------------|--|
| Matt Wynne        | As a shared ownership tenant of Stockport Homes. |

### **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. DELIVERY PLAN OUTCOMES REPORT 2023-24**

The Executive Director of Resources (Stockport Homes) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update to Member Committee on the outcomes achieved for 2023-24 against the agreed objectives in the 2021-26 Delivery Plan.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Members enquired about the climate change strategy and the 547 properties that had received heating upgrades to enable the 97.5% of all managed properties to have the Energy Performance Certificate and if there were alternative heating pumps available. In response, it was noted that some properties had already been installed with heating pumps, but the costs were not low enough to roll out to more properties.
- Clarification was sought on the Council Plan 2024-27 and being able to meet the housing need. It was stated that this was a priority and work was underway with the homelessness and development teams to deliver on this and to maximise resources.
- The high percentage of ASB complaints was referenced and it was noted that it was being monitored quite closely, but that consideration should be given to SHG encouraging complaints from its tenants in order that it could be recorded, actioned and responded to effectively.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **6. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Executive Director of Resources submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) presenting the year-end performance and tenant satisfaction data for 2023-24.

Members welcomed the report and noted that benchmarking was really useful for Councillors while monitoring the work being done at Stockport Homes.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

## **7. COMPLIANCE ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24**

The Executive Director of Operations submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an overview of the organisation's compliance performance and activity during 2023/24 and highlighting initiatives to be undertaken during 2024/2025. The report aimed to provide the Member Committee with assurance that SHG's properties and buildings continued to be managed safely and in line with statutory obligations.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Members enquired about the six core areas of compliance and whether tenants were enabled to deal with their own 'mould issues' with training or guidance. In response, it was noted that tenants were educated as much as possible about ventilation, heating their homes and dealing with it themselves. It was also stated that a cycle of mould washes and treatment would also be carried out and would remain a key consideration going forward.
- Clarification was sought regarding what happens when customers refuse carbon monoxide (CM) installations. In response, it was stated that there were specific fire safety actions including the statutory obligations as a landlord including the CM detectors being installed and trialed which was up to 94% with the remaining 6% refusing installations. These customers were continued to be worked with and educated regarding the CM installations. It was noted that not CM detectors were hard

wired, however, the new regulations do state that there needed to be one in every room the 'gas flutes' went through.

RESOLVED – That report be noted.

### **Exclusion of the Public and the Public Interest Test**

The Chair invited the Committee to consider whether to exclude the public and press from the meeting during consideration of Agenda item 8 – 'Arrears Year End Position' as it contained information that was 'not for publication'.

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the appendix to Agenda Item 8 – 'Arrears Year End Position' which contained information 'not for publication' by virtue of Category 3 'Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority)' as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

### **Item including information 'Not for Publication'**

## **8. AREAS YEAR-END POSITION**

The Customer Finance Manager submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on rent collection, money advice and universal credit.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Members requested that copies of the 'postcards' be provided to be circulated to all Councillors.
- Members congratulated the work being done with the tenants which was not replicate in the private sector. It was noted that the 'Good Landlord Charter' was a good idea and served a great purpose.
- It was noted that ongoing work continued with tenants to educate them on what to do when experiencing difficulties which would help tenants/landlords including 'ethical letting schemes' and 'managed private tenancies' including what was affordable and manageable within the priorities.

(NOTE: Appendices to this report contained information 'Not for Publication' that had been circulated to members of the Committee only).

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

## **9. CAPITAL PROGRAMME OUTTURN REPORT 2023-24**

The Executive Director of Resources submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing a summary of the 2023/24 Capital Programme.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Members welcomed the report and the commented that it was important that there was investment in people as well as the investment and review of stock of the physical properties and keeping the data up to date.
- The team were also congratulated for the opportunities and funding available for the delivery of technology to reduce carbon footprint to reach carbon zero.
- Clarification was sought on the blocks at York Street and what was being done about improving the heating for tenants to control as well as insulation. In response, it was noted that a system was already in place at York Street blocks to increase energy efficiency and energy efficient systems to enable the tenants to control their systems.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **10. CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REPORT**

The Head of Customer Access submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) on behalf of the Director of Housing Plus providing the Member Committee with details of feedback received during 2023/24.

Clarification was sought regarding the increased number of complaints from Councillors/MPs. In response, it was noted that Stockport was quite a politically active area with a lot of enquiries and referrals from Councillors and MPs which was reflective of the residents being able to take issues to their Councillors and MPs.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **11. REGULATORY STANDARDS 2023-24 SELF-ASSESSMENT**

The Executive Director of Resources submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) presenting the self-assessment against the applicable Regulatory Standards to the Member Committee and providing an update on Regulation of Social Housing Providers.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Members enquired about the rent cap of 7% for the last financial year and whether or not it would remain and if there were any repercussions. In response, it was noted that the Government had confirmed that the rent policy would follow the CPI Plus 1 for the next financial year, which would result in lobbying for a new rent strategy and bringing back rent restructuring.
- It was noted that the housing supply was increasing across Stockport which was reflective in the number of cranes around the borough.
- It was stated that SHG's role in supply was based upon what was owned by SHG's and the Council and partners thoughts about what was best going forward for Stockport and the most financial efficiencies going forward.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **12. SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY**

The Assistant Director of Skylight submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) on behalf of the Director of Housing Plus updating the Member Committee on Skylight's external grant funding work and support of Stockport's Third Sector and wider civil society.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Members requested that all Councillors be kept up to date with the funding opportunities and that this information be shared either by email or through the Chief Executive weekly updates.
- Members congratulated the work being done by the Skylight Team and the support and guidance provided by the team to everyone involved including residents, community groups and councillors.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **13. FINANCIAL MONITORING UPDATE**

The Executive Director of Resources submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update to the Member Committee of Stockport Homes' financial performance for the year ended March 2024 and the start of 2024/25.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Clarification was sought regarding the new building developments and the building of affordable council homes. In response, it was noted that there was a development strategy with an appetite and vision to develop in conjunction with the Council and discussions that were ongoing.
- It was noted that there were schemes already underway at Hampshire Lane and Melford Road with the majority of properties in the immediate town centre.
- It was commented that there were thousands of families on the housing waiting list for three-bedroom homes and that considerations be given to looking at other options to design and scale homes to meet the demand.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **14. MEMBER COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT**

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

The following comments were made/issues raised:

- Members welcomed the SHG funding of a mental health housing support worker who provided support directly to customers experiencing poor mental health.
- It was noted that there should be a discussion relating to housing and the sector and how the Government could support the housing crisis in Stockport.

## Member Committee - 1 July 2024

- The update was welcomed and it was commented that it provided an opportunity for members to add to the agenda and how that process would work in terms of feeding into the agenda for future meetings. In response, it was stated that questions/requests could be emailed to SHG in advance of the agenda being published.
- Clarification was sought regarding the independent review of SHG and where it was up to. In response, it was stated that it was a council decision and would go through the normal council processes including scrutiny.
- Members enquired about the gender pay gap and the current 14% median pay gap showing that females hourly rate remained lower than males across 'Three Sixty'. In response, it was stated there was an ongoing battle to recruit more female staff into the sector, but there has been lots of initiatives to advertise and recruit through schools and colleges.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 3.40 pm