

## **Decisions of the Housing Committee**

27 November 2018

Members Present:-

Councillor Gabriel Rozenberg (Chairman)

Councillor Shimon Ryde (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Daniel Thomas

Councillor Laithe Jajeh

Councillor Julian Teare

Councillor Thomas Smith

Councillor Paul Edwards

Councillor Ross Houston

Councillor Ammar Naqvi

Councillor Tim Roberts

### **1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

### **2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS**

None.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Councillor Ross Houston:

Non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7, Business Planning, by virtue of being a Council appointed Director for Barnet Group.

### **4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)**

None.

### **5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)**

None.

### **6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)**

None.

### **7. BUSINESS PLANNING 2019-2024**

This report stated that the development of the council's Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy had been aligned to cover the next five years (2019-2024). This paper set out the priorities for the Housing Committee that make-up the corporate plan, as well as committee specific priorities. It also set out the allocated budget for the

Housing Committee and how it will meet its financial targets. The indicative savings proposal for the Housing Committee for 2019-2024 was £2.73m.

The budget projections through to 2024 were indicative figures. The budget would be formally agreed each year as part of the council budget and council tax setting process, and therefore could be subject to change.

A final budget would be considered by Policy and Resources Committee on 20 February 2019 before being recommended to Council on 5 March 2019. The final Corporate Plan would be published following this.

The Chairman commented that doing 'more with less' by finding ways to meet targets, whilst making savings had been very impressive. He also emphasised the greater involvement of Opendoor Homes.

The Chairman also assured the Committee that 2.17 on page 16 of the report, which referred to the transfer of some Council homes to Opendoor Homes as they became empty, was reflected in H6 of the proposed savings on page 17 of the report. There would be more detail of this at the January 2019 meeting of this Committee.

Members also commented/asked for clarification as follows:

- Opendoor would be able to accelerate itself as a RA;
- Some Members felt that 65% was still not affordable;
- Were the Council looking to buy at auction – Officers replied that this was not currently the case, as the current system was set up to be quite cautious and risk averse. Buying at auction in future would depend on the appetite of this Committee to move in that direction;
- Voids – The Chief Executive of Barnet Homes reported that the this would be very much the same through Opendoor's Homes;
- The Chairman confirmed that there would not be a reduction in homes transferred which were currently used for temporary accommodation;
- Members asked if any thoughts had been given to prefabricated homes. The Chairman confirmed that there had been some initial conversations about this;
- The Chief Executive confirmed that there were 320 new homes in the pipeline and other options were also being pursued.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1. The corporate priorities (Appendix A) be noted and the additional priorities approach to delivery (as set out in Appendix B) be approved;**
- 2. Following a vote on each of the savings proposals H1 to H6 at Appendix C and subject to any equalities impact assessments, the savings proposals be agreed and referred to Policy and Resources Committee for eventual decision by Council.**
- 3. The votes were as follows**

### **H1**

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| <b>For</b>     | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Against</b> | <b>0</b>  |

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| <b>Abstained</b> | <b>0</b> |
|------------------|----------|

## H2

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <b>For</b>       | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Against</b>   | <b>0</b>  |
| <b>Abstained</b> | <b>0</b>  |

## H3

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <b>For</b>       | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Against</b>   | <b>0</b>  |
| <b>Abstained</b> | <b>0</b>  |

## H4

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <b>For</b>       | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Against</b>   | <b>0</b>  |
| <b>Abstained</b> | <b>0</b>  |

## H5

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| <b>For</b>       | <b>6</b> |
| <b>Against</b>   | <b>4</b> |
| <b>Abstained</b> | <b>0</b> |

## H6

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| <b>For</b>       | <b>6</b> |
| <b>Against</b>   | <b>4</b> |
| <b>Abstained</b> | <b>0</b> |

## 8. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

The chairman ruled the following item as urgent:

### **Willow House, East Finchley – Fire**

The Chairman felt that it was important that the Committee should receive an update of the fire at Willow House and reported that there would be a detailed report to the January 2019 meeting.

The Chairman was pleased to report that everyone was safe and invited the Chief Executive of Barnet Homes to give a more detailed update.

Consequently, it was noted/reported that:

- Most people were out within 10 minutes;
- The fire was under control by 2am;
- 13 flats were significantly damaged;
- Most families were put into respite accommodation;
- The arrangements for re-housing were outlined and community groups were being consulted.

The Chairman thanked Barnet Homes for the rapidity of its response to the emergency and also thanked Councillors involved in the process.

The meeting finished at 7pm