

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 4th July, 2017

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Tom Baker-Price (Chair), Councillor Jane Potter (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Natalie Brookes, Michael Chalk, Anita Clayton, Andrew Fry, Pattie Hill and Jennifer Wheeler

Also Present:

Councillors Juliet Brunner, Antonia Pulsford and Pat Witherspoon.

Officers:

J Pickering

Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley and P Ross

MINUTE EXTRACT – MINUTE ITEM NO. 24: TASK GROUP PROGRESS REPORTS - HOMELESSNESS SHORT SHARP REVIEW UPDATE

a) Homelessness Short, Sharp Review

The Committee were provided with an update (as detailed at Appendix 1) following the latest meeting of the Homelessness Short Sharp Review Group held on Tuesday 4th July 2017; whereby Members were asked to consider Redditch Borough Council's draft Housing Allocations Policy. The draft policy had been subject to public consultation from 23rd June to 19th July 2017. A number of residents who had responded had given positive feedback on the proposed changes.

In the absence of Councillor Nina Wood-Ford, Councillor Natalie Brookes informed the Committee that the group had met, on three separate occasions, with the Council's Strategic Housing Manager, Private Sector Housing. Members were informed that there were different types of homeless people; which included sofa surfers, those staying in temporary accommodation and

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hostel accommodation and people living in overcrowded conditions.

Further discussion followed with Members commenting that there were other key factors which contributed to homelessness, which included:-

- The rising cost of privately rented accommodation.
- The short supply of social housing.
- Benefit changes – Universal Credit, whereby claimants had to wait 8 weeks or longer before benefits were paid. This could be detrimental to anyone experiencing financial difficulties or vulnerable claimants.
- Young people leaving care were not always fully prepared for independent living.

Councillor Natalie Brookes further informed the Committee that Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) would also be looked into.

Members had been surprised to see how hard the Council was working with people and that a lot of 'face to face' work was being carried out. The Council was helping those who were in desperate need of help. The group was also aware that some people did not want to be housed.

RECOMMENDED that

the draft Redditch Borough Council Housing Allocations Policy be adopted by the Council.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.13 pm