

CABINET

1 AUGUST 2022

Present: Councillors Barnett (Chair), Batsford, Haffenden, Hilton, Roark, and Rogers.

In attendance: Jane Hartnell (Managing Director), Mary Kilner (Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer), and Andrew Palmer (Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment)

444. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Evans and Councillor Willis.

445. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received.

446. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Councillor Hilton raised an error in the appointments to working groups attached to the minutes of the previous meeting which show Councillors Hilton and Haffenden in the Labour Group column for the Discretionary Rate Appeal Panel and Licensing Committee (Scrap Metal Dealers).

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2022 be approved as a true record subject to the above amendment.

447. UPDATE ON HEALTH INEQUALITIES WORK IN HASTINGS

The Managing Director introduced a report to update Cabinet on progress in addressing health inequality in Hastings.

The Council agreed a motion in February 2021 regarding the health inequality gap experienced by residents of Hastings.

Since this motion was passed, the issue of health inequalities has been highlighted even further as the impact of the pandemic on deprived communities has become better understood.

During 2021 £3.4 million of funding that had been previously identified for health programmes in Hastings and Rother was re-allocated as legacy funding following lobbying by Councillor Mike Turner. The first £1 million of this allocation has been invested during 2021/22.

The remainder will fund a new year-long innovative Hastings-focused universal healthcare programme which recognises that access to healthcare is currently unequal, and poverty a key driver of poor health.

Councillor Batsford paid tribute to the work of Councillor Turner as a member of the East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) in holding local

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healthcare providers to account and securing funding for Hastings health services.

Councillor Barnett thanked the NHS for their help with the universal healthcare experiment, and the Director of Public Health for East Sussex, who has been leading a Local Strategic Partnership health inequality working group which has been leading on a whole systems approach to public health.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To welcome the progress made in ensuring the issues of health inequality that blight the lives of many residents are being addressed.

Reasons:

To update Cabinet on progress in addressing health inequalities since the Council motion was adopted in February 2021.

448. YORK BUILDINGS

The Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, introduced a report to provide an update on the Council's Grant Agreement with Homes England for the delivery of affordable rent housing at 12/13 York Buildings and advise members of the key conditions relating to its role as a residential landlord.

The Council has completed the development of six self-contained one bedroom flats at 12/13 York Buildings. The property is a grade II listed building which consists of retail on the ground floor with the newly developed flats repurposing the upper floors which had been empty for many years.

The Council has been awarded funding of £303,910 through the Affordable Homes programme to deliver the units at York Buildings at affordable rent. Once accepted, this will place a restriction on how the properties can be used. This will help to offset some of the cost of providing homelessness support by providing accommodation for those the Council is required to assist.

Councillor Carr was present and asked if there is a move to audit other Council owned buildings to see if they could be repurposed into affordable accommodation in the same manner.

Councillor Edwards was present and asked if the annual surplus takes account of running costs going forward.

The Assistant Director confirmed that a 30% allowance is included in the figures to offset running and maintenance costs. The building has been fully renovated so it is expected that maintenance costs will be low in the short-term. The building will be added to the Council's portfolio of temporary accommodation and will be managed by the same team of officers.

The flats will be let in accordance with the Council's letting scheme and allocation policy. This scheme can provide a blueprint for the future as the Council develops the

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appropriate policies and procedures for directly delivering social housing.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- 1. The Council renews its role as a Registered Provider directly delivering affordable, social housing.**
- 2. The Council proceeds to drawdown funding through the Affordable Homes Programme 2021-2026 to deliver Affordable Rent housing at 12/13 York Buildings.**

Reasons:

1. The delivery of Affordable Rent at 12/13 York Buildings will provide six permanent homes to people on the Council's Housing Register and directly support the Council's Affordable Housing targets and its 500 Affordable Rented Homes Programme.
2. The development of 12/13 York Buildings is being financed by borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board and the Affordable Housing grant reduces the borrowing requirement by circa £300k. The lower borrowing costs will be capable of being funded by the rental income.
3. The Council will be able to more easily bring forward Affordable Housing in the future through its own developments or the acquisition of Section 106 units. There are more direct delivery opportunities available to the Council as a Registered Provider and a Homes England Investment Partner.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 6.56pm)