

Minutes

Social Services, Health & Housing
Policy Overview Committee
13th May 2009
Meeting held at the Civic Centre, Uxbridge



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| | <p>Members Present: Councillors Judith Cooper (Chairman), Michael Markham, Peter Kemp, Pat Jackson, John Major and Lindsay Bliss</p> <p>Apologies: None</p> <p>Officers Present: Neil Stubbings, Paul Feven, Brian Doughty, Barry Newitt and Charles Francis</p> <p>Others Present: Cllr Anthony Way</p> |
| | <p>Declarations of Interest: None</p> |
| | <p>Notes of the meetings held on 23rd April 2009 were agreed as an accurate record.</p> |
| | <p>Exclusion of the press and public: It was agreed that all items of business were considered in public.</p> |

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| <p>2.</p> | <p>Major Reviews in 2008/9: Private Rented Sector – Final Report (Agenda Item 1)</p> <p>The Chairman introduced the final report and the following amended recommendations were tabled:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overall, officers seek out and develop opportunities and beneficial partnerships with the private rented sector in discharging the Council’s responsibilities in the Housing area. 2. That the London Borough of Hillingdon seeks to encourage local landlords to register with the Association of Residential Lettings Agents (Arla) licensing scheme and publicise a list of those which do in the Hillingdon People monthly magazine. 3. That Housing clients who are signposted to the private rented sector be encouraged to seek out those landlords with either Arla or similar accreditation as a means of quality assurance. 4. That officers in the Housing Options / Needs Teams be requested to link the information provided to prospective tenants with accredited landlord schemes and to integrate this into the revised Private Rented Sector Strategy as a model of best practice. 5. That officers do more to encourage landlords to enforce tenancy conditions in the Private Rented Sector in relation to damage to property, causing nuisance to neighbours or failing to fulfil their own obligations to maintain the garden and decorate internally etc. 6. That the current incentives to encourage Landlords Accreditation Scheme be welcomed. However, further incentives and information should be developed to encourage even more landlords to participate in the scheme. 7. That tenant and landlord management packs provided by Lettings Agents be reviewed and amended as necessary to include details of refuse and garden waste collection as a means of improving the street scene around some PRS properties. | <p>Action By:</p> |
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| | <p>8. That Officers ensure consistent language is used both verbally and on printed materials when providing information, advice and guidance to all housing enquiries (and in particular homeless clients) and complete the review already started in this area.</p> <p>9. That Officers be requested to review the information contained on the Housing website to ensure that this is as helpful as possible to tenants.</p> <p>10. That Officers promote information about low cost ownership schemes and shared ownership schemes as viable options to long term renting within the Private Rented Sector.</p> <p>11. That partnership working with outside agencies and organisations/bodies (such as Brunel University) be developed further to ensure the success of future initiatives to address common problems (anti-social behaviour, noise nuisance, littering and street scene) associated with the Private Rented Sector.</p> <p>12. That the successful Hillingdon Private Landlord's Forum be developed further to undertake further work in relation to partnership working and the further development of its activities and role.</p> <p>13. That everything possible be done to ensure that the application to the CLG to seek consent for additional HMO licensing for the South of the Borough is successful.</p> <p>14. That the preventative work being carried out through the Tenancy Sustainment Team be further developed, with key partners, in assisting people to remain in their homes and avoiding homelessness, particularly repeat homelessness.</p> <p>15. To note that Officers will integrate the findings from the Rugg Review (where appropriate) into a revised Private Rented Sector Strategy.</p> <p>Following discussions, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph beginning ' In respect of Planning controls' on page 20 of the report, to request officers clarify where the burden of proof lies in relation to: <i>'In addition, HMOs that have been in existence for over 10 years continuously have established use rights and are therefore excluded from action under development control powers'</i> and to amend the report if necessary. | <p>Action By:</p> |
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| | <p>Social Care Agenda will take place in June.</p> <p>4. To request officers provide a presentation on the Transformation Agenda which will inform the scope of the (possible) major review on Transformation to the June meeting.</p> <p>5. To request officers provide an update on the Hillingdon Independent Living Centre (HILC) to the June meeting.</p> | <p>Directorate Officers</p> <p>Directorate Officers</p> |
| | <p>Given that it was the last meeting of the Council year, the Chairman thanked fellow Members of the Committee, all those who have attended as witnesses and also officers for their support.</p> <p>Meeting closed at: 8.30pm Next meeting: 16th June 2009 in CR 4</p> | |

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Charles Francis on 01895 556454. Circulation of these minutes are to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

