

Subject: New Homes for Neighbourhoods – Estate Regeneration Programme - Extract from the Proceedings of the Housing Committee Meeting held on the 6 March 2013

Date of Meeting: 21 March 2013

Report of: Monitoring Officer

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Committee:

To receive the item referred from the Housing Committee for approval:

Recommendation:

- (1) That the Policy & Resources Committee be recommended to agree that the four vacant and unlettable prefabricated bungalow units in the rear gardens of 243-245 Preston Road, Brighton (as shown on the annexed plan at Appendix 1) be demolished as required to enable redevelopment of that garden site with new housing, subject to planning consent, under Phase 2 of the Estate Regeneration Programme as outlined in paragraphs 3.21 and 3.22 of the report;
- (2) That the Policy & Resources Committee be recommended to agree to the vacant former Housing Office at Manor Place, Brighton (as shown on the annexed plan at Appendix 2 to the report), be demolished in order to be redeveloped, subject to planning consent, under Phase 2 of the Estate Regeneration Programme as outlined in paragraph 3.23 of the report.

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00 pm 6 March 2013

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Councillor Wakefield (Chair), Powell (Deputy Chair), Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Farrow (Spokesperson), Barnett, Davey, Fitch, Jarrett, Mears and Rufus.

PART ONE**55. NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS – ESTATE REGENERATION PROGRAMME**

- 55.1 The Committee considered the report of the Head of City Regeneration on New Homes for Neighbourhoods, Estate Regeneration Programme. The report updated the Committee on the development of new and improved affordable housing on council owned Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land, and outlined the proposed framework for an Estate Regeneration Programme.
- 55.2 The Head of City Regeneration referred the Committee to the Recommendations, and said that on legal advice recommendation 2.3 (3) would be withdrawn. That recommendation asked for delegated authority to be given to the Housing Committee to approve any further demolition of buildings on HRA land. Legal advice was that under the current constitution this was not possible. The matter would be considered when the constitution was reviewed.
- 55.3 Councillor Farrow referred to paragraph 3.26 which related to Self Build Housing, and asked if Housing Cooperatives could be involved. Councillor Farrow referred to paragraph 3.35 and asked the Head of City Regeneration whether there could be a rent level between Target Rent and Affordable Rent. The Chair said that she too would like Housing Cooperatives to be involved and agreed that it was important to keep rent levels as low as possible.
- 55.4 Councillor Mears referred to the Estate Regeneration Programme, and noted that a report went to Cabinet on this matter back in November 2010, and was concerned that the current anticipated time for completion of works to the former garage sites was still some years away and asked if the time line could be looked at. Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 3.24 and asked what steps were being taken to enable the sale of the former Whitehawk Library.
- 55.5 Councillor Barnett said she was also concerned at the potential time for completion of the former garage site.
- 55.6 Councillor Jarrett agreed that things did move slowly and asked officers to consider ways of speeding up the process. With regard to rent levels, Councillor Jarrett noted that if people were currently paying 100% rent, then Affordable Rent of 73% would be a big improvement. The more money collected in rent, would result in more properties being built.
- 55.7 Councillor Powell agreed that the sale of the former Library was important and asked officers to look into the matter. Councillor Powell referred to paragraph 5.7 and noted that 5% of the new units would be wheelchair adapted and asked how many that would be.
- 55.8 The Head of City Regeneration referred to the former Whitehawk Library and said that Cabinet approval had previously been given to sell the site with the assumption it would

achieve a capital value of £1m. Developments options were being considered with corporate partners, but the prior approval of Cabinet had to be considered. Rent levels would be fully considered in due course, and a report would come to a future meeting of the Housing Committee. The 5% of new units being wheelchair adapted would equate to one unit. The development of new housing was important, and everything would be done to ensure all steps were undertaken as quickly as possible.

55.9 Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted that there were nine possible sites and asked if all the sites would be offered as a package to one developer, and suggested that if some sites were offered to smaller providers the process could be speeded up. Councillor Peltzer Dunn also referred to the possible rent levels and asked what the current average rent was for a two bedroom property. The Head of City Regeneration said that the sites were being packaged together as it was thought that that would make it more attractive to developers, but soft marketing was being undertaken to test the market. With regard to rent, the allocation of homes would not exclusively be to those who were currently in the private rental sector, and the rents would be in line with current Housing Association rents. The Head of Finance (Business Engagement), said that rent would be calculated using a set formula and it was likely the Target Rent would be the same as it currently was for social housing.

55.10 Councillor Peltzer Dunn asked that when the Constitution was reviewed that a request be made that Housing Committee be given authority to approve the demolition of buildings on HRA land. The solicitor confirmed that such authorisation was already included in the draft Constitution which would be considered by the Policy & Resources Committee and Full Council.

55.11 RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Housing Committee note the next steps and processes in the proposed Estate Regeneration Programme.
- (2) That the Housing Committee note progress with the garage site procurement (Phase 1 of the Estate Regeneration Programme) and give delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources to award the contract following completion of procurement of a delivery partner for the development of new housing at the sites specified in paragraphs 3.12 and 3.13 in the report and any substitute or additional garage sites.
- (3) That the Housing Committee recommend that the Policy and Resources Committee agree:
 - (i) that the four vacant and unlettable prefabricated bungalow units in the rear gardens of 243-245 Preston Road, Brighton (as shown on the annexed plan at Appendix 1) be demolished as required to enable redevelopment of that garden site with new housing, subject to planning consent, under Phase 2 of the Estate Regeneration Programme as outlined in paragraphs 3.21 and 3.22 in the report;
 - (ii) that the vacant former Housing Office at Manor Place, Brighton (as shown on the annexed plan at Appendix 2 to the report) be demolished in order to be redeveloped, subject to planning consent, under Phase 2 of the Estate Regeneration Programme as outlined in paragraph 3.23 in the report;

- (4) That the Housing Committee agree that a range of funding, rent and homeownership options should be provided in new housing to be developed on HRA land under the Estate Regeneration Programme in order to ensure that development is viable and to increase the number of new homes the Estate Regeneration Programme can deliver, as set out in paragraphs 3.31 to 3.42 in the report.