

BEST VALUE COMMISSIONERS

Housing Sub Board
9th December 2024

Council House, Room 125

Board Members

Jackie Belton, Commissioner and Chair
Paul Langford, Executive Director, City Housing
Naomi Morris, Head of Service, Strategy and Enabling
Sarah Scannell, Assistant Director
Andrew Healy, Finance Business Partner
Kerry Scott, Housing Delivery Programme Lead
Wayne Davies, Director, Asset Management
Nasreen Chaudhry, Personal Assistant
Guy Chaundy, Assistant Director Housing - Strategic & Enabling
Cllr Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness
Chaneill Harrison, Business Support Co-ordinator

Apologies

Cllr Penny Wagg, Housing Lead, Liberal Democrats
Cllr Bruce Lines, Shadow Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness
Tom Smith, MHCLG Chief of Staff

1 Welcome & Introductions

- 1.1 Jackie Belton welcomed everybody to the meeting and introductions were completed.

2 Previous Minutes & Actions

- 2.1 Jackie Belton went through all open actions in detail. The action tracker was updated with new timescales, substantive updates and actions were closed which had been completed. The board approved the previous set of minutes with no points of accuracy recorded. Jackie Belton requested for officers to review and implement actions, and provide an update at the next meeting.

3 BMHT Update

- 3.1 Draft report for February to the BMHT review was discussed in detail and the following points were raised.
- 3.2 Recommendations in 3.3 & 3.4 in the report need to be reviewed and confirmation provided that it is in line with the Council's governance arrangements for land disposal which are required, considered and agreed upon by the Cabinet Property Committee. This recommendation proposes to make changes to this regarding the disposal of HRA land and runs contrary to the Cabinet Committee's Terms of Reference.
- 3.3 Sales of private units, paragraph 4.22 and appendix 6 need to be reviewed and amended as it currently suggests the sale of homes delivered a profit and the scale of the surplus generated needs to be tested and assurance provided that this is an accurate reflection of the review.
- 3.4 Paragraph 4.26 – this paragraph needs to be clearer on the details and costs of the SLA.
- 3.5 Paragraph 4.32 – the recommendations relating to forward homes need to be clearer and set out the actions required to cease forward homes as a company entity. Currently, Forward Homes is a live company on Companies House.
- 3.6 Officers agreed to review and update the report in light of feedback and would circulate it to Commissioners and distribute the updated version for further comments.

The Commissioners:

Max Caller CBE, John Coughlan CBE, Chris Tambini, Pam Parkes FCIPD, Jackie Belton, Myron Hrycyk, John Biggs.

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4 Affordable Housing Through Planning

- 4.1 The board welcomed the detailed presentation and reiterated the need for an increased supply of affordable housing.
- 4.2 Sarah Scannell was requested to provide a breakdown of the delivery of S106 houses split between developers and RPs. It was noted that the largest component of affordable units was for affordable rent and shared ownership. BCC requires a greater supply of housing at social or truly affordable rents, the delivery of which will help reduce the numbers and costs of households in TA and B&B.
- 4.3 It was also noted the success of the TA acquisitions programme, the service continues to review how BCC can fund the acquisition of more housing, this will be kept under review and progress reported back to the board.
- 4.4 The announced changes to planning committees' decision-making powers were discussed and it was confirmed that this was unlikely to make a significant difference in BCC as many schemes are not currently in compliance with planning policy.

5 Housing Solutions and Support

- 5.1 A separate meeting was to take place on Tuesday to discuss the TA initiatives to increase supply and reduce demand.
- 5.2 The success of the accommodation finding teams' highly commended award was acknowledged and welcomed.
- 5.3 It was noted that the HOC has been closed since the 7th of November 2024 following a violent incident and the service is working hard to develop a revised and safe operating model. Stephen Philpott to provide updates on changes to arrangements, to Cllr Jayne Francis and Jackie Belton.

6 Regulator of Social Housing

- 6.1 The information provided by the team was noted.

7 AOB

- 7.1 Wayne Davies confirmed one of BCC's contractors is underperforming on VOIDS. Wayne and his team have close oversight of this and will report back in January 2025.
- 7.2 JB reiterated her support for the service to strengthen its focus on addressing underoccupancy and releasing much-needed larger homes. Progress and performance on this will be monitored via the HSB.
- 7.3 A paper outlining the different strands of work relating to addressing under-occupancy in BCC stock is to be brought back as a report to the February Sub Board. It was agreed that it was important to track processes on an individual and team basis.
- 7.4 Outstanding capital work on the HOC – Wayne Davies confirmed that if the required works were completed the end of March 2025, the service would remain compliant with H&S requirements. This will be monitored closely with monthly meetings with Acivico and any emerging risks escalated if required. Cllr Francis and Jackie Belton asked to be updated if the situation changed or if there was likely to be any slippage on timescales.

8 Actions

- 8.1 Andrew Healey to provide a paragraph explaining how the decent homes investment would also address decarbonization priorities within the HRA business due to cabinet in 2025.
- 8.2 Stephen Philpott to provide updates on changes to arrangements for the HOC, to Cllr Jayne Francis and Jackie Belton.
- 8.3 Draft BMHT report to be updated following feedback, this is due to go to Cabinet in Feb 2025 and it is important that the report doesn't slip further (see section 3 of these minutes 09/12/2024).
- 8.4 Sarah Scannell was requested to provide a breakdown of the delivery of S106 houses split between developers and RPs.

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- 8.5 A paper outlining the different strands of work relating to addressing under-occupancy in BCC stock is to be brought back as a report to the February Sub Board. It was agreed that it was important to track processes on an individual and team basis.
- 8.6 Wayne Davies to report back on under-performing contractor.

9 Date of Next Meeting

- 9.1 TBC.

The Commissioners:

Max Caller CBE, John Coughlan CBE, Chris Tambini, Pam Parkes FCIPD, Jackie Belton, Myron Hrycyk, John Biggs.