

ENTERPRISE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 24th May, 2022

Present:-

Councillor Flood (Chair)

Councillors Caulfield
Dyke

Councillors Brittain

Sarah Watts, Private Sector Housing Manager +

+ Attended for Minute No. 4

1 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest were received.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Coy, Hollingworth and Snowdon.

3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED –

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

4 CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING - PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING POLICY CONSULTATION

The Private Sector Housing Manager presented an overview to the committee of three new policies related to Private Sector Housing. In 2021 Cabinet approved the Private Sector Housing Project Plan and the

policies would form part of that plan. Additional policies were expected to follow, to improve the Council's enforcement toolbox.

The first policy related to the energy performance of buildings; specifically privately rented properties and was born from two pieces of legislation. These laws ensure that landlords have a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and that they are rated at a minimum band E level. The legislation gave the Council authority to ask landlords to meet the minimum E requirement or face financial penalties.

Both Chesterfield Borough Council and the government have a shared desire to improve the thermal efficiency of properties, which in turn improves health and wellbeing, financially helps fuel poor residents and reduces the effects of global warming. It was confirmed that the EPC register is publicly available online, so tenants are able to look at the rating of properties and the team is able to check which properties do not have a certificate in place.

The second policy is specific to Chesterfield Borough Council and relates to amenities and space standards in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO). In 2018 the government changed mandatory licensing requirements for HMOs and introduced national minimum room size standards for sleeping accommodation. The government also allowed local authorities to set their own local standards and the team viewed this as an opportunity to help safeguard some of the most vulnerable residents of the borough that live in HMOs.

The new standards set a suitable benchmark that provided consistency amongst landlords and also with neighbouring authorities. The standards would help to ensure that tenants had a safe amount of space to live healthily in. Discussions took place around the minimum requirements for kitchen and bathroom facilities within HMOs and the officer confirmed that those were detailed in the policy, in order to achieve the best standards for tenants.

The third policy related to Park Homes. The legislation had changed to introduce a requirement for councils to carry out a fit and proper persons assessment for all park home site owners. It was acknowledged that park home tenants were also a vulnerable section of society and the existing policy needed to be refreshed in order to protect those tenants.

RESOLVED –

1. That the committee note the new policies.
2. That a further update be provided to the committee on the effectiveness of the policies following implementation.

5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - RE-ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

***RESOLVED –**

That after consideration of items containing exempt information, the public be re-admitted to the meeting.

6 SCRUTINY MONITORING

The Committee considered the Scrutiny recommendations monitoring schedule.

RESOLVED -

1. That the Scrutiny monitoring schedule be noted.

7 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the four month period 1 June, 2022 to 30 September, 2022 was presented for information.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

8 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE ENTERPRISE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The 2022/23 Work Programme for the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee was reported for information. The committee were advised that due to workload pressures, the Economic Growth item scheduled for the July meeting will now be postponed.

RESOLVED –

1. That the work programme be noted and updated to include the decisions of the current meeting.
2. That the Economic Growth item scheduled for July be moved to the September meeting.
3. A recycling education topic be brought to the next meeting alongside a consultation exercise on the Revitalising the Heart of Chesterfield Plans.

9 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

The Minutes of the meeting of the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 7 April, 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.