

Key Decision Required	No	In the Forward Plan	No
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CABINET

16 FEBRUARY 2017

REFERENCE REPORT FROM THE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY COMMITTEE

A.3 HONEYCROFT AND SPENDELLS SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEMES REVIEW

(Report prepared by Mark Westall and Katie Sullivan)

BACKGROUND

At the Service Development and Delivery Committee meeting held on 15 January 2018 the Committee was requested to formally respond to the consultation on the principle of closing the Spendells and Honeycroft Sheltered Housing Schemes.

Members had before them for their reference and information the related report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing which had been submitted to the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 November 2017.

The Head of Housing (Tim R Clarke) gave a presentation to the Committee on the review of the Spendells and Honeycroft Sheltered Housing Schemes. The presentation covered the following matters:-

- a) the statutory consultation with the tenants at both Spendells and Honeycroft schemes had commenced;
- b) Cabinet had concluded that it was no longer financially viable to continue with the schemes at both Honeycroft and Spendells for the reasons set out in the report;
- c) water testing at Honeycroft had identified unsatisfactory results and subsequently, as part of the consultation process all residents had relocated to alternative properties with secure tenancies, and an option to move again should they wish to do so; and
- d) the tenants at Spendells had all requested to move out of the scheme and be relocated, with suitable properties being found for all 10 residents on secure tenancies with moves due to be completed over the next 3-4 weeks. During the consultation, 2 responses were received, one being positive and the Town Council had expressed a concern to the scheme closing.

Members expressed a concern that the schemes would remain vacant for some time pending a decision from Cabinet on the future options for redevelopment.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS TO CABINET

Having discussed this matter it was **RESOLVED** that Cabinet be informed that this Committee supports the recommendations to Cabinet in its report of 10 November 2017 in that:

- (i) the Spendells and Honeycroft Sheltered Housing schemes had proven to be unpopular for several years due to their shared facilities and dated design and

that it was economically unviable for the Housing Revenue Account to continually subsidise the on-going and increasing revenue loss of rental income at the schemes;

- (ii) the commencement of formal consultation on the principle of closing both the schemes with residents in accordance with Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985;
- (iii) the Portfolio Holder for Housing had attended to present the outcome of the viability work for each scheme to the Committee, during the consultation period;
- (iv) the outcome of formal consultation along with more detail on the costs associated with closure will be reported back to Cabinet to inform the final decisions on the future of these schemes;
- (v) an associated budget of £200,000 within the HRA in 2017/18, to support residents throughout the whole process, funded from the HRA General Reserve had been established;
- (vi) officers had been authorised to commence preparations to secure alternative accommodation for affected residents in the event that Cabinet decides to close the schemes, including holding open voids at other sheltered schemes;
- (vii) further work be undertaken by officers exploring the provision of alternative sheltered type housing accommodation after detailed financial modelling within the HRA;
- (viii) in addition, the Committee were pleased to note that there had been successful and proposed relocation of the residents at both schemes to alternative properties on secure tenancies; and
- (ix) that Cabinet ensures that the properties at both Honeycroft and Spendells are not left vacant for longer than necessary and are made safe until final decisions are made as to their future.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Comments

The Housing Portfolio Holder thanks the Service Development and Delivery Committee for its support of the Cabinet's previous decisions on this matter.

Recommendation to Cabinet

That Cabinet notes and welcomes the support of the Service Development and Delivery Committee in this matter.