

Scrutiny Standing Panel Agenda



Housing Scrutiny Standing Panel Tuesday, 25th October, 2011

Place: Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 5.30 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Mark Jenkins (The Office of the Chief Executive)
Tel: 01992 564607 Email:
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Members:

Councillors S Murray (Chairman), A Mitchell MBE (Vice-Chairman), Ms R Brookes, K Chana, Mrs A Grigg, Ms J Hart, Mrs S Jones, W Pryor, D Stallan, H Ulkun and Mrs J H Whitehouse

SUBSTITUTE NOMINATION DEADLINE:

16:30

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

3. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 5 - 12)

To agree the notes of the last meeting of the Panel held on 19 July 2011.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

(Assistant to the Chief Executive). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 13 - 18)

(Chairman/Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed the Terms of Reference of this Panel and associated Work Programme. This is attached. The Panel are asked at each meeting to review both documents.

6. COUNCIL HOUSEBUILDING PROGRAMME (Pages 19 - 34)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

7. SOLAR PV TO COUNCIL HOUSING (Pages 35 - 50)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

8. FIRE SAFETY IN COMMON PARTS OF FLAT BLOCKS (Pages 51 - 60)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

9. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN (2011/12) - PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 61 - 70)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

10. JOINT HOUSING AND FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY STANDING PANEL - HRA

In April 2012, the Government will be introducing a major, long term change in the way that local authority Housing Revenue Accounts (HRAs) are funded. This will involve a change away from the current "HRA Subsidy System" to a new "HRA Self Financing System," under which this Council will need to make a one-off payment to the Government in excess of £180 million (instead of making annual payments to the Government – currently in excess of £11 million per annum), for which we will need to borrow a substantial proportion.

There are two key aspects to this process from the Council's point of view. The Council needs a well-thought out robust 30 Year Financial Plan for the HRA, setting out all expected housing income and expenditure to meet the Council's housing objectives, and the right treasury management solution for borrowing the money in order to meet the cost of the payment to the CLG, and ensure that we receive the best terms.

Following informal consideration by Cabinet members and in view of the introduction and importance of HRA Self Financing, the Chairmen of the Housing and Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panels have agreed that a Joint Meeting of the two Scrutiny Panels should be held with officers and the Council's HRA Business Planning Consultants CIHConsult – chaired by Councillor Stephen Murray, to discuss CIHConsult's draft report before the Indicative HRA Financial Plan is adopted by the Cabinet on the 5 December 2011. Attached is a Proposed Timetable, which sets out the approach to the formulation and adoption of the HRA Financial Plan, together with

dates.

The Joint Meeting of the Housing and Finance Scrutiny Panels will be held at 7p.m. on Monday 28 November 2011 in the Council Chamber, and all members of the Council are invited to attend the meeting to discuss this important issue.

11. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To consider which reports are ready to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

12. FUTURE MEETINGS

The next programmed meeting of the Panel will be on Tuesday 31 January 2012 at 5.30p.m. in Committee Room 1, and thereafter on Tuesday 13 March 2012 at 5.30p.m. in Committee Room 1.