

16. PRESENTATION BY ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S FLOATING SUPPORT PROVIDER - FAMILY MOSAIC

The Chairman welcomed Karla McLeish, Acting Floating Support Manager and Angela Randle of Family Mosaic, who gave a presentation regarding their organisation's work.

Family Mosaic possessed around 24,000 good quality homes available for rent serving more than 45,000 people providing care and support services. They were one of the largest housing providers in London, Essex and the South East. Karla McLeish managed a team in Waltham Abbey which covered Epping Forest and Uttlesford.

Family Mosaic's services were free, they advised on:

- (a) Debts
- (b) Benefits
- (c) Budgeting
- (d) Evictions
- (e) Re-possession
- (f) Social inclusion
- (g) Assistance with forms
- (h) Mental health

The organisation accepted referrals from professional agencies and self referrals, their staff attended meetings with clients at local authorities, although they did not work with children.

Family Mosaic held drop-in sessions once a week at Epping Library and Loughton, a service they were looking to extend to Waltham Abbey and Loughton Library. Their staff met District Council Housing Manager every 6 weeks and the Homelessness Team every month. The organisation arranged trips with clients at Christmas/Halloween time and to the seaside.

Family Mosaic consisted of 11 staff 1 of whom was part time.

The Chairman thanked Family Mosaic for their presentation. They then answered questions from the Panel.

The Panel asked if Family Mosaic worked with Voluntary Action Epping Forest. Karla McLeish replied that they worked in partnership with other agencies but they were careful to avoid duplication.

Was it possible for the public to visit Family Mosaic's Waltham Abbey office? They advised that this was not possible, their staff made home visits.

Members asked what they should do if any enquiries came their way from the public regarding this area. District Council officers said they could pass on Family Mosaic

referral forms to the Panel separately. Family Mosaic distributed some of their leaflets to the Members.

The Panel asked how many people they supported per annum. Family Mosaic replied 190, with the bulk of referrals coming from local authorities. It was advised that they were funded by Essex County Council although currently budget cuts of 20% would be taking place.

The Panel expressed concern about the need to reach out to rural parts of the district, however Family Mosaic advised that the majority of the referrals were from the urbanised parts of the district. They were planning to obtain a mini bus for getting to remote areas.

17. PRIVATE SECTOR ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The Panel received a progress report regarding the Private Sector Housing Strategy 2012-2015 Action Plan from the Assistant Director (Private Sector Housing and Communities Support).

At its meeting in April 2012 the Council's Cabinet adopted the Private Sector Housing Strategy (PSHS) 2012-2015. This assessed the District's current and future private sector housing needs and set out the Council's approach to meeting these needs. The strategy included an Action Plan setting out the proposed actions that would be taken by the Council contributing towards the achievement of the housing objectives for the private sector over the 3 years of the strategy's life.

The Cabinet had agreed that Action Plan progress should be monitored on an annual basis by this Panel, the first annual report was considered in October 2013.

RECOMMENDED:

- (1) That the Progress Report on the Action Plan contained within the Private Sector Housing Strategy 2012-2015 be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder with no further comments;
- (2) That appropriate uncompleted actions be carried forward to the Action Plan 2014/15;
- (3) That the proposed Action Plan 2014/15 be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder with no further comments;

18. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN (2014/15) - 6 MONTH PROGRESS REPORT

The Panel received a 6 month progress report regarding the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Key Action Plan (2014/15) from the Director of Communities.

In March 2014 the Council's latest Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan (2014/15) incorporating the Repairs and Maintenance Business Plan. This set out the Council's objectives, strategies and plans as landlord in relation to the management and maintenance of its own housing stock. An important section of the HRA Business Plan was the Key Action Plan setting out the proposed actions the Council would be taking over during the year.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Key Action Plan (2014/15) 6 Month Progress Report be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder.

19. HRA FINANCIAL PLAN - HALF YEARLY UPDATE

The Panel received a report regarding the Half Yearly Update for the HRA Financial Plan from the Director of Communities.

At its meeting in March 2014, the Panel considered the draft HRA Business Plan for 2014/15 recommending its adoption to the Housing Portfolio Holder which was subsequently approved.

The Cabinet had asked the Panel to review updates to the HRA Financial Plan twice per year at its scheduled meetings in October and March.

CIH Consultancy had acted as the Council's HRA Business Planning Consultants for a number of years, they would contract with the authority until 2015. The consultancy had undertaken its six month review of the current HRA Financial Plan taking into account the Council's current financial position and policies.

RECOMMENDED:

That the six month review of the HRA Financial Plan 2014/15 be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder without further comments.

20. HOUSING STRATEGY: 12 MONTH PROGRESS REPORT ON KEY ACTION PLAN 2013/14

The Panel received a 12 month progress report on the Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2013/14 from the Director of Communities.

At its meeting in September 2009, the Council's Cabinet adopted the Housing Strategy 2009-2012 which assessed the District's current and future housing needs and set out the Council's approach to meeting those needs. The strategy also included a Key Action Plan setting out the proposed actions that would be taken by the Council to contribute towards the Housing objectives.

The strategy was due to be updated in 2013 for a further three year period. However, the Housing Portfolio Holder agreed that the production of the next Housing Strategy should be deferred until the completion of the Preferred Options for the Local Plan, as much of the strategy was dependent on the Local Plan.

The Panel agreed that a new Housing Strategy Key Action Plan for 2015 should be considered by this Panel at its January 2015 meeting for recommendation to the Housing Portfolio Holder.

RECOMMENDED:

- (1) That the 12 month progress report on the Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2013/14 be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder without further comments; and

- (2) That a new Housing Strategy Key Action Plan for 2015 be considered at the Housing Scrutiny Panel in January 2015 for recommendation to the Housing Portfolio Holder.

21. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2014/15 - QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE

The Panel received a report regarding Key Performance Indicators 2014/15 Quarter 1 Performance from the Director of Communities.

A range of 36 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2014/15 was adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee in March 2014. The KPIs were important to the improvement of the Council's services and the achievement of its key objectives, they directed improvement effort towards services and the national priorities.

As part of the Overview and Scrutiny Review undertaken in 2013/14 changes had been made to arrangements for the quarterly review of KPI performance with effect from the current municipal year. From this first quarter of the year, the existing scrutiny panels were now each responsible for the review of quarterly performance against specific KPIs within their areas of responsibility.

It was noted that performance targets in Quarters 1 and 2 had been achieved. However the Panel requested that in future the KPIs relevant to this Panel only should be submitted to meetings.

RESOLVED:

That the Key Performance Indicators 2014/15 Quarter 1 be noted.

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

The Chairman advised that he would provide a verbal update of the panel's work at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

23. FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Panel would be on 21 October 2014.

CHAIRMAN