

# MINUTES

## Environment, Health and Housing Committee

<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday, 7 November 2017
<b>Venue:</b>	Town Hall, St Annes.
<b>Committee Members Present:</b>	Councillor Ben Aitken (Chairman) Councillor Viv Willder (Vice-Chairman)  Councillors Peter Anthony, Maxine Chew, Susan Fazackerley, Shirley Green, Gail Goodman, John Kirkham, Graeme Neale, and Louis Rigby.
<b>Other Councillors Present:</b>	None
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Paul Walker, Mark Evans, Kirstine Riding, Chris Hambly, Phil Dent, Katharine McDonnell
<b>Other Attendees:</b>	One member of the public.

### Public Platform

There were none on this occasion.

#### 1. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any personal or prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members. There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

#### 2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Environment, Health and Housing Committee meeting held on 5 September 2017 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

#### 3. Substitute Members

The following substitutions were reported under Council procedure rule 24(c):

Councillor Susan Fazackerley substituting for Councillor Angela Jacques

### Decision Items

#### 4. MyHomeChoice Fylde Coast – Consultation on Changes to the Allocations Policy

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, introduced a report regarding a proposed consultation on changes to the Fylde Coast Allocations Policy for social housing, otherwise known as MyHomeChoice.

In providing information regarding the reasons behind the proposed changes, Kirstine provided a detailed overview of the current allocations policy, how it operated and how allocations were undertaken. She went on to describe, in depth, the proposed changes and the reasons for the changes. Kirstine explained that the main

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impetus behind the change was the need for the social housing sector to be able to adopt a more flexible commercial approach.

Kirstine concluded her presentation by explaining the consultation process, the wide range of consultees including currently registered households, partners and councillors. She also advised that the results of the consultation would inform a future report to committee.

Following questions from the committee seeking clarification on a number of points regarding the local connection criteria, hard to rent properties and the differences between social and private rented sector, and the consultation process, it was RESOLVED:

1. To note the contents of the report on the consultation related to proposed changes to the Consistent Assessment Policy (Allocations Policy) for MyHomeChoice Fylde Coast;
2. That the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, and Councillor Oades, establish a working group with the Housing Services Manager to submit a formal consultation;
3. That all councillors are requested to provide responses to the consultation by the end of November 2017, should they wish to prior to the working group; and
4. The Fylde Coast Housing Providers group to consider all responses received from across the Fylde Coast and provide a revised Consistent Assessment Policy for MyHomeChoice Fylde Coast for further consideration and approval by the committee.

(Councillor Rigby requested that his vote against the proposal be recorded)

#### 5. Homelessness Reduction Act 2018

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, introduced a report which provided an overview of the Homelessness Reduction Act, which was due to come into force in 2018, and the significant changes it would bring to the homelessness duties for the Council.

The changes would include an enhanced prevention duty extended to 56 days from 28 days; a relief duty to support households for 56 days to relieve their homelessness by securing accommodation and financial support from central government to assist the local authority in carrying out their statutory duties. Ms Riding also explained that the Act would require the Council to help all household at risk of, or already suffering, homelessness, not just vulnerable households.

Ms Riding advised that the funding provided by the government was to allow for local authorities to adapt their services. These would be the Flexible Homeless Grant and the New Burdens Funding, she also advised that the Council had already been in receipt of the Trailblazer funding, which had started the process of finding new ways of working.

Ms Riding concluded her report by advising that the new initiatives to be put in place would be the employment of a new tenancy support worker who would focus on the Landlord Incentive Scheme, a new shared debt advice service working with Blackpool Council and the Citizens Advice Bureau, and working with the YMCA to get provide two additional interim units for homelessness households.

The committee RESOLVED to

1. Note the new provisions within the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 and, in particular the extended range of statutory homelessness duties the Council is obliged to perform under the new Act;
2. Note the new initiatives Fylde Council are intending to introduce with the additional financial support that has been made available by Government to support Local Housing Authorities in implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018; and
3. Recommend to Council approval of a fully-funded revenue budget increase for the total sum of £122,900. £98,862 funded by DCLG Flexible Homeless Grant and £26,038 funded by DCLG New Burdens Funding.

The following information items were received by the committee.

6. Overview of Environmental Health Department 2016/17

The committee received the first of what would be an annual report covering the work and interventions of the Environmental Health department.

The committee asked a number of questions surrounding the cryptosporidium outbreak and the council's interaction with United Utilities. Chris Hambly, Environmental Health Manager, advised that during the outbreak the Council's role had been one of emergency planning.

The committee thanked the Environmental Health team for all their work.

7. Progress Housing Group – Annual Review for Fylde Borough Council 2016/17

The committee received the Progress Housing Group Annual Review, which provided information on how Progress Housing were working towards their six strategic aims for 2020 and progress in 2016/17.

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