

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Housing Review Board held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Border Road, Honiton, EX14 1EJ on 12 August 2019

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 2.30 pm and ended at 3.20 pm

22 Public speaking

There were no questions raised by members of the public.

23 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Housing Review Board meeting held on 20 June 2019 were confirmed and signed as a true record, subject to the word 'was' being changed to 'is' in Minute 4 Declaration of interest. Councillor Hall's declaration of interest regarding his mother being a housing tenant.

In response to a question, Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Service Lead – Housing reported that the Housing Service were actively advertising the three current vacancies on the Board and would shortly be preparing a press release. Peter Sullivan, Vice Chairman reported that that he was encouraging tenants to volunteer as Board members through the various tenant meetings that he attended.

24 Declarations of interest

Councillor Ian Hall: Personal interest – mother is a housing tenant. Chairman of the Millwey Rise Action Group.

Councillor Dan Ledger: Personal interest – employed by a third party contractor for the current repairs and maintenance service.

Peter Sullivan: Personal Interest – housing tenant.

Cat Summers: Personal Interest – housing tenant.

Pat Gore: Personal Interest – housing tenant.

Alek Williams: Personal interest – housing tenant

25 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency raised at the meeting.

26 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There was one confidential item to be considered.

27 Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED

that under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set out on the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B).

28 **Proposed purchase of 18A & B St. Andrews Road, Exmouth (known locally as the Sailors Rest) involving the spending of Right to Buy (RTB) receipts for 2019/2020.**

Members noted that the report sought permission to proceed with the purchase of the properties known as 18A & B St. Andrews Road, Exmouth following submission of a conditional offer. The report also outlined the proposed spending plan of Right to Buy (RTB) receipts for the 2019/2020 financial year. The report also sought delegated authority to continue the programme of property acquisitions using Right to Buy receipts supplemented with HRA funds and borrowing.

During discussions the points noted included the following:

- The need to ensure good value from the investment and the difference between a commercial investment and one based on housing need.
- The importance of getting the right balance of tenants in the property.
- The greatest housing need was for one bedroomed accommodation in Exmouth.
- The property was in good condition and should not need extensive repairs.
- This was a special and rare opportunity to add to the council's housing stock in Exmouth and a good use of HRA and RTB funding.

The Board considered the need for continuing the spending of Right to Buy receipts on individual property acquisitions and supported a continuation of the arrangements that had been effective during [previous financial years.

RECOMMENDED

1. that delegated authority be given to the Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes & Communities and Chair of Housing Review Board to approve purchases to meet the 2019/2020 spending requirements using HRA funding to compliment the use of Right to Buy receipts;
 2. that the purchase of 18A & B St Andrews Road, Exmouth using Right to Buy receipts, HRA funding and any commuted sums available be approved;
1. that it be recommended to Council that the Constitution be amended to include a delegated authority for the Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment to purchase land and property for the Housing Revenue Account (including Right to Buy receipts) subject to the funds being from within approved budgets, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities and the Chair of the Housing Review Board.

Attendance List

Board members present:

Councillor Tony McCollum (Chairman)
 Peter Sullivan, Tenant (Vice-Chairman)
 Pat Gore, Tenant
 Cat Summers, Tenant
 Alek Williams, Tenant
 Councillor Ian Hall
 Councillor Dan Ledger

Councillor Helen Parr

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

Brenda Taylor
Eileen Wragg

Officers in attendance:

John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Giles Salter, Solicitor
Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Service Lead Housing
Paul Lowe, Housing Enabling & Allocations Manager
Chris Lane, Democratic Services Officer

Councillor apologies:

Christine Drew, Independent Community Representative
Councillor Kim Bloxham

Chairman

Date: