

# Minutes of a meeting of the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 26 September 2017 at 6.00 pm in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 6.00 pm

Concluded 6.48 pm

## Present – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT	GREEN	INDEPENDENT
Heseltine	Farley Jamil Nazir Salam	R Ahmed	H Hussain	K Hussain

## Apologies:

Councillor Mallinson

## Observer:

Councillor Ross-Shaw, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport

## Councillor Farley in the Chair

### 9. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

### 10. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

### 11. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

No referrals had been received.

### 12. HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY - PROGRESS UPDATE



*'A Place to Call Home: Housing and Homelessness Strategy for Bradford District 2014 – 2019'* was agreed by the full Council on 25 March 2014.

The report of the Assistant Director, Economy and Development (**Document "F"**) updated the Committee on progress made towards the strategy objectives.

Following a synopsis of the report, the Chair welcomed a question and answer session, as follows:

- What was the reasons behind the significant number of long term empty homes in the District?
  - This was a long standing issue due to a number of reasons such as people making investments, inheritance through a death in the family, emotional ties to dwellings or other matters of choice. The service was trying to deal around a 1000 empty properties that were causing problems for neighbourhoods;
- Figures in report showcased properties that showed continuous problems and therefore was there anything Councillors could do in their respective Wards to assist the Council in trying to reduce the number of empty properties?
  - The Council had already offered a substantial amount of help. The offers of loans were available and 8000 leaflets had been circulated for this sole purpose.
  - In relation to landlords, the Council was exploring whether loans were available for the sake of home efficiency;
- How had the Council progressed with the element of a surcharge costs for empty homes since last year?
  - The Council Tax had increased some time ago on empty properties and this was looked on as an incentive to make use of properties but some long term standing empty properties were held on by owners as previous empty status;
- When would White Rose Energy come into effect?
  - The Executive in January 2017 had approved Bradford Council to enter into a partnership with Leeds City Council to promote White Rose Energy and this energy would come into effect in the near future;
- How were properties brought back into use?
  - The Council was reliant on partners to undertake work and secure inter agency funding. There was an arrangement with a number of partners that bought properties and so that they could bring back to full use; and,
- The was knowledge of empty properties around the district for a number of decades and every occasion a Compulsory Purchase Order was issued, the owners would undertake minor remedial work to avoid the order. On what basis were owners able to avoid orders?
  - People were entitled to keep properties, occupied or not and this was their right providing Council Tax was paid and if owners of empty dwellings fulfilled certain obligations that the Council requested then orders could be avoided.
- Information was sought on loans for homeowners?
  - The Council had been working on a regional basis to develop an



Energy Repayment Loan (ERL), which was approved by the Executive in December 2016. ERLs were interest free and targeted homeowners who may struggle to access loan finance, to enable them to benefit from energy efficiency measure through national and regional programmes; and,

- Were partners involved with the No Second Night Out (NSNO) service, commissioned in October 2015, that provided holistic support for rough sleepers, including street outreach, emergency accommodation and assistance into settled housing?
  - Bradford Cares Network, was a Bradford Council funded initiative, commissioned by the Safe and Stronger Communities partnership and was being led by a network of local charities.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the report be welcomed.
- (2) That the Committee receives an update report in 12 months to include information on the “No Second Night Out” service and the “Bradford Cares” Campaign.

***ACTION: Assistant Director, Economy and Development***

### **13. THE COUNCIL'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME**

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “G”**) updated members on progress with the delivery of the Council’s Affordable Housing Programme and advised the Committee of the potential procurement of contracts with the value in excess of £2m associated with the delivery of the future programme.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the report be welcomed.
- (2) That an update report be presented to the Committee in 12 months time.

***ACTION: Strategic Director, Place***

### **14. REGENERATION AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18**

The report of the Chair of the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee (**Document “H”**) presented the Committee’s Work Programme 2017-18.

**Resolved –**



**That the meeting scheduled on 24 October 2017 be cancelled.**

***ACTION: City Solicitor***

Chair

**Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

THIS AGENDA AND ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

