

Minutes of the Cambridge sub-Regional Housing Board (CRHB) held on Friday 7 August 2009

1. Introduction and Apologies

Present

Stephen Hills (SH)	South Cambridgeshire District Council (Vice Chair)
Sarah Lyons (SL)	Cambridge City Council
Jane Hollingworth (JH)	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Sarah Gove (SG)	Fenland District Council
Steve Plant (SP)	Huntingdonshire District Council
Frank Mastrandrea (FM)	Huntingdonshire District Council
Steve Clark (SC)	Forest Heath District Council
Carole Herries (CH)	St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Trevor Baker (TB)	Cambridgeshire County Council
John O'Mahony (JOM)	Homes & Communities Agency
Nigel Howlett (NH)	RSL representative
Colin Wiles (CW)	RSL representative
Sarah Ireland (SI)	RSL representative
Mike Davey (MD)	Director of Community Engagement (Fenland) - Item 2
Kathy Brown (KJB)	Cambridge City Council (taking minutes)

Apologies

Liz Bisset (LB)	Cambridge City Council (Chair)
Alan Carter (AC)	Cambridge City Council
Dan Horn (DH)	Fenland District Council
John Onslow (JO)	Cambridgeshire Horizons
Sue Beecroft (SB)	Cambridgeshire Horizons
David Keeling (DK)	RSL representative

Action

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

- SH
 SH reported that the Extra Care Strategy sub-group have met, there is some way to go to formulate a strategy. This week the latest "protocol" was circulated, and the framework with the decision making process is now out for consultation. SH to ensure it has been widely circulated.
- SH
 A new Housing/Health Manager has been appointed, bringing a wealth of experience, starting September. SH suggested that Lee McManus be invited to the November meeting, for an introduction and to provide an update on the Extra Care Strategy.
- SB/TB
AC/LB
 Local Investment Plans (LIPs) - once things are further developed a paper will be brought to the Board. (Part of the Single Conversation)
- SB/TB
AC/LB
 Next version of JSNAs - TB reported that due to the PCT Public Health team concentrating on the Swine Flu epidemic these have been delayed. They will be circulated once complete.
- SB/TB
AC/LB
 Single Conversation - AC has circulated ToR, awaiting comments from Alex Plant and LB.
- SB/TB
AC/LB
 A grant of £953k is targeted towards BME activity.
- All
 Update on Managing Growth – this is a private sector initiative – HCA has asked for bidders, 60 expressions of interest. No trial areas have been selected yet, however, Cambridgeshire has been suggested as it has a strong rental market. JOM will provide updates as and when. All to let JOM know of any sites to be put forward.
- SB
 Cambridge Centre for Housing Studies has published a report on housing need/household formations. SB to circulate.

- HAC – priority areas – will be circulated when available.

JOM

3. Safer and Stronger Communities – update on the LAA theme

- MD was asked back to CRHB to ensure that the County is adequately linked into housing and vice versa.
- Mike Davey, Director of Community Engagement (Fenland), is now the lead for the County for the Community Safety Partnership, Drug and Alcohol Team (DAT), Community Cohesion (inc gypsies and travellers (G&T)) and Community Engagement.
- MD circulated a draft Safer and Stronger Structure, raising the question, where/how does housing fit in? It is anticipated that sub-groups link in, such as the G&T group; the voluntary sector; and then whatever comes out of the Rural Strategy Group. This will be launched in September, and the actions are likely to be steered by the Stronger Officer Group.
- How can CRHB work with and influence the County Domestic Violence Group and the Stronger Officer Group?
- CDRP - ASB and the work we do as housing providers play a part in this.
- MD to ask Simon Kersey to e-mail KJB for circulation to CRHB, a list of who sits on what groups, and to bring this back to a future CRHB to consider and to ensure that feed in and feedback is adequate.
- Need to ensure local groups feel engaged.
- MD to formally write to LB, as Chair, to ask for a representative for the Stronger Officer Group.

**MD
KJB**

MD

4. HCA New Structure and Appointments

- Two area teams for East of England, Area East (which includes Suffolk), and Area West which includes Cambridgeshire.
- Within these Areas there will be spatial teams based on County lines
- Each of these will have a Team Leader, two Investment and Regeneration Managers and an Investment and Regeneration Officer.
- Although the new structure went live on 20 July, due to the number of vacancies, including the team leader for Cambridge, continue with existing contacts until further notice.
- Once the vacancy is filled JOM will introduce the new team leader for Cambridge, Steve Collins (Head of Area West) and Scott Bailey (Team Leader for Suffolk) to CRHB.

JOM

5. Update on SHMA Event

- Feedback from the day revealed the need for a larger event, with a different profile of speakers, an all day event, an up-to-date invite list, and for invites to be sent out sooner, venue for 60+ people. TB reported that they were looking into having a map of the region to cursor over to reveal key figures.
- The general tone was that people are still getting to grips with SHMA and need to make it more accessible before widening it further.

6. Housing Sub-Region and Effect of LAAs on Boundaries Update on Suffolk's Local Govt Review Outcomes

- The various judicial reviews were successful, and were announced on 15 July, but the Boundary Committee have lodged an appeal, which will now be heard at the end of Sept/beginning of October.

7. Work Plan

- Variable tariff – work is progressing on variable tariff across the sub-region. The Government has released its consultation paper on CIL. It suggests using the work already done to feed into CIL as opposed to variable tariff. Any further work on variable tariff will need to consider the impact of CIL.
- Sustainability theme – combine with the LAA environmental theme in January. Also invite David Arkell, The Hive to this meeting.
- Invite Claire Bruin to provide an update on the Older Peoples Strategy and Action Plan to the September meeting; along with the Supporting People focus.
- The work plan will be revised to reflect comments and availability of guests. KJB to circulate.

KJB

8. Consultation / Publications

- HRA Review – proposed that debt free LAs take on portion of national housing debt in return for coming out of the HRA subsidy system. Could be as much as £160M for SCDC with very little increase in money available to support service.
- Strategic Approach to Housing KLOE consultation launched, closing date is 18 September. Agreed that each LA would work on this individually and then discuss at next CRHB if there is any value in putting in a joint response.

All/SB

9. Standard Feedback

- CRHB agreed that in order to reduce the number of standard items on the agenda, briefing notes from meetings would be e-mailed round and only key points for discussion would be brought to the Board. It would be up to those lead officers to put the item on the agenda. Updates from the Suffolk authorities would be dealt with in the same way.
- Feedback from organisations such as HCA, Horizons and Go-East will continue as standard agenda items.

All

10.1 Cambridgeshire Horizons

- No representative present.

10.2 Homes and Communities Agency

- Programme position – a letter has gone out to LAs and providers (JOM to circulate letter to CRHB for information), regarding the RME round in September to allocate investment for the rest of the year. All bids must be submitted, by 5pm Friday 11 September. They will be assessed and a programme put together for announcement by the end of September, to get programme position for quarter 2. HCA are willing to look at those bids needing a quicker decision than end of September on a case by case basis.
- As bids are fed through as they come forward, LAs can prioritise their bids once they have all been submitted, eg w/b 14 September.
- Need to ensure bids use up the allocated amount of funding this year otherwise the money may be lost out of the region.

JOM

10.3 Go-East

- Written update circulated.

10.4 Regional Housing Advisory Group

- No representative present.

10.5 Sub-Regional RSL Forum

- No meeting since Board last met.

10.6 Cambridge Sub-Region Strategic Housing Group (CSHG)

- No meeting since the Board last met.
- CRHB supported the suggestion that the Cambridge Sub-Regional Housing Strategy should be the lead document that should sit above and inform the Prospectus for Growth. LB to discuss with JO as part of her current dialogue with Horizons.

LB

10.7 Housing Enablers

- Kickstart bids – FM to circulate paper.
- RME – work to do to inform single conversation and task groups.
- Extra Care – lack of clarity around commissioning, thoughts will be fed back.

FM

10.8 CLIP Sub-Group

- No meeting since the Board last met.
- Continued discussion around discrepancies between figures.

10.9 Growth Partnership Board

- Emergency meeting called as £6m was taken away from the growth fund.

10.10 Gypsy and Traveller group

- Reviewed who sits on the task groups.
- Need to revisit the Terms of Reference.
- The existing policy/action plan needs to be revisited. Mike Davey will contact districts about how best to do this with the suggestion that a consultant be employed.

11 Any Other Business

- Letter received re Regional Housing & Planning Improvement Plan - £6,000 has been approved. The Enablers will lead on this.
- JH – the planning inspector's final report on East Cambs' proposed new core strategy had been received, there were minor amendments but generally the inspectors had approved it. The main thing was that the affordable housing policy had been approved and the affordable housing viability report which had been had prepared by JH using the Three Dragons toolkit, was deemed robust and soundly based.
- SL – going to appeal with Countryside regarding Clay Farm's application in the City of 2500 new homes. Its predominantly about viability on percentage of affordable housing.

12 Future meetings

The next meeting will be held at 10am, on Friday 4 September 2009 at Sanctuary Hereward offices, Ely.

2009 Meeting Dates:

First Friday of the month, starting at 10am – to finish with lunch by 1.00pm.

2 October – East Cambs DC

4 December – East Cambs

6 November – Sanctuary Hereward