

Minutes of the Cambridge sub-Regional Housing Board (CRHB) held on Friday 4 December 2009

1. Introduction and Apologies

Present

Liz Bisset (LB)	Cambridge City Council (Chair)
Alan Carter (AC)	Cambridge City Council
Jane Hollingworth (JH)	East Cambridgeshire District Council (minutes)
Steve Plant (SP)	Huntingdonshire District Council
Dan Horn (DH)	Fenland District Council
Steve Clark (SC)	Forest Heath District Council
Stephen Hills (SH)	South Cambs District Council (Vice Chair)
John Onslow (JO)	Cambridgeshire Horizons
Sue Beecroft (SB)	Cambridgeshire Horizons (minutes)
Trevor Baker (TB)	Cambridgeshire County Council
David Keeling (DK)	RSL representative
Nigel Howlett (NH)	RSL representative
Mike Hay	Cambridgeshire County Council (item 12)

Apologies

Carole Herries (CH)	St Edmundsbury Borough Council
John O'Mahony (JOM)	Homes & Communities Agency

Item

Action

2a **Draft Minutes of Meeting of Friday 6th November 2009**

The minutes were approved.

2b **Matters Arising**

- Re: item 10 – Jill Tuffnell had advised that a fee would be charged should she attend CRHB to give an overview of the local economic prospects for the near future as suggested. It was, therefore, decided not to invite her to speak on this occasion
- Update on Suffolk's boundary review: proposal for Greater Boundary Committee submitted their proposed Ipswich and "rest of Suffolk" option to Secretary of State. Court of Appeal have refused leave to appeal to LAs considering appealing to Supreme Court. This also allows a 6 week window to lobby the Secretary of State. "Our" two Suffolks are lobbying for an east/west split, the west part comprising mid Suffolk, Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury. Timing difficult in light of general election
- Stronger Communities theme for Cambridgeshire Together: SH will be on this group, and Maggie Sherlock will provide RSL representation.

3 **Gypsies and Travellers (G&T)**

The project to refresh the data on the accommodation assessments is on hold until the requirements of EERA are clarified. Making Cambridgeshire Count has raised the issue, as has the Safer, Stronger Board on the LAA. However the county-wide Gypsy And Traveller Strategic Co-Ordination Group is now meeting and has Terms of Reference, with a strong link through the chair, Mike Davey, who is also chair of the Safer, Stronger Board. This group will consider accommodation assessments as well as other issues, including the location and licensing of transit sites, which was raised as an issue by CRHB members.

Steve Plant is our link between CRHB and G&T issues and helpfully clarified

Item	Action
<p>many of these issues for the Board.</p> <p>For reference, there is also a Site Delivery Group which is chaired by David Bailey from Fenland and there is a Planning Group chaired by Stewart Patience of the County Council.</p>	
<p>Agreed it might be helpful to have a “wiring diagram” of these groups and identify their terms of reference, to see how they link.</p>	SP
<p>4 HIA review update</p> <p>SP outlined the current position on the HIA review. A review of HIA services was carried out in 2008. The review report included the recommendation that a number of tasks be completed before any final decision is made on progression towards competitive tendering. One action was to commission further research into the experience, costs, funding, risks and options for the various models for the delivery of HIA services. This research has been carried out by Foundations (the national body for Home Improvement Agencies). It looks at three possible options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Five HIAs – one for each district area (the current delivery model) 2. Two HIAs – one covering two districts and one covering three districts 3. One county-wide HIA <p>There would be clear cost savings from adopting Options 2 or 3. However, TUPE and pension deficit issues are presenting challenges to the move towards competitive tendering of the service. Further exploration of the pension issue will inform the decision on whether the cost of covering pension fund deficits would make procurement uneconomic in the present financial climate and therefore exempt.</p> <p>Advice from the County Council’s procurement officer is that unless one of the exceptions applies all new contracts issued by Supporting People will be subject to the EU Procurement Directive and therefore competitive tendering.</p> <p>Supporting People Commissioning Body will be asked to discuss the position at its next meeting on 2 February 2010 and a progress report will be made to a future meeting of CRHB</p>	
<p>5 Disability Housing Strategy</p> <p>JH presented an updated Disability Housing Strategy Action plan. The Cambridgeshire Disability Housing Strategy Action Plan 2008 – 2011 was completed by the County Disability Housing Group and presented to CRHB for approval in December 2008. The County Disability Housing Group meets quarterly to review actions and to ensure that progress is made against the action plan. The group consist of representatives of Cambridgeshire NHS, registered social landlords, housing strategy managers of the district councils, homelessness and allocations officers from the district councils and the Home-Link manager and officers from Supporting People and the county council’s social care, disabilities and community development teams. The group is led by Jean Clark, Service Development and Commissioning Manager, at the County Council.</p> <p>There has been considerable progress against the aims in the plan and much of this progress has been achieved through the development of the Home Link Choice-Based Lettings scheme. A further progress report will be made to</p>	SP
	JH

Item	Action
CRHB in 2010, but it was noted that by then a new strategy and action plan may be required.	
One adjustment suggested that action for SHMA needs to move to the “yet to be completed” section of the action plan.	SB/JH
6 Sub-regional Housing Strategy – action plan review	
SB presented the updated Sub Regional Housing Strategy action plan. This was welcomed by the meeting as a useful short summary of what the districts are doing, and how the activity of the districts contributes to the overall aims of the sub-region.	
Agreed to carry out a health check on the sub regional strategy at the February away-day, focusing on outcomes	All
Agreed to add a column to the action plan to add actual outputs and outcomes and provide some more challenge to the process.	SB
7 Housing Delivery Update for Cambridgeshire	
SB presented a report previously discussed at the Horizons Board, giving an account of housing delivery to end of September 2009 and setting off the process to review targets for 2010/11.	
Target is currently set at 3,800. Annual monitoring reports for each of the five districts add up to 3,200 for 2010/11.	
The Housing Board suggested targets should be kept challenging, in order to support bidding for funds and making the case for housing delivery across Cambridgeshire. Effect of missing the target not totally clear but suspect reward for hitting or missing it is likely to be minimal (DH).	
Felt to be the “wrong moment” to reduce targets, much development is actually affordable, so a reduction might send the wrong messages. A fragile, volatile market so endorse keeping as it is (DK).	
8 Work Plan – review the forward plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agreed January’s meeting is a full agenda (“focus on the environment”), so stick to only the necessary formalities (agreeing minutes etc) to try to keep the meeting to a reasonable length. ▪ Most other updates can be deferred to February meeting. ▪ Remove “quarterly update on growth” from January, as covered under item 7 at this (December) meeting ▪ Link DH’s item on solid wall insulation and MMC project to “The Hive” item (DH to discuss with David Arkell). Combine into this the “Smartlife project” update ▪ Regional retro-fitting item to be led by AC and JH. ▪ Peterborough Carbon Challenge item to be deleted 	
9 Consultation / Publications register presented.	
SB reminded all the districts that they should complete the EERA survey about the impact of the recession quarterly.	
Northstowe has been invited to bid to be an Eco-town development.	

It was noted that the Eastern region is not doing as well as other regions in securing Kick-start funding for stalled sites.

10 Updates

Cambridgeshire Horizons

Items on the next Horizons Board agenda will include:

- Targets update. This is being revised in the light of the economic downturn (as discussed under Item 7).
- Progress report on Northstowe Eco town.
- The Planning appeal on Clay Farm. The inspector's report is expected in March, but negotiations are continuing in the meantime. Trumpington Meadows development has got planning permission and the planning agreement is signed .
- Quality Charter next phase – there will be a drive to better embed the principles and raised aspirations for quality.
- Quality panel for Cambridge – a panel of experts to be set up.
- Cambridgeshire Together – announcement due about the Comprehensive Area Assessment very soon. Cambs has no “red flag” items but there were issues about Homelessness and migrant workers which we would wish to follow up.
- Update on the grant cut for the Cambridge sub-region and the Housing Growth Fund.
- Endorsement from the board for the Integrated Development Plan, which will be integrated with local infrastructure strategies.

Single conversation – progressing and will be integrated into Local Investment Plans.

11 Any Other Business

Homelessness JSNA

Plans for taking forward the recommendations are now being developed. It was noted that there is now a county-wide Homelessness JSNA group and a county-wide Homelessness strategy group. JH to investigate and report to CRHB whether there is a need for the 2 groups or whether they can be amalgamated. Could leave as it is for 6 months and then review?

JH

Districts to talk to their lead officers on homelessness to ensure they are clear and fully involved in the appropriate group(s).

County Council's scrutiny review of affordable housing

Terms of reference have been circulated.

Planning Policy has offered input as an integral part of the process in securing affordable housing. CRHB supports this suggestion.

SB

CRHB pleased that County is showing a growing interest in housing issues and welcomes the review. Opportunity to help County draw in to the Single Conversation, and to see how its land resources can contribute to delivery.

Actions

- Put suggestion of planning policy input to Rob Jakeman who leads the review.
- Question Luminus' input when DK has offered to provide RSL viewpoint, to ensure review is clear of geographical issues. Clarify that DK replaces

Item

Action

NH on the review.

- Put Rob Jakeman in contact with TB as county lead on the SHMA.
- For Developer input, suggest Development Industry Forum nominates a large and small developer to meet the Review's needs.

New Chair

AC thanked the retiring Chair, Liz Bisset, for her efforts and her very positive contribution to the work of the Board over the last few years.

12 Transformation of Social Care Strategy and Action Plan (including the Older People's Strategy Action Plan)

MH gave a presentation about the County Council's initiative "transforming social care" (presentation attached).

This will develop into a strategy for dealing with the changes expected called "Shaping our Future" which will:

- Set out the County's vision for 2020.
- Stress prevention and early intervention.
- Incorporate actions from the county's previous older people strategy
- Link to exec summary of "Shaping our future":
<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/C4EFEF66-76FD-4315-BB3D-4F0F50A11EE5/0/271109ExecutiveSummaryShapingourFutureAFrameWorkforActionDraftStrategysmaller.pdf>
- Link to provider briefing (Aug 09):
<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/28B9CC9D-667A-4651-9584-DFECE2A5E524/0/ProviderBriefingIssue5.pdf>

Other related documents are:

- Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People
- Scrutiny report and action plan for older people
- Older Peoples Strategy
http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/41BD43D5-3981-41F4-A14E-D33AB3829534/0/OPStrategy20082011_Finalonweb.pdf

The project will be driven and monitored by the Well Being Partnership of the LAA. This brings together a new senior officer group and the existing well-being officer group. They will receive a report in January 2010 on the action plan and this then proceeds to County Cabinet for approval. Then becomes a County Framework Strategy.

Mike has asked the officer group to start developing an action plan (for Shaping Our Future).

Councillors are keen that there are not a lot of separate officer groups. At present the Supporting People Commissioning Body falls under Rod Craig, who is considering if and how best to bring the structures together.

Some uncertainty about housing representation on the well-being partnership. CRHB asked to be kept in mind as a useful consultation forum for housing-related issues.

10 Future meetings

The next meeting will be held at 10am, on Friday 8 January at ECDC offices, Nutholt Lane, Ely.

Item

Action

Dates of Future Meetings:

Meetings will usually start at 10.00am and finish with lunch by 1.00pm.

2010 dates

5 February – meeting/strategic away
afternoon – Sanctuary Hereward

5 March – Sanctuary Hereward

9 April (2nd Friday) - ECDC

7 May – Sanctuary Hereward

4 June - ECDC

2 July – Boathouse Wisbech

6 August – Sanctuary Hereward

3 September - ECDC

1 October – Sanctuary Hereward

5 November - ECDC

3 December – Sanctuary Hereward