

Minutes of the Cambridge sub-Regional Housing Board (CRHB) held on 1 July 2011

1. Introduction and Apologies

Present

Alan Carter (AC)	Cambridge City Council (Chair)
Stephen Hills (SH)	South Cambridgeshire District Council (Vice Chair)
Jane Hollingworth (JH)	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Dan Horn (DH)	Fenland District Council
Trish Reed (TR)	Huntingdonshire District Council
Julia Vernon (JV)	St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Sue Beecroft (SB)	Cambridgeshire Horizons
Trevor Baker (TB)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Nigel Howlett (NH)	RSL representative
Philip Sullivan (PS)	RSL representative
David Keeling (DK)	RSL representative
Scott Bailey (ScottB)	Homes & Communities Agency
Kathy Brown (KJB)	Cambridge City Council (taking minutes)

Apologies

Paul Kitson (PK)	Homes & Communities Agency
Frank Mastrandrea (FM)	Huntingdonshire District Council
Steve Plant (SP)	Huntingdonshire District Council
Martin Palmer (MP)	Forest Heath District Council

Action

2. Spotlight on Homelessness

Paper circulated

- Update paper on changes to benefits regulations and government policy on homelessness. **ScottB**
- HomeLink have secured £40k funding to deal with the challenges ahead.
- Need to be clear where the gaps are where funds could help and bid accordingly for external funds.
- SB and TB offered to help pull work together for any joint bid.
- Consequences of these changes on economic sustainability - link to the LEP to make businesses aware.
- Facilitate a meeting with Alex Plant (in his role at the County and LEP). **AC/SB**
- Domestic Violence appears to be on the increase.
- Evictions from private sector landlords has increased.

3. Draft minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Draft Minutes circulated

- CBL Systems – SH to update CRHB after meeting.

4. HIA Shared Services

- The last year has been spent looking at options, and now have determined a structure, based around core staff team, with savings coming from reduced management and admin staff. The main location will be at SCDC, with hot desking at other authorities with the aim of flexible working; leading operandi at the City; IT review by Hunts. A cost sharing agreement will be drawn up by finance and legal and savings divided up accordingly. Awaiting SCDC Cabinet agreement. Staff to be TUPED across to the City by end of December, so from January 2012 the

location and single team to pursue redundancies and recruitment of single manager.

5. Home-Link Affordable Homes Publicity

Document circulated

- The first affordable rent product will soon be advertised. CRHB need to agree on how much information should be available and when to allow customers to make an informed choice, to bid at the right time.
- Some information needs to go out as soon as the first affordable rent properties are to be advertised.
- St Eds have concerns about giving too much information too soon which would raise a lot of questions and cause confusion from our customers.
- NH to take the draft document to a “customer committee” for their views; JV to also attend. **NH**
- Document may need to evolve as more information comes available.
- SH to feedback comments to Andy Graves and to take revised draft
- CRHB endorses something transparent and quickly to be available.

6. Tour of Oxlip House

Named after the County flower of Suffolk. The scheme was planned in an era of expected grant famine. It is a mix of tenure with 52 apartments, shared ownership and for rent. Another three developments are currently in train.

7. Housing & Health – feedback from brainstorm session with Cathy Mitchell

Papers circulated

- DH is the CRHB rep on the Urgent Care Network (UCN) and circulated a report following a brain-storming session. DH to continue to report back from these meetings.
- The UCN aims to reduce in appropriate admission to acute hospitals by 20% and ensure number of Delayed Transfer Of Care patients per acute is under 2.5% of available beds and that unproductive bed days for DTOC patients in acute NHS settings are reduced by 40%. There are 26 activities in 5 strategic areas for improvement (circulated).
- This links well with the Extra Care Strategy to help focus thinking.
- Extra Care and Housing Strategy Groups (Private Sector Housing), and also the HIA groups to look at some of the potential areas for development identified. **SH**
- Need to capture some of these actions in the sub-regional strategy. **SB**
- AC has been invited by Cathy Mitchell to be involved in a workstream around what happens to joint work between the County and the PCT when the PCT disbands.
- Cathy Mitchell is organising a Housing & Health event in September - CRHB will be invited.
- Andrew Lansley is holding an event with selected invitees.

8. Communications Plan

Document circulated

- SB pulled together a communications plan with the demise of Horizons in September in mind.
- SB/DK/SH to fine tune the wording for key messages.
- A strapline can follow at a later stage.
- Use the same logo as Home-Link with CRHB wording.

9. Sub-Regional Housing Statement

CHRB endorsed the Statement following a few minor amendments. **SB**

10. Sub-Regional Housing Strategy and SHMA

- Funding has been secured for SB's post until the end of March. AC/SB to bring back a paper to CHRB in August, for funding from April. **AC/SB**
- SB is setting up a budget report for the work, which will be brought to CRHB in August. **SB**

11. Work Plan

August

Funding paper for Sub-Regional Housing Strategy – AC/SB **AC/SB**
Grant Bids - Paul Kitson/Nick Enge, HCA. **HCA**

September

Location of meeting to be agreed – SB **SB**
Budget Report - SB **SB**

October

Spotlight - Under-occupation - TR **TR**
Update on Localism item

Future Item

County child poverty strategy – DH to bring to CRHB during the consultation phase. **DH**

Link back to the Sub-Regional Action Plan to pick up themes and invitees. **SB**

12. Consultation / Publications

This will be circulated via e-mail following the meeting.

11.1 Cambridgeshire Horizons

No update.

11.2 Homes and Communities Agency

- Affordable Rent Data and Grant Allocation – long stop date of 19 July for decision by HCA – ScottB wished to thank colleagues for their input. The bids are currently going through a consistency check for whole country.
- JH raised a concern over conversions of existing stock and the consequence of the diversion of resources.
- Officers are committed to working in partnership with the HCA but need a transparent process.
- ScottB confirmed there are other areas trying to negotiate a less than 80% affordable rent however this is Govt policy the HCA framework is simply to enable this.
- Reorganisation – consultation process was extended and should be out prior to the summer.

12 Any Other Business

- AC wished to congratulate SB for her presentation at the CIH Conference at Harrogate, along with Niki Hollingworth. CHRB got a very strong profile.
- PS has looked at complaints – there is a democratic filter for complaints to

be referred to the Ombudsman. In the Localism Bill it says “complaints must be referred by a designated person (member of House of Commons, councillor, designated tenant panel member)”. PS to circulate a paper.

13 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 9.30am on Friday 5 August at Sanctuary Hereward, Ely.

Future Meetings

First Friday of the month, starting at 9.30am – to finish with lunch by 12.30pm.

2011 dates

2 September – East Cambs DC

4 November – East Cambs DC

7 October – Sanctuary Hereward

2 December – Sanctuary Hereward