

Minutes of the Cambridge sub-Regional Housing Board (CRHB) held on 5 November 2010

1. Introduction and Apologies

Present

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|------------------------|--|
| 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 |
| Steve Clark (SC) | Forest Heath District Council (taking notes) |
| Steve Plant (SP) | Huntingdonshire District Council |
| Frank Mastrandrea (FM) | Huntingdonshire District Council |
| Niki Hollingworth (NH) | St Edmundsbury Borough Council |
| Sue Beecroft (SB) | Cambridgeshire Horizons |
| Paul Kitson (PK) | Homes & Communities Agency |
| Nigel Howlett (NH) | RSL representative |
| David Keeling (DK) | RSL representative |
| Sarah Lyons (SL) | Cambridge City Council |
| Kathy Brown (KJB) | Cambridge City Council (minutes) |

Apologies

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Carole Herries (CH) | St Edmundsbury Borough Council |
| Trevor Baker (TB) | Cambridgeshire County Council |

The agenda order was revised

Action

2. Comprehensive Spending Review

Papers circulated

- Announcements do not necessarily help clarification as housing markets vary significantly nationally. Papers circulated to the Board are a very good starting point for what it means for Cambridge. The board shared their thoughts/concerns.
- PK affirmed caution re the interpretation of the total number of new homes planned to be built with the new HCA funding as he wasn't sure how existing commitments are being assessed.

3. HRA Review

- Stephen Hills attended an event about the review of the HRA.
- The HRA reform will happen and an announcement is expected in January. The detail of this will be critical. The City and SCDC will be taking on several million pounds of debt.
- Good news – as a result of consultation the cost of disabled adaptations will form an element of the settlement; expect further consultations on detailed points.
- Bad news – RTB receipts will still go back to the Treasury (although it is uncertain if this is for the lifetime of the CSR; and if it is for all receipts) – need to wait for detail to come out.
- Public sector borrowing rate has increased by 1%.
- Opening debts could be higher but the current target rent regime will stay.
- Homeless grant has been retained with a possible slight increase – although it is expected there will be an increase in demand.
- Focusing on priority need - JH taking report to committee.
- New Homes Bonus – the Housing Planning Delivery Grant is being scrapped, and this funds a large number of officer posts. Cambridge City

Council is planning to underwrite half the cost of the posts for 2011/12 with the expectation the other half will come from the NHB.

4. LEP and Housing

Paper circulated

- How will the HCA work with LEP, how does it see its role? What do we want it to do? There is no funding for LEPs.
- Alex Plant was on the project board and is now leading on setting up LEP. The Project Board is made up of Leaders of councils, businesses and the University. It is Chaired by business.
- This list of what it might do is enormous but agreeing what it will do is more difficult. Does housing play a part? It is currently public sector led but it will be business led.
- There is a Member meeting in November.
- What does this group do in influencing the future of the LEP? AC and NH to pick up with John Williamson when they meet next week. AC and NH would take a more leadership role in developing the LEP.

AC/NH

5. Task Group

Paper circulated

- The Group's aim was to identify the analysis (by using the SHMA), and use it to inform the sub-regional strategy. This will more clearly define its link to the SHMA.
- An updated/new strategy stating the vision of the sub-region is required by the end of March. This is key, in that it is what hangs the sub-region together. A natural housing market centres on Cambridge, along with its neighbours – and this is why we come together.
- How we shape/influence the LEP should be part of this process.
- Next steps: process to refresh the sub-regional housing strategy; process of influencing LEP; communicating the LHA (first product); prioritisation of impact of reduced grant subsidy. Then look at the effects of these policies on homelessness eg those that can no longer afford their mortgages.
- Use community networks eg Fiery Spirits.
- Raising platform of RSLs.
- All to e-mail DK with case study examples which Colin Wiles could use to promote the added value of RPs.
- This group would stay together to coordinate, steer, targets, monitor, allocate work.
- SH talking about CBL, SPlant wants a risk analysis etc

All

6. Sub-groups/CSHG – Sarah Lyons

Diagrams circulated

- Links and overlaps were looked at and suggestions made for the future - 5 groups have reduced to 3.
- Need to ensure consistencies across the groups with agendas, and ensure proper memberships to feed in/feed back.
- Caution about revolving chairs – Chair must ensure strong links with other groups.
- Homelessness group also has links to health and JSNA; sub-regional homelessness strategy group will continue but its remit will change – JH is CRHB's link to the Chair – review the group in a months time.

7. CLIP

- PK thanked all for their contribution enabling the production of the CLIP.

The second draft will go to the Horizons Board on 7 December, with recommendations of how this LIP is taken forward/implemented/delivery options.

- Individual authorities will need to take it to their members for a view on how to take it forward.
- Currently in the consultation period - changes can be made up to 7 December.
- Covering report will be circulated to CRHB for comment at the next meeting, prior to the Horizons Board.

8. Progress on Gypsy and Travellers Housing Issues/Needs Assessment

Paper circulated

- Assessment includes Kings Lynn and West Norfolk and Peterborough for 2011-2016 and 2016 and beyond.
- The County's first draft of the Strategy is out (pre-public domain draft).

9. Work Plan

December

- Spotlight of G&T - defer to January as TB's deadlines are December.
- High Priority - Spotlight on Homelessness through the County – high priority – invite LA homelessness leads; with communication points – SB will pull this together
- Third Sector – defer to January.
- New Homes Bonus consultation result.
- Horizons CLIP cover report.
- Update from extra care group - JH
- Localism/communities bill - SH

**TB to
note
SB**

**JH
SH**

January

- Third Sector - to allow time to invite guests and space on agenda. SH to invite reps; other suggestions are C CVS, NH to also ask around.

**SH
All/NH**

February

- Theme on energy efficiency/feed in tariffs/retrofitting
- Sharing good practice
- Items prior to the review of the group.

10. Consultation / Publications

Links will be on the Horizons website.

11. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The minutes from CRHB in September were amended and agreed.

12.1 Cambridgeshire Horizons

Member Learning and Devt session - 6pm Wed 10 Nov at Orchard Park.

12.2 Homes and Communities Agency

Covered already in the course of the meeting.

12.3 Go-East

Tom Purser has left GO-East and there is currently no-one available to take his place on CRHB. The Core Brief is no longer produced. SB to ask if Dennis Roberts is able to provide any input.

SB

12.4 Single Conversation

Remove.

13 Any Other Business

- SP – a recent emergency planning exercise highlighted the value of sharing resources with other LAs, and to procure jointly for cost benefits. SP asked that each LA let him know what resilience is in place with the anticipation of joint working - what is stored locally, bought locally or via a consortium. **All**
- NH - a comment had been made at a previous CRHB about RSLs not responding properly re homelessness. This has still not been raised formally for discussion. JH to prepare a paper of issues to take to the RSL Housing Management Forum. **JH**
- Under-occupation - sub-regional work with RSLs taking place all LAs to be part of - work going on to create “successes”.
- NH will draft a paper on the impact of CSR on housing for Steve Vartoukian (County Council). Papers circulated today will also be useful along with anything else that members of the Board forward to NH for inclusion. **NH/All**

14 Future meetings

The next meeting will be held at 9.30am, on 3 December at Sanctuary Hereward, Ely.

9.30am on the following dates in 2011:

14 January – East Cambs DC (2nd Friday)
4 February – Sanctuary Hereward
4 March - East Cambs DC
1 April – Sanctuary Hereward
6 May – East Cambs DC
3 June – Sanctuary Hereward

1 July – East Cambs DC
5 August – Sanctuary Hereward
2 September – East Cambs DC
7 October – Sanctuary Hereward
4 November – East Cambs DC
2 December – Sanctuary Hereward