

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2009**

Councillors Councillors Bull (Chair), Adamou (Vice-Chair), Adje, Beacham, Mallett, Newton and Winskill

Apologies Councillor Aitken, Joseph Ejiofor

Also Present: Yvonne Denny (Church Representative), Helena Kania (Local Involvement Network (LINK)) and Sarah Marsh (Parent Governor Representative)Councillors Bevan and Whyte

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION
OSCO01.	<p>WEBCASTING</p> <p>The meeting was web-cast on the Council's website.</p>
OSCO02.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Aitken (substituted by Councillor Beacham) and Joseph Ejiofor (Parent Governor).</p> <p>An apology for lateness was received from Councillor Adje.</p>
OSCO03.	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>No other business was permitted to be considered under Standing Order 32.6.</p>
OSCO04.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>Councillor Bull (Chair) declared a personal interest as one of the Supported Housing Schemes detailed in the CAB92 Supported Housing Review was in the White Hart Lane Ward, which he represented.</p> <p>Councillor Adje declared a personal interest as one of the Supported Housing Schemes detailed in the CAB92 - Supported Housing Review was in the White Hart Lane Ward, which he represented and he was a member of the Age Concern Board for London.</p> <p>Councillor Gorrie declared a personal interest as one of the Supported Housing Schemes detailed in the CAB92 - Supported Housing Review was in the Hornsey Ward, which he represented.</p> <p>Yvonne Denny (Parent Governor) declared a personal interest as she was Vice Chair of theHaringey NDC (New Deals for the Community) Board.</p>

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2009**

	<p>Councillor Bevan declared a prejudicial interest as he was on the Cabinet which made the decision on CAB92 - Supported Housing Review.</p>	
OSCO05.	<p>CALL-IN OF DECISION OF THE CABINET OF 17 NOVEMBER 2009 REGARDING CAB92 SUPPORTED HOUSING REVIEW</p> <p>Councillor Gorrie outlined the reasons for the call-in of the Cabinet Decision on 17th November 2009, CAB92 – Supported Housing Review, including that residents’ views had not been included in the Cabinet Report; the notes from residents’ meetings showed that the majority of residents did not support the proposals, which Councillor Gorrie believed lacked clarity and strategic context and the decision should not have been taken before the Older Persons Housing Strategy had been approved. He asked the Committee to refer the decision back to Cabinet and ensure that the decent homes budgets for the 4 supported (also called “sheltered”) housing schemes were ring-fenced until decisions were made with residents.</p> <p>The Committee received a deputation from Paul Burnham on behalf of the Haringey Defend Council Housing group. His comments included: that the decision did not meet Council policy and was lacking in adequate consultation with residents. Mr Burnham stated that demand for supported housing in Haringey was higher than two years ago and concluded that the decision should be referred to Full Council for further consideration.</p> <p>The Committee received the report of the Monitoring Officer introduced by Terence Mitchison, Senior Project Lawyer, which confirmed that the decision on the Supported Housing Review taken by Cabinet did not contradict the Council’s current policy framework.</p> <p>The Committee was invited to ask questions on the Monitoring Officer’s report and in response the Senior Project Lawyer explained that it was not possible to challenge the decision on the basis of future policy. The Committee contended that the decision could impact future strategy.</p> <p>Councillor John Bevan, Cabinet Member for Housing and Nick Powell, Head of Housing Strategy, Development and Partnerships were invited to respond to any of the issues raised. In response to the call-in, Councillor Bevan stated that the same weighting had been applied to each scheme and alternative accommodation arrangements could not be offered before a decision to close any schemes had been taken.</p> <p>The Committee noted that there had been 4 rounds of meetings with residents and their families at each of the 4 schemes in question, and a presentation to the Older Peoples Forum, about the future of the sheltered housing schemes and relevant reports had been made available. Translators were also offered at schemes where there were known speakers of English as a second language. The Cabinet had</p>	

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2009**

also discussed the matter at great length. Councillor Bevan stated that he believed that the majority of residents had accepted that the proposals would protect the future of sheltered housing and bring the schemes up to the modern day standard and refuted claims that there had been a lack of input by tenants in the decision making process.

The Committee noted that there were currently 323 applications for housing schemes and 75 of these were old applications awaiting review. Most of the applications were for Good Neighbour Schemes; less than 160 were for Sheltered Housing Schemes. The Head of Housing Strategy, Development and Partnerships emphasised that there was less demand for sheltered housing, with 2 or 3 units becoming vacant each week, and explained that in future better use would be made of sheltered housing accommodation including improvements to under-occupancy numbers; of the 1000 places for sheltered housing in the Borough there were 100 – 150 vacancies each year.

The Head of Housing Strategy, Development and Partnerships explained that the new Older Persons Housing Strategy, aimed to be completed by December 2010, would provide a pathway for older people to receive supported housing but it would not be a detailed review of supported housing. The funds to carry out the recommendations agreed by Cabinet were linked to the Decent Homes programme which had to be met by 2010. If the funding was not spent on achieving the Decent Homes Programme by this time it would be returned to the Government.

The Committee expressed concerns that there were inaccuracies in the HQN housing options appraisal report of 2009 and were informed that the report had been commissioned to look at “extra care” and not sheltered housing specifically. The Cabinet decision included for the site for Protheroe House to be redeveloped as an extra care supported housing scheme to remain within the Council’s ownership further to formal consultation and financial appraisal on how the scheme would be built and funded. “Extra care” provision would mean more spacious flats and having support and care teams on site 7 days a week. All residents would be tenants and each would have their own front door (unlike residential care) with facilities and public spaces for communal use. During the sale of extra care units clear conditions would be attached to leases to ensure that buyers were entitled to extra care accommodation and would not sub-let the units.

Officers reiterated that a final decision had only been made by Cabinet regarding Campbell Court, the three other schemes (Larkspur Close, Protheroe House and Stokley Court) were subject to formal consultation and financial appraisals. The Committee was reminded that the research indicated that adaptations to current schemes would be more expensive than demolishing and rebuilding.

The Committee expressed concern that demand for sheltered housing

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2009**

would increase in the future after the number of units in Haringey had been reduced. In response officers explained that current and past numbers of service users were used to project future demand and they did not believe the Borough would be left with a short-fall of sheltered housing units. Officers emphasised that a large number of supported housing users could be adequately housed in alternative accommodation and that the purpose of the review was to improve assistance to independent living in the many ways available. Discussions would be held with residents and options will be available.

In response to concerns that moving older people could cause death officers stated that this could be averted if the move was dealt with properly. The Council would ensure that full support was available during transition to reduce the stress of moving and give people control.

In response to questions, the Committee was informed that the proposals were not financially motivated and that it was common practice to deal with all housing stock in its entirety which was why all 4 sheltered housing schemes had been considered within one report.

Councillor Gorrie summarised his presentation including: urging the Committee to recommend that the Council invest in a Decent Homes programme that was cheaper and did not reduce current facilities to general need; suggesting that there was a lack of figures demonstrating that current schemes were not value for money; emphasising the need to allow residents to choose whether to move out or not.

Councillor Bevan summarised, including that current sheltered housing properties were 30 years old and there was less demand as older people preferred to remain in their own homes, there was a need to bring housing properties up to modern standards. This work had been delayed since the Ridgeway Older Persons Housing and Support Needs Analysis Report in 2005 to allow further investigative work.

Clerks note: Councillor Bevan left the meeting room at this point.

Councillor Bull moved a Motion that the decision be regarded as being inside the Councils Policy and Budget Framework. The motion was CARRIED unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Cabinet decision was inside the Council's Policy and Budget Framework

Councillor Adje moved a Motion not to take any further action, on the understanding that officers had confirmed that Cabinet had agreed the recommendations in principle only and that there would be further

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2009**

	<p>formal consultation with the tenants at Protheroe House, and that there would be an Equalities Impact Assessment and a full financial appraisal before a further report was put to Cabinet for final decision. The same would apply to Larkspur Close and Stokley Court when it was timely to do so. Officers also confirmed that there would be full consultation with residents before formulation of the Older Persons Housing Strategy next year.</p> <p>The Motion was CARRIED following a vote by a majority. (Voting: 4 for, 2 against, 1 abstention).</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Not to take any further action in respect of Cabinet decision CAB 92, Support Housing Review.</p>	
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COUNCILLOR GIDEON BULL

Chair

The meeting ended at 21:15 hrs

SIGNED AT MEETING.....DAY

OF.....

CHAIR.....