

Bristol Homes Board

Minutes of the meeting 13 September 2018, 3.00 pm Venue – City Hall, Bristol

Board members:

Cllr Paul Smith, Cabinet Member for Homes and Communities (Chair)

Alistair Allender, Chief Executive Elim Housing and Chair Bristol Housing Partnership

James Durie, Chief Executive Bristol Chamber & West of England Initiative
(Regional Representative for Association of Residential Letting Agencies)

Nick Horne, Independent

David Ingerslev, Service Manager Compass Centre and Rough Sleeper Services, St Mungo's
(Chairperson, Bristol Supported Housing Forum)

Rob Kerse, Chief Finance Officer University of Bristol (Universities)

Ian Knight, Head of Accelerated Delivery South West Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

Jackson Moulding, Director Ecomotive (Bristol Community Led Housing Hub)

Tom Renhard, Director, ACORN

Steven Teagle, Divisional Managing Director Affordable Housing & Regeneration Galliford Try

Penny Walster, Shelter, Hub Manager (ACFA:Advice Network)

Bevis Watts, Managing Director Triodos Bank UK

Laura Welti, Forum Manager (Bristol Disability Equality Forum)

Other attendees:

Sarah Spicer, Strategic Planning (BCC)

Allison Taylor, Democratic Services (BCC)

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for absence

The Chair, Cllr Smith, welcomed those present. He noted the following apologies:-

- Steven Teagle – Kathryn Pennington as substitute;
- Laura Welti;
- Penny Walster;
- Rob Kerse;
- Bevis Watts.



2. Public Forum

None received.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were agreed as a correct record subject to the following changes:-

- Membership listing – Nick Horne – delete ‘Chief Executive Liverty’ replace with ‘Independent’;
- Membership listing – Tom Renhard – Add ‘Director’ before ‘Acorn’.

Matters Arising

1. The Chair informed the Board that at its meeting on 4 September, Cabinet had agreed to set up a Local Housing Company. The company would be registered once its name was determined. The decision included the transfer of land at Romney House, Lockleaze (planning permission already granted) and the Baltic Wharf Caravan Club site (planning permission yet to be given) to the Company. There were also 26 sites that were being put forward as potential sites for self-build through Bristol & Bath Regional Capital and the Community Housing Hub.

4. Housing Festival - Jez Sweetland

The Chair welcomed and introduced Jez Sweetland. Jez Sweetland then introduced his colleague Jessie Weldon and two guests – Francesca Medda and Huw Thomas from University College London.

The following points arose after the presentation:-

- Homes England had committed money to the Festival and it was hoped that this could bring brockeridge from other government departments;
- Ian Knight applauded the vision of the festival noting that Local Authorities were under such financial pressure that they could not meet all needs of communities. He hoped this would be a transformational launch pad and be at the forefront of a different approach to housing;
- Alistair Allender supported the vision but believed there was a need for strong leadership to keep it on track. In response, Jez Sweetland stated that the festival was the enabler with the Homes Board having an oversight of outcomes, politics and finances along with the City Office. Support was now needed for sponsorships and engagement regarding how the 19-day site could be run;
- James Durie supported the vision stating that it added to what work was currently underway. He questioned how it could be maintained over a 5-year period. He noted that Education and Transport were connected to Housing and should therefore be part of the vision. He hoped to be able to bring private house builders to the table;
- Jackson Moulding stated that the Board were considering all factors of delivery. It was not easy to deliver housing and engaging communities. He hoped the Festival would showcase innovation in order to engage



the public. In response, the Board heard that it was hoped to tell those innovative stories over the 5-year period. This period was chosen in order to measure outcomes;

- The Chair was in full support of the vision and project, noting that he regularly attended Housing Conferences but a longer term project could make a far bigger impact. He hoped that the whole city and not just the centre would be showcased with various projects the Council was undertaking as well as what the Festival had to showcase;
- David Ingerslev welcomed the festival and noted that there were innovative projects in Bristol that were not found elsewhere. He supported the notion of communities having structures which enabled them to self-manage;
- Tom Renhard particularly supported bringing all housing activities together. He highlighted the challenge of pitching community engagement so that it was not simply a corporate matter. He offered engagement with respect to mental health housing;
- Nick Horne applauded the inspirational content of the presentation. He acknowledged the innovative community work happening outside of Bristol. He supported the concept of a mobile festival and hoped with the correct content Bristol would get behind it. He hoped that that the focus on people and communities would not be lost. In response Jez Sweetland hoped to find inspirational examples around the globe and that Bristol and the Board would help in its success by working in partnership. He hoped for a solution orientated culture with a will to succeed;
- The Chair thanked Jez Sweetland for the presentation and stated that the Board would act as a reference group for the Festival and urged the groups represented on the Board to engage with the Festival.

5. Social Housing Green Paper

The full document and one-page summary had been circulated to Board members for initial comment. The Chair felt it would be too complex to respond as a Board and therefore encouraged all groups to respond individually. His initial thought was that a Green Paper on this subject had to be a good thing and that funding for social housing would continue. The following points arose from discussion:-

- Consultation ended on 6 November;
- Alistair Allender expressed some cynicism that the paper was politically driven and what it might deliver. He also questioned the content of some of the 5 key elements. He noted that the thriving communities content was new for this government and reflected the way the sector was seen;
- Nick Horne was underwhelmed with the Paper. There was little concerning how supply could be increased and a lack of linkage with welfare reform post-Grenfall. The more positive message regarding social housing and employment of residents was helpful;
- Ian Knight noted the value of shared ownership and asked whether the Planning Authority controlled this through S106 Agreements and was informed this was the case and that the level of share was limited to 1% and 40% for purchase of share. Shared ownership was once targeted at council house waiting lists but this was no longer the case as a relatively good income was now required. Shared-ownership made no contribution to homelessness and that's why more social housing was needed;
- Kathryn Pennington stated that the shared-ownership was a positive thing but was concerned about the model as a home owner was responsible for all repairs but only own 1% of the house which was inequitable;
- Alistair Allender concurred but noted it was commercially positive as it was possible to get renters to take it up who would be paying more and thus free up properties;



- Tom Renhard felt the paper could have included more on performance in relation to complaints to the Housing Ombudsman and with respect to measures/regulations to stop those complaints.

6. Standing Item - Housing Delivery Update

- The Chair reported that the Council was to bid for additional housing capacity within revenue accounts for 378 homes and £40m additional borrowing. The bid would be for 10 individual schemes on condition that they started within 3 years.
- Affordable housing development: There had been some slippage in anticipated development figures, and further slippage could not be ruled out. He hoped Housing Associations would be encouraged to contact BCC as there was still grant available to bid for that could be used to buy up whole schemes to increase affordable housing numbers. The Council was on target to provide 800 new affordable homes by 2020. He noted the current increase in activity, particularly reporting that Romney House and Hartcliffe Campus now had outline planning permission. Work was taking place on bringing more sites forward on the border with neighbouring authorities in relation to the agreed Joint Spatial Plan;
- The Chair also reported that 4 June 2019 would be the centenary of the tree planting of Bristol's first post-war housing development as implemented by Dr Christopher Addison. There would be a ceremony and the Government Minister would be invited.

7. Any Other Business

- Suggested item for the November Homes Board was an updated on the Mental Health and Housing report;
- The land hub would be amalgamated into Bristol Community Land Trust after Christmas;
- Galliford Try offered to bring an item to a future meeting on the work they are undertaking to develop a skills academy for construction, Cllr Smith suggested this be a wider report that also looked at the new skills centre opening in Hengrove in 2019;
- There had been strong cross-party support for the Local Housing Company. There had been three Scrutiny meetings which had been positive;
- There had been no time to consider the One City Plan. An electronic update would therefore be circulated.

Meeting finished at 5.00 pm

CHAIR _____

