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Bristol Homes Board Meeting Agenda

**Thursday, 20 June 2019, 3.00 pm
City Hall - City Hall, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR**

Board Members:

Cllr Paul Smith, Cabinet Member for Homes & Communities (Chair)
Alistair Allender, Bristol Housing Partnership
Peter Daw, Housing Management Board
James Durie, Bristol Chamber & West of England Initiative
Nick Horne, Independent
David Ingerslev, St Mungo's
Robert Kerse, University of Bristol - Chief Financial Officer
Ian Knight, Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)
Jackson Moulding, Bristol Community Led Housing Hub
Tom Renhard, ACORN
Steven Teagle, Galliford Try
Penny Walster, ACFA: Advice Network
Laura Welti, Bristol Disability Equality Forum

Distribution Bristol City Council Officers:

Julian Higson
Sarah Spicer
Deeanne Klein

cc Cathy Provenzano, Garrick Property Services

Indicative Timings	No	Item	Lead	Purpose
3.00 pm	1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for absence		
	2.	Public Forum		
	3.	Minutes of the last meeting (Pages 3 - 9)		
3.10 pm	4.	One City Thematic Board update		Deanne Klein
3.20 pm	5.	Discretionary Licensing		Tom Gilchrist

Bristol Homes Board

**Minutes of the meeting
21 March 2019, 3.00 pm
Venue – City Hall, Bristol**

Board members:

Councillor Paul Smith, Cabinet Member for Homes & Communities (Chair)
Alistair Allender, Bristol Housing Partnership
James Durie, Bristol Chamber & West of England Initiative
David Ingerslev, St Mungo's
Lucy Heath (for Ian Knight), Homes and Communities Agency
Jackson Moulding, Bristol Community Led Housing Hub
Tom Renhard, ACORN
Stephen Teagle, Galliford Try
Penny Walster, ACFA: Advice Network
Laura Welti, Bristol Disability Equality Forum
Peter Daw, Tenant Representative, Housing Management Board

Other attendees:

Charlotte Olver, Galliford Try (for item 4)
Miriam Venner, City of Bristol College (for item 4)
Sarah O'Driscoll, BCC Strategic City Planning Manager, Growth and Regeneration (for item 5)
Corrina Haskins, BCC Democratic Services
Sarah Spicer, BCC Business Planning and Service Development Manager

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for absence

The Board welcomed Peter Daw, who had been elected to sit on the Board as a Tenant Representative of the Housing Management Board.

Apologies were received from Nick Horne, Robert Kerse and Ian Knight.

The Board were informed that Nick Horne would soon be leaving the area to take up a new job as Chief Executive of a Housing Trust in Manchester.

2. Public Forum

There was no public forum.



3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the 31 January 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising:

1. Homes for Heroes 100 Year Celebration/Launch of Bristol Housing Partnership Charter

AA reported that following the Bristol Housing Partnership would be combining the event of 4 June with the launch of the BJP Charter and circulated copies of the Charter to Board Members.

LW reported that, as part of the centenary celebrations, the Hillfields project would be launching an event on 6 April which would include teaching 8 year olds how to do an access audit and design their own homes.

2. Housing Trajectory

PS confirmed that there was no Housing Trajectory report on the agenda for this meeting, but there would be an update at the next meeting. He reported the following changes:

- The planning application for the Hengrove Park development had been refused by the Development Control Committee, and the Council was in the process of drawing up amended plans;
- In terms of smaller development sites, there had been an increase in developers selling houses for affordable housing and in some cases, this had amounted to 100% of houses. In response to a concern that this may result in affordable housing being concentrated in certain areas, he confirmed these were small sites of 15-30 houses with a tendency for no existing affordable housing provision.

4. Skills Academies 3.20pm

The Board received a joint presentation from Charlotte Olver (Galliford Try) and Miriam Venner (City of Bristol College) about work to develop construction skills academies with a view to meeting the demand for skills shortages in the industry and providing career opportunities for local communities.

MV reported that:

- The City of Bristol College had invested in a £9m development project at Hengrove, predominately funding through the Local Enterprise Partnership, with a view to training skilled workers in the construction industry;
- The planning process was underway and the project was due to open in September 2021;
- The project responded to a local skills shortage and a projected demand for 80,000 skilled jobs in the future;



- The project would start with 850 students and would grow year on year;
- The new curriculum offer would include higher apprenticeships; provide more traditional training routes and form part of a coherent regional plan for skills delivery;
- The project looked to involve local young people and address the current situation where South Bristol had a large number of NEETS (young people not in Employment, Education or Training);
- The facility would allow students to work in an outside area to give them a real experience of a construction site;
- In delivering the project, the City of Bristol College was working with key employers such as Galliford Try.

CO reports as follows:

- Galliford Try launched its first skills academy in 2017 and now had 8; the most recent being in Blackberry Hill, Fishponds;
- The academy initiative was to create an on-site experience for students to try and engage them with construction;
- The initiative was targeted at the long term unemployed and hard to reach people to give them a taste of the construction industry;
- The initiative had a dual purpose of addressing the construction skills and housing shortages and providing training opportunities for people looking for work. The on-site training academies allowed students to be trained in the Green CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) Card which was necessary for anyone wishing to work on a construction site;
- The academy in Bristol was working closely with the City of Bristol College and supporting students in advance of the new facilities opening;
- The on-site training was particularly important to give people a real experience of the work, as a lot of construction workers leave the industry within 2 years;
- Since starting the initiative, Galliford Try had engaged with over 2,000 people and many lives had changed as a result.

The following comments were raised:

- There was a shortage of people being trained in the Chartered Institute of Housing qualification and this could be something that the City of Bristol College could consider in the future;
- These initiatives could feed in with community led housing projects such as the Fishponds project.

In response to questions from Board Members, MV/CO confirmed that:

- It was recognised that there were a number of potential workers, many of them skilled, in the homeless community who didn't have English as a first language and City of Bristol College was running a course in bricklaying combined with English as a foreign language and hoped to develop this type of provision;
- Under-18s often found it difficult to access construction sites and these barriers were being addressed at national level by the Construction Industry Training Board;
- The City of Bristol was collaborating with other colleges in South Gloucestershire and Weston to provide provision across the area;



- As well as traditional skills, student would learn skills associated with the changing industry such as modular/sustainable buildings;
- It was recognised that mental health was a big issue in the construction industry, and Galliford Try had engaged ambassadors and mental health nurses to support students;
- It was recognised that there were challenges with marketing and demand, and especially encouraging women and communities that would not usually consider construction as a career path;
- It was hoped that the introduction of T Levels would encourage students seeking an academic route into the industry.

MV welcomed Board Members to contact her outside the meeting with any further feedback.

The Board thanked MV and CO for the presentations and welcomed the close partnership between the college and the industry.

5. Local Plan Update 3.50pm

PS reported that the Mayor had launched the consultation on the Local Plan Update on Monday 18th March.

SO gave a presentation on the Local Plan update as follows:

- This was a refresh of the Bristol Local Plan and the proposals were out for consultation until 24 May 2019;
- The review programme linked with the Joint Spatial Plan timescales and it was anticipated that the JSP would be adopted at the end of 2019 and the updated Local Plan approved at the end of 2020;
- The consultation had been promoted online and through social media, press releases and hard copies would be available in libraries from 1 April;
- Officers would attend meetings of stakeholder organisations on request;
- There were 4 elements to the consultation:
 - Development of strategy and areas of growth and regeneration;
 - Draft development management policies;
 - Proposals for open space protection;
 - Draft development site allocations;
- In relation to housing, the plan aimed to:
 - Meet and exceed Joint Spatial Plan target (33,500 homes)
 - Encourage community led-housing and self-build;
 - Manage student accommodation;
 - Ensure that homes were accessible.
- The following areas had been identified for growth and regeneration:
 - Central: Western harbour/Frome Gateway/ Bristol Temple Quarter and St Philips Marsh;
 - East Bristol/Central Fishponds and Lawrence Hill;



- South: Bath Road Brislington (former green belt) Hengrove Park
- Green belt changes were proposed for areas at Ashton Vale, Yew Tree Farm and on the boundary with North Somerset.

The following comments were raised

- Accessible homes needed to meet the latest standards;
- Local Plan should look at interim uses which could meet the needs of homeless people.

In response to questions, SO confirmed:

- She was willing to engage separately with local groups (by direct contact or via the Local Plan website), but asked all groups to engage with the consultation process;
- The Plan would last until 2036 with a rolling review every 5 years;
- There were a number of policies that wouldn't change from the current Local Plan and in future versions the retained policies would also be included ;
- There was an aspiration within the plan to fit in the with Council's Policy on Climate Change and there were opportunities to achieve these aims;
- That 3 major development sites identified were in flood plains and the Council would need to justify and mitigate for development in these areas. She firmed that the Council was engaged in a process with the Environment Agency;
- She would clarify if the policy included the Environmental Access Standard;
- The new Plan did not carry any significant weight at the moment in terms of planning decisions;
- The Plan was due to be endorsed at full Council in November.

6. Shelter - A Vision for Social Housing 4.20pm

Penny Walster gave a presentation on the Shelter Vision for Social Housing as follows:

- Shelter established a Commission after the Grenfell Tower disaster of 2017 where the local community felt that their concerns had not been heard and that social housing tenants did not have a voice;
- The Commission was set up with 16 diverse Commissioners including politicians from across the political parties, representatives of the local community in the Grenfell area and social housing experts;
- The recurring themes following a 12 month process of community engagement were:
 - Social housing was not affordable enough;
 - People feel powerless;
 - Concerns about who can and can't access social housing;
 - Not enough social housing;
 - The future of social housing.
- The Commission came up with "big asks"
 - 3.1m more social homes over the next 20 years;



- The need for a reform in the renting system to introduce a new regulator, improve standards and give social renters a stronger voice;
- The Commission’s report was launched in January and been publicised by the panel;
- The “ask” of the Bristol Homes Board was how they wanted to be involved in taking the recommendations forward.

In terms of Bristol City Council support for the vision, PS confirmed that:

- The Council had worked to provide Shelter with the accurate data for the Bristol area;
- The removal of the borrowing cap on the Housing Revenue Account was beneficial to local authorities and would allow council housing to play a big role in delivering additional social housing.

The following comments were raised by Board Members:

- applaud the document and the vision of Shelter;
- there would need to be a range of different solutions to achieve the 3.1 million target;
- the Board could address some of the policy issues through the trajectory review;
- a change to the rules to tighten Section 106 Agreements would help achieve the target;
- Shelter would need to meet at a national level with housing industry representatives, such as Galliford Try, to gauge the view of the industry on land price/supply and looking at reforming the land compensation act;
- Concern that an additional 3.1m social homes over 20 years may not be enough to address the problem.

In response to concerns that a 20 year strategy would not address the interim challenge of people living on the streets, PS confirmed that the Council would soon be consulting on a Rough Sleeping/Homeless Strategy and this would come back to the board.

In response to requests from the Board, PW confirmed that she would be willing to come and talk to local groups about the Shelter vision and also recommended that people engage with the Government Spending Review.

7. Any Other Business

The following items were suggested for future meetings:

- Social Housing – Who is it for?;
- Discretionary Licensing;
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy;
- Tenants’ Federation.



Meeting finished at 5.13 pm

CHAIR _____





Discretionary Licensing - Presentation to Bristol Homes Board

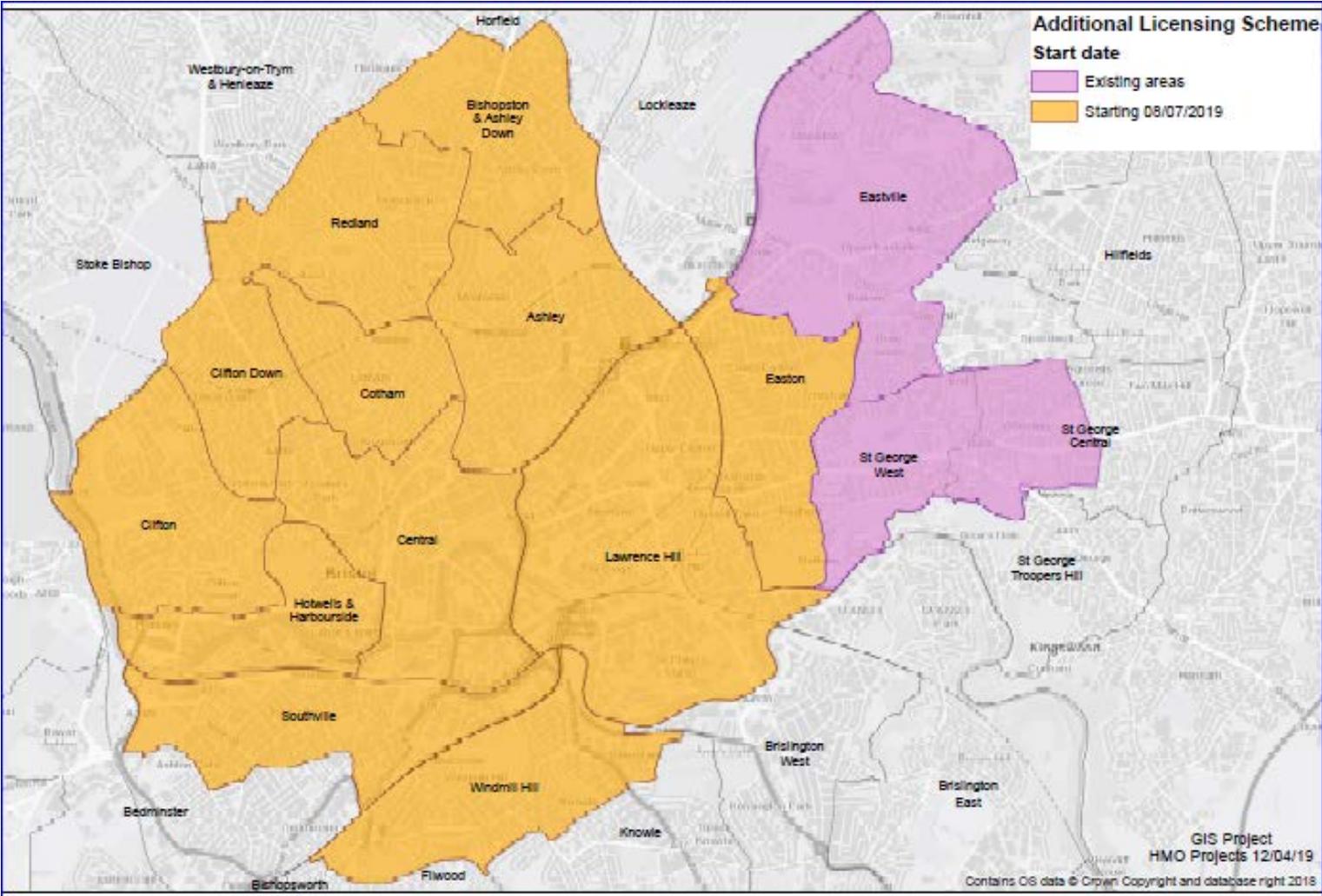
Discretionary Licensing Schemes

- Bristol's discretionary licence schemes
 - Stapleton Road (April 2013 - April 2018)
 - Eastville / St George (2016 - June 2021)
 - Central Additional Licensing scheme comes into force on 8th July 2019
- Also mandatory Licensing of large HMOs with 5 or more unrelated occupants (2006 – ongoing)

Bristol Profile – Building Research Establishment Report 2017

- There are 200,945 dwellings in Bristol
- Private Sector housing accounts for 81.5% of the stock
- PRS accounts for 28.9% of all housing in the city and still growing
- This is 9% above the national average
- 22% of PRS are Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) (12, 559)
- 62% HMOs are in the central wards of Bristol
- 20% of these come under mandatory HMO licensing
- 56% potentially meet ‘Additional’ HMO licensing criteria
- HMOs in the private rented sector in Bristol are generally in poorer condition than non-HMOs
- 22% of PRS HMOs have category 1 hazards and 9% are in a state of disrepair (compared to 13% and 6% in non-HMOs in the PRS)
- 15% of low income households live in an HMO in the PRS

Discretionary Licensing Areas in Bristol



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Central Additional Licensing Scheme Consultation

- Initial 12 week consultation took (19th Feb-13th May 2018)
- **69%** of 2746 responses agreed or strongly agreed that AL would help resolve the issues of poor management and poor condition conditions in HMOs,
A 2nd consultation (8th Nov to 20th Dec 2018) sought views on a revised fee structure.
- **47%** of 257 responses strongly agreed or agreed that the revised fee structure was fair.
- Those consulted included: Landlords & Agents, Private Tenants in the area, other residents, landlord & tenant organisations, student union, councillors/ MPs

Exemptions

- Student accommodation managed by ANUK under National Code of practice are exempt
- HMOs owned and managed by Bristol University or University of the West of England are legally exempt

Fee Structure

- Fee structure had to be reviewed following High Court case [Gaskin v Richmond upon Thames \[2018\]](#)
- Licence fee income ring-fenced for the processing licences, administration and enforcement
- Fees payable in two parts – Part 1 fee for application processing and Part 2 for enforcement and administration. (see Table 1)
- Additional fee of £100 for applicants who are found to be unlicensed.
- Discounts for valid safety certificates (£150) and West of England Rent with Confidence members (£50)
- Loans may be available to landlords to help fund works needed to bring properties up to licensing standards

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Total Fee breakdown

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Application Status	Discount Amount	Fee (New Application)	Fee (Renewal Application)
Licence application and fee* received with no safety or EPC certificates and no Rent with Confidence membership	£0	£1,255	£1,055
Minus discount for Rent with Confidence membership only but no safety/EPC certificates	£50	£1,205	£1,005
Minus discount for satisfactory safety/EPC certificates but no Rent with Confidence membership	£150	£1,105	£905
Minus discount for both Rent with Confidence membership and satisfactory safety/EPC certificates	£200	£1,005	£855
Plus Investigation cost for finding unlicensed property	£100	£1,355	£1,155

Licensing Standards

- Amenity standards include

 - Room sizes

 - Occupation

 - Heating/ventilation

- Fire standards

 - Fire alarms

 - doors and partitions

 - Means of Escape

Property Licence Conditions

These include:

- There are in total 38 HMO licence conditions to meet and a further 8 Code of Good Management practice standards
- Meet HMO licensing standards and undertake all work contained in the license conditions: fire precautions, space heating, bathroom and kitchen facilities etc.
- Property to be maintained in good repair and facilities and equipment must be kept in a safe condition and good working order;
Have valid fire alarm, emergency lighting and gas and electrical safety test certificates and an EPC
- Tenants provided with a written tenancy agreement
- Have a working smoke alarm installed on each floor and where there is a solid fuel burning combustion appliance, a carbon monoxide alarm

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Stapleton Road Scheme Outcomes

Detail	Number
Number of properties licensed	1207
Number of licence inspections undertaken	2485
Number of licensable properties where at least one serious hazard identified	396
Number of licensable HMOs where management breaches identified	137
Number of referrals made to other agencies/ Departments	204
Number of Service Requests received in the license area	1549
Number of notices served both formal and informal	665
Number of Civil Penalty Notices issued for not licensing a licensable property	2

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Eastville / St George outcomes (so far)

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Detail	Number
Number of properties licensed	3122
Number of licence inspections undertaken	3079
Number of licensable properties where at least one serious hazard identified	440
Number of licensable HMOs where management breaches identified	181
Number of referrals made to other agencies/ Departments	301
Number of Service Requests received in the license area	3080
Number of notices served both formal and informal	747
Number of Civil Penalty Notices issued for not licensing a licensable property	9

Central Bristol HMO scheme – Operational Plan

The delivery plan is programmed in two phases

Processing and issuing:

- processing of the licence applications and issuing of the licence within 2 years of satisfactory application.
- inspection of all known licensable properties within the 5 years

Page 22 The inspection programme priorities:

- Landlords with previous enforcement action against them
- Where tenants are known to be or we are made aware of vulnerability
- Landlords known to us with a history of poor management
- Work with high portfolio landlords and agents in coordinating inspections
- Minimises car use, car sharing and promote public transport, cycling etc. (where practicably possible)
- The programme will be regularly reviewed to ensure we keep on track

Recruitment is underway for additional staff resources

Conclusion

- It is a legal requirement to licence HMO
- Restrictions on landlords serving section 21 notice to quit
- All properties will be inspected
- Licence conditions and standards must be complied with
- Living conditions are improved above the legal minimum
- Fear of eviction for tenants who complain reduced
- Failure to licence a property or comply with conditions can result in enforcement action (prosecution/CPN)
- The scheme is self funding from licence fee income

Questions?

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Bristol Homes Board

June 20th 2019

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping

Strategy 2019-24

Graham Jones & Dave Clarke – Housing Options

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Agenda Item 6



Five Priorities identified in Strategy

- **Tackling rough sleeping**
- **Prevention and Early Intervention**
- **Improving Health and Wellbeing and Supporting People to Build Better Lives**
- **Delivering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in all Services**
- **Working in Partnership**

Stakeholder Consultation

Between February 2018 and April 2019 we met with a range of organisations who deliver homelessness related services, including:

- National Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel,
- National Housing Federation,
- NHS Commissioning,
- Next Link,
- Golden Key,
- Crisis,
- Bristol Refugee Rights,
- Bristol Refugee Forum,
- the Care Forum,
- One25,
- Wildgoose Crisis Centre Ministries,
- Streetwise.

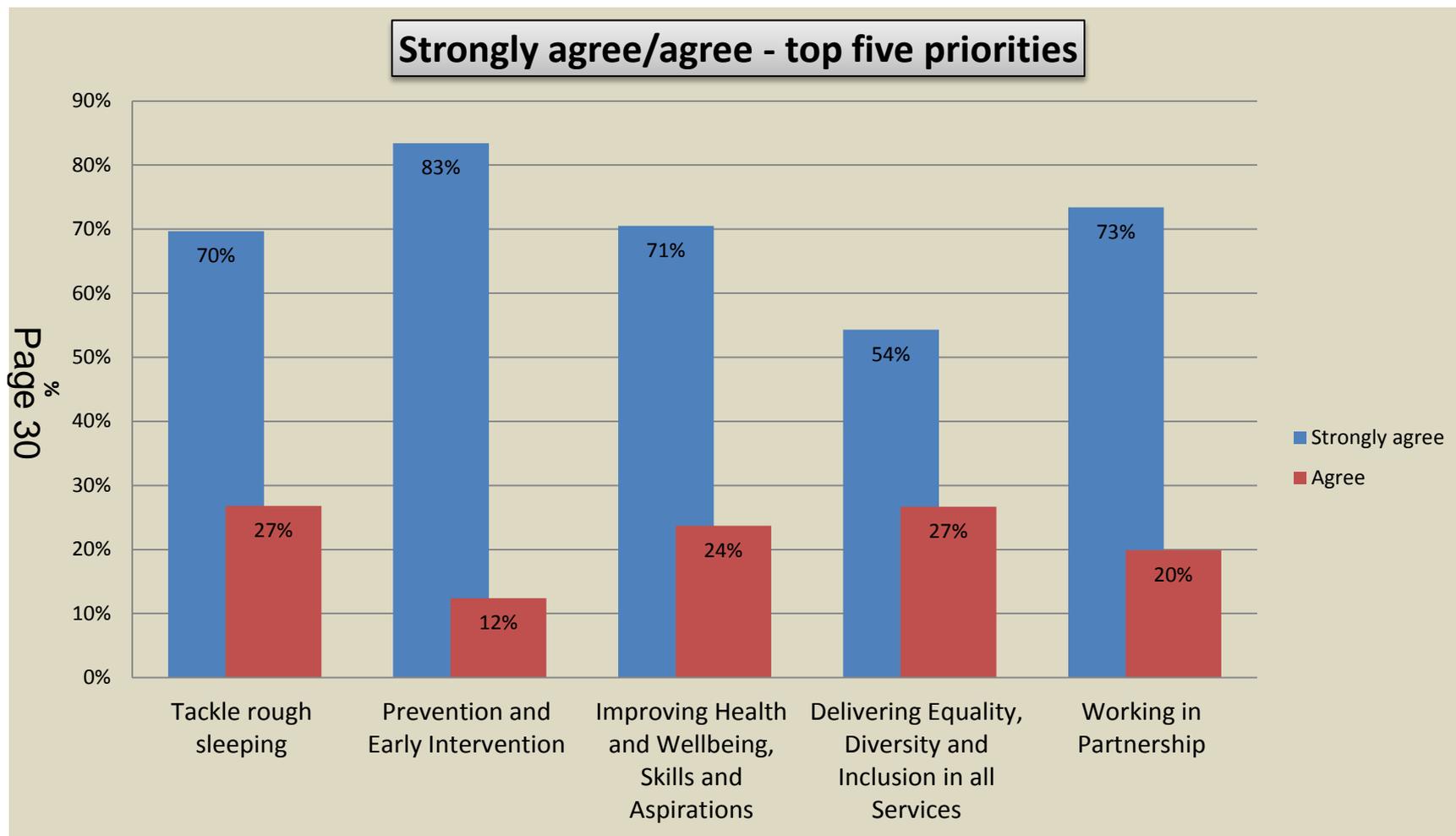
Stakeholder Consultation – Key Issues

- Need to consider wider societal factors that can lead to homelessness
- Need to take account of the many non-commissioned services working in the city
- Importance of hidden homelessness (sofa surfing, people with no recourse to public funds, exploitation)
- Need to consider impact of issues such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's)
- Issues raised fed into draft strategy, priorities and actions

Public Consultation

- Consultation on the draft strategy began on 8th April 2019 and finished on 27th May 2019
- In addition to publicity through the press and media, 3000 service users were contacted, as were a range of stakeholders who deliver homelessness and rough sleeping services in the city
- As of 28th May 2019 we have had 330 fully completed responses to the consultation and another 365 partial responses.

Public Consultation – The Five Priorities



Additional Comments on Priorities

- A number of respondents highlighted the need for a 'housing first' approach
- Need for more affordable/social housing in city
- A number wanted to see more done with the Private Sector – tackling 'unreasonable rents'
- A number called for the conversion of empty business buildings into affordable accommodation

Public Consultation – Key Actions

- Most popular actions to take forward:
- Provide more move on accommodation for people sleeping rough (182 responses)
- Reduce the numbers in Temporary Accommodation through prevention work and range of more affordable options (166 responses)
- Increasing the supply of affordable homes, and ensuring that the right homes are delivered to meet housing needs (164 responses)
- Build on existing links with health services (145 responses)
- Review and where needed change the range of supported accommodation options available (100 responses)

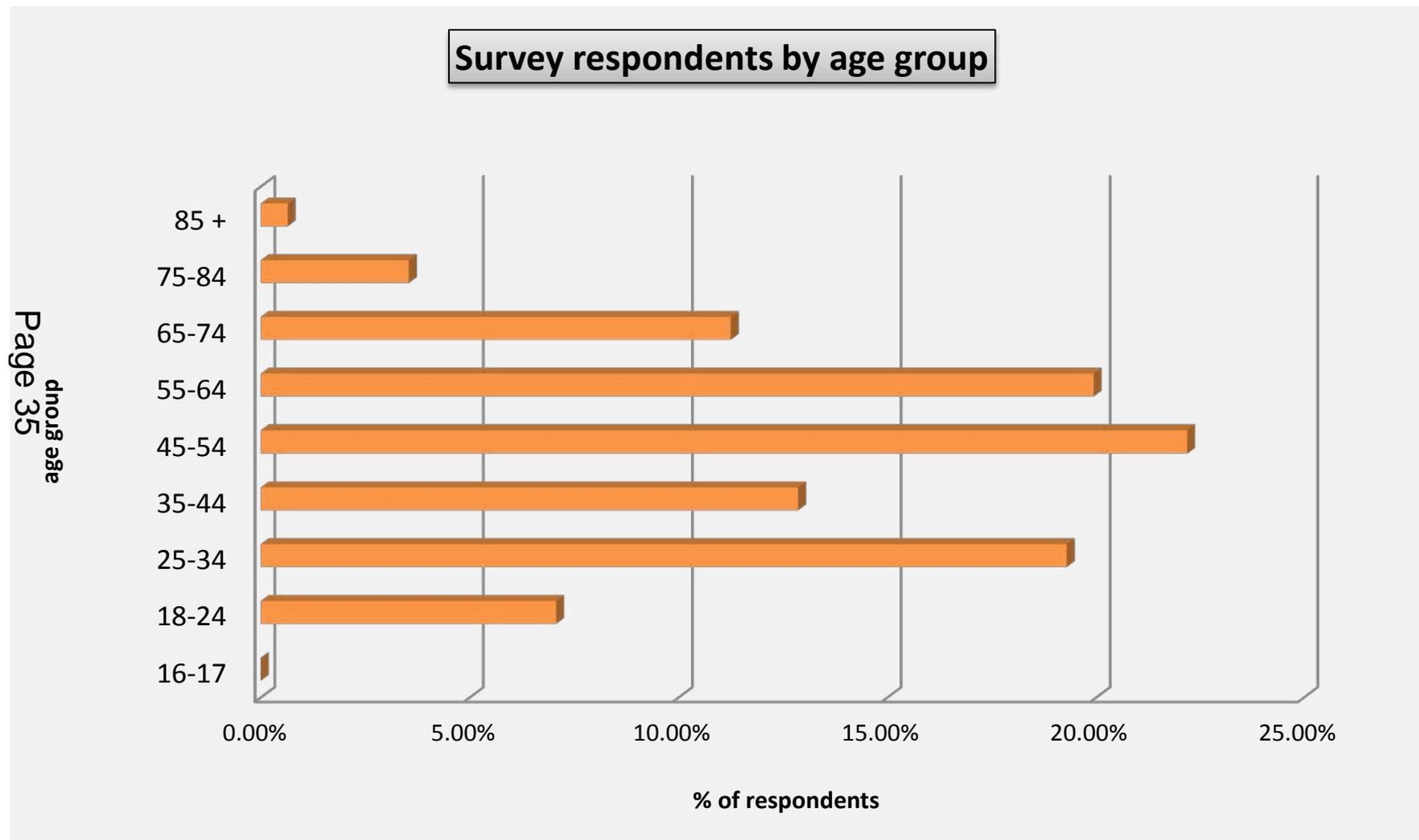
Additional Comments on Actions

- Build more council houses, stop 'right to buy', and prevent developers from excluding affordable housing
- A Housing First approach – but also emphasis on the need for complementary support services to tackle mental health and drug and alcohol issues
- More partnership working
- Bring more empty properties back into use

Public Consultation – Who responded?

- More women than men responded (62.9% compared to 30.6%)
- Some 61.7% identified as owner occupiers, a further 18.3% as private renters. Just over 5% identified as Council Tenants
- Around 4% of respondents identified either as no fixed abode/rough sleepers or were currently in temporary accommodation.

Public Consultation – Age Range



Progress – decision pathway

- 20th June – **Bristol Homes Board**
- 20th June – **Update to Director (Homes & Landlord Services)**
- 28th June - 3rd July – **Presentation to Growth & Regeneration EDM**
- W/C 16th July - **Cabinet member briefing**
- Tuesday 30th July - **Cabinet Board**
- 5th August – **Deadline for Forward Plan submissions**
- 8th August - **Deadline for executive summary review period**
- 12th – 16th August – **Draft Report review period**
- 21st August - **final report deadline to Democratic Services**
- 26th August – **Statutory publication by Democratic Services**
- 3rd September – **Approval by Cabinet**

Questions

Graham Jones

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Dave Clarke

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Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Housing, Church and Community

What is the Commission for?

In March 2018, the Archbishop of Canterbury published Reimagining Britain: Foundations for Hope. Building on a key chapter, 'Housing – the Architecture of Community', the Commission will seek to bring a distinctively Christian contribution to the debate, on how to ensure people are well-housed, how local community life is fostered and in particular, how housing policy is directed to building well-functioning communities, evidenced by action among churches and the National Church Institutions.

Who will sit on it?

The Commission is made up of members appointed to bring specific areas of expertise and personal experience in this area, including a mix of theologians and experts in housing policy. The Commission will be chaired by Charlie Arbuthnot, and the Lead Bishop will be The Right Reverend Dr Graham Tomlin, Bishop of Kensington.

Charlie Arbuthnot	Chair
The Rt Revd Dr Graham Tomlin	Bishop of Kensington
Cym D'Souza	Arawak Walton Housing Association
Stephen Backhouse	Westminster Theological Centre
Sir Robert Devereux	Former Permanent Secretary, DWP
Professor Christine Whitehead	London School of Economics
Chris Beales	Durham University
Lynne Cullens	National Estate Churches Network
Gill Payne	National Housing Federation
Marvin Rees	Mayor of Bristol

Why was Mayor Rees Approached?

As Mayor of Bristol Marvin and his administration have been very consistently and publicly committed to tackling the challenges of the housing crisis in Bristol. The Commission was keen to work not just with individual Parishes and Dioceses but to also engage with the political and city challenge and learn how the church can work to support the wider needs and strategy of the city. The complexity and breadth of that challenge is significant; new housing supply, affordability, regeneration of deprived areas, homelessness, social justice issues connected to lack of sufficient housing stock etc. In addition, Marvin has been keen to make the point that the success of the city is not just down to the City Council but is achieved through the collective response of all its key stakeholders (One City Plan). The church in Bristol is a key stakeholder and the opportunity to partner with the church in seeking the welfare of the city by examining how it can provide practical support to help tackle Bristol's housing challenge and enable healthy communities is important. The focus of the Commission in Bristol will not just be on discussion but will be developing a practical response as an exemplar for the Commission to share and learn from.

What Will be The Outcome in Bristol?

The Commission has been split into several streams of work and Marvin has agreed to work within the 'Local Church and Community Work Plan'. The intent and ambition behind that is that it gives scope and opportunity to engage with the City Council's partnership with the Bristol Housing Festival and the scope to develop and trial new housing on church land. The Commission is then able to use those exemplars to share and learn how other sites can benefit from that learning in those first schemes.

How long will it be operational for?

It is expected that the Commission will arrange its work so that it is brought to completion in 18 months' time. Fruits of the Commission's work will have a much longer life span.

How is it being funded?

Funding for the Archbishop's Commission is from the Archbishop of Canterbury's Discretionary fund.

What are its aims?

The Commission seeks to:

- a) To develop an authentically Christian theological framework for understanding housing and community-building issues.
- b) To propose areas for action by the Church of England, in parishes and dioceses maximising the church's contribution to alleviating the suffering attributable to the current housing crisis and the church's contribution to building better communities.
- c) To offer to Government, Whitehall, the housing industry, housing charities and others in the sector, proposals to shape the trajectory of future housing policy.

What exactly is it going to do?

The Commission will be meeting regularly over the coming 18 months, engaging with many of the key issues related to housing, church and community from a Christian perspective. In addition to looking at what the academic and policy research tells us, the Commission will be listening to people with direct experience of housing issues to inform its work and hearing from local churches and dioceses with experience of tackling these issues in their community. Regarding output, it will seek to produce actions as well as words; proposing areas for action by the Church of England and offering Government, Whitehall, the housing industry, housing charities and others in the sector, proposals to shape the trajectory of future housing policy. Wherever possible, we will seek to work in partnership with other public, private and voluntary organisations that share this vision.

Is it party political? What links does it have to government?

The Commission is not party political. It will simply be looking at what the academic and policy research tells us, and listening to people with direct experience of housing issues to inform its work. We will seek to work constructively with government and other key stakeholders, highlighting good policy and practice where possible, but being a critical voice when challenge is necessary.

How involved will the Archbishop be?

In March 2018, the Archbishop of Canterbury published Reimagining Britain: Foundations for Hope. The Commission will seek to build on a key chapter, 'Housing – the Architecture of Community', to bring a distinctively Christian contribution to the debate. Archbishop Justin has asked the Commissioners to be mindful of the values and themes explored in

this book as they carry out their 18-month review and will be taking a close interest in the Commission's work as it progresses.

What government policies do you want to see changed/introduced?

The Commission aims to offer a vision for housing, informed by the Christian faith, and propose changes which could shape the future of housing policy, as well as recommending areas for action by the Church of England itself – at local, regional and national level. There are many important issues the Commission will be considering through the course of its work. We cannot pre-empt the conclusions we will come to nor recommendations we will make.

Why aren't churches opening their doors to homeless people? Surely that would solve the housing crisis...

It is a tragedy that today so many people in the United Kingdom are homeless, leaving too many women, men and children vulnerable on our streets or in temporary and/or inadequate accommodation. Many churches are already supporting people who are homeless, befriending them and providing a listening ear, as well as offering food, night shelters and other practical help, which we must recognise and encourage, whilst also seeking long-term solutions. We want to recognise this good work and encourage more churches to do the same.

In the aftermath of Grenfell, do you have a view on standards of housing and how housing should be maintained?

The Grenfell Tower disaster was a stark reminder of how we have marginalised whole sections of the population in sub-standard housing; this urgently needs addressing. But it also brought to the surface the resilience and power of local communities in responding to this tragic event. In seeking solutions to the broader housing crisis, we must listen more closely to people with direct experience of housing issues.

What's your policy on environmental/sustainability concerns related to housing?

Climate change is a clear and present danger to the world and the greatest challenge facing future generations. The Commission will be mindful of the responsibility we have to care for God's creation through the course of its work, and its findings and its recommendations.

What about the Church Commissioners, what are they doing with all of their land and financial assets to help solve the housing crisis?

We recognise the work the Church Commissioners are already doing in this area, with their long history of contributing towards housing provision in England. As well as offering recommendations to Government, Whitehall, the housing industry, housing charities and others in the sector, the Commission will also propose areas for action by the Church of England - in parishes, dioceses and national institutions, including the Church Commissioners - maximising their contribution to alleviating the suffering attributable to the current housing crisis and to building better communities.

You say the Commission will listen to people. How?

We have started as we mean to carry on, by inviting local church leaders and members from across the country to the Commission launch to talk about the housing issues they see in their community and how they are tackling them. This includes people with direct experience of housing problems, as well as people who are actively involved in responding

to the need. Going forwards, we want to expand this listening and action network, making use of the Church of England's presence in every community.

There are some non-Christians on this Housing Commission. How will this bring a distinctly Christian contribution to the debate?

We welcome and value the range of views, perspectives and expertise the Commissioners will bring to the work of the Housing Commission. The Commission's work will draw upon this, whilst being regularly weighed against the work of a dedicated theology stream.