

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 _____

