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PLANNING & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 18 APRIL 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Leo Walters (Chairman), Malcolm Alexander (Vice-Chairman), David Evans, David Hilton, Samantha Rayner, Adam Smith and Malcolm Beer

Also in attendance: Lead Member for Planning (Councillor Derek Wilson) and Councillor Christine Bateson.

Officers: Tanya Leftwich and Russell O'Keefe

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gerry Clark.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

It was announced by the Chairman that the meeting was being recorded.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 29 March 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

INCREASING HOME OWNERSHIP - PARTNERSHIP AND INVESTMENT PLAN

The Lead Member for Planning informed Members that the report would be going before Cabinet on the 28 April 2016.

Members were informed that the report set out the issues that affect the delivery of affordable housing in RBWM. It considered the changes that were emerging in the Housing & Planning Bill and proposed a plan to maximise the delivery of the manifesto commitments in this area.

It was noted that the report recommended that Cabinet agreed a plan of actions with the aim of providing an average of 116 units per annum that would allow residents to access home ownership and key worker private rented housing.

Members noted that the report fulfilled a request from the Policy Committee on the 19 January 2016 that requested a partnership and investment plan to increase home ownership be submitted to Cabinet for consideration in April 2016.

The Lead Members for Planning explained that the Council was working on the Borough Local Plan. It was noted that there would be a supplementary planning document prepared on housing which was due to be submitted in September / October 2016 for it to be adopted in December.

The Lead Members for Planning went onto explain the different affordable housing types available which were noted as follows:

- Social Rent
- Affordable Rents
- Shared Ownership
- Starter Homes
- The Private Rent Sector (PRS)
- Key Workers
- Self-Build
- Help to Buy

In the ensuing discussions the following points were noted:

- That private landlords (in the Private Rent Sector) could if they so wished provide a concierge service (e.g. laundry, dry cleaning, etc) in order to charge more rent.
- The average Shared Ownership percentage paid at the start by purchasers was around 25% - the remainder amount was then paid as rent.
- A key worker policy was in place to help preserve essential services within the Royal Borough.
- It was suggested by Councillor Hilton that key workers be asked why some initiatives were not taken up.
- Councillor Beer stated that he saw the value in ordinary/affordable rented properties being made available.
- That there might be an opportunity in the future for self-build properties.
- That the 2016 figure in para 2.1 on page 10 of the report should read 2015.

The Panel made the following comments:

- That the Council would need to be clear at which group of people they would be aiming the key worker scheme at. It was suggested that this information be included in the body of the report.
- To remind people that as part of the Starter Homes scheme any land in the Green Belt would be covered by the Green Belt Policy.
- That the figures in para 2.24 of the report should show the workings as to how the figures were arrived at.
- That the deposit figures (percentage figures) for Shared Ownership properties would be sourced from registered providers and supplied to the Panel.

The Planning & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel unanimously agreed to recommend to Cabinet the following:

- I. Approves that following submission of the Borough Local Plan, that a Supplementary Planning Document should be progressed on the delivery of housing, including affordable, shared ownership and other tenures and types.**
- II. Approves the detailed actions set out in paragraphs 2.24 – 2.28.**

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the following future meeting dates (7pm start):

- Tuesday 28 June 2016.

- Thursday 18 August 2016.
- Tuesday 18 October 2016.
- Thursday 17 November 2016.
- Monday 23 January 2017.
- Wednesday 19 April 2017.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion took place on following items 7-9 on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

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