

**HOUSING SUB COMMITTEE
8 DECEMBER 1998**

Present: Councillor Worrall (Chairman), Councillors Barnard, Flood,
Miss Haydon, Mrs Hirst, Jones, Ryan, Mrs Shillcock and Mrs Sutcliffe

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Mrs Pile

34. Substitute Members

The Sub Committee noted the attendance of the following Substitute Member under Standing Order No. 38

Councillor Mrs Sutcliffe for Councillor Mrs Pile

35. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 1 September 1998 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36. Vehicle Parking and Enforcement Matters (Item 1)

The Director of Social Services & Housing reported on measures undertaken to address problems with the parking of vehicles on certain estates in the Borough. A strategy had been developed which included the targeting of specific areas; improved communication and logging of actions taken by each Department and the use of formal cautions. A particular concern was the parking of heavy goods vehicles on estates, where enforcement lay with the Police and Traffic Commissioner. The Sub Committee concluded that inter-Departmental and inter-agency co-operation outlined in the report would add to the effectiveness of vehicle enforcement measures.

RESOLVED that the improved co-ordination and joint targeting of vehicle enforcement actions, as described in paragraph 4 of the report, be approved.

37. Housing: Major Repair and Improvement Programme (Item 2)

The Sub Committee was advised of progress on improvement schemes in the 1997/98 and 1998/99 programmes. The Sub Committee considered and approved two further schemes. In the first scheme, improvements to individual flats, common areas and external areas would be carried out at Stuart House and York House, Priestwood, from a budget of £95,000. The second scheme would involve anti condensation works, estimated at £99,000 (including fees), at 1 - 12 Buckthorns, Priestwood.

RESOLVED that

- (i) progress with the major repair and improvement schemes previously approved be noted;

- (ii) the scheme for improvements to the flats and common areas of Stuart House and York House, Priestwood be approved; and
- (iii) the scheme for anti condensation work to 1 - 12 Buckthorns, Priestwood, be approved.

38. Proposed Single Allocation to Local Housing Authorities for Capital Investment in Housing (Item 3)

The Sub-Committee considered a report on a consultation paper issued by the Government on plans to allocate all housing capital resources through the Housing Annual Capital Guideline mechanism, which would replace the current separate allocations of Annual Capital Guideline, Private Sector Renewal Support Grant and the Capital Receipts Initiative. The Sub Committee noted that the Borough, as a debt-free authority, would be disadvantaged by the proposals as it would no longer receive a Private Sector Renewal Support Grant (in 1998/99 budget terms) of £53,000, and £19,000 through the "Receipts Taken Into Account" mechanism. On this basis, the Sub Committee concluded that it could not support the proposed changes to the allocation of housing capital resources.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Council do not support the proposed changes to the allocation of housing capital resources; and
- (ii) the Director of Social Services & Housing be authorised to prepare an appropriate response to the Government's consultation paper, in consultation with the Chairman of the Social Services & Housing Committee.

39. Information Items

The Sub Committee noted the following items submitted for information only:

Development Programme – Position Statement (Item 4)
Housing Statistics (Item 5)

40. Exclusion of the Public and Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following Items which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (3) Information Relating to Occupiers or Former Occupiers of Council Property (Items 6 & 13)
- (9) Terms Proposed in the Course of Negotiations for a Contract (Items 7 & 8)
- (12) Information Advice Relating to Possible Legal Proceedings by the Authority (Items 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13)

41. "Swedish Houses", Tilehurst Lane, Binfield (Item 6)

The Director of Social Services & Housing reported on the condition of a group of properties at Tilehurst Lane, Binfield, known, because of the origin of their design, as "Swedish Houses". These pre-fabricated timber-frame houses had been constructed circa 1945 to 1950 and recent surveys had shown considerable expenditure would be required to repair the properties. The Sub Committee, therefore, agreed to support the redevelopment of the site in conjunction with a Registered Social landlord partner, and noted that consultations with tenants and owner occupiers would be handled sensitively.

RESOLVED that

- (i) redevelopment of the group of properties at Tilehurst Lane, Binfield, known as Swedish Houses, be supported as the preferred option;
- (ii) a tenant and owner consultation, leading to a tenant ballot, be undertaken; and
- (iii) a full report on the outcome of the consultation and a programme for further action be submitted to the Social Services & Housing Committee in May 1999.

42. **Housing Management Compulsory Competitive Tendering Specification – Consultation with Tenants (Item 7)**

The Sub Committee considered a report on the draft Housing Management Specification and was advised that the Council was required to consult with all tenants on the draft, which had been circulated to members of the Sub Committee and the Social Services & Housing Committee.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the draft specification for Housing Management Services be approved for consultation;
- (ii) a summary of the draft specification be circulated to all tenants and leaseholders for comments; and
- (iii) the results of the consultation exercise with Members, tenants and leaseholders be reported to members in March 1999, with the revised draft specification, for final approval.

43. **Request for Local Authority Social Housing Grant: Windsor & District Housing Association (Item 8)**

The Director of Social Services & Housing reported on a proposal to make a grant allocation from the Local Authority Social Housing Grant Budget to assist with the funding of a Purchase and Repair Programme by Windsor and District Housing Association. Under the scheme, existing properties at the lower end of the market would be purchased and repaired to provide value for money accommodation.

RESOLVED that an allocation of £556,898 (plus/minus 5%) to Windsor and District Housing Association for the purchase of three two-bed properties and seven three-

bed properties, to which the Council would have 100% nomination rights on the initial let and 75% nomination rights on subsequent lets, be approved.

44. **Contravention of a Direction Served Under Section 354 of the Housing Act 1985: Inverugie, London Road, Bracknell (Item 9)**

The Sub Committee was advised that the Council had a duty under the Housing Act 1985 to ensure that houses in multiple occupation were fit for both the number of occupiers and also in terms of fire safety. In a report containing exempt information, the Sub Committee considered the particular circumstances of a case relating to Inverugie, London Road, Bracknell, and concluded that legal proceedings under Section 355 of the Housing Act 1985 were appropriate.

RESOLVED that authority be given to instigate legal proceedings under Section 355 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) against the owners of Inverugie, London Road, Bracknell, for knowingly contravening a Direction served under Section 354 of the said Act, which limited the occupancy of Inverugie to no more than one household.

45. **Contravention of a Direction Served Under Section 354 of the Housing Act 1985: Ascot House, Rectory Close, Easthampstead (Item 10)**

The Sub Committee was advised that the Council had a duty under the Housing Act 1985 to ensure that houses multiple occupation were fit for both the number of occupiers and also in terms of fire safety. In a report containing exempt information, the Sub Committee considered the particular circumstances of a case relating to Ascot House, Rectory Close, Easthampstead, and concluded that legal proceedings under Section 355 of the Housing Act 1985 were appropriate.

RESOLVED that authority be given to instigate legal proceedings under Section 355 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) against the owners of Ascot House, Rectory Close, Easthampstead for knowingly allowing a contravention of a Direction Order served under Section 354 of the said Act, which limited the number of individuals who occupied the Ascot House to nine.

46. **Non-Compliance with Housing Act Notice – Unfit Property: 1 Rupert Villas, London Road, Bracknell (Item 11)**

The Sub Committee was advised that the Council had a duty to serve notice on the owners of an unfit property, requiring either works to make the dwelling fit for occupation or the property's closure or demolition. It was an offence for the recipient of a notice to not comply with such a notice. In a report containing exempt information the Sub Committee considered the particular circumstances of a case relating to 1 Rupert Villas, London Road, Bracknell, and concluded that legal proceedings should be undertaken against the owners of the property.

RESOLVED that

- (i) authority be given to instigate legal proceeding against the owners of 1 Rupert Villas, London Road, Bracknell for non compliance with a Notice requiring works to be undertaken to make a dwelling fit for habitation; and
- (ii) authority be given to the Director of Public & Environmental Services to arrange for the work to be carried out in default and the recovery of all associated cost.

47. Non-Compliance with Housing Act Notice – Unfit Property: 75 Underwood, Great Hollands (Item 12)

The Sub Committee was advised that the Council had a duty to serve notice on the owners of an unfit property, requiring either works to make the dwelling fit for occupation or the property's closure or demolition. It was an offence for the recipient of a notice to not comply with such a notice. In a report containing exempt information the Sub Committee considered the particular circumstances of a case relating to 75 Underwood, Great Hollands and concluded that legal proceedings should be undertaken against the owners of the property.

RESOLVED that

- (i) authority be given to instigate legal proceedings against the owner of 75 Underwood, Great Hollands for non compliance with Notice requiring works to be undertaken to make a dwelling fit for habitation; and
- (ii) authority be given to the Director of Public & Environmental Services to arrange for the works to be carried out in default and the recovery of all associated cost.

48. Information Item

The Sub Committee noted the following item submitted for information only:

Possession Proceedings (Item 13)

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 9.40pm

CHAIRMAN