

**HOUSING SUB COMMITTEE
23 SEPTEMBER 1997**

Present: Councillor Angell (Chairman)
Councillors Grayson, Harrison, Miss Haydon, Mrs Hirst,
Jones, Mrs Pile, Mrs Shillcock, Ward, Worrall

20. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Housing Sub Committee held on 13 May 1997 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. **Bid for Local Authority Social Housing Grant Shared Equity Scheme - Notting Hill Home Ownership (Item 1)**

The Sub Committee considered a report on the potential for providing shared equity opportunities in partnership with Notting Hill Home Ownership.

Notting Hill Home Ownership wished to work in partnership with the Council to provide shared ownership opportunities. The proposal was to purchase ten properties offered for sale in the private housing market and, where required, carry out moderate improvements to the properties. The properties would then be offered at between 25% and 75% shares, to applicants on the Shared Ownership Register, the Housing Waiting List, or existing Council Tenants.

The Sub Committee noted the flexibility of the scheme which made it particularly attractive.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) Local Authority Social Housing Grant in the sum of £241,405 (+/- 10%) be made to Notting Hill Home Ownership from the 1997/98 approved budget for the purchase of ten existing satisfactory premises to be offered for shared ownership; and
- (ii) authority be given for a Nomination Agreement to be entered into giving the Council 100% nominations from applicants on the Shared Owner Register, the Housing Waiting List, or existing Council tenants

22. **Conditions of Tenancy (Item 2)**

The Sub Committee considered a report on a revised Draft Agreement and Conditions of Tenancy.

The draft Housing Nuisance Strategy had identified the need for a clear and comprehensive Agreement and Conditions of Tenancy to deal effectively with nuisance and anti-social behaviour. The report presented a revised draft for the Sub Committee's consideration, prior to statutory tenant consultation.

The Sub Committee discussed the document and the following particular points were made:

Rent

Clarification of rent arrears and the impact of Housing Benefit on rent, including its implications for succession of tenancy on the death of a tenant, would be considered by officers with a view to introducing clear information in a sensitive way.

Insurance

Officers agreed to look further at advice for tenants on insurance, particularly contents insurance.

Pets

Some clarification would be considered for inclusion in the explanatory material, particularly on the position of existing pets.

Garages

A clause would be added regarding the storage of dangerous materials or substances in garages.

Aerials

The text would be amended to permit installation of television aerials by introductory tenants with the prior written consent of the Housing Section.

Vans and Lorries

Officers were requested to consider ways in which lorries and large vans could be prevented from parking on estate highways.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Draft Agreement and Conditions of Tenancy be approved, as amended;
- (ii) the timetable for consultation and implementation of the new Agreement and Conditions of Tenancy for secure and introductory tenants be approved; and
- (iii) the officers be requested to consider and report back on the ways in which lorries and large vans can be prevented from parking on the estate highways.

23. **Introductory Tenancies (Item 3)**

The Sub Committee considered a report on how Introductory Tenancies were to be implemented.

The Social Services Transition and Housing Committee on 17 June 1997 had approved the adoption of an Introductory Tenancy regime. The report outlined the main principles by which this would operate. The scheme would be the subject of consultation with tenants in tandem with the consultation to be carried out on Tenancy Conditions.

A full report on the performance of the scheme would be made to the Sub Committee after one year of operation but the scheme would be monitored continuously from its implementation. Officers would ensure that members were provided with sufficient information so that they could be satisfied that the process was operating properly.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) Introductory Tenants should only be granted the statutory rights allowed under Part V of the Housing Act 1996;
- (ii) the new revised tenancy conditions, subject to tenant consultation, be used for all Introductory Tenancies from 1 January 1998;
- (iii) the issue of Notice of Possession Proceedings against Introductory Tenants be delegated to the Housing Estates Manager, Post No HEA002 and two Housing Managers, Post Nos HEA004 and HEA005; and
- (iv) the Assistant Director (Housing) and the Head of Housing Estate Services be authorised to conduct reviews of decisions to take possession proceedings.

24. **Housing Major Repair and Improvement Programme (Item 4)**

The Sub Committee considered a report on progress on schemes included in the 1996/97 programme but not yet reported as completed, and progress on schemes on the 1997/98 which were previously approved by Committee. A number of schemes included in the Housing Capital Programme 1997-2001 as approved by Policy and Resources Committee on 11 February were also reported for approval to proceed and to spend.

The Sub Committee discussed arrangements for casual deliveries to sheltered units with door entry systems. Some consideration would be given to the suggestion of a 'communal' letterbox.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the progress of schemes previously approved by Housing Committee and Social Services Housing Committee be noted;
- (ii) the schemes for further rewiring work to dwellings in Harmans Water and for the installation of door entry systems in Broadway House and Farningham House be approved; and
- (iii) both proposals, as allowed by SO62 and SO60 requiring competitive quotations shall not apply, subject, in the case of the door entry systems, to an acceptable tender being received.

25. **Tenants Consultation (Item 5)**

The Sub Committee considered a report on the legislative requirements regarding the Council's arrangements for consulting tenants upon housing management matters. The Social Services Transition and Housing Committee on 9 September 1997 had resolved that responsibility for determining arrangements for tenant consultation should be delegated to the Housing Sub Committee.

The Council had quite properly been consulting with its tenants about a range of housing management issues for many years, but recent discussions between the Housing Department and the Legal Section had focused on the statutory requirement to have an agreed procedure for tenant consultation in accordance with the legislation. This was required to be published and available for public inspection on request.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Sub Committee approves the procedure for tenant consultations as set out in Appendix A of the report;
- (ii) the procedure is published and made available to any member of the public requesting it free of charge; and
- (iii) the Sub Committee supports informal consultation with tenant representative groups recognising their special role in Housing Management Compulsory Competitive Tendering arrangements.

26. Items for Information (Items 6, 7 and 8)

The Sub Committee received and noted the following information items:

- Development Programme - Position Statement (Item 6)
- Sale of Council Houses (Item 7)
- Housing Statistics (Item 8)

27. Exclusion of 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 Items 7 which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following categories of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (5) Information relating to occupiers or former occupiers of Council accommodation (Item 11)
- (7) Information relating to business or financial affairs (Items 9 & 10)

28. Future of Calcott, Rectory Close, Bracknell (Item 9)

The Sub Committee considered a report on the future use of Calcott, Rectory Close, Bracknell.

Negotiations had been opened with the NHS Trust with a view to the disposal of the freehold of the site for the development of a purpose built group home for people leaving Church Hill House.

RESOLVED that the Finance and Property Sub Committee be requested to approve the sale of the freehold of Calcott for a sum of £65,000 to the East Berkshire NHS Trust to enable the redevelopment of the site with a group home for residents leaving Church Hill House.

29. **The Future of 2/2A Hurst Close, Crowthorne Road, Bracknell (Item 10)**

The Sub Committee considered a report on the possible future use of 2/2A Hurst Close, Crowthorne Road, Bracknell. The adjoining properties were in private ownership. Together, the dwellings occupied a substantial site, the redevelopment of which could provide substantial housing gain.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) in the event of it being demonstrated that the redevelopment of the site, currently occupied by numbers 1, 2/2a and 3 Hurst Close, can provide a scheme giving substantial housing gain, then a Registered Social Landlord can be invited to assemble the site for an affordable housing scheme, the mix and tenure of which will be decided by Bracknell Forest Borough Council; and
- (ii) in the event of any redevelopment being unable to provide substantial housing gain, then the Borough Engineer and Surveyor be asked to negotiate terms with the NHS Trust, or one of their provider partners, with a view to the disposal of the freehold to secure the use of the premises for people leaving Church Hill House.

30. **Possession Proceedings (Information Item 11)**

The Sub Committee received and noted a report on Possession Proceedings.

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm and concluded at 8.50 pm

CHAIRMAN