

# **COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY, 29 JUNE 2023**

**PRESENT:** Councillor D.M. Cundy (Chair)

**Councillors (In Person):**

B. Davies                                      L. Davies                                      M. Palfreman                                      H.B. Shepardson

**Councillors (Virtually):**

K.V. Broom                                      B.W. Jones                                      W.R.A. Davies                                      T. Davies  
R.E. Evans                                      H.L. Davies                                      J.K. Howell

**Also in attendance:**

Councillor L.D. Evans – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes

**Also Present (In Person):**

I. Jones, Head of Leisure  
J. Morgan, Head of Housing and Public Protection  
H. Morgan, Economic Development Manager  
A. Eynon, Principal Translator  
R. Morris, Members Support Officer  
K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

**Also Present (Virtually):**

A Bowen, Housing Hwb Manager  
R. Parkinson, Team Leader - Housing Advice  
M. Runeckles, Members Support Officer

**Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 10.35 am**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Owen, R. Sparks and M. Thomas.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM**

There were no declarations of personal interest or of any prohibited party whips.

**3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)**

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

**4. EMERGENCY SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATION UPDATE REPORT ON THE OPERATION OF THE NEW ALLOCATION POLICY (MONITORING)**

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

The Committee, in accordance with the decision made at its meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023, received a monitoring report on the effectiveness of the new Emergency Social Housing Allocation Policy developed by its Task and Finish Group. It was noted the content of the report included data for the previous period relating to:-

1. Proportion of properties directly matched and those advertised,
2. Band if clients directly matched,
3. Number of properties directly matched and advertised by each community area, type of property and landlord,
4. Proportion of direct matches that were successful,
5. Number of direct matches where the client requested a review of the allocation and the outcome of those reviews,
6. Number of direct matches where the client refused the allocation but didn't request a review.

The following questions/ issues were raised on the report:-

- In response to question on when the formal consultation period would commence on the introduction of a new Social Housing Allocations Policy, the Committee was reminded that Cabinet had agreed the current emergency policy would be in place for a period of 18 months and consultation could commence at any time within that period. The Head of Housing and Public Protection advised that he would include a timeline within the next monitoring report on the introduction of the new policy and commencement of the consultation period.
- Reference was made to graph 2 within the report detailing the number of properties directly matched and those advertised on Canfod Cartref. It was confirmed the number of properties advertised had reduced since the adoption of the emergency allocations policy and that the reduction would continue as the number of directly matched properties increased, with those matched being allocated to the people in most need and to those with a local connection. Properties were only now advertised if they could not be directly matched or were not suitable for local needs.
- With regard to a question on Graph 6, and to the increase in unsuitable matches, the Committee was informed that could be attributable to a number of factors, primarily to tenants not advising the Council of a change in their personal circumstances. However, under the new emergency policy, people on the housing register would have to re-register on a regular basis to update their needs/requirements.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the monitoring report be received.**

## **5. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS - UPDATE**

The Committee was reminded that at its meeting held on the 5th April 2023 (Minute 4 refers) it had considered a report on the extension of 10 Conservation Areas within Carmarthenshire and had resolved to approach the Welsh Government on the issue of restricting the installation of Solar Panels on the front elevation of roofs in Conservation Areas. Subsequent thereto, a meeting had been held on the 15<sup>th</sup> June between the Chair of the Communities, Homes and

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

Regeneration Scrutiny Committee met with the Local Authority's Built Heritage team, Rhodri Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability, Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability, and Councillor Russel Sparkes to discuss the above issues and how it could be ensured old housing stock was better adapted to help the Council meet its Zero Carbon targets, which, included installing Solar panels on protected buildings.

Following that discussion, it was proposed the Council do not now approach the Welsh Government on this issue, contrary to the Committees earlier recommendation, but that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny committee be requested to look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and generation of energy in relation to the historic housing stock of the county.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Council do not now approach the Welsh Government (as resolved in minute 4 of the meeting of the Committee held on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023) but that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee be requested to look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and generation of energy in relation to the County's historic housing stock.**

## **6. COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/23**

The Committee received its Annual Report on the work undertaken during the 2022/23 municipal year. It was noted that the report had been prepared in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Council's Constitution and provided an overview of the work programme and key issues addressed, whilst also incorporating any issues referred to, or from, the Cabinet, Task and Finish reviews and development sessions.

The following questions / issues were raised on the report:-

- Reference was made to point 2.14 within the report on the provision of an alternative outdoor education offer for Carmarthenshire and clarification sought on the future of the current outdoor residential facility at Pendine.

The Head of Leisure Services reminded the Committee that, as detailed in the report, it had been consulted on the proposals at its meeting in December 2022 which included reference to the condition of the existing facility at Pendine and to the potential cost of refurbishment. Whilst the need for such a residential facility was recognised and valued, consideration would need to be given to whether the facility was in the right place. Accordingly, a report was being finalised on the future of the outdoor education offer in Carmarthenshire, including the Pendine facility, for Cabinet's consideration in September.

Having regard to the above, a suggestion was made, and endorsed, that the report on the outdoor education offer be submitted to the Committee prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.**

**7. FORTHCOMING ITEMS**

The Committee received a list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next meeting to be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2023.

**RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 be noted.**

**8. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 15TH MAY 2023**

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 be signed as a correct record.**

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**CHAIR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.