

# The Housing Board

Cambridgeshire | Peterborough | West Suffolk

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Swansley Room, South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne



Cambridgeshire | Peterborough | West Suffolk

## Meeting Notes

### 1. Present, apologies and previous notes

#### *Present*

- Sarah Ferguson (SF), Cambs County/P'brgh **Chair**
  - Sue Beecroft (SB), Housing Board
  - Sean Evans (SE), East Cambs DC
  - Alex Francis (AF), CPCA
  - Julie Fletcher (JF), South Cambs DC
  - David Greening (DG), Cambridge City
  - Suzanne Hemingway (SH), Cambridge City
  - Dan Horn (DH), Fenland DC
  - Nigel Howlett (NH), CHS – RP rep
  - Jo Keegan (JK), Cambs County
  - Simon Phelan (SP), West Suffolk
  - Carol Pilsen (CP), Fenland DC
  - Helen Reed (HR), Cambridge City
  - Heather Wood (HW), South Cambs DC
  - Elaine Field (EF), South Cambs DC **Notes**
- Lisa Sparks, Commissioning Manager, Housing Related Support , Cambridgeshire County Council
  - Adrian Cannard, Strategy and Planning Director, CPCA

#### *Apologies*

Sally Bonnett, East Cambs DC

Jon Collen, Hunts DC

Iain Green, Cambs and Peterborough

Karen Mayhew, Homes for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (H4C&P)

Angela Parmenter, East Cambs DC

#### *Previous Notes*

Draft notes of May 2019 were approved and are available at:

<https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housingboard/>

A review of previous actions is at the end of this document.

### 2. Cambridgeshire Housing Related Support (HRS) Review update

Lisa Sparks updated that agreement has been received to pursue the recommendations in the expansion of Housing First for Cambridge, working in partnership with Cambridge City Council.

Next priority is to be clear about time line and actions, provided to partners, and keeping Members up to date. Investment in Housing Related Support mainly in Cambridge City and starting discussions there first. Re-design work has to be County wide and need to think about HRS in all areas, to meet the needs of services across the County.

Some proposals will not be realised, working closely with Finance. Target of £311k. Need to be in a position of a new tender by March 2020. We need to look at staff considerations and need to plan how services are run.

DH discussed support in Fenland but providers are not keen on the new way.

**Action: Lisa and DH to work with providers to come up with a solution.**

NH mentioned regulatory concerns about supported housing, could mean many risks. Building new homes is the priority. 55% of CHS turnover is in core housing, the rest of services are non-core activity.

Lisa advised that the contracts team have sent out extension letters to providers yesterday.

SH concerned providers may withdraw from important services. How does Housing Board think we should be providing this resource?

For more information on Housing First go to:

<https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/about-housing-first>

Or email:

[HRSReview@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:HRSReview@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

### 3. Homelessness System Transformation: Business Case

SF discussed the paper entitled Tackling Homelessness – System Transformation – Structure for Business Case.

The Board discussed, and agreed the purpose, to set out ambition and scope for looking at developing a more systemic approach to tackling long term homelessness across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and secure the resources needed to do this:

- Would be helpful to see links to groups who work with us, i.e. Sub Regional Homeless Group.
- Link to working with other District leads and what they are doing (how we connect, and picking up on how can we reform the system with new initiatives and trying different things with different projects. A challenging question to existing groups doing good work).
- There are other costs apart from public health i.e. criminal justice. Can add trailblazers report (still work in progress).
- We need to set out clearly our outcomes and what success looks like. Clear and consistent about setting out costs against outcomes. Can we look at development options and models, which take into account improving outcomes of revised cost envelope?
- Critical that we access the private rented sector. Look at our conversations with government as a group. Are we defining what our AH stock is, and making it more affordable for the private sector?
- Understanding drivers in each area i.e. Cambridge is unaffordable, except AH.
- Need to be looking at transforming our system and services.
- CHS are seeing people going through homelessness who are destitute, linked to CLAS (Cams Local Assistance Scheme) (vulnerable clients; links into think communities and homelessness prevention). How can we get communities to provide support within the funding limits, services may not always be provided by us e.g. volunteers.
- There is a need for continued support when someone moves in, not just crisis support. Intergenerational support for children, etc.
- Coordination network at CHS covers accessing to charities.
- Should we encourage innovation in communities to get ideas going? There are many charities that may not be using all their resource available in the most effective way, we could help them coordinate. How we work better with them and the rural community council network.
- Maybe need to ask volunteer communities to contribute in their own language / terms.
- Understand how our Lettings system works and who it is targeted to.

- Need to keep connection with other social care/public health systems. Understanding is it poverty, is it the benefit system, and is it lack of skills to manage within families – why do they end up in court? Should we do better early identification in tenancies, where people are already known. The gig economy? Could have caused problems in people managing, with other social and economic changes.
- Could do a local audit of individual cases on evictions and so on. Need to be able to share data, court cases, and applications.
- Need to look at accessibility of affordable housing, and housing providers being willing to consider vulnerable clients (affordability tests and policies), overcoming hurdles affordability, ASB, drug issues etc. Could look at working on an agreement to address those issues – builds on trailblazer work. The Board discussed government KPI's etc.
- Peterborough NHS is looking at health needs of rough sleepers, and those on the cusp of rough sleeping. **Action: Invite Vicki Peacey, Public Health Specialty Registrar to Board meeting (arranged for August 2019).**
- How well do we use the duty to refer? Could others work with us under this duty or something very like it? **Action: SB to investigate.**
- How many people have come out of private housing into renting?
- Homeless central government team may have ideas.
- Would help to know more about future homelessness funding as its very unclear. **Action: SB to draft a letter.**

The Board discussed s21 and the Homeless Reduction Act Report by DG. A lot of work around invalid notices etc. **Action: DG to share document.**

- Businesses need accommodation for their workers (and near to their work). We could work with private rented landlords to support these tenants. Trailblazer has had some success with landlords working together.
- Peterborough having some success with s21 project in Peterborough.
- AF recommended people speak with Julie about what they have done on this topic.
- HR discussed supply and potential risks moving forward.

Plan to take a business case to CPSB asap. SF will meet with Owen Garling next week and will aim to get this on the CPSB agenda in July if possible, but it would be good if we can brief all Chief Execs first.

**Action: SF and SH will get a draft around to the Board.**

Need to think about engaging providers asap.

SB spoke about the Homeless Prevention Trailblazer Year 2 review briefing note published May 2019, gone out to celebrate success of project so far. Also sent around a draft of what we should think about funding happening after 2020 going forward. Huge savings being made from these efforts.

DH mentioned the success of the last few years, but there are gaps, we need to be looking across at the business plan work. Reality is that we have a gap next year of core service team for funding in Fenland - is a concern. Need a sense of what would be the work programme for year 4, and then when we have the picture, can we think about if there is any mitigating ways which we can do it in a different way. Fenland could be part of a rota system with MASH for example, to keep team going.

HW mentioned that a rota system is a good idea; however the real benefit at SCDC is the work with MASH via Trailblazer. If there were any cuts where we couldn't retain a full team, this would be important. SE agreed and added the need to focus on benefits to each department; we need to show the financial benefit to teams to retain contributions and highlight. To think about it across Councils. NH added that we could ask, how do Housing Associations contribute? It would be helpful to know what they are to contribute. We could find a way to focus on the benefits of other agencies, i.e. health, where there are cost savings, with clear evidence to have these conversations HW advised. HR mentioned sponsorship and other wider funding methods/opportunities.

**Action: SB to add to the existing cost-benefit report and submit to SF to use as part of CPSB report.**

Clarity is needed of what the year forward looks like. JF mentioned funding from CPCA. The Board discussed a brief to consultant to work across the system.

#### 4. Combined Authority (CPCA) update

Adrian Cannard provided an update from the CPCA. The Spatial Framework document was taken to their Board last week (seeking to consult on issues around that) and was deferred. Issue from the new Planning Portfolio Holder, to be brought back at a future date, probably not before September.

Reason deferred, changed PH, new one needs to reflect on what is in the conversation and that it could do more in challenging what life could be like in 2010 and doing more on that, growth and economy. Therefore, not going out to consultation. Next week will see the Local Transport Plan out to consultation. Work behind scenes to inform framework, challenges around governing economy and labour needs, then effectively housing demand. GL Hearn (property consultancy) came in to look at this and have provided a final draft. Adrian mentioned productivity and providing better paid jobs. Didn't cover housing mix in this (much bigger study and better led than Local Authorities). Could come to this later.

As part of the devolution deal, agreed to set up a land commission with a Board of representatives from a range of stakeholders, but not achieved target yet to have workshops in how to accelerate delivery, still in planning phase. Have achieved match funding of one public estate programme which is very much about bringing forward public sector owned land and supported their running costs, and used CPCA support to share this with the government. Commissions will be reviewed by the PH. Looking at mechanisms going forward.

AF mentioned that increased interest in pipeline schemes is coming through, over the next few months, due to new legislation of affordable rent. For profit providers coming into the market, pension and investment led schemes, shared ownership and PRS, investment vehicles looking to invest in affordable housing. AF mentioned the Affordable Homes Programme. DEVCO activity picking up. Workshops on how development companies can work together.

Adrian also advised that the CPCA have gone through a restructure. Paul Rains is the new Director for delivering strategy, and CPCA are looking at getting in additional Planning resource.

AF is leaving CPCA in a few weeks. Joining Accent Housing on 1<sup>st</sup> July to lead their Homes England programme. SF and the Board thanked AF for her support and valued contribution to these meetings.

SB asked, is there an opportunity with the Board to look at what can be changed from the GL Hearn report, and can we be involved? Adrian advised they can do a presentation on the report. At what point does Board have an opportunity to contribute, can use Housing Board as a sounding board? Adrian said going forward that is the intention of CPCA (to involve Housing Board).

JF asked if CPCA are doing more work on the deferred Spatial Framework. Adrian replied that they need to reshape what they have done.

AF will let Board know where we are regards the Pipeline update meetings held quarterly with the enablers.

#### 5. Home-Link year end stats

HW updated regards the total lets for the Cambridgeshire and Sub-Regional Home-Link Scheme April 2018 – March 2019 (not included is the number of direct lets, could include this in future). The Board discussed the figures:

- NH stated that it would be good to see lets by largest landlords, figures are interesting but there is a

question on why things are different in different Authorities. HW advised providing figures to Board after the Home Link Board meeting has happened might be better.

- To understand how people are using the current Homelessness Reduction Act policy.
- JF add that we are having a strong steer from Members on clear local connections, prioritising this above banding status, need to get the right balance of local need and banding.
- HR asked to check figures as not quite what Cambridge City have (Harriet at the City could discuss with Sharon Lock, Sub-Regional Home-Link Manager).
- HW went through the figures and reasons for differences.
- DG advised it could be useful to understand how the homeless prevention column fits in, and to see the overall picture, e.g. to indicate how reliant we are on the actual register to deliver preventions as opposed to other means. **HW action to add new information i.e. number of bids per property, number of people on register in each District and band, checking accessibility of people understanding system.**
- SB asked about how many lettings are made for each District, on a new development, can this figure be added? HR asked about cross Authority lettings. HW mentioned that Locata (the new system) can provide more report data moving forward. HW will discuss with Sharon Lock. **Action for all; any particular questions feed back to HW.**
- SB: would like to see Bedroom type and who is on the register on Housing Boards' quarterly update.
- HW will bring back in 4 months' time, so that the Housing Board update follows the Home-Link Group meeting. **Action: SB to change on work plan.**

HW mentioned that the Sub-Regional Home-Link Manager, full time permanent post, has been advertised this week. The current post holder, Sharon lock, is currently on secondment in that position.

Need to kick off discussions on allocations policies, keen to invite the Home-Link Manager to this meeting, it's in our Forward Plan to start looking at it in September, however we need to have an initial conversation in the summer.

**Action: HW to invite Sharon Lock to the next Board meeting**, Sharon can bring variants in differences in policy interpretations, and any issues she has encountered so far in her position. This Board can help steer policies in the future. **All to ensure HW has info on what they want to address next time.** Specific requests regards Areas are to be looked at as part of the allocations policy.

## 6. AOB

Cambridgeshire County Council is doing work internally, preparing a report to Committee in terms of homelessness: How we support staff, how we maximise commercial opportunities, etc. Finalising paper and published for Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> June, will then provide a link to it. Making a commitment to our role in terms of housing and homelessness.

SF sends apologies for the July and August Board meetings.

SB emailed around questions from a consultancy as part of a national study, encouraging response to questions. **Email SB with any input.** JF has a separate LGA telephone survey regards combined authorities.

## 7. Future meetings

All at Swansley Room, South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne:

5 July 2019, 2 Aug 2019?, 6 Sept 2019, 4 Oct 2019, 1 Nov 2019, 6 Dec 2019

#	Agenda item	Action & when added <sup>1</sup>	Lead	To do	Doing	Done
<b>June 2019</b>						
1.	Housing related support	Lisa S and DH to work with providers to come up with a solution for Fenland, where providers are not keen on the new way to approach HRS.	LS/DH	✓		
2.	Homelessness	Invite Vicki Peacey, Public Health Specialty Registrar to Board meeting (arranged for August 2019).	SB/VP			✓
3.	Homelessness	SB to investigate how well we use the duty to refer and whether others could work with us under this duty or something very like it?	SB		✓	
4.	Homelessness	SB to draft a letter asking govt about future homelessness funding as it's very unclear. DH to proof read.	SB		✓	
5.	Homelessness	s21 and the Homeless Reduction Act Report by DG. A lot of work around invalid notices etc. DG to share document.	DG	✓		
6.	Homelessness	Business case for CPSB - aim to get this on the CPSB agenda in July - would be good if we can brief all Chief Execs first. SF and SH will get a draft around to the Housing Board.	SF / SH		✓	
7.	Homelessness	SB to add to the existing cost-benefit report for Housing Board, and submit to SF to use as part of CPSB report.	SB			✓
8.	Home-Link update	HW to add new information i.e. number of bids per property, number of people on register in each District and band, checking accessibility of people understanding system. Add no. of bedrooms, type and who is on the register on Housing Boards' regular update. Any particular questions feed back to HW to include in quarterly report.	HW	✓		
9.	Home-Link update	Change dates of Home-Link updates to Housing Board on work plan.	SB	✓		
10.	Home-Link update	HW to invite Sharon Lock to the next Board meeting. All to ensure HW has info on what they want to address at July's meeting.	HW All	✓		
11.	LGA survey	Email SB with any input to this national study on combined authorities, if it helps.	SB	✓		
<b>April 2019</b>						
12.	MARM / children	In County need to articulate a clear conversation with Housing colleagues who may not initially think about children vs adults having separate processes. Need clarity to work towards same goal across services. Should be a multi-agency document for children's services. Invite Jenny Goodes.	SB			✓
<b>March 2019</b>						
13.	DAHA	Could ask Homes England about effect of DAHA on shared ownership and HtB; currently Help to Buy is all standard paperwork. NH and VC in contact about this.	NH		✓	

<sup>1</sup> Note: Actions completed are "ticked" and reported to the following Housing Board meeting. Once the "done" tick has been seen by Housing Board members, the action is then removed from the table but can be found in the previous meeting notes if members want to look back on the actions completed in the year. At the end of year review meeting all the actions will be brought together in one table to see what has been completed in the year. Items to add to agendas are listed separately.

#	Agenda item	Action & when added <sup>1</sup>	Lead	To do	Doing	Done
14.	Private rent note	JC, can we add what percentile or private rents, the LHA rate is hitting – to provide feedback to DWP. DG asked would be good to report on monthly rents instead / as well as weekly figures.	SB		✓	
February 2019						
15.	New developments	Investigate the system of numbering and naming of streets, and postcodes – can we help get postcodes set up earlier in the process to facilitate life for new residents? SCDC to share findings from Northstowe with other district postcode teams. SB to help with info-sharing process. Survey in progress.	NH to send info to Mike Hill and cc HW		✓	
16.	New developments	IG to share his work on health and mental health on new developments JSNA, add to future HB agenda, possibly July 2019.	IG		✓	
November 2018						
17.	Housing delivery report	SB to add West Suffolk figures, Peterborough and also enablers detail on tenure, and re-circulate via email once report is more complete. KM offered to check with H4C&P	SB / KM		✓	
October 2018						
18.	Adaptations pathway	Housing Board to support work to make better sense of the nationally allocated DFG funding, and help each District benefit from the funds proportionately, achieving a more coordinated system.	HR, LS, SB		✓	