



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 30TH OCTOBER 2019 AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor B. Jones - Chair

Councillors:

C. Cuss (Social Services and Well Being), N. George (Neighbourhood Services), C.J. Gordon (Corporate Services), P. Marsden (Education and Achievement), S. Morgan (Economy, Infrastructure and Sustainability), L. Phipps (Homes and Places) and E. Stenner (Environment and Public Protection).

Together with:

R. Edmunds (Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services), D. Street (Corporate Director – Social Services and Housing).

Also in Attendance:

M. Williams (Interim Head of Property Services), S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer) and C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from C. HARRY (Interim Chief Executive) and M. S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director - Communities),

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

3. CABINET – 16TH OCTOBER 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2019 were approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

4. CHARTIST GARDENS DEVELOPMENT, PONTLLANFRAITH

The report provided Cabinet with an update on the Chartist Gardens scheme proposed on the site of the former Pontllanfraith House and sought approval to progress contract formalities if and when the developer secures planning consent.

It was noted that Cabinet previously considered (in October 2018) a strategy for the disposal of selected land with residential development potential, and at the time agreed to develop a proposal with a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) for the site of the former Pontllanfraith House.

As such, the report outlined in more detail the proposal that has been developed for the site in partnership with Pobl and which will result in a significant level of affordable homes provision, resultant benefits for the Common Housing Register and a capital sum being received by the Council for the sale of the site.

Cabinet thanked the Officers for the report and discussion ensued.

Members discussed the report at length and were encouraged to see the ratio of affordable housing allocated at the flagstone development. In noting that there are 42 homes allocated as social rental accommodation, it was noted that additional properties would be available on a shared ownership scheme.

A Member sought further information on the Common Housing Register and how it works, and whether there are any other schemes similar to the Chartist Gardens, Pontllanfraith planned for the future. Officers explained that the Common Housing Register is managed by Caerphilly Council but has been developed in partnership with a number of partners and Registered Social Landlords, with the aim to provide additional residential options in addition to Council properties. Each of the 4,500 applicants has been assessed based on their needs and circumstances. The Chartist Gardens Scheme has been developed as a result of exceptional partnership working, designed alongside the developer to provide affordable housing. In addition, it was noted that similar arrangements are being considered with United Welsh Housing Association for a development in Nelson.

Discussions took place around the types of accommodation available on the site, and in particular the bungalows and apartments. Officers explained that there are a mixture of bungalows and 2-storey apartments and houses, providing level and easy access where possible, some of which are to be allocated to the affordable housing scheme.

In addressing concerns of some local residents and family members it was confirmed that the Sir Harold Finch Memorial Stone will be relocated to a location agreed with family representatives. It is recommended that the stone is relocated adjacent the pond to the northern boundary of the development site. This will form an attractive pedestrian entrance to the Local nature reserve and SSSI to the north (Sir Harold Finch Park) which will be unaffected by the development. In addition, Officers outlined that an Almshouse style development of apartments that would be arranged around the war memorial and will form the centre piece of the scheme.

Discussions took place around Planning and the pressures on the Authority to provide additional housing, which the scheme can provide. However, it was noted that there have been a number of representations from local residents in relation to the site, in which Members assured residents that the site will meet the needs of a number of people awaiting allocations on the Common Housing Register, in addition to those requiring affordable housing as well as preserving a significant section of the natural environment around the site.

Cabinet discussed Loftus Gardens, an award winning development of 250 homes in Newport, 60% of which are classed as affordable. Works were undertaken on the site with involvement and engagement from the local community, which has created a community feel and sense of pride and ownership, which Chartist Gardens aims to create with the development at Pontllanfraith.

A Member sought further information on the relocation of the play area at the current site and transport links. Officers explained that the site has been designed specifically accounting for the metro link, subject to planning permission. In relation to recreation, it was noted that there will be green space at the centre of the site and the current play area will be relocated closer to the main road and current car parks, for ease of public access.

In discussion Well-being of Future Generations, Cabinet were pleased to note that all homes with driveways will feature pre-installed cabling for electric vehicle charging and two public charging points will be provided, should there be sufficient capacity on the grid.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's Report:

- i) the proposed scheme outlined in section 5 of the report be agreed;
- ii) the Interim Head of Property Services be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Places and the Interim Director – Communities to conclude the contractual and commercial formalities with the RSL (Pobl).

5. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – TO NOTE

Cabinet were provided with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, which detailed the scheduled reports from 30th October 2019 to 12th February 2020. Members were reminded that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme is a working document and therefore subject to change. In addition, it was noted that, going forward, the Forward Work Programme will be provided to Cabinet as a standing item on each Cabinet agenda.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Forward Work Programme be noted. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 10.51am.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 13th November 2019.

CHAIR