

SLDC Housing Advisory Group

Minutes of meeting held on the 30 October 2012

Present

Cllr Jonathon Brook(SLDC) – Chair	J Derbyshire (CRHT)
T Whittaker (SLDC)	D Pogson (NPS)
D Hudson (SLDC)	D Stubbs (SLH)
I Withington (SLDC)	M Henry (Applithwaite)
P Allen (LDNPA)	A Willmott (Impact)
M Barry (CCC)	P Thomas (SLH)
Cllr A Hall (SLDC/LDNPA)	
L Campbell (SLDC)	

		Action
1.	Apologies, M Tummey (SLDC), M Nicholson (Russell Armer) , Gail Staton, Elsa Braily (Home Housing), Graham Hale (CCC).	
2.	Minutes of the last meeting. Approved as true and fair record.	
3.	<p>Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey – TW gave verbal update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last survey carried out in 2003, since then there have been many changes in definition resulting in limited comparisons can me made. • Carried out in partnership with other Cumbrian authorities. <p>Key findings SLDC survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in private sector stock nearly doubling in past 10m years . • Now stands at 13.2% housing stock (excluding holiday lets. Second homes) • Higher percentage older dwellings than national average • Average household income s significantly below national average • High proportion thermal comfort failure • Above national average in fuel poverty • High proportion of hard to heat pre 1919 dwellings / solid walls • Long term forecast is that there is likely to be a continuing decline in stock conditions unless intervention on affordability and or financial circumstances improve in South Lakeland <p>Comparison with Cumbria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLDC lowest take up of benefits as a percentage of occupied dwellings • Highest proportion of over 65's • Highest with Eden DC percentage Thermal Comfort failure. 	
4.	<p>Private Sector Housing Strategy Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December cabinet – split into 4 sections • Improving Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Less demand for renovation grants resulting in significant underspend (£0.5m) – potential to ring fence money and /or transfer in the AH 	

	<p>fund.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Potential to market. target money given the high percentage of non decent stock ○ High percentage non decent homes / sub standards homes could be influencing demand for new stock and the council should remain flexible but concentrate in improving the existing stock as well. ○ Limited Incentive given high demand for housing for landlords to improve stock ○ Suggested solutions included accreditation scheme / regulation and enforcement of a standard. This would allow the council to be pro active in its delivery of increased standards. Potential resource implications. – SLDC to consider Eden DC accreditation scheme. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reducing empty Homes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Potential to recycle empty stock to create affordable rent ○ National pilot scheme(1 of 12) - SLDC to offer £10k loans to repair homes at 5% interest to help cover defaults – properties to be rented at affordable rates for 5 years. ○ Cumbria wide empty homes loans scheme under discussion ○ Matchmaker Scheme – showing gaps between what buyers can afford and sellers willing to accept. ○ Currently setting up empty homes management scheme with SLH to repair empty homes and rent social (preferable) or affordable rents for 5 yrs. ○ Changes to Council Tax in 2013 to reduce empty homes discount (50%) and to add a premium (150%) ● Energy efficiency improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to decide on the council’s role as a provider, partner or promoter of the Green Deal. <u>Group offered the following considerations:</u> ○ Potential to utilise recent community energy scheme takers to raise awareness ○ Publicise through Council tax bills and council should co ordinate the maximisation of awareness of the Green Deal! ○ Potential to work with Lancaster University to research issue of fuel poverty in rural areas and solutions to combat off grid fuel reliance. ○ Utilise the community energy scheme takers to establish rural / urban split of take up ● Make better use of existing private Housing Stock <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Linked to Green Deal ○ Potential to highlight issues through 3rd party such as at the time of fire service inspections ○ Set targets for smaller HA / trusts ○ Link in with Primary Care Trust information ○ Council message should be co ordinated through emphasise the four action points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any further suggestions were invited to be sent to TW directly 	ALL
5.	<p>Affordable House price review</p> <p>TW reported that the 2012 review Medium incomes decreased by 5.1% , house prices by 1.1% average across the</p>	

	<p>district income to house price ration has increased from 7.5 to 7.6, meaning that houses are now marginally less affordable</p> <p>MH commented that construction costs had increased and tougher building regulations will also add to costs.</p> <p>Proposed to recommend that affordable house prices are kept the same.</p>	
6.	<p>LDF Updates</p> <p>LDNPA - PA reported that after additional dialogue with stakeholders their land Allocation DPD now contains a reduced amount of sites in South Lakeland - 20 in total . They now aim to consult on soundness in January 2013.</p> <p>SLDC – DH reported that the land Allocations examination was proving challenging, especially in light of the inspectors interpretations of the NPPF</p> <p>LDNP: - Pre submission version goes to full authority approval in November. Expected pre submission consultation 13 December with Submission in March 2013</p>	
7. / 8	<p>Any Other Business & future agenda items</p> <p>The following were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Eco Housing: what can we do to ensure new housing is as energy efficient as possible? The group was asked to think about initiatives that could be put in place without compromising viability. • Up to date position and projections on building regulations and Code for sustainable homes • Requested that TW Report back on finalised Private Sector Housing Strategy Action Plan (<i>the final version is attached</i>) • The future of Housing Needs surveys. Issues of funding, disparities between areas, methodologies etc. 	ALL

Date of next meeting: 12 February 2012, arrive 9.45 for 10.00 start – Georgian Room, Kendal Town Hall.