

## SLDC Housing Advisory Group

### Minutes of meeting held on the 23 April 2012

#### Present

Cllr P Thornton (SLDC) - Chair	J Derbyshire (CRHT)
D Hudson (SLDC)	M Nicholson (Russell Armer)
I Withington (SLDC)	D Pogson (NPS)
P Allen (LDNPA)	M Henry (Eric Wright)
F McEnaney (CCC)	P Greenup (SLDC)
Cllr A Hall (SLDC)	Cllr J McCreesh (CALC)
L Campbell (SLDC)	L Reynolds (SLDC)
E Brailey (Home)	T Whittaker (SLDC)
D Stubbs (SLH)	
G Denwood (Two Castles)	

		Action
1.	<p><b>Apologies,</b> Merrill Tummey (SLDC), Mark Shipman (SLDC), Lucy Reynolds SLDC , Anne- Marie Willmott (Impact), Helen Irving (CALC ), Judith Cook (LDNPA), Cllr Heidi Halliday (SLDC).</p>	
2.	<p><b>Minutes of the last meeting.</b> Amended item 4 paragraph 2. Adding the word and/ or in the following sentence. "This is acting against the aims and aspirations of local housing groups and sustainable communities where it is necessary to encourage those of working age and / or contributing to society to stay." <b>Matters Arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PT welcomed creation of SLH as a stand alone registered provider and wished all the best.</li> </ul>	
3.	<p><b>Older Persons' Housing Strategy</b> LR presented the circulated the draft Strategy and requested discussion / feed back on content and actions. It was stressed that the Strategy was to be viewed in conjunction with the County Council's agenda and was intended to be about what SLDC can do towards supporting older persons in the district. <u>Strategy includes a number of actions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce a market position statement</li> <li>• Actively promote policies in Core Strategy to achieve appropriate mix / type of dwellings</li> <li>• Advocate the benefits of Lifetime Homes Standard</li> <li>• Work with private sector and CCC to develop more extra care housing</li> <li>• Develop good practice in helping existing home owners stay in own homes – gain understanding of equity release.</li> <li>• Support CCC in addressing identified need for home improvement schemes to help older people to commission home adaptations.</li> <li>• Support green deal / fuel poverty measures</li> <li>• Promote floating support services</li> <li>• Continue to engage with Choice Based Lettings to ensure access improvements for older people</li> <li>• Look at new initiatives such as Eden's Homeshare scheme.</li> </ul>	<p>LR</p> <p>TW/ LR</p>

	<p>The group supported the draft strategy in general .PA stated that the themes were all relevant and the document was welcomed. The production of a market position statement was crucial and advantageous to work from the most up to date evidence base.</p> <p>Feedback included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional support should be given to help those who wish to down size and this should be added to the strategy.</li> <li>• Additional dialogue needs to take place with private sector developers who specialise in the provision of older person’s homes to gain further input into the strategy and help make it deliverable and realistic in terms of housing models. Agreed this will take place.</li> <li>• Policy should make it clear that the affordable housing element is still required in this sector of development as per core strategy policy. Though the council needs to be flexible in its approach as viability is an issue in this sector along with uncertainty in the long term provision of support funding.</li> <li>• There was support for the provision of “ extra care housing ”due to the flexibility of care offered by this model in comparison to residential care, which is offered to only those in need and may split households.</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that the as the district is a popular “retirement” area the provision of additional suitable homes for the older person may exacerbate the problem as there was no way of restricting the use for those with a local connection other than through the “affordable” model .The affordable element needs to be maintained to help balance the housing markets and provide for those already in the district in need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of support for bungalow provision was welcome and this was seen as additional leverage to ensure a more balanced supply of appropriate types of housing. It was recognised that flexibility in affordable ask may be needed to support the provision of bungalows due to the extra land cost involved. However there may be the potential to use New Homes Bonus funds to meet the additional costs of bungalow provision as the footprint is approximately 50% more than a house.</li> <li>• Concern was raised at the support given to lifetime home standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Extra cost involved</li> <li>○ Often provides a miss match of room sizes and not seen as a good selling point</li> <li>○ Potential to conflict with policies to encourage down sizing and encouraging flexibility in the market.</li> <li>○ Consider revising policy support for this action and place more weight on appropriate dwelling types such as bungalow provision.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Consideration of support for subdivision of larger homes.</li> <li>• Concerns raised regarding welfare reform and how it will impact on the uptake of 2 bed units where there is a desire for ‘spare’ bedrooms but is viewed as under occupation.</li> </ul>	
4.	<p><b>Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Review.</b></p> <p>LR gave verbal update on current review of Choice Based lettings and ways forward.</p> <p>Previous feedback has been taken on board and discussed as part of the CBL review. The review has not resulted in any changes to the prioritisation lists. It was reported that overall CBL is working well, though some small issues still need to be ironed out. 14,500 people are now registered on the Cumbria-wide system, 3000 in South Lakeland and 176 homes allocated.</p>	

	<p>The full review will report in May and the working parties are currently looking at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How welfare reform may impact on issues of allocation</li> <li>• How Access could be improved particularly for older people</li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</b> DH went through the summary document as attached to the agenda.</p> <p>Overall the LDF process will change to Local Plans which will focus on strategic priorities. Over arching principles are the presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development should be <b>PLAN led</b>.</p> <p>In short term SLDC will be evaluating existing plans to demonstrate conformity with the NPPF. In the long term there is a need for the consolidation of plans and to ensure evidence base is kept up to date. DH reported that the NPPF provides consensus but not certainty and that there are many ambiguities due to the vastly reduced guidance and delegation of decisions down to the LA level could lead to many challenges. In those areas that do not have an adopted plan there is a strong risk of unplanned development and its associated risks and evidence of this is already been seen in Cumbria. MN reported that developers are keen to see the Site Allocations process continue as soon as possible as the uncertainty has contributed to low investment. Representing Developers in South Lakeland he went on to say that local developers in South Lakeland are respecting the allocations process but he warned that there is evidence now of larger companies targeting those councils with out a plan.</p>	
6.	<p><b>LDF Updates</b> <b>LDNPA</b> -New Local Development Scheme now published . Time table for land allocation document to be submitted is Jan 2013 with adoption 2013. LDNPA is currently reviewing / summarising and addressing consultation responses.</p> <p><b>SLDC</b> – Pre submission consultation has now finished and officers are currently reviewing issues raised. Submission is timetabled for May 2012. Key issued identified so far are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• impact of development on the AONB</li> <li>• infrastructure provision,</li> <li>• alternative approached to development around Kendal</li> <li>• approach to landscape assessments</li> </ul> <p>DH reported that through the plan making process SLDC are continuing to address constraints by working with infrastructure providers and to ensure that they plan investment accordingly to aid the delivery of growth. The phasing of sites reflects the time needed to over come known constraints.</p> <p>The group raised concerns that pressure on external providers needs to be kept up to make them plan and invest. Is there a role for CCC in the long term pressure of infrastructure providers?</p> <p>Concerns were also raised that consistent and timely responses on proposals were needed from CCC Highways and that The Developers Group had set up a meeting</p>	FM

	<p>with CCC to explore how CCC can improve its dialogue.  FM reported that there had been a number of restructures at County level in recent times and personnel were still settling into their new roles.</p>	
7.	<p><b>New Homes Bonus (NHB)</b>  PW reported that a NHB protocol has now been adopted by the Council and that it has allocated £0.5m from the SLH stock transfer towards the NHB fund in advance of future receipts. The Council has decided not to borrow against the potential income from NHB due to its long lead time for payment (only payable on completed development / occupation) and the risk of future national policy / government changes.  The fund will be used to help in the provision of affordable housing, neighbourhood plans and locally important projects. Funding for the latter may be open for bids from LAPs.  Overall the process will be managed by the Council’s Cabinet.  Applies to the whole district.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Affordable Housing Completions</b>  TW present figures as provided in agenda. These do not include quarter 4 private sector completions as details are awaited from Building Control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall Completions are down but reflect difficult market conditions and national trends</li> <li>• Figures for schemes going forward into 2012 /2013 (anticipated starts) show a lot more promise</li> </ul> <p>EB reported that there was potential for a dip in schemes starting in 2015 due to HCA funding constraints which will pay out on completions end of 2015 and uncertainty of future schemes post 2015.  TW reported that this was the transition period of new funding arrangements and that SLDC was looking at the private sector / LA co operation to plug any potential gaps in provision.  It was reported that pre application advice / consultation with planners was helpful, and working in a positive way.</p>	
9.	<p><b>CALC Request to Publish Minutes</b>  Although only an advisory group and not a decision making forum no objections were received and it was concluded that the minutes would be published in future on the One South Lakeland website.</p>	IW

**Date of next meeting: 17 July 2012, arrive 9.45 for 10.00start – Georgian Room, Kendal Town Hall.**