

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

5 September 2019

COUNCILLOR ADRIAN LAWRENCE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING

For the period 5 July to 26 August 2019

Progress on Portfolio Matters.

West Norfolk Housing

Strong performance shared ownership sales.

In my last report I mentioned that we had commenced marketing of new shared ownership homes. During the first few days the properties were available to view they generated strong interest, with the first application being made within hours. The first purchasers to come forward have been approved having been subject to qualifying checks and affordability assessments. There have been several more applications made, with other households which are now going through the application process. Shared ownership homes are available to households who can raise a deposit and mortgage finance, but who wouldn't be able to afford a market price.

New information and guidance documents for private landlords

Officers are finalising a new fire safety guidance document for landlords to ensure that landlords are aware of the standards expected in rented properties. An important part of the regulatory role is to raise awareness of the standards required. This document will provide an accessible summary of the necessary requirements based on national guidance, and will be on the website soon. This will be followed by a review of the amenity standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's). Work has also commenced with Norfolk Trading Standards to create a guidance document for landlords covering a range of issues from, Furniture Regulations, Electrical Safety, Gas Safety, Energy Performance Certificate's and Letting Agents Fees.

Winter Night Shelter update

I am preparing a report on the matter of a funding request from the Winter Night Shelter in line with the contribution that was made last year. Since the Shelter closed its doors at the end of March, planning started to re-open in winter season 2019/20. An impact report has been prepared detailing feedback and thoughts on how last season had worked out. The report can be viewed via the link below.

<https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/8d333cb0/files/uploaded/KLWNS%20impact%20report%202018-19%20final.pdf>

It is clear from an impact report subsequently prepared by the Night Shelter charity that people were assisted that otherwise would have spent the night outside. The Night Shelter provision meant that the Council did not need to provide additional emergency beds in hostel provision in the town as it had done in the previous winter 2017/18. These arrangements had proved particularly difficult to sustain over periods of prolonged cold.

The conditional contribution the Council made last year was matched by other sources including public donations. The success of the project was in part down to the commitment of volunteer staff and the generosity of the public donating food, toiletries and bedding.

If anyone wants to make a donation to the Night Shelter charity there is a giving page at www.klwns.org.uk

Meetings Attended

Cabinet Sifting
Full Council
Cabinet
Meetings with Officers
West Norfolk Housing Company