

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

14 June 2018

COUNCILLOR ADRIAN LAWRENCE - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING & COMMUNITY

For the period 12 April to 14 June 2018

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Home Choice

There are 912 live applications

1 Emergency

165 High

243 Medium

503 Low

46 applicants were housed in the month of May

Houses in Multiple Occupation

We are preparing for changes to the licencing regime for Houses in Multiple Occupation. This will mean a significant number of additional properties are likely to fall within the licencing regime. Currently the regime applies to 3 stories or more where five or more individuals live together as 2 or more households. From October 2018 properties of any type i.e. less than 3 storeys occupied in this way will require a licence. We will engage with landlords over the months ahead and support and incentivise landlords through the process. A new digital application process is currently being developed with a software partner that will be live by October.

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard

I will be bringing forward a report on the new Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard – these new regulations are aimed at ensuring private landlords take reasonable actions to ensure properties they let out are as energy efficient as they can be. The regulations mean that from 1 April 2018 private rented properties must have an EPC rating (Energy Performance Certificate) of E or better (unless an exemption applies). There are a number of exemptions that can be sought, and the Government is currently undertaking further consultation on these. Again we will be working on arrangements for supporting landlords to meet these new regulations.

Ministerial visit – 11th May

Along with some of my Colleagues, Officers and Sir Henry Bellingham MP we welcomed The Minister for Housing Dominic Raab MP and Sir Edward Lister Chair of the new Homes England. A presentation was given on the progress of our major housing delivery programme, and future opportunities that we have for development on Council owned sites as well as joint working opportunities with Freebridge Community Housing. We took time to take our guests to the Council's key strategic housing site at West Winch. Discussing plans for a housing access road we will continue to explore options with Homes England on how the access road, and associated highways improvements can be funded.

The Council continues a process with Home England following selection of 7 Council owned sites under the Accelerated Construction programme. I hope to report some progress on this soon.

Fixed Odds Betting Terminals

On 17th May 2018 the Minister for Sport and Civil Society Tracey Crouch announced that the maximum stakes on Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs) are to be reduced from £100 to £2 to reduce the risk of gambling-related harm.

Changes to the stake will be through secondary legislation. The move will need parliamentary approval and the Government will also engage with the gambling industry to ensure it is given sufficient time to implement and complete the technological changes.

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals)(England) Regulations 2018

On 16th April new Animal Welfare regulations were made, coming into force on 1st October 2018. The changes include animal boarding establishments, animal breeding, pet shops, riding establishments and exhibition of animals. There will be risk rated premises and up to 3 year licenses.

Contraband Tobacco

On 24th May a joint working operation including Trading Standards, Norfolk Constabulary and the Borough Council seized large quantity of illicit tobacco, a CCTV hard drive and over £1000 in cash from a premises within the Borough.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Full Council
Cabinet
Cabinet sifting
Meeting with Housing Minister
Mayor Making
Portfolio Meetings
Various Meetings with Officers