

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK
CUSTOM BUILD AND SELF BUILD POLICY DEVELOPMENT TASK GROUP

Minutes from the Meeting of the Custom Build and Self Build Policy Development Task Group held on Thursday, 25th August, 2016 at 4.00 pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn

PRESENT: Councillors R Blunt, Mrs S Collop and C Manning

Officers:

Alan Gomm, LDF Manager
Duncan Hall, Housing Services Manager
Karl Patterson, Housing Development Officer
Nikki Patton, Housing Strategy Officer
Hannah Wood-Handy, Principal Planner

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Blunt be appointed Chairman of the Task Group.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Manning be appointed as Vice Chairman to the Task Group.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Bubb.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was none.

5 MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34

There was none.

6 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND COVERING GOVERNMENT POLICY AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Officers present introduced themselves.

The Housing Services Manager gave a Presentation on the background covering Government Policy and relevant Legislation, as attached.

Officers responded to questions from Members of the Task Group, as summarised below:

- In terms of the final use of the home and if the owner could resell etc., this would be looked at in the Planning definitions and the land Use Policies.
- Different options were available for the ownership of land. Some companies offered sites and were in control of the site, which still came under Custom Build. Some companies released plots and they were in control of the owner.
- With regard to the term 'serviced plots', it was clarified that this meant that the plots did not have to be serviced before they were released for build. However, consideration needed to be given to the accessibility of services to the plots, for example drainage and electricity etc. needed to be available in the vicinity.
- A register was available for people to register their interest in Custom Build and Self Build plots. The register asked for details such as budget, timescales and type of plot desired.
- The Task Group was advised that Custom Build and Self Build plots were exempt from CIL, however if they were sold on within a number of years, they could be liable to CIL.
- Custom Build and Self Build projects offered opportunities for economies of scale if an organisation or group of people worked together.
- Affordable properties at Shropshire were provided as an example and the Task Group were informed that over 250 affordable Self Build properties had been available in this area. The resale value of the properties was restricted and applicants had to meet certain eligibility criteria to apply for a property.
- Examples of a scheme in Cambridge were provided. Individuals could pay a membership to an organisation and would have control over the design of the properties they wanted to live in.
- Discussions were held as to whether it was better to engage further with the public now, or wait until policies had been formulated.

The Housing Development Officer informed the Task Group that the register had been launched in April, with an accompanying press release. The register had been created in conjunction with other Norfolk Authorities so that a Norfolk wide register could be provided as well as registers for the individual organisations. 28 individuals had registered so far, and further promotion of the register would be carried out in due course. The Task Group was informed that it was a statutory requirement for Authorities to provide a register and the Council's response to the register would be formulated into Policy. The Housing Development Officer explained that recent additional guidance had been received on the register and Local Authorities could charge people for joining the register, however it was felt that this could act as a deterrent. The Register could also be restricted to those with local connections and those with the financial capacity to develop self-build. The Council's current register was not restricted, but it did ask questions about local connections and budget available.

The Task Group was informed that the Council had an obligation, as set out in the Act, to give permission for sufficient serviceable plots to meet the demand of the register within three years.

The Housing Services Manager explained that communication and promotion of the register and strategy would include estate agents and planning agents as it could be a useful tool for their clients.

ACTIONS:

(i) The Housing Strategy Officer to confirm the timescales involved in the liability to pay CIL if properties were sold on.

(ii) Members of the Task Group to look at the Custom and Self Build Toolkit Website.

(iii) The LDF Manager and the Principal Planner to look at how many self-build/individual sites had come forward for Planning Permission recently.

7 **OBJECTIVES OF THE TASK GROUP/TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Terms of Reference for the Task Group had been approved by the Regeneration and Development Panel.

The Housing Services Manager explained that consideration could be given to widening the remit of the Group to include wider issues such as starter homes and housing supply policy development.

It was anticipated that the Group would report back to the Regeneration and Development Panel with their final report in early 2017.

The Housing Services Manager explained that if the Task Group decided to look at wider issues it may be necessary to invite the relevant Portfolio Holder.

8 **LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

The LDF Manager provided the Group with the background on Exception Sites and how they were defined in policy. He explained that one option could be to allow self-build outside of the development boundary, similar to what was allowed in exception sites. He explained that the Task Group would also need to give consideration to the rural countryside and if self-build should be permitted.

The LDF Manager referred to the Shropshire model and explained that the Policy could include different build types across the spectrum.

He explained that the value to the land owner would need to be investigated and self-build plots could be sold at market value. The Principal Planner explained that a percentage threshold could be introduced with regard to self-build plots, along similar lines to what

had been introduced for the provision of affordable housing. The Task Group was informed that there were lots of options which could be considered to encourage facilitation and delivery of sites.

Consideration would also need to be given to the Councils role and how involved they wanted to get. The Task Group was informed that some Councils had already allocated land for self-build projects

ACTIONS:

(i) Examples from Cambs CC and Teignbridge be brought to a future meeting of the Task Group.

9 **OVERVIEW OF POLICY OPTIONS**

The Housing Services Manager circulated two documents to the Task Group, as attached. The documents provided background on the legislation and also examples of what was happening in other Local Authority areas.

The Housing Services Manager explained that to get the 'ball rolling' Councils were offering their own land for self-build. He felt that if the Council wanted to be ambitious with their offer, they needed a mix of their own land and other sites to be brought forward.

10 **NEXT STEPS**

The Task Group discussed their next steps and actions were agreed as set out below.

The Chairman of the Task Group asked those present to give consideration to increasing the size of the Task Group to a nine Member Task Group. The Task Group agreed that the size of the Group be increased and a recommendation would be presented to the Regeneration and Development Panel at its meeting on 30th August 2016.

ACTIONS:

(i) The Housing Services Manager to circulate the supplementary planning document created by Teignbridge.

(ii) The Housing Development Officer to bring forward an analysis of the register to a future meeting of the Task Group including preferred areas and budget etc.

(iii) The Housing Services Manager to contact the National Group which had been set up to help Authorities to formulate their Policies and invite them to a future meeting of the Task Group.

(iv) The Property Services Manager and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets be contacted to discuss Council owned parcels of land which could be considered for self-build plots.

(v) More detail on the Cambridge site to be provided to the Task Group and representatives from South Cambs be invited to a future meeting of the Task Group.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(i) That the Regeneration and Development Panel increase the size of the Task Group from five Members to nine Members.

(ii) The Custom Build and Self Build Policy Development Task Group's Terms of Reference be amended to reflect the increase of Membership.

(iii) That the Group Leaders be contacted by the Democratic Services Officer to ask for their nominations for additional Members to the Task Group.

11 **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

RESOLVED: The schedule of meetings was agreed as follows:

Tuesday 27th September 2016 at 4.00pm in Meeting Room 1.

Tuesday 18th October 2016 at 4.00pm in Meeting Room 1.

Tuesday 15th November 2016 at 4.00pm in Meeting Room 1.

Tuesday 20th December 2016 at 4.00pm in Meeting Room 1.

Tuesday 31st January 2017 at 4.00pm in Meeting Room 1.

12 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none.

13 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Custom Build and Self Build Policy Development Task Group was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 27th September 2016 at 4.00pm in Meeting Room 1, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

The meeting closed at 5.50 pm