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7 July 2020

HOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP

A virtual meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group will be held on Tuesday 21 July 2020 **at 6.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors Bennett (Chairman), Mrs Pendleton (Vice-Chair),
Mrs Cooper, Dendle, Goodheart, Mrs Haywood, Hughes and
Ms Thurston

PLEASE NOTE: *This meeting will be a 'virtual meeting' and any member of the press and public may listen-in and view the proceedings via a weblink which will be publicised on the Council website at least 24 hours before the meeting.*

Different meeting arrangements are in place for the period running from 4 April 2020 to 7 May 2021 from the provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and the meeting regulations 2020, to allow formal 'virtual meetings'.

This Council's revised Rules of Procedures for 'virtual meetings' can be found by clicking on this link: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/constitution>

Any members of the public wishing to address the Cabinet meeting during Public Question Time, will need to email Committees@arun.gov.uk by 5.15 pm on Thursday, 21 May 2020 [due to the Bank Holiday] in line with current Cabinet Procedure Rules. It will be at the Chief Executive's/Chairman's discretion if any questions received after this deadline are considered.

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact: committees@arun.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are reminded to make any declarations of pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda and are reminded that they should re-declare their interest before consideration of the item or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

Members and officer should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the application they have the interest in
- b) whether it is a pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial
- c) the nature of the interest
- d) if it is a prejudicial or pecuniary interest, whether they will be exercising their right to speak to the application

3. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group held on 6 February 2020.

4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

5. START TIMES

The Working Group are required to agree the start times for its meetings for this municipal year 2020 – 2021.

6. CUSTOMER SERVICES ANNUAL UPDATE

(Pages 7 - 22)

This report considers the operation of the services over the last financial year ending March 2020 and identifies emerging trends of operation comparing this with the operation over the previous 5 years.

Members are requested to note this update.

7. **FIRE POLICY & MANAGEMENT PLAN**

(Pages 23 - 68)

This report seeks approval for the adoption of the Fire Safety Policy and Management Plan in respect of Council housing stock.

Housing and Customer Services Working Group is asked to recommend to Cabinet:

- the adoption of the Fire Safety Policy 2020
- the adoption of the Fire Safety Management Plan 2020
- give delegated authority to the Group Head of Residential Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Residential Services to make minor changes to the policy and plan

8. **VOID LETTABLE STANDARD 2020**

(Pages 69 - 82)

This report seeks approval for the adoption of the Void Lettable Standard in respect of Council housing stock.

Housing and Customer Services Working Group is asked to recommend to Cabinet:

- The adoption of the Void Lettable Standard 2020
- Give delegated authority to the Group Head of Residential Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Residential Services to make minor changes to the standard

9. **HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE**

(Pages 83 - 102)

This report sets out progress being made in respect of health and safety in Council owned homes.

Members are requested to note this update.

10. **REPORT BACK FROM CABINET/FULL COUNCIL**

On 9 March 2020 Cabinet reviewed the recommendations put forward by the Working Group in its last meeting held on 6 February 2020.

The first recommendation was at Minute 12 [Asbestos Policy and Management Plan] which would ensure that the Council was able to meet the regulations and requirements set out in the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED - That

- (1) The Asbestos Policy 2020 be adopted;
- (2) The Asbestos Management Plan be adopted;
- (3) Delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Residential Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Residential Services to make minor changes to the Policy and Plan.

The next set of recommendations were at Minute 13 [Tenancy & Lettings Policy] where it had been explained that the Policy presented had been an amalgamation of the previous Tenancy Policy 2012 and Introductory Tenancy Policy 2016. The main driver of the introduction of flexible fixed term tenancies had been to improve better use of housing stock.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The Tenancy and Lettings Policy April 2020 be adopted;
- (2) All current flexible tenancies be converted to secure lifetime tenancies from April 2020;
- (3) Delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Residential Services to make minor changes to the Policy.

The next set of recommendations were at Minute 14 [Pets Policy] where approval was sought to adopt a Pets Policy in respect of the management of the Council's tenancies.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The Pets Policy April 2020 be adopted;
and
- (2) Delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Residential Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for

Residential Services to make minor changes to the Policy.

The next recommendations were at Minute 15 [Empty Homes Update] which sought approval to adopt an updated Enforced Sale Procedure and use of existing funds. Councillor Stanley provided a brief update on the work that had been undertaken in bringing empty homes back into use as a result of the Empty Homes Strategy which had been adopted by Cabinet in 2018 and he applauded the work of the Council's Empty Homes Officer who had just secured the Empty Homes Practitioner of the Year Award.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The updated Enforced Sale Procedure be noted; and
- (2) Delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Technical Services to make changes to the end Enforced Sale Procedure, with a review to take place by the end of 2022; and
- (3) Approval of the use of existing revenue funds identified below for Empty Homes Assistance Programme with any unspent funds to be earmarked at the end of the financial year for:
 - (a) £66k currently earmarked for Empty Homes
 - (b) Unspent receipts from discretionary housing grants repayments (current balance £20k)
 - (c) Unspent receipts up to £44k from disability facilities grant repayments.

Finally, Cabinet was alerted to the last set of recommendations at Minute 16 [Energy Efficiency Strategy].

The Cabinet

RESOLVED

That the Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty Strategy 2020-2025 be adopted.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/047/090320.

11. **WORK PROGRAMME 2020/2021**

(Pages 103 -
104)

To agree the work programme for the Working Group for 2020/21.

Note : Reports are attached for all Members of the Working Group only and the press (excluding exempt items). Copies of reports can be obtained on request from the Committee Manager.

Note : Members are reminded that if they have any detailed questions would they please inform the Chairman and/or relevant Director in advance of the meeting.

Note : Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings - The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. This meeting may therefore be recorded, filmed or broadcast by video or audio, by third parties. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and as available via the following link – [Filming Policy](#)