

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Tuesday, 26 June 2018 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

A R Woolf (Chairman)  
J D McLean (Vice-Chairman)

D Ashby  
J R Astill  
F Biggadike  
L J Eldridge

P C Foyster  
A Harrison  
J L Reynolds  
S-A Slade

E J Sneath  
J Tyrrell

In Attendance: Portfolio Holder – Place, Portfolio Holder – Housing and Health, Place Manager and Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors M D Booth, H Drury, J L King and A M Newton

**1. MINUTES**

Policy Development Panel – 1 May 2018

**AGREED:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Development Panel held on 1 May 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel – 25 January 2018

**AGREED:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel held on 25 January 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel – 24 April 2018

**AGREED:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel held on 24 April 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

There were no declarations of interest.

Action By

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL - 26 June  
2018**

**3. QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 6**

There were none.

**4. TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were no tracking of recommendations to consider.

**5. ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE PERFORMANCE MONITORING  
PANEL**

There were none.

**6. KEY DECISION PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan published on 4 June 2018.

**AGREED:**

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

**7. POLICY REGISTER**

Consideration was given to the Policy Register Dated 13 June 2018

**AGREED:**

That the Policy Register was noted

**8. STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Place which sought to update the Policy Development Panel on the draft revised Street Naming and Numbering Policy.

The Portfolio Holder for Place presented the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Place recognised the longevity of the policy and stated that the biggest opportunity brought by this was the introduction of charges for exercise of consulting with various bodies about proposals for names. It was stated that these charges were not for profit, but simply to reclaim the costs.

Officers added that they welcomed feedback for review of the draft to be ready for the final presentation in September.

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL - 26 June  
2018**

Members stated that they knew of one street that was named differently at either end. Members wanted to know what the policy was on such errors. The Portfolio Holder for Place stated that this should have been rectified at the time of implementation but stated that residents can submit a complaint and the relevant steps can then be taken. He offered to investigate this particular case.

Councillors stated that one of the aims of PDP was to shorten and simplify policies, they therefore stated that they would appreciate seeing some of the unnecessary material cut out. Officers stated that the vast majority of the policy was still relevant and valid, but they asked that members contact them to highlight areas they felt could be cut/simplified.

Members stated that it was a problem with houses having hard-to-find numbers. They therefore asked if a specification could be made to make it so a house had to display a number. Officers and The Portfolio Holder for Place stated that this was already the case, but that here was no regulation to allow a stipulation to be made as to what number should be displayed.

The Chairman advised of some words that were on the list of both acceptable and not acceptable suffixes. Officers stated that they would look into this.

**AGREED:**

- a. That members of the Panel notify officers of any areas of the policy which could be cut or simplified while still maintaining the legal integrity of the document; and
- b. That the final revised policy be considered by Policy Development Panel on 19 September 2018 prior to it being considered by Cabinet.

ES, CB

**9. HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director – Place. Which sought to provide an update to Houses in Multiple Occupation.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health introduced the report. It was stated that the Spalding Voice had featured an article about the prosecution of The Chequers, which it was hoped would prove an example of enforcement

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL - 26 June  
2018**

It was stated that the new regulation was removing the stipulation that a HMO had to be a property which was 3 or more stories.

Phase 1 of the changes was due to begin in October which was when the Policy would be implemented. Landlords who were not previously subject to licenses would not be prosecuted immediately and would have a grace period to obtain a licence. It was stated that some reports would have to go to Council for approval but that, generally, progress was good.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health stated that she would ask that members feed back to officers if they knew of any HMOs

The Chairman stated that he was pleased with the information given

Members asked what happened to individuals living in properties which were prosecuted. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health stated that they would need to vacate the property, as it would be deemed unsafe, but that these people would be pointed toward housing advice and given the necessary support to aid them in finding new accommodation. Officers stated that there was a homelessness team and policies in place to resolve such issues. Officers also stated that when enforcement took place it was hoped to be about making the property owner comply rather than to deny a licence immediately.

Members asked that because the new HMOs would be so difficult to find, if there were any other identifying factors that could be used to find offending properties. Officers stated that they would rely heavily on individuals such as Post Office staff and neighbours and that HMO properties were often uncared for and run-down, more so than neighbouring properties. The Chairman stated that refuse collection staff could also be a valuable resource for identifying such properties.

Members asked a number of questions to Officers;

- How the policy was being publicised.
- If the new figure of 1200 HMOs in the district included the properties which would fall under the new legislation and if these buildings would be written to to inform the owners that they would need to comply; and
- If employment agencies would be notified and told what the changes were.

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL - 26 June  
2018**

Officers stated that they would get back to members with the answers to these questions

ES

Members asked if this policy would include Caravan sites used to house workers. Officers stated that they would not be included and that this was a separate type of license

The Chairman asked when the new legislation would be implemented, the Place Manager stated that the 1<sup>st</sup> phase would begin on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 but that she would get back to Members on this to confirm.

The Chairman asked that the policy document be brought to the meeting in September

**AGREED:**

- a. That the report be noted.
- b. That the Houses in Multiple Occupation policy be brought to the Policy Development Panel on 19 September 2018

ES, DS,  
GW

**10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director – Strategy and Governance which sought to present the draft of the Council’s Equality and Diversity policy to the Policy Development Panel for review.

Officers stated that the last update was in 2013 and that the new draft had been simplified and shortened significantly.

The Vice-Chairman wanted to thank officers for their hard work on the policy with regard to shortening and simplifying the document. The Chairman wished to echo this sentiment.

**AGREED:**

That the Policy Development Panel recommend the draft Equality and Diversity Policy to Cabinet.

**11. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director – Strategy and Governance which sought to present the draft of the Council’s Freedom of Information policy to the Policy Development Panel for review.

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL - 26 June  
2018**

It was stated that the previous review of this policy was in June 2014. The document linked to the relevant act and therefore was simple and short.

The Vice-Chairman wanted to thank officers for their hard work on the policy with regard to shortening and simplifying the document. The Chairman wished to echo this sentiment.

**AGREED:**

That the Policy Development Panel recommend the adoption of the draft Freedom of Information Policy to Cabinet.

**12. POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Manager – Governance, which set out the Work Programme of the Policy Development Panel. The Work Programme consisted of two separate sections, the first setting out the dates of the future Panel meetings along with proposed items for consideration, and the second setting out the Task Groups that had been identified by the Panel.

Public Open Spaces Task Group

The Task Group was expecting that the Senior Planning Lawyer would be at the next meeting to provide information. It was further stated that after this had taken place, the Task Group could be closed.

Data protection

The Data Protection and Retention Task Group was currently on hold but was still active, awaiting a new meeting.

Planning Design

The Portfolio Holder for Place stated that it was hoped that the new local plan would be completed at some point before the end of the year, at which point this Task Group could commence.

HMOs task group

It was agreed that this could be brought off the Work Programme in September after the HMO policy had been presented to PDP. Officers stated a review could take place 6 months after the implementation on 1 October 2018, members agreed that this was a good idea. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL - 26 June  
2018**

said that in September's update, best practice photos could be provided alongside the report.

It was agreed that the HMO policy would be presented to PDP on 19 September 2018.

It was agreed that the HMO policy would be reviewed 6 months after the new legislation was implemented on 1 October 2018.

Leisure Facilities Task Group

Members asked why the leisure facilities Task Group was still on the work programme. The Chairman stated that this was still active and had never gone away. Officers stated that as a holding position a new short term leisure contract was out to tender. This position enables the council to work with local partners to carry out a 'full options appraisal' for long-term provision of leisure services in the district.

Officers stated that the upcoming new leisure contract was far more robust than the previous version which set out clear performance standards to be met by the potential supplier.

Officers stated that tenders were to be submitted in August 2018. Officers agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman would be briefed on any further information after this date.

**AGREED:**

- a. That the HMO policy be presented to PDP on 19 September 2018.
- b. That HMOs Task group be removed from the Work Programme after the HMO policy had been presented to PDP on 19 September 2018.
- c. That the HMO policy be reviewed 6 months after the new legislation was implemented on 1 October 2018; and
- d. That the Work Programme be noted.

DS, ES,  
GW

DS, GW

ES, DS,  
GW

**13. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT.**

There were none

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL - 26 June  
2018**

(The meeting ended at 7.39 pm)

(End of minutes)