
SWALE RAINBOW HOMES SHAREHOLDER SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Monday, 9 September 2024 from 7.00 pm - 7.07 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Ann Cavanagh (substitute for Councillor Kieran Golding), Alastair Gould, Angela Harrison (Chair), Peter Marchington, Hannah Perkin and Karen Watson (Vice-Chair).

OFFICERS PRESENT: Charlotte Hudson and Jo Millard.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (virtually): Councillors Simon Clark, Shelley Cheesman, Kieran Golding, Mike Whiting and Tony Winckless.

OFFICER PRESENT (virtually): Emma Wiggins.

APOLOGY: Councillor Kieran Golding.

217 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

218 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2024 (Minute Nos. 631 - 635) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

219 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

220 SWALE RAINBOW HOMES SHAREHOLDER UPDATE

In introducing the report, the Head of Housing and Communities explained that at the last sub-committee held in February 2024, it was agreed to pause any further work due to viability issues but grant funding opportunities should continue to be sought. She explained that the Swale Rainbow Homes (SRH) Board had continued to meet and planning permission had been granted for the Cockleshell Walk site in May 2024. This had enabled more detailed discussion with Homes England (HE) in respect of grant funding via their affordable homes programme.

The Head of Housing and Communities said the three key areas that were looked at were interest rates, local housing allowance rates and the actual build costs which were provided by the appointed quantity surveyor. HE had confirmed the gap to make the scheme viable was still too large but they encouraged the inclusion of more social housing in the scheme so that a larger grant may be offered. She said that whilst the income stream from social housing would be lower, a higher grant might be offered.

The Head of Housing and Communities said that the unknown variables were the build costs of the scheme, it was common for quantity surveyors to include a tolerance in their estimates, and HE suggested that some costs were high.

In conclusion, the Head of Housing and Communities said the fee to fund the procurement process and construction tender to include more detailed costs such as architectural assessments and surveys, was approximately £65k.

A Member said the process had come so far and the procurement work should be carried out.

Resolved:

(1) That the use of funds to progress the construction tender be approved.

Chair

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel