

06 July 2023 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks



Scrutiny Committee

At the above stated meeting the attached presentations were tabled for the following items

	Pages	Contact
5. Introduction to Scrutiny	(Pages 1 - 6)	Jim Carrington- West Tel: 01732 227286
6. West Kent Housing Association Chief Executive	(Pages 7 - 16)	

The Chief Executive, West Kent Housing Association (WKHA) will be in attendance to answer questions on their service including new housing provision and maintenance of current stock and future challenges.

If you wish to obtain further factual information on any of the agenda items listed above, please contact the named officer prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you need this agenda or any of the reports in a different format, or have any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact Democratic Services on 01732 227000 or democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

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An Introduction to Scrutiny

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July 2023

Agenda Item 5

Membership of the Committee

Part 5 of the Councils Constitution

The Scrutiny Committee will comprise a permanent Chairman and Vice Chairman (appointed by Council), and 9 other elected Members, that follow the political proportionality of the Council.

No Members of the Committee may be members of the Cabinet, their deputies or members of any of the Cabinet Advisory Committees.

The membership of the Committee can be found at Appendix H - Membership of Council Committees, Cabinet and Advisory Committees

Functions of the Scrutiny Committee

Scrutinise the executive (Cabinet)

Invite Portfolio Holders to the Committee to report on their areas

Call-in key decisions

Review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area

Invite external bodies to the Committee

Review performance

Receive regular performance reports

Carry out in-depth Scrutiny

Annual report to Council

Functions of the Scrutiny Committee

Recognise the remit of other Committees e.g. Audit, Governance, Advisory Committees

Policy development and overview is covered by Advisory Committees

Cannot scrutinise quasi-judicial decisions e.g. Planning or Licensing decisions

Invite the Police along once per year to discuss

Work constructively with external organisations

Ask questions in advance of a meeting. Especially if relating to more information around performance reports.

In-Depth Scrutiny

Scrutiny Committee resolve to constitute a working group to look at a particular topic

A clear term of reference should be agreed by the Scrutiny Committee

The Group Chair should be appointed by the Committee

Ordinarily between 3 and 5 Members should form the working group

This can include Members who do not sit on the Committee but not members of the Executive

A degree of admin support can be provided from Officers

The report will be written by Members

Depending on the topic, typically an interim report is provided at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee with a final report to the meeting after

Recommendations that are agreed by the Committee are put to Cabinet for their consideration

Responses from Cabinet to these reports are a standing item on the Scrutiny Committee agenda

WEST KENT HOUSING
ASSOCIATION
&
SEVENOAKS DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Scrutiny Committee
6 July 2023
Tracy Allison, CEO

We have 8,200 homes. All rented below market rent with 74% rented at c40% below market.
72% of the people we housed in 2021/2 are struggling, claiming benefits.



Headlines 2022

Overall Customer Satisfaction; 4.3 out of 5

Achieving arrears of 2.17% (sector average of 3.1)

Responsive repairs service: Improving satisfaction rating at 4.34 out of 5.

Complaints 357 (down), Compliments 436

Launched new communities offer: reshaped team to better support our residents, particularly those in financial hardship.

This included a new team dedicated to providing intensive housing management support and a new fuel poverty role.

75% of our homes already meet EPC band C.

approach, prioritising homes to benefit households most at risk from fuel poverty.

Delivered 148 new homes and have 389 in construction

Reconfirmed

Finalist at UK Housing Awards for development Faversham

**Winner at Kent Housing Group awards
- excellence in development and regeneration
- Julie Terry, Housing Professional of year.**

Communities Offer: success measures

Damp and Mould

From Summer 2022:

Cost of Living concerns- ability to heat homes will impact likelihood damp, mould.
Identified all properties that could be at high risk. Surveyor visits, Green Doctor advice.
Dedicated role. Key measure tracked by Board.

From December 2022:

cases

Where problems found, supply monitors so residents can be aware of humidity
Joined up working with tenancy support- early signs, referrals process working well
Review the use of dehumidifiers and other solutions such as window stickers

Our plans for investment in our current homes

prioritising homes to benefit households most at risk from fuel poverty.

Established a five-year plan that includes expanding our door and window replacement initiatives to align with the preferences of our residents. In 2022 invested

In 2023 we are aiming to replace the windows of 77 homes and 1,266 doors, that works towards our goal of ensuring every home is at EPC C rating by 2030.

Completing detailed review of current homes to understand if they can be modified to meet net zero and would they still be suitable as a social rented home for the next 50 plus years. This will identify homes we will sell as they become empty. The surplus on the sale of any property will be recycled into net zero works.

Challenges:

As yet Sector is unclear what NZC means and standards for new Decent Homes legislation

Upwards pressure on prices



14 new homes Swanley by regeneration

Pear Tree Close (three two-bedroom and one three-bedroom) , Northview (six one-bedroom apartments for

houses) These replace 67 old garages that had reached the end of their life and presented a perfect opportunity for re-development of the site.

Challenges for future pipeline:

47% of Social Housing new homes NATIONALLY come from s106

Ending of S106 will hit our future pipeline

Lack of planning conditions requiring affordable homes will continue to drive up land value

Upwards pressure on prices and loan funding

Opportunities for future pipeline:

Jun 23 Homes England announced seeking pilots to fund regeneration

If we can regenerate existing sites, we can attract grant funding

Expertise to create sustainable homes and re-energise communities

Strategic Partnership Agreement 2020-2023

AIM: to help us delivering on our common ambition for;

- Tackling homelessness and those in temporary accommodation
- Providing new homes for vulnerable / low-income groups
- Pathways from social and affordable rent into home ownership.

Some context;

A 13 year old girl will spend 52 more days a year in school when not in temporary accommodation

Need more social homes not more Temporary Accommodation!

S106: no grant anyway. Shared ownership or market sale provides subsidy

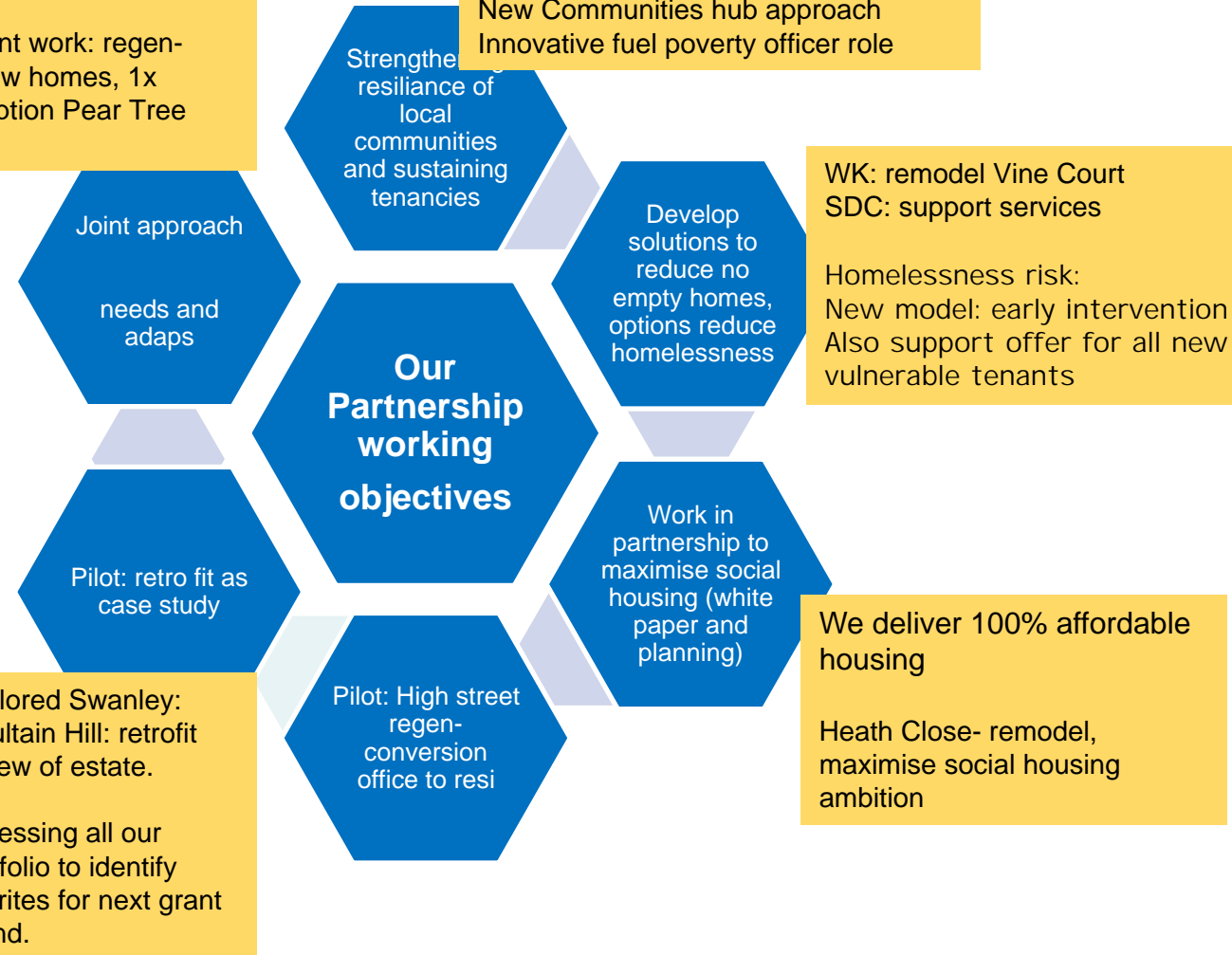
costs and loan interest.

SDC Housing Strategy

Excellent joint work: regen-providing new homes, 1x tailored adaption Pear Tree Close

Covid response/ Cost Living crisis

Swanley pilot : Pride in Neighbourhood
New Communities hub approach
Innovative fuel poverty officer role



Our 2021 Vision for a Partnership Approach for new homes

- progress so far

SDC strategic decision:
Seek to maximise social value potential?

If so; site sequencing potential
Scope; for 400-500 new homes over 5-8 years

SDC planning
rejected

WK bid
unsuccessful