

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSING ADVISORY GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2007

Present:

Gerry Wyld	Slough Borough Council
Paul Abey	Housing Corporation
Graham Ashworth	New Forest District Council
Barbara Compton	Southampton City Council
Michael Crofton-Briggs	Oxford City Council
Yvonne Edgar	Thames Valley Housing
Pete Errington	Home Builders Federation
Dick Feasey	Kent County Council
Ian Haynes	Milton Keynes Council
Chris Kenneford	Buckinghamshire County Council
Adrian Maunders	Guildford Borough Council
Sunethra Mendis	GOSE
Sharon Smith	Regional Housing Forum Chair
Barbara Thorndick	West Kent Housing Association
Ian Walker	Oxfordshire County Council
Alison Bailey	South East England Regional Assembly
June Cass	South East England Regional Assembly
Catriona Riddell	South East England Regional Assembly
Cath Stubbings	South East England Regional Assembly
Dominick Veasey	South East England Regional Assembly

1. Apologies for absence:

Gerry Wyld opened the meeting and informed the Group that due to apologies from Leigh Herington he had been asked to act as chairman.

There were no other apologies.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

2.1 Sharon Smith requested it be noted that her apologies had not been recorded on the Minutes of the previous meeting. The Minutes were agreed subject to that change.

2.2 There were two matters arising not otherwise on the agenda:

- Cath Stubbings advised that the report of the RHF Overcrowding Sub Group was still being finalised. It will be reported to the Advisory Group's next meeting. In reply to a question as to how the timing of the report would influence the Regional Housing Strategy and funding submission, she stated that the main points from the report had already been taken into account by the Regional Housing Board.
- Alison Bailey advised that the Regional Monitoring Report had been to the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) and was due to be published in June.

3. Membership Update

- 3.1 Robin Edwards has now retired and the Assembly are working to replace his expertise. The Demography Sub Group does not currently have any meetings scheduled.
- 3.2 Peter Shadbolt has left Surrey County Council and resigned from the Advisory Group. He will be replaced on the Advisory Group by Ian Walker from Oxfordshire County Council.
- 3.4 The Assembly has recruited Mark Williams to work on planning for housing, including Gypsies and Travellers. He will take up the post on 4 June.

4. PPS 3: Housing

- 4.1 Catriona Riddell explained that the Regional Assembly was looking to arrange a series of workshops to consider the implementation of PPS 3. The workshops would be aimed at local authority planners, and if possible, arranged to group authorities on a geographical basis. The involvement of CLG, GOSE and PINs would be important.
- 4.2 The Group discussed the forthcoming CLG advice on strategic housing land availability assessments. Pete Errington offered to find out more about the steering group that had been established to oversee the preparation of the advice and likely timetable. The latter would determine whether the Assembly's proposed workshops could have any impact on the content of the guidance.
- 4.3 The Group considered how strategic housing market assessments should be dealt with at the workshops. Alison Bailey reported that work to update the previous DTZ analysis of housing market areas was in its very early stages. There was currently no brief, but likely timescale for reporting was at least six months.
- 4.4 The Group made the following points on timing and content of the workshops:
 - best timing is 10:00 am to 4:00 pm;

- they should not focus on more than 2 to 3 issues;
- SHMAs should be taken forward separately, but it would be useful if awareness of the work planned by the Assembly could be raised at the workshops;
- Graham Ashworth, Ian Haynes and Dick Feasey offered to assist with the workshop planning.

Action:

- **Pete Errington to seek further information on the steering group overseeing preparation of the housing land availability guidance.**

5. National Planning Housing Advice Unit

- 5.1 Catriona Riddell reported that Kevin Williamson from the National Planning Housing Advice Unit (NPHAU) would be giving a presentation at RHB on 14 May. The main focus of the Unit appears to be the Affordability Model developed by Reading University, along with a planned programme of quantitative and qualitative research.

6. DTZ Housing Type and Size Research

- 6.1 Alison Bailey reported that the Housing Type and Size research had been presented to RPC in March. It had been stressed to RPC that the presentation was the start rather than the end of a process, and there is a commitment to go back to RPC with proposals on how to respond to the consultants' recommendations on planning. In the meantime, the RHB will be considering a report on the consultants' recommendations most relevant to housing policy on 14 May.
- 6.2 The Group discussed the recommendations. It was agreed that the Assembly would develop some thoughts on next steps on the planning related recommendations and circulate these to the Advisory Group for comment.

Action:

- **The Regional Assembly to circulate a note for comment.**

7. Affordable Housing Monitoring Update

- 7.1 Dick Feasey reported that the Regional Assembly had established a small group of experts to work with the consultants Three Dragons to advise on improving the evidence base on affordable housing delivery. The output would be a new data request to be sent out as part of the Assembly's annual survey of housing supply. The data request will be accompanied by extensive guidance notes and

supporting information developed with valuable input from the Housing Corporation, CLG and a number of local authorities in the region. The deadline for return of the data will be 28th September 2007.

8. South East Plan Update

- 8.1 Catriona Riddell provided an update on the anticipated timetable for the South East Plan. The Panel report is expected to be completed by the end of July.

9. Regional Housing Strategy Update

- 9.1 The Regional Housing Strategy review consultation ends on 27 April. During the consultation period there has been opinion-polling and focus groups run by Ipsos-MORI, as well as five workshop-style events across the region. Analysis of the responses will be carried out during the two weeks following the end of the consultation period, with an initial report to the RHB on 14 May and input to the draft funding submission which will be considered by the Board on 20 June.

10. Gypsies & Travellers Update

- 10.1 Dominick Veasey updated the Group on the progress of the Assembly's work relating to Gypsies and Travellers. The Gypsy and Traveller Officer Task Group held on 17 April confirmed that the region's Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Assessments are almost complete and will feed into the Partial Review process.
- 10.2 The Assembly will shortly be receiving existing site data from local authorities which will be used to develop a regional database and GIS map of authorised sites within the region. This database will also assist the RHB in determining site bid applications and local authorities.
- 10.3 The Assembly will discuss at the next English Regions Network meeting the potential to undertake some work with other Regional Assemblies looking at transit needs and Travelling Showpeople accommodation needs.

11. Any Other Business

- 11.1 The Group agreed that it would like to combine future meetings with visits.

Action:

- **Volunteers prepared to host a meeting to advise Alison Bailey.**

- 12. **Date of next meeting:** 23rd July 2007 at 2:00 pm.

(The meeting was subsequently re-arranged for Thursday 26th July at 10.00 am).