

Crawley Borough Council

Cabinet

Supplementary Agenda

Wednesday, 8 March 2023



Chief Executive

6 Matters referred to the Cabinet and Report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

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Attached is a copy of the OSC Comments to Cabinet from its meeting on: 6 March 2023.

NOTE: The Leader has agreed that, although this report and information was not available for at least five clear days before the meeting, there are special circumstances justifying its urgent consideration.



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Agenda Item 6

Cabinet Wednesday 8 March 2023

Comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on Monday 6 March 2023 OSC/309

1. Cabinet Agenda Item 7 – Tenancy Policy Crawley Homes

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report [CH/199](#) of the Head of Crawley Homes. During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Head of Crawley Homes, the following comments were made:

- Recognition that from 1 April 2023 all new Council tenants would be offered secure periodic tenancies. Existing flexible tenants would be offered a new secure periodic tenancy to replace their flexible tenancy, the grant of these new tenancies to take place over a two year period commencing 1 April 2023. It was confirmed that introductory flexible tenancies would be phased out using the provisions of section 103 of the Housing Act 1985. This was a prescribed process to be followed should the policy be approved.
- It was noted the phase out was resource intensive and a 2 year period offered stability during the transition and would not require additional finances to administer. The phasing out process of introductory flexible tenancies was discussed in detail together with clarification provided on the communication methods and publicity required for tenants including letters, social media, and newsletters.
- Recognition that the Council has had limited success to date creating opportunities for best use of stock through the review process at the end of the tenancy fixed term. Only a small percentage (less than 30%) of the Council's stock has been let on a flexible tenancy and there was a limited number of those tenancies that have been subject to review to date.
- Acknowledgement flexible tenancies presented the Council with a number of difficulties and/or challenges associated with ongoing management. However, despite the number of management challenges there were also benefits to the Council of offering flexible tenancies, including the opportunity of rightsizing households at the end of the fixed term although such outcomes had been limited to date but over the longer term this pattern could change.
- Confirmation that downsizing can be difficult to achieve other than through negotiation or incentive and further details on the incentive scheme were provided. Opportunities for financial incentives together with other options (such as property condition and repair) were being investigated as it was important to enable movement within the housing register. Additional information was provided with regards to under-occupation, mutual exchange, and the potential for lodgers.
- Recognition that whilst benchmarking with other local authorities had not taken place directly it was observed that other landlords had taken similar decision routes.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

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2. Cabinet Agenda Item 9 – Waste and Recycling Contract Extension

(Exempt Paragraph 3)

Information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report HPS/34 of the Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services.

During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability and the Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services, the following comments were made:

- Acknowledgement that the proposal enabled the Council the continuity of the waste and recycling service and would ensure the waste vehicle fleet was operating efficiently and fit for purpose. The procurement of a new waste vehicle fleet with a view to new vehicles coming into operation at the beginning of the extension period in February 2024 would assist in maintaining the delivery of service benefits to residents.
- Recognition that the arrangement enabled the Council to assess options for making amendments to the local waste collection arrangements in response to the National Waste Strategy which the Government had indicated would be released in the 'near future'. The Council's target to net zero was highlighted and it would be important to consider the environmental factors and any impact.
- Support for a further report to OSC once the National Waste Strategy was known indicating proposals for the Council's collection regime.
- Confirmation that an options analysis had been considered as part of the vehicle fleet and was reference within the report. However, clarification was sought about the specifics documented within the proposals. It was moved by Councillor Pritchard (seconded by Councillor Ayling) that the specific options analysis be compiled and sent to Cabinet for its consideration. A vote was taken and upon being put to the Commission, the proposal was declared as carried.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet, with the additional recommendation above.

Councillor T Belben
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Commission
6 March 2023