

54. Portfolio Holder under Scrutiny - Quality Housing

Donald Nannestad, Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing:

- a) advised that performance data for service areas which came under his portfolio covered the Council's own housing stock, regulation of private sector housing and health
- b) highlighted those major changes since his last report had been the Regulator of Social Housing (ROSH) expanding to cover local authorities from 1 April this year and policy announcements by Government since the July General Election
- c) reported that in terms of Government announcements, the changes in Right to Buy would help, however, in the period between the autumn statement and the deadline for applications to be made under the previous system, over 90 applications were received which was the equivalent to the number which would normally be sold in around two years.
- d) presented his report to Performance Scrutiny Committee providing an insight into key activities and achievements during the past twelve months, covering the following main areas:
 - Homelessness
 - Tenancy Services
 - Voids
 - Housing Repairs
 - Housing Investment
 - New Build
 - Decarbonisation
 - Control Centre
 - Private Sector Housing
 - Health
- e) extended his thanks to the team of officers that supported his Portfolio for their hard work, dedication and commitment to supporting the residents of Lincoln
- f) invited members' comments and questions.

Question: Why did Park and Carholme wards have the highest number of complaints regarding dis-repair?

Response: Complaints were received from private and rented accommodation. Park and Carholme ward were the two wards with the biggest numbers of private and rented properties which was reflected in the number of complaints.

Question: Who carried out the inspections of City of Lincoln Council properties?

Response: The Council had entered into a contractual agreement with an external contractor to undertake stock condition surveys. A small number of unresponsive surveys would be undertaken by existing City Council employees.

Question: What was the Lincoln Home Standard?

Response: The Lincoln Home Standard was developed locally by the Lincoln Tenants Panel (LTP) to agree to some enhancement of homes. It was being reviewed in anticipation to decent homes round two which included exploring different floor coverings if a property became void. Local enhancement on decent homes was in the process of being reviewed but wasn't yet complete. A report would be submitted to a future Portfolio Holder meeting on the management of homes for customers.

Question: If the inspections were undertaken by a contractor, how much would it cost?

Response: To complete and independent 20% stock condition survey of the stock, it would cost around £137,000.

Following a brief discussion on the matter, Gary Hewson, Chair of Performance Scrutiny Committee raised concerns in relation to health in the city and highlighted that every year the statistics showed that regionally and nationally it was very poor.

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing explained that there were a number of reasons for this but the main issue was due to the lack of support services and NHS funds. The best way to access information currently was through e-gyms as it enabled officers to measure statistics more closely. There also needed to be improvements through the primary care trusts and mental health services.

The Chair concluded the item, and on behalf of the Committee made a recommendation to the Executive expressing its concerns around health and requested that they view the current Health statistics and liaise with the Local MP with a view to receiving suggestions on what improvements could be made locally.

RESOLVED that:

- a) Performance Scrutiny Committee submit a recommendation to the Executive to review the current health statistics and liaise with the Local MP on what improvements could be made locally.
- b) The content of the report be noted with thanks.