

Brierley Hill Area Committee - Thursday 8th November 2012

Report of the Director of Adult, Community & Housing Services

Beech Road, Kingswinford

Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on issues relating to a specific area in Beech Road. A site made up of ground floor shops, maisonettes above and a garage block.

Background

2. To summarise the report of 28th June; the issues that concerned Members were the disused shops (only one operates as a convenience store) vandalism and fly tipping. It was noted that despite ongoing issues the properties remain popular (largely because of the location) and one maisonette is owned.
3. It was noted that Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) had looked at the site but did not consider it as a viable development site.
4. Members requested that a feasibility study was undertaken.

Current Position

5. Weekly visits are made to the location to address any issues that may have arisen and in particular anything associated with Health & Safety. The Housing Manager makes spot checks when in the area.
6. It is recognised that remedial work to the block would not address the issues highlighted earlier in this report. We are currently exploring with the Police, their offer of assistance (through the Payback scheme), with the cutting back and clearing of overgrown vegetation.
7. It is intended that before plans and costings can be made public that consultation should first take place with the residents who are directly affected.
8. The new HRA (Housing Revenue Account) regime places the Council in a different position and able to take some decisions locally. Cabinet has already taken the decision to replace right to buy sales with new build properties accepting that it is unlikely to be like for like and accepting that receipts will need to be pooled and potentially added to, to make any programme viable.

9. The way forward and in line with the Council's agenda to increase the supply of affordable social homes, will be that all potential development sites (of which Beech Road could be one) will be assessed with decisions taken on a site by site basis to determine property mix.

Finance

10. Right to buy receipts and budgetary provision to be made with the HRA capital programme will determine the level of new build activity.

Law

11. Provisions relating to the Council housing stock are contained in the Housing Act 1985.

Equality Impact

12. This report in itself has no implications for equality impact. A new build programme would necessitate an Equality Impact Assessment.

Recommendation

13. Members are asked to note the contents of the report.



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On behalf of Andrea Pope-Smith
Director of Adult, Community & Housing Services

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