

Minutes of last City Regions Board meeting

City Regions Board

Friday, 15 March 2024

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as [Appendix A](#)

Item	Decisions and actions
------	-----------------------

1 Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes, Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed Members, officers and guests to the meeting.

Apologies were received by Cllrs Brock, Merry, Hunt and Gannon. Cllrs Penberthy, Kemp and Hale attended the meeting as substitutes.

Cllr Penberthy declared a personal interest which related to item 3 on the agenda. He was a Director of PEC Homes.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

3 Strategic Housing Discussion

The Chair welcomed **Cllr James Jamieson OBE, Member of the Government Older People's Housing Taskforce (OPHT), Gary Orr, Chief Executive of the Abri Group, Jordan Rosenhaus, CEO of TopHat, and Andrew Shepperd, Managing Director of TopHat**, to the meeting.

The Chair invited **Cllr James Jamieson OBE** to address the Board to update Members on the OPHT's emerging findings and to share his own views in a personal capacity. He included the following points in his update:

- It was projected that there would be over 20 million people aged 65+ by 2066.
- Approximately 6% of the 65+ age group live in supported housing and less than 1% in housing with care.
- Most people aged 65+ lived in energy-inefficient homes and homes with poor access.
- 9 in 10 people aged 65+ were living in underoccupied homes.

- In the last year, approximately 7,000 retirement homes had been built and approximately 200,000 homes.
- Issues related to social isolation and loneliness were more prevalent in older people living in their own home.
- Local authorities saved approximately £2,000 annually for every apartment which had been designed for older people.
- Accommodation for older people in town centres added approximately £15,000 economic benefit to the town.
- The importance of clarity, embedding a people-centred approach, good leadership and partnership at a local and system level, was emphasised.
- The need to ensure that all housing was suitably designed for later life and creating age-friendly and dementia inclusive communities, was expressed.

Members made the following contributions:

- A suggestion was made which related to stamp duty and the possibility of reducing or eliminating stamp duty for older people.
- The importance of considering health-related issues on an individual basis was recognised.
- In relation to underoccupancy, a question was asked regarding local government's role in increasing provision of sheltered and assisted living.
- The importance of appropriate transport links close by to sheltered and assisted living facilities, was emphasised.
- The need to consider age limits and ensure that such accommodation remained a desirable place to live, was expressed.
- The opportunity to regenerate wider communities was highlighted.
- The importance of retrofitting, community-led housing and implementing planning policies, was emphasised.
- A suggestion was made which related to potential financial compensation for older people moving out of their current homes to make space for younger families.

Cllr Jamieson thanked Members for their contributions and responded to their comments and questions.

The Chair invited **Gary Orr** to present a series of slides to Members which related to the work of Abri Housing Association. The presentation slides set out the following information:

- Abri Housing Association background information
- Asset count
- The housing context
- Operating environment
- Good practice that Abri could share
- Homes England
- Strengthening housing association and local authority relationships
- The key policy priorities the next steps which government should address

Members made the following contributions:

- A question was asked which related to funding for well-designed new build housing.
- A concern was raised regarding the lack of available land.
- Members shared personal experiences related to the work of their local authority.

Gary thanked Members for their contributions and responded to their comments and questions.

The Chair invited **Andrew Shepperd** to present a series of slides to Members which related to the work of TopHat. The presentation slides set out the following information:

- The TopHat mission
- Traditional UK housebuilding facing major structural challenges
- Customisable houses and apartments
- Advanced manufacturing facilities
- Factory 2 status
- Façade styles
- Embodied carbon lifecycle assessment
- Zero bills
- Case studies
- UK Project pipeline

Members made the following contributions:

- Questions were asked which related to the following points:
 - the lifespan of the houses
 - the impact on residents, skills and workforce
 - infill and viability
 - timescales
 - new build delays and speeding up processes
 - retrofitting existing properties
 - support methods from local authorities
 - tackling remediation-related issues
- A concern was raised which related to the mix of materials used.
- The importance of carbon initiatives was recognised.
- Members shared personal experiences related to the work of their local authorities.

Andrew thanked Members for their contributions and responded to their comments and questions.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

4 City Regions Policy Updates

This item was noted without discussion.

5 Work Local

The Chair introduced the report and asked Members for their contributions.

Members made the following contributions:

- The importance of clarity regarding a structured, national framework and its outcomes, was emphasised.
- In reference to point 12 within the report, the need for a further discussion in relation to the direction of the economy and the agenda for an industrial strategy, was expressed.
- The importance of delivering lasting, long-term benefit at a local level, was emphasised.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

6 Transporting Economic Inclusion

Due to time constraints, the Board agreed that a workshop be held in April or May to ensure that the topic could be discussed in detail.

7 Future Growth Funding

Due to time constraints, the Board agreed that a workshop be held in April or May to ensure that the topic could be discussed in detail.

8 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Integration

Due to time constraints, this item was adjourned to a future meeting of the Board.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Satvir Kaur	Southampton City Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Gareth Roberts	Richmond upon Thames London Borough Council
	Cllr Martin Fodor	Bristol City Council

Members	Cllr Bella Sankey Cllr Nazia Rehman Cllr Nadine Peatfield Cllr Fran Belbin Cllr John Cotton Cllr David Mellen Cllr Ross Garrod Cllr Liam Robinson Cllr Barry Anderson Cllr Julia Lepoidevin Cllr Antony Mullen Cllr Michael Ross Cllr Geraldine Coggins	Brighton and Hove City Council Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council Derby City Council Sheffield City Council Birmingham City Council Nottingham City Council Merton London Borough Liverpool City Council Leeds City Council Coventry City Council Sunderland City Hull City Council Trafford Council
Apologies	Cllr Jason Brock Cllr John Merry CBE Cllr Anthony Hunt Cllr Martin Gannon	Reading Borough Council Salford City Council Torfaen County Borough Council Gateshead Council
In Attendance	Cllr Chris Penberthy Cllr Daren Hale Cllr Nick Kemp	Plymouth City Council Hull City Council Newcastle City Council