

Item 3

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET

Conference Room 1,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Thursday,
21 September 2006

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor R.S. Fleming (Chairman) and
Councillors Mrs. A.M. Armstrong, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Hodgson,
D.A. Newell and R.A. Patchett

In Attendance: Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. B.A. Clare, V. Crosby,
Mrs. A.M. Fleming, G.C. Gray, Mrs. J. Gray, D.M. Hancock,
J.G. Huntington, G. Morgan, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, A. Smith and T. Ward

Apologies: Councillors M. Iveson, K. Noble and W. Waters

CAB.75/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Members had no interests to declare.

CAB.76/06 MINUTES
The Minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.77/06 CHANGES TO HOUSING LAW LEGISLATION
Consideration was given to a report regarding the changes that had been introduced by the Housing Act 2004 and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The Housing Act 2004 implemented new recovery provisions under the Right to Buy scheme, in particular the use of discretionary powers on repayment of discount. The changes were designed to tackle profiteering and lessen the impact of Right to Buy sales on the availability of affordable housing.

Section 179 of the 2004 Act enabled introductory tenancies to be extended for a further six months beyond the initial twelve months. Statutory Instrument 2006 No.1077 The Introductory Tenancies (Review of Decisions to Extend a Trial Period)(England) Regulations 2006 set out the tenant's entitlement to request an oral hearing and how the right would be exercised.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 enabled Local Authorities to deal more effectively with anti-social behaviour, including powers to demote a secure tenancy and to obtain Anti-Social Behaviour Injunctions.

- RESOLVED :**
- (1) *That the new provisions concerning Right to Buy, demoted tenancies, extension of introductory tenancies and Anti-Social Behaviour Injunctions be noted.*
 - (2) *That comprehensive policy and procedural guidance be prepared jointly by Officers of the Housing Department and Legal Section, in consultation with appropriate Tenant Groups and other stakeholders. A draft of the policy and procedural guidance to be presented to Cabinet for consideration no later than 11th January 2007.*
 - (3) *Following the adoption of the policy and procedural guidance, appropriate training be provided on the legislation detailed in the report, directed specifically at Officers, and specialised training be provided for Housing Review Panel Members.*

CAB.78/06 CONFERENCES

The Leader of the Council presented a report (for copy see file of Minutes) regarding the Council's representation at the following:

- 5th Annual Assembly of the Standards Committees, Birmingham – 16th – 17th October 2006.
- Westminster Briefing, London 5th December 2006

- RESOLVED :**
1. *That the Council be represented at the 5th Annual Assembly of Standards Committees by two Members of Council, together with the Solicitor to the Council and Principal Assistant Solicitor.*
 2. *That the Lead Member together with the Community Safety Manager represent the Council at the one day Westminster Briefing.*

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Gillian Garrigan, on Spennymoor 816166 Ext 4240

Published on 21st September 2006.

These Minutes contain no key decisions and will be implemented immediately.