

Meeting Date: 19th July 2022

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Place Panel Chairman's Report – Councillor James Bainbridge**

Place Panel 16th June 2022

The first meeting of the Place Panel took place with an emphasis on housing matters.

The first area was an update from Riverside Housing Association regarding the upcoming scope and scale of their intentions to expand and a review of the operation in the last year. Beyond the usual statistics that one would anticipate with such a presentation, the previous year has seen an active expansion in the group both locally (with the completion of the takeover of the financially troubled Impact Group) and the 'complementary partnership' with One Housing Group, a 16,000 unit housing group based primarily in London and the South East.

Of important note to Carlisle, is the intention of Riverside to increase the number of units it owns through the St Cuthbert's Garden Village project and in the re-development of the most westerly section of their Morton estate which will see existing housing redeveloped and revamped as opposed to the traditional use of Section 106 to expand the portfolio. The cost of this 10-year scheme at £35 million is significant, as is the present funding gap of £18 million to this scheme, hence their need for the support of the Council to "act as the bridge" to the funding gap. It will be interesting to see how our successor authority approaches the present dialogue to this project in nine months' time.

Members may be aware through their casework of the recent changes made to the Cumbria Choice Based Lettings Scheme. The intention of the new policy is to make it clearer and simplified in terms of a new banding structure. Management once on the scheme, will require customer led involvement, with activity needed to remain on the list each year. It is early days in the new system with it only just going live prior to the meeting. The Officer has agreed to come back to the Panel with a six-month review which will be eagerly awaited.

Following this, the Officer presented an update on the delivery of the homeless prevention and rough sleeping strategy. Members may be aware that one aspect of this wide-

ranging report was reported locally. Of note the largest reason for homelessness in Carlisle remains the impact of family breakdown. Carlisle's management of its homelessness policy remains strongly ahead of the other districts and has certainly sought to build upon the increased attention that homelessness has received during the pandemic, rather than treading water in the post pandemic world.

We also used the opportunity of our first meeting to further set out the agenda for the future year.

Full details of the discussions are to be found within the Minute Book

Cllr James Bainbridge
Chairman