



MEETING OF THE  
COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

25 JANUARY 2011

PRESENT:-

P.M. Posnett (Chairman)  
M.C.R. Graham MBE, P.M. Chandler  
S. Dungworth, M.R. Sheldon  
J. Wyatt, D.R. Wright

Strategic Director (KA)  
The Head of Communities  
Chief Accountant, Neighbourhood Regeneration Manager  
Customer Insight Officer (LG), Democracy Officer (DB)

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C44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor's Dean, Freer and Holt.

C45. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2010 and the Special Meeting held on 27 October 2010 were approved and authorised to be signed by the chairman.

C46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Posnett declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in any matters related to Leicestershire County Council due to her role as a County Councillor.

C47. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL AND OTHER COMMITTEES

Meeting of the Council : 15 December 2010 : Petition

***RESOLVED*** that receipt of the petition be noted and that it be referred to the next meeting of the Community and Social Affairs Committee on 25 January 2011.

A Petition was received on 3 December 2010 from Rebecca Vickers which contained 42 signatories and stated the following :-

'We the undersigned want to stop the street dance lessons price being increased and believe that it was worthwhile for the Council to continue funding the sessions. It is worthwhile for the council to fund these lessons because they are very popular, improve our fitness, keep us active and are fun!'

The Head of Communities confirmed that at the time the petition was received there was some uncertainty about funding, but now funding had been secured until the end of March 2011. A new initiative would be working alongside Active Melton to seek an extension to this funding.

C48. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 31 DECEMBER 2010

The Chief Accountant submitted a report on behalf of the Head of Central Services (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members.) to update the Committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 31 December 2010.

**RESOLVED** that

(1) the progress made on each capital scheme be noted;

**RECOMMENDED** that

(1) approval be sought from the Policy, Finance and Administration Committee for an increase of £35,000 to the authorised level of spending in respect of Decent Homes Grants;

(2) the changes to the authorised spending in respect of the Housing Revenue Account capital programme (detailed within the Committee report) be approved.

C49. REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2011-12 – HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

The Chief Accountant submitted a joint report on behalf of the Head of Central Services (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) to set the rents of Council dwellings, approve the Housing Revenue Account estimates for 2011-12 and set the working balance for 2011-12.

**RESOLVED** that

(1) an average rent increase of 6.30% for Council dwellings for 2011-12 with effect from 4 April 2011 be approved and that when a property was re-let the rent be brought in to line with the Government's formula rent;

(2) the estimates for 2011-12 be approved;

(3) A working balance of £257,650 was budgeted for at 31 March 2012 based on an average 6.30% rent increase.

C50. APPROVAL TO IMPLEMENT A CHARGED COMMUNAL CLEANSING SCHEME FOR COUNCIL TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS (FLATS ONLY)

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Manager submitted a report on behalf of the Head of Communities (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members to seek approval to implement a cleansing contract and seek approval to go out to tender to seek the most competitive price.

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Manager that :-

- the proposed charges were fair in comparison to other Local Authorities
- they had heavily consulted with the Tenant's Forum Executive Committee who expressed that they were opposed to the charge

Members raised the following issues/concerns :-

- why the rules in the Tenant Hand Book (in relation to cleanliness) were not being enforced
- that a fair and consistent approach should be followed
- if all the flats could be brought up to the standard at St John's Court
- that the flats needed to be clean otherwise there would be a problem with void properties

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) Melton Borough Council implement a cleansing programme at a charge of £1.50 per property per week;
- (2) the charge be reviewed annually.

C51. FEES AND CHARGE ADJUSTMENTS 2011

The Head of Communities submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members to seek Members determination in regard to three proposed fees and charges changes for 2011/12, for which further investigation and or information was requested by a previous meeting of this Committee and that were not approved as part of the programmed fee and charge annual review process.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) Pitch hire charged (as set out in the Committee report) be approved;
- (2) Cemetery record searches (as set out in the Committee report) be approved;
- (3) Community Centre room charges (as set out in the Committee report) be approved.

C52. APPROVAL TO INVESTIGATE VIABILITY OF A HOUSING FOYER SCHEME FOR THE BOROUGH OF MELTON

The Head of Communities submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) to seek Member approval for Officers to investigate with partner agencies the need and viability of a Foyer Housing Scheme (Supported Living for 16-25 year olds) for the Borough of Melton.

The Head of Communities stated that :-

- the scheme aimed to look at early intervention
- they went to visit a successful Foyer scheme in Wisbech
- The ring fence for supporting people had been removed
- a clear need for funding needed to be demonstrated

Members raised the following issues/concerns :-

- If the Supporting People scheme was to be removed
- If there was the necessary demand for the scheme

**RESOLVED** that permission be granted to the Head of Communities to lead on research into the viability of a Foyer Scheme for the Borough and to report back to the Community and Social Affairs Committee the outcome of this work.

C53. COUNCIL HOUSING CAR PARKING – TOWN CENTRE FLATS

The Head of Communities submitted a report (copies of which were previously been circulated to Members) to allow Members to make a decision as whether or not to implement an enforceable car parking permit scheme for the Housing Revenue Account car parks in Melton Mowbray Town Centre.

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Manager stated that :-

- visitor permits could be issued (with a time limit) that would be allocated to a property
- garages not earmarked for sale were being let
- the car parks had been resurfaced and were now of a very high standard
- the permits could be posted to residents or could be collected from Community Centres
- it may be necessary to report the uptake of the scheme on an annual basis

Members raised the following issues/concerns :-

- if residents could choose not to have a permit
- where residents could collect the permits from
- maintenance of the car park
- preventing fraudulent use of the permits
- the use of empty garages
- the cost of administering the scheme
- if negotiations could take place with Leicestershire County Council about the cost of the permit

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the introduction of a chargeable car parking permit scheme (to be administered by Leicestershire County Council at a cost of £30 per permit to the resident) be approved;
- (2) Delegated authority be granted to the Head of Communications in consultation with the Chairman of the Community and Social Affairs Committee to scrutinise the cost of the permit provided by Leicestershire County Council.

C54. **IMPROVING HOUSING SERVICES UPDATE**

The Head of Communities submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) to update and provide Members with a copy of the response made to a recent consultation document issued by Communities and Local Government '*Local Decisions : A Fairer Future for Social Housing*' and to note the Housing Improvement Plan.

**RESOLVED** that :-

- (1) the response made to the recent consultation 'Local decisions: a fairer future for Social Housing' be noted;
- (2) the Housing Revenue Account Improvement plan update be noted.

C55. **2011/12 HOUSING REVENUE CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Head of Communities submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) to seek approval for a Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme from 2011-14 to ensure improvements to our current housing stock was maintained.

**RESOLVED** that the Capital Programme for 2011-14 be approved.

C56. **URGENT ITEM**

There were no urgent items.

**EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that the Public be excluded during the consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (Access to Information : Exempt Information) under paragraph 3.

C57. SHORT-TERM EXTENSION OF HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE

The Head of Communities submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) for Members to seek approval to extend the Council's current Housing Responsive Maintenance Contract.

**RESOLVED** that the

- (1) the implementation of a 6 month extension to the current Responsive Maintenance Contract that the Council had with Jeakins Weir Ltd be approved;
- (2) delegated authority be granted to the Head of Communities, in consultation with the Head of Central services, to negotiate the terms for the extension

The meeting which commenced at 6.30 p.m. closed at 8.20 p.m.

Chairman