

RURAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

16 MARCH 2011

PRESENT:-

Councillors N.R.G. Angrave (Chairman),
P. Baguley, G.E. Botterill, A. Freer, E. Holmes,
T. Moncrieff, J.B. Rhodes, N. Slater

Head of Central Services, Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods,
Head of Regulatory Services, Principal Policy Officer, Democracy Officer (EG)

R37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Graham MBE, Moore-Coltman and D.E. Orson.

R38. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2010 and the special meeting held on 20 December 2010 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

A Member raised a concern that exempt papers were not issued to Members who were not Members of the Committee and asked that this be considered in future.

R39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

R40. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other Committees.

R41. FUTURE JOBS FUND

The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which informed the Committee of the success of the Future Jobs Fund and provided an evaluation of the project as it approached its conclusion.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

R42. **RESPONDING TO SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS**

The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which sought approval of a Service Level Agreement between the Council and Leicestershire County Council for the provision of labour in exchange for salt and spreading equipment during Severe Weather conditions and to seek approval from Members for the Melton Severe Weather Procedure.

A Member expressed concern that farm snow ploughs were not being utilised as they had been in the past and should be considered in order to tackle the snowfall as soon as it arrived.

The Principal Policy Officer stated that a request for improvement of communication would be issued and it would be noted that the service of snow ploughs was still available.

A Member suggested that the salt depot was to close. The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods stated that he would obtain clarification with regard to any proposed closure.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the joint Gritting Service Level Agreement be approved;
- (2) the Melton Severe Weather Procedure be noted.

(Councillor Rhodes requested that his abstention from voting be recorded.)

R43. **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT UPDATE (BID)**

The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which gave an update on the BID project and asked Members to consider whether they would like to vote in support of the Melton Mowbray BID.

Members discussed the costs involved. The Chairman stated that the Council would benefit as he considered that it would generate a lot of activity if the project was set up.

Concern was expressed that the BID would result in an additional £7k of support to the town centre and we should look to find savings elsewhere due to the budget pressures.

Concern was raised that businesses, if they considered it would add value, would feel they did not have the backing of the Council if the Council decided not to vote in the ballot.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the responsibility for voting in the BID ballot be delegated to the Head of Central Services in consultation with the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods;
- (2) the BID in Melton Mowbray be supported.

(Councillors Holmes and Moncrieff requested that their vote against the preceding decision be recorded.)

R44. **DRAFT MELTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2011**

The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which brought to Members the Draft Melton Local Development Scheme 2011.

Councillor Rhodes stated that

- He was concerned about the amount of time it had taken to arrive at this stage
- He considered that the Localism Bill would have an effect and suggested a review after the Bill had been introduced to consider the Council's position
- Some things which were in the strategy had caused problems, for example only building small dwellings in the countryside which he considered a lot of Parish Councils were unhappy about
- More flexibility was needed as he considered affordable homes were not always 2 bed homes
- At a recent community forum it had emerged that a meeting with the Chair of Bottesford Parish Council had been arranged to discuss green spaces which the Ward Councillor had not been aware of.

The Principal Planning Officer stated that the Core Strategy would set standards for development and indicated that a need for housing and evidence pointed to a lack of 2 bed houses for younger people. He further stated that the County Council were doing some work on green spaces to identify land which should not, in their view, be built on and this would be brought to the Task Group.

Councillor Rhodes stated that Development Committee Members had not been invited to the Transport Infrastructure Workshop on 17 March 2011 and other Members had not received notification of the meeting. The Chairman stated that the meeting was important but not urgent and he would therefore request that the meeting be rescheduled. He further requested that Borough Councillors be informed of future meetings as a matter of courtesy.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Draft Melton Local Development Scheme 2011 be approved for submission to the Secretary of State;
- (2) subject to no objection from the Secretary of State the Draft Melton Local

Development Scheme be adopted.

R45. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 31 JANUARY 2011

The Head of Central Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which updated the Committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 31 January 2011.

RESOLVED that the progress made on each capital scheme be noted.

R46. BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO DECEMBER 2010

The Head of Central Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which provided information on actual expenditure and income incurred on the Committee's services compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 December 2010.

RESOLVED that the financial position on each of the Committee's services to 31 December be noted.

R47. FEES FOR PRE-APPLICATION PLANNING ADVICE

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which presented to the Committee recommendations for the charging of pre application advice in accordance with the Committee's decision of 10 November 2010.

RESOLVED that the scheme for charging for pre application advice to commence from 1 April 2011 be agreed.

R48. REGULATORY SERVICES ENFORCEMENT PROJECT

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which informed the Committee of the progress made on the project and which sought authority to implement the opportunities identified by the project.

A Member discussion took place with regard to the involvement of Parish Councils where the view was that some were happy on level 1 whilst others were keen to work with the authority in order to shape the project into a workable model. The Head of Regulatory Services stated that none had gone past level 3.

Members agreed to the implementation of the approach with a review in 12 months or earlier should there be an escalation of complaints.

RESOLVED that

(1) the content of the report be noted;

- (2) the approach to the prioritisation of planning enforcement cases be implemented;
- (3) the approach to the prioritisation of licensing enforcement work be implemented;
- (4) the development of partnership working on Enforcement with Parish Councils be implemented;
- (5) a report detailing the impact of the projects be submitted to the Committee in approximately 12 months time, or if there is an escalation in complaints.

R49. REPORT INTO NATIONAL BENCHMARKING EXERCISE FOR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

The Head of Regulatory Services and the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods submitted a joint report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which implemented the instructions of the Development Committee to highlight the report to the Committee and to provide findings in relation to the planning policy function.

RESOLVED that the results of the exercise and the Planning Policy findings be noted.

R50. LEICESTERSHIRE TOGETHER ENVIRONMENT COMMISSIONING HUB

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report which informed Members of the newly formulated countywide overarching environmental group the Leicestershire together 'Environmental Commissioning Hub'.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

R51. INCREASE IN FEES/CHARGES

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which requested that higher fees be charged on collection of stray dogs from the kennels, for carrying out risk assessments for private water suppliers and for water supply sampling beginning in April 2011.

RESOLVED that

- (1) an increase in charge for collection of a stray dog from the kennels to £50 be approved;
- (2) a standard charge for dealing with Private Water Supplies at £40 per hour or each part thereof, to include investigation, risk assessment, granting authorisation, check monitoring or audit monitoring be approved;
- (3) an additional charge for taking a chemical water sample to cost price plus £40

for administration be approved.

R52. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30 p.m., closed at 8.00 p.m.

Chairman