



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

24 January 2012

PRESENT:-

Councillors D.R. Wright (Chairman) V.J. Manderson (Vice Chairman),
P.M. Chandler, E. Holmes, T. Moncrieff, J. Moulding, P.M Posnett, J.B. Rhodes
J. Wyatt.

As Observer

Councillor M. Gordon

Chief Executive
Corporate Director (KA),
Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods (HNC), Head of Central Services, People
Manager, Head of Communications, Waste and Grounds Management Manager,
Environmental Protection and Safety Manager, Planning Policy Officer , Administrative
Assistant for Communities and Neighbourhoods.

C1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Malise Graham and Strategic Director, Christine Marshall.

C2. MINUTES

- a) PRESENT- Councillor B.Rhodes was present at the meeting of the 21/09/2011
- b) C14. 'on going revenue coats' to be amended to 'on going revenue costs'
- c) C14. 1) Councillor D.Wright is a member of the Housing Foyer Group

Subject to a, b and c the minutes of the meeting held on 21st September 2012 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

C3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Gordon declared a personal interest in Item 8 by virtue of living in a council house. Councillor Chandler, Councillor Wyatt, Councillor Holmes, Councillor Moulding and Councillor Moncrieff declared a conflict of interests by virtue of them being members of the Development committee.
Councillor Rhodes and Councillor Posnett declared personal and non prejudicial interest in relation to any issues concerning the Leicestershire County Council by

virtue of them being County Councillors.

C4. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other committees.

C5. FAIRMEAD REGENERATION PROJECT

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods presented a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) seeking Members comments and approval on the Fairmead Regeneration Master Plan. A presentation was given outlining the Master Plan Process, Inception Principles and the Financial and phasing models.

Members raised questions about the size of the new properties and concerns over creating a 'racetrack' by implementing the spine road. It was clarified that traffic calming would be implemented and that this has already been discussed to try and prevent this occurring.

A Member also expressed concerns over the small size of the resident consultation group. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that consultation had been ongoing for the last 3 years and was identified in the Master Plan document on page 93. He also clarified that a leaflet had been delivered to every household, resident meetings had taken place and feedback had been encouraged through the council website. It was explained that public feedback had informed the presentation and the Master Plan.

A Member expressed that the regeneration was very important but urged the Council to continue keeping the residents informed. Several members expressed that they feel that the Council has a moral duty to give owners of properties a time scale in which this regeneration will happen. A Member raised concern about raising expectation and not being able to deliver the regeneration financially.

A Member expressed that a better Equality Impact Assessment was needed to inform the Master Plan as this one was poor and stated that EIA's consistently fell below standards.

RESOLVED that a further report be made to this committee at the next CSA meeting to seek guidance from members upon housing factors which will affect the preparation of the Business Plan.

Cllr Posnett and Cllr Holmes left.

C6. WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The Head of Communications presented the website development report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) to raise awareness of the report that had previously be taken to the Policy, Finance and Administrative committee in July 2011.

The Corporate Director explained that the Leicestershire County Council are currently going down a route of procurement and that Melton Borough Council could work in partnership with Other Leicestershire Authorities by joining in with this.

Cllr Posnett returned.

A Member suggested that officers look into the above option further.

Cllr Holmes Returned.

RESOLVED that the options being considered to improve and update the Council Web Site be noted.

C7. COUNCIL HOUSING FINANCE REVIEW

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods and the Head of Central Services submitted a joint report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which reviewed the HRA reform, HRA Business Plan and the Asset Management Strategy.

Some amendments were made, clarifying that on page 7 of Appendix A, 'The total profile is £65.9m over 3 years' should read 'The total profile is £65.9m over **30** years' and on pages 11 and 12 of Appendix A the graphs figures are in millions.

A Member raised concerns over whether the debt ceiling is being set correctly and adequately and suggested that a letter be written to the Minister outlining concerns about the headroom not being sufficient. Another Member agreed and proposed that this should be a recommendation to the officers.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the progress made in regard to Council Housing Finance Review and the Asset Management Modelling be noted.
- 2) the HRA Business plan be approved.
- 3) delegated authority to the Head of Central Services and the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods be approved to ensure the new and on-going borrowing for the debt settlement to best reflect the needs of the service, considering the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

Cllr Gordon left the room

C8. REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2012-13- HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods and the Chief Accountant submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members). The Chief Accountant explained that Melton Borough Council are still on target to comply with the Government's rent restructuring requirements and that on average there will be a an increase of 7.2% equating to £4.60 per week. He also explained that Melton is one of the lowest increases in Leicestershire.

A Member raised concerns about people not being able to pay the extra increase and the Chief Accountant emphasised that the increase is a government instruction that Melton Borough Council have to adhere to.

Councillor Holmes abstained.

RESOLVED that

- 1) an average rent increase of 7.20% for Council dwellings for 2012-13 with effect from 2 April 2012 be approved.
- 2) The continuation of rent being brought into line when a property is re-let with the Governments formula rent be approved.
- 3) the estimates for 2012-13 be approved, subject to the receipt of the Final Determination with delegated authority being given to the Head of Central Services in consultation with the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods to amend the estimated working balance based on any minimal changes to this Determination.
- 4) an increased working balance level of £500,000 by 31 March 2013 be approved.
- 5) a working balance of £569,800, budgeted for at 31 March 2013 based on an average 7.20% rent increase be approved.
- 6) the creation of an HRA reserve for development and regeneration be approved.

C9. WARM HOMES GRANT FUNDING 2012- URGENT ITEM

The Environmental Protection and Safety Manager submitted a report to inform Members of a successful bid for grant funding of £195,000 for making homes warm in the private sector through installing heating systems or providing better fuel economy systems. It was explained that this £195,000 must be spent in this financial year. The Environmental Protection and Safety Manager explained that there had been a lot of interest and that the public were being told about the bid through the Councils website, press releases and through voluntary agencies.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the grant fund is brought into the Capital Programme for 2011-12 be approved and the project be put into action.
- 2) the Policy, Finance and Administrative Committee be requested to approve the business case.

Cllr Gordon returned.

C10. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING- APRIL TO DECEMBER 2011

The Head of Central Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) to update the Committee on the progress of scheme within the Capital Programme to December 2011.

The Chairman asked for clarification on Appendix A 'Scheme forecast lower due to refusals for works and vulnerability of tenants within one particular scheme.' The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained that some tenants had refused rewiring work to avoid any disruption in their homes, but that work would

be compulsory if any Health and Safety regulations were in breach. HCN also explained that the work currently being carried out has been completed prior to the recommended time scale so there were no Health and Safety implications.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the progress made on each capital scheme be noted.
- 2) the revised phasing of the Waterfield Leisure Pool projects be approved for submission to the Policy, Finance and Admin Committee for further approval.
- 3) the changes to the authorised spending on HRA schemes be approved.

Councillor Holmes left.

C11. ANTI POVERTY STRATEGY STATEMENT

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) seeking members approval on the Melton Anti Poverty Strategy Statement 2012-2015.

The Community Policy Officer explained that the report seeks to improve learning opportunities for children and support for parents, as well as improve access to services and improve communication between internal and external partners.

The Community Policy Officer also made an amendment to the document asking that page 3 and 4 be changed around, fuel poverty needs to be highlighted and a greater emphasis needs to be placed on aspirations. The Community Policy Officer highlighted that the document was a working document and that an action plan is currently being prepared to support the Anti Poverty Strategy Statement. Members expressed support of the report.

RESOLVED that the Melton Anti Poverty Strategy Statement 2012-15 be approved taking into account the comments made.

C12. COMMUNITY CENTRES- MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) seeking Member approval for the employment of 2 (0.25FTE) caretakers to undertake duties at three of Melton Sure Start and Community Centres. The People Manager explained that due to current overtime issues in this area, a more robust service is needed. The People Manager explained that a discount of 10% will be available to local residents for private bookings of the Centres.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the employment of two Community Centre Assistants (0.5FTE) for three Sure Start and Community Centres in Melton Mowbray (1 year fixed term from 1st April 2012) be approved.
- 2) the income generated from room bookings be allocated to Melton Borough Council from the existing Management Committee to cover the costs of the post that are to be employed through Melton Borough Council.

- 3) The current charges be approved remaining subject to review with a 10% discount for private bookings for those living in the Melton Town due to town residents paying into the special expenses budget.

C13. LEISURE VISION DEVELOPMENT

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which updated members on the progress taken towards the development of the Leisure Vision for Melton Borough. The Chief Executive explained that consultation outlined in 3.4 will develop advice around which type of legal vehicle is needed to provide the Vision.

A Member asked if the petition against the closure of the Waterfield Leisure Pool will be taken into account. The Chief Executive stated that the petition is not part of the Leisure Vision Report.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the progress taken towards the development of the Leisure Vision be noted
- 2) the preliminary consultation upon sporting need within the Borough amongst local people be noted.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

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

C14. CEMETERY SERVICES REVIEW

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which outline possible changes in the Cemetery Services.

A Member expressed concern over whether any of these changes would change availability and standard of the Chapel. The Waste and Grounds Management Manager confirmed that there will be no change to the availability and level of service provided regarding the Chapel.

RESOLVED that recommendations 1-3 in the report be approved.

C15. GARAGE SITES REVIEW

Councillor Chandler, Councillor Wyatt, Councillor Holmes, Councillor Moulding and Councillor Moncrieff declared a conflict of interests by virtue of them being members of the Development committee and left.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which has previously been circulated to Members) to update Members on

progress regarding Garage Sites.

It was discussed garages could be put up for auction, making sure that a reserve is place on them to achieve a reasonable price.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the proceeding of application for outline planning permission be approved.
- 2) permission for officers to explore the development opportunities be approved.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30 p.m, closed at 8:55 p.m.

Chairman