



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

20 March 2012

PRESENT:-

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

As Observer
Councillor M. Gordon

Corporate Director (KA), Chief Accountant, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods,
Head of Communications, People Manager, Place Manager, Administrative Assistant
for Communities and Neighbourhoods.

C19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Pru Chandler.

C20. MINUTES

a) C15; Councillor Gordon left the meeting declaring an interest in this item due to being a Member of the Development Committee.

Subject to a) the public and exempt minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2012 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

The minutes of the meeting of the 13th February 2012 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

C21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Gordon declared a personal interest in Item 10 by virtue of living in a council house. Councillor Rhodes and Councillor Posnett declared personal and non prejudicial in relation to any issues concerning the Leicestershire County Council by virtue of them being County Councillors.

C22. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other committees.

C23. LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP NHS

A presentation was given by John Short, the Chief Executive of Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, seeking a response from the Committee on their application to become an NHS Foundation Trust. John Short explained that it is government policy for NHS trust to now become NHS Foundation Trust or under new management. He explained that Foundation Trust were more accountable to their members, who elect Governors.

Members asked questions about the National Procurement Patient record, how many members of staff were front line and discussion around what the appropriate age of membership should be.

RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Chairman of Community and Social Affairs Committee to write a formal response from the committee to the Leicestershire Partnership, taking on board Members comments about the age of young people joining the Leicestershire Partnership membership and Council of Governors.

C24. FAIRMEAD REGENERATION PROJECT

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report outlining the draft Fairmead Business Plan and potential 1st phase. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhood explained that the 1st phase was in light of members comments from the previous meetings. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stressed that at present the housing mix of properties were not being approved through this report.

A Councillor expressed the importance of moving forward on the project, making sure that discussions with the 3 owner occupiers were maintained. Discussion took place over whether Fairmead is the area of the Borough with the greatest need and it was discussed that the net gain of the 46 properties in the Master plan could make more regeneration in the Borough possible.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods clarified that the regeneration does not just address housing solutions or condition of stock, but seeks to improve social and economical development in that area. A Member stated that the Fairmead Regeneration is part of the regeneration for the whole of the Borough, not just the Fairmead area.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Prospectus and Business Plan for regeneration for Fairmead be noted and approved
- 2) the Fairmead Estate Regeneration Master plan report be approved to enable officers to explore funding opportunities
- 3) delegated authority be given to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhood in consultation with the Chair of Community and Social Affairs, the Head of Central Services and the Solicitor to the Council to progress and agree terms with the 3 owner occupiers affected by the Core Master plan Scheme.

C25. CUSTOMER SERVICES STAFFING RESOURCES

The Head of Communications presented a report seeking approval for additional staffing in Customer Services to address resource issues and increased workloads. The Head of Communications and the Corporate Director explained that this was as a result of work of the Customer Services task Group.

The Head of Communications explained that the pause on the development of the website solution will be beneficial to allow consideration of another option and for a workshop to take place in the next 4-6 weeks which will inform the decision process.

Discussion took place which addressed the issue of training new staff members. The Corporate Director explained that the additional staffing will provide opportunity to re-introduce champions of service should this be something the council wish to do.

Councillor Graham left the meeting.

The Head of Communications stated that Customer Service staff are paid on level of ability based on competencies set out in a career grade structure and explained that the call back service time that operates depends on the volume of calls.

Councillor Graham returned to the meeting.

RESOLVED that

- 1) 4 additional FTE Customer Services Advisor posts and an additional 1 FTE CRM Development Officer be recruited.
- 2) The full year cost of 109,780 be referred to the Policy, Finance and Administration Committee (PFA) for approval for funding from the working balance.
- 3) PFA be asked to approve a permanent increase to the establishment.
- 4) The decision regarding a new website be paused to allow consideration of regarding another emerging option.

Councillor Moncrieff left the meeting.

C26. BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO DECEMBER 2011

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide information on actual expenditure and income incurred on this Committee's services compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1st April 2011 to 31st December 2011.

Councillor Moncrieff returned to the meeting.

A Member asked for an update on the waiting list of allotments and it was decided that the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods would gain this information and relay it back to Members. A Member raised concerns over the cemetery gates being open and asked if these could be shut in the evenings. It was decided that this would be monitored in regards to any increase in anti social behaviour incidences on the site.

RESOLVED that the financial position on each of the Committees services to 31st

December 2011 be noted.

C27. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT- BUDGET MONITORING (1 APRIL 2011- 31 DECEMBER 2011)

The Head of Central Services and the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to provide information on actual expenditure and income on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1st April 2011 to the 31st December 2011.

RESOLVED that the financial position on the HRA to the 31st December 2011 be noted.

C28. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 29 FEBRUARY 2012

Councillor Holmes left the meeting.

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to update the committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 29th February 2012.

Councillor Homes returned to the meeting.

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

C29. FUEL POVERTY ACTION UPDATE

Councillor Gordon left the meeting by virtue of living in a council house.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to inform Members of the progress being made in dealing with the issues surrounding fuel poverty and energy efficiency.

The Place Manager drew Members attention to the last paragraph in point 3.2 emphasising that the company Cheaperenergy Ltd will support tenants to change providers to the most advantageous provider for the tenant and will switch the provider on the tenant's behalf if requested. The Place Manager highlighted point 3.7 stating that Venturetricity, the parent company of Solas Power, had been in contact with the Council since the last Committee meeting on the 13/03/12 but that the advice is still to open the offer up to other companies.

The Chairman highlighted the need to set up a task group as soon as possible and it was decided that a Fuel Poverty Initiative Steering Group be established comprising of the Housing Repairs Contract Task Group.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the progress being made to date be noted.
- 2) an ad hoc Fuel Poverty Initiatives Steering Group be established consisting of the members of the Housing Repairs Contract Task Group.

C30. SOCIAL HOUSING FRAUD CONSULTATION

Councillor Gordon returned to the meeting.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to inform Members of the issues arising from the Government's consultation document on Social Housing Fraud and propose a way forward regarding the Council's response.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods shared the Council's view on the consultation questions and stated that more information was needed to answer question 10-13 of the paper.

RESOLVED that that delegated authority be given to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods to give a final response to the consultation document as appropriate.

C31. CITIZEN ADVICE BUREAU

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report outlining the current CAB service in Melton and seeking Members approval to continue with the current arrangements until 30th September 2012.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods shared that the CAB also have a presence in the children's centres now and that the aim is to have a CAB presence everyday in the town. It was explained that the Council are looking to commission some more specialist advice to work alongside CAB. It was clarified that the CAB does have access to some of the information that Melton CAB held, as members asked.

Councillor Manderson declared an interest and left the meeting.

Members expressed concern that the Council were not serving as many people as the service was before and raised concerns over the lack of progress.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods suggested that a more detailed report should be brought back to the Committee in 6 months to monitor progress. The Corporate Director stated that the service will be marketed far more extensively in the future.

Councillor Manderson returned to the meeting.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the current CAB service in Melton be noted.
- 2) the extending of the current service be approved until the 30th September 2012, when a further report outlining a longer term proposal will be presented to this committee.

2 Members voted against these recommendations and one member abstained from voting.

Councillor Holmes left the meeting.

C32. HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to update members on the Housing Asset Management Strategy developed as part of the HRA reform Business Plan and seek approval to the revised Asset Investment Plan and Asset management Modelling.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods drew Members attention to point 3.5 explaining that the investment peak occurs in years 15-21. This involves bringing some improvements forward to spread the cost over a greater time in order to manage expenditure. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods suggested this Business programme only running one more year, in order to bring back to the Committee a revised and more detailed report.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The progress made on the Housing Asset Management Strategy be noted and the revised Asset Investment Plan be approved.
- 2) The Housing Asset Management Modelling Position Statement be noted and approved.

C33. SUPPORTING PEOPLE SERVICE PERFORMANCE

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report presenting the findings of a recent Supporting People inspection.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods drew the Members attention to the outcome of the Supporting People QAF report which assessed the service as an overall B, the minimum requirement being a C. He also stated that where C levels were awarded, Officers plans to raise these levels. The People Manager explained that the whole overall Supporting People service will be tendered so all level C's will soon have to be level B's.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The outcome of the Supporting People QAF report which assessed the service as an overall B be noted
- 2) Delegated authority be given to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Chair of Community and Social Affairs Committee and the Chair of Policy, Finance and Administration to agree the way forward to secure a long term Lifeline Service

C34. LEISURE VISION

An update on the Leisure Vision was given drawing attention to a questionnaire in final preparation that will be launched through the members Saturday Surgery Stall at the end of March.

RESOLVED that the further progress made be noted.

C35. URGENT BUSINESS

OLYMPIC TORCH ROUTE

The Olympic torch route was shared for the event on the 3rd July. The test run will take place on the 20th of April.

RESOLVED that the Olympic route be noted.

C36. BUSINESS HOUSING INSPECTIONS

The People Manager told Members that a housing inspection will be taking place, where every property will be visited from the 28th May for 8 weeks. This will be to ensure that all tenants are adhering to the conditions of tenancy and pick up any vulnerabilities of tenants and any community safety issues.

RESOLVED that the Housing Inspection that will be taking place from the 28th May for 8 weeks be noted.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 9:17 p.m.

Chairman