



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

21st September 2011

PRESENT:-

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

As Observer
Councillor John Illingworth

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

C1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Malise Graham.

C2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd June 2011 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

C3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Rhodes declared personal and non prejudicial in relation to any issues concerning the Leicestershire County Council by virtue of him being a County Councillor.

Cllr Posnett declared a personal and non prejudicial in relation to any issues concerning the Leicestershire County Council by virtue of her being a County Councillor.

C4. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other committees.

C5. BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO JUNE 2011- GF

The Head of Central Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) asking that the financial position up to the 30th June of each of the Community and Social affairs committee services be noted. The Chief Accountant also asked that an amendment was noted on point 3.6.1 Rent Rebates that the final sentence should read:

'The other major variation on this service related to a **lower** level of internal recharges outside the control of the budget holder.'

A member asked it to be noted that the Members Supporting People Panel no longer operates.

RESOLVED that the financial position on each of this Committee's services to 30th June be noted.

C6. BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO JUNE 2011- HRA

The Chief Accountant submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which asked members to note the financial position on the HRA to the 30th June. The Chief Accountant also asked that an amendment on the top of page 2 of the report be noted. The under spend should read:

Working Balance @ 31 Mar **2012**

Attention was brought to Appendix A Repairs and Maintenance in that properties were being refurbished to avoid backlog of accommodation, stopping them falling into disrepair.

A member noted that homelessness was on the rise but that Melton Borough Council have empty homes that need to be re-let quickly to accommodate those in need.

RESOLVED that the financial position on the HRA to 30th June 2011 be noted.

C7. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 31 AUGUST 2011

The Chief Accountant submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which asked that the progress made on each capital scheme be noted and that the virement outlined in paragraph 5.3 be submitted to Policy, Finance and Administration committee for approval.

Attention was brought to paragraph 5.3 and it was suggested that money was to be moved from the kitchen improvement programme to pay for fire assessments that need to be carried out on the properties. It is to be noted that the priority homes that need kitchen and bathroom improvements will be done.

A member raised a concern about the current state of the window frames in some flats on the Fairmead estate and suggested that the Council re-seal the frames as a quick and cheap way to fix them temporarily. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained that replacement window frames are going to be installed by the end of this financial year for a longer term solution to the problem.

RESOLVED that the progress made on each of the capital schemes be noted and that the virement in paragraph 5.3 be sent to Policy, Finance and Administration committee for approval.

C8. REVIEW OF CHARGES 2012-13- GF

The Chief Accountant submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which recommended that the committee determines the level of charges for 2012-13 for each of the services set out in the report.

The Chief Accountant drew member's attention to paragraph 5.4 of the report and explained that the Council were reviewing the income of other Councils to monitor what they were charging to ensure that Melton Borough Council had some parity. It was also explained that the report may come back to members when this monitoring was complete.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods clarified that there were no charges regarding WLP, Active Members or children's centres as these will appear in a report at a later date.

An amendment was made to Appendix A by the Chief Accountant in regard to the public conveniences service, Park Lane being amended to Wilton Road and explained that this did not affect the charges listed.

A member expressed concern at the annual usage of the Public Conveniences not matching up with the annual income, and proposed that an investigation into who uses the services should be done through a sample one morning/afternoon. The Chief Executive brought to member's attention that the Public Conveniences are free for baby changing services, disabled users and under 16's and therefore this could dramatically increase the annual usage without increasing income.

RESOLVED that the level of charges for 2012-13 for each services set out in Appendix A be approved.

C9. REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES- HRA

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhood submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which recommended that the committee determines the level of charges for 2012/13 for each of the services set out in the appendix of the report.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised members that as far as possible charges reflected real costs.

A member expressed concern over a case where a resident's television aerial had never worked and that the Council had charged him even though he had then bought his own. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods agreed to investigate this case and report directly to the member.

RESOLVED that the level of (HRA) charges for 2012/13 for each service as set out in Appendix A be approved.

C10. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011-16

The Chief Accountant submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which asked members to note the Capital Programme for 2011-2016 and that members consider the schemes being submitted in 2011-16 for funding as part of the budget setting process to ensure they meet the councils priorities.

The Chief Accountant asked that an amendment be noted from Appendix A, the private sector major and minor repair loans scheme has been amended to **£100K** as the total estimate instead of £250K.

RESOLVED that the Capital Programme for 2011-2016 be noted and the capital schemes submitted in 2011-16 be approved and noted that the Private Sector Major & Minor Repairs Loans scheme is reduced to £100K.

C11. CAR PARKING PERMIT SCHEME- HRA CAR PARKS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which recommended that members make a decision not to introduce any car parking permit schemes in HRA car parks, but monitor the situation in line with the recent petition. The report also recommended that the members instruct officers to monitor the usage of effective car parking and ensure that any issues are incorporated into the Car Parking Strategy planned for 2012-13.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained that originally the tenants had asked for an investigation into solutions to stop illegal parking; however the tenants did not think that the problem was significant enough to warrant the permit scheme that would cost them £30.

A member stated that this investigation would not have been carried out without the tenants asking for solutions, but if the scheme was not carried through then illegal parking would still happen as no action has been taken.

A member suggested the possibility of installing collapsible posts at the entrance of the car park; however the £50,000 installation fee and the cost of loss of keys as well as call outs if tenants could not get their vehicles in and out of the car park made the suggestion unviable.

Councillor Illingworth explained that the current parking policy was un-enforceable because of the illegible signage. It was also suggested that tenants who wanted a parking permit could have an allocated space, leaving tenants without one to find a free space.

It was suggested that a survey of affected residence be undertaken to gather their views and identify implications of introducing a payable car park permit scheme. Member were reminded of the Equality Impact Assessment that highlighted that the most affected group were the vulnerable and the elderly. Members welcomed the approach to erect clear and appropriate signage at relevant car parks as this may deter some inappropriate parking. Members also requested that Officers monitor the car parks and bring a report back in 6 months. Members were advised that this monitoring would be undertaken whilst Officers were going about their usual duties as part of ongoing checks.

RESOLVED that

- (1) The car parking permit scheme be not introduced in the HRA car parks in Melton Mowbray;
- (2) clear & appropriate signage to be erected at the relevant car parks as soon as possible;
- 3) the usage of car parks be monitored with existing resources and reported back to this committee in six months with an update
- 4) car parks be monitored by the Housing Officers whilst going about their usual duties as part of ongoing checks.

C12. ANTI- SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR- EXTENDING SCOPE OF CURRENT B CONSULTATION

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which recommended that members comment and delegate to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Chair of Community and Social Affairs Committee to respond to the consultation paper.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained that on the 3rd August the Department for Communities and Local Government issued the consultation document attached which proposes action can now be taken by social landlords if criminal behaviour is committed in an area which may not be in the immediate vicinity of their home. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhood stated that this amendment should not be restrictive and is a great tool to minimise and tackle the cause of anti social behaviour and reminded members of the councils approach of tackling the root causes of Anti-Social behaviour as a longer term sustainable solution.

A member expressed concern about the effect that this could have on the eviction of a family, and another member expressed concern about who would house these families once the council had evicted them.

It was suggested that this could be used along-side other anti social behaviour tools to increase awareness of consequences and a deterrent.

Members then commented on the consultation questions and instructed the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods to respond accordingly taking into account the comments they had made.

RESOLVED that the consultation paper be delegated (with explanation) to the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods in Consultation with the Chair of C&SA for response in line with member comments.

C13. IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL HOUSING REFORM: DIRECTIONS TO THE SOCIAL HOUSING REGULATOR

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which recommends that the members delegate to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Chair of Community and Social Affairs Committee to respond to the consultation paper.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhood explained that the Government amendment means that fixed term contracts have been changed from 2 years to 5 years if implemented.

A member expressed support of the paper explaining that it will encourage tenants to be self reliant and that the assessments involved will mean that tenants are not in social housing longer than they need to be.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained that an extension can be granted on a tenancy probation period if problems arise and the Chief Executive explained that the introductory tenancy period is included in the 5 years contract.

RESOLVED that the consultation paper be delegated to the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods in Consultation with the Chair of C&SA for response in line with member comments.

C14. HOUSING FOYER PROJECT

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which recommended that the committee establishes a Housing Foyer working group, that a study be carried out of two potential sites and that the working group reports its findings back to the Committee making necessary recommendations.

The People Manager explained the concept of a housing foyer scheme, and how it would help young people gain skills that would lead to them sustaining their own tenancy. There would be on-site support to help young people gain

education and skills that would lead to employment.

In regards to funding the key areas are the capital build and the on-going revenue costs, some of which would be met from the rent and there were discussions underway with the supporting people team for other costs.

The People Manager further went on to explain that officers were currently in discussion with 2 registered providers, following an initial exploratory 'offer' to a number of providers.

An amendment was made to the final bullet point in Appendix A which should read;

'Has been employed from 1st April 2011 as the Floating worker is now in place.'

A member stated that this scheme could run in conjunction with the Hub. The member also stated that PERA have shown an interest in providing mentoring, positions on board, job and work experience placements if the scheme is approved.

Members expressed overwhelming support and praise for the scheme.

RESOLVED that

- 1) a Housing Foyer Working Group be established comprising of;

Councillor V. Manderson, P. Posnett, J. Wyatt, T. Moncrieff, J. Moulding and P. Chandler

and report its findings back to the Community and Social Affairs Committee and Policy and Finance Committee with recommendations.

- 2) a feasibility study be carried out at the two potential sites for the project.

C15. COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which recommended that members noted and commented on the draft Community Safety Plan 2011-2014 and the priorities and outcomes identified within Appendix A.

The Chairman asked for an amendment to be made to page 3, suggesting that 'Melton' should be amended to 'Melton and the borough'. It was also suggested that an amendment be made to page 4 to put more emphasis on the cattle market.

A member stated that the Community Safety Officer who collated the report be congratulated.

RESOLVED that the draft Community Safety Plan 2011-14 and the priorities and outcomes identified in Appendix A be approved

C16. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD (LSCB) ANNUAL REPORT

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which recommended that members comment and approve the LSCB annual report.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods brought the members attention to point 9.1 of Appendix B which shows that Melton Borough Council is currently not being fully compliant, which has focused officers on specific areas.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods assured members that Melton Borough Council is aiming to be fully compliant by the end of September.

RESOLVED that the LSCB annual report be approved.

C17. COUNCIL HOUSING ENERGY EFFICIENCY INITIATIVE

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which recommended that members note the progress made in relation to energy efficiency initiative and that members instruct officers to progress the initiative.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stressed that presently there wasn't enough information to sign a contract but suggested that a contract be signed before April's change of feeding tariff to maximise benefits.

Members expressed concern over the costing of the PV Panels and about letting the roofs to one company in case the company fell into financial collapse.

A member also suggested that the company involved could involve young people with apprentice roles within the company.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods suggested that more work will need to be done on the costing. As part of further work members also requested that the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods also explore the potential of the council carrying the work out and using the income from the feed in tariff to pay off any borrowing costs.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the progress made in relation to energy initiatives be noted;
- 2) the initiatives be progressed with members of the Housing Repairs Task Group and included into the 2011/12 capital programme.

C18. LEISURE FACILITY VISION

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which was the outcome of a recent meeting of the Melton Community Partnership Sub Group tasked with the development of a medium to long term vision for the development of leisure facilities in Melton Borough.

The Chief Executive brought to member attention that Active Melton group are now a Social Enterprise group and would like to have an active role in the developing the vision and that advice would be sought upon these governance arrangements.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The steps taken to develop the vision be noted
- 2) Work on developing the vision to include Culture and Heritage as well as sports and leisure be approved
- 3) Advice be sought upon the Governance arrangements to include Active Melton at various stages of the project;
- 4) a progress report be presented every quarterly meeting so that all members are informed and updated.

C.19 URGENT BUSINESS

MELTON COUNTRY PARK: BYE-LAWS AMENDMENT

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report which recommended that members support a proposed change to the laws that will allow for permitted fishing at a specific or specific location(s) within the Melton Country Park.

A member expressed concern that changing the bye-law could have implications on other issues and proposed that the bye-law is discussed as part of a wider ecological assessment.. The member asked that a paper comes back to investigate into the ecology of the Country Park

RESOLVED that

- 1) the bye-law be changed to allow permitted fishing at the specific or specific location(s).
- 2) a new paper be presented back to this committee in March 2012 investigating into the ecology of the Country Park.

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.

WATERFIELD LEISURE POOL- MANAGEMENT AND RE-DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members).

The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods presented the update on the long term management contract and re-developments proposals following members decisions at their meeting of 22 June 2011.

RESOLVED that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Strategic Director (CAM), the Head of Central Services, the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods, the Solicitor to the Council, and the Corporate Property Officer to carry out the decisions of the CSA Committee in relation to implementing the award of the management contract for Waterfield Leisure Pools and the delivery of the re-development proposals.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30 p.m., closed at 10:06 p.m.

Chairman