



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

22nd January 2013

PRESENT:-

Councillors D.R. Wright (Chairman) V.J. Manderson (Vice Chairman),
P. Chandler, M. Graham, T. Moncrieff, B. Rhodes, M. Twitney

Observer

M. Gordon, J. Douglas

Strategic Director (CAM) Chief Accountant, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods,
Environmental Protection & Safety Manager, Administrative Assistant for Communities
and Neighbourhoods.

C21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors P. Posnett, S. Lumley and J. Moulding

C22. MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting of the 14th November 2012 were signed by the
Chairman subject the following amendments

C19: £78k in 2012/13 and £117k in 2013/14

C23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Rhodes declared a personal interest in any items relating to the
County Council by virtue of being a County Councillor.

Councillor Gordon declared a personal and pecuniary interest in Item 7 and Item
10 by virtue of her being a Council Tenant.

C24. UPDATE ON DECISIONS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods presented a report to update
Members on the progress of decisions made at the previous meetings of this
committee. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained to
Members that the Gas and Oil Maintenance Contract is still in the 6 week tender
period. It was noted that the Lead Officer for the Capital Programme item is J.
Worley not D. Garton and that the amendment to the minutes also applies to C19
on this update.

RESOLVED that the progress on decisions be noted.

C25. CAPITAL PROGRAMME UNTIL 30th SEPTEMBER 2012

The Chief Accountant presented a report to update Members on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to the 31st December 2012.

The Chief Accountant brought Members attention to the table in 5.2 showing the Capital Programme position in terms of expenditure and para 5.4 outlining variances.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods asked for an amendment to be made to recommendation (iii) for Members to approve £19k instead of the stated £24k after a recent renegotiation resulting in SLM providing £5k more than originally stated.

Discussions took place about the age of equipment in the Scalford Brook Play Area and the type of equipment that was going to be used to mitigate the risk of disrepair in a relatively short period of time. The Chief Accountant clarified that the installation of the equipment had been approved at committee on the 11 November 2008 and the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that he would provide further information to Members of the Policy, Finance and Administration Committee on the 23rd January who were debating this issue before formal monies will be released. A Member requested whether it was feasible to erect fencing around the play area. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that this may be difficult.

In relation to the major refurbishment in the sauna/steam area at Waterfield, a Member required whether it was possible to create a direct access to the sauna/steam area from the pool. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods said that he would discuss this with the contractor.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The progress made on each capital scheme be noted.
- 2) The business case and use of additional S106 funding in respect of the Scalford Brook Play area improvements attached at Appendix B be approved for submission to the Policy, Finance & Administration Committee for approval.
- 3) The project mandate and business case in respect of the Waterfield Leisure Centre Sauna/Steam Refurbishment at Appendix C & D be approved respectively and a supplementary estimate of **£19k** from capital receipts be approved for submission to the Policy, Finance & Administration Committee.

C26. REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2013-14- HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Councillor Gordon left the meeting

The Head of Central Services and the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a joint report to approve the HRA estimates for 2013-14, set the working balance for 2013-14 and set the rents of Council Dwellings.

The Chief Accountant drew Members attention to the increase on guest room

charges that was requested by this committee on 19th September 2012.

RESOLVED that

- 1) An average rent increase of 4% for Council dwellings for 2013-14 be approved with effect from 1 April 2013 and that when a property is re-let the rent continues to be brought into line with the Governments formula rent.
- 2) An increase in guest room charges as noted in paragraph 3.2 (h) be approved.
- 3) The estimates for 2013-14 be approved subject to the receipt of the limit rent 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 changes to this Determination;
- 4) A working balance of £1,073,042 be budgeted for at 31 March 2014 based on an average 4% rent increase;
- 5) A minimum working balance of £750,000 be approved.

Councillor Gordon entered the meeting

C27. THE EAST MIDLANDS AFFORDABLE HOUSING DECLARATION

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhood presented a report seeking Members comments on and approval to sign the East Midlands Affordable Housing Declaration.

A discussion took place around whether there would be a significant increase in affordable Housing if the Council signed the declaration.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The approval to sign the East Midlands Declaration on Affordable Housing be given.

C28. PARK LANE PUBLIC CONVENIENCE SERVICES- OPTIONS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods and the Head of Central Services presented a report asking Members to approve an option on the appropriate level of service provision for its public conveniences.

Discussion took place about the level of success of a social enterprise taking on this service.

RESOLVED that Option 3 be actioned, a report be brought back to Members at an appropriate committee to provide information of any interested social enterprises, whilst the Council continues to manage and maintain this facility as it currently does.

C29. TENANCY POLICY

Councillor Gordon left the meeting

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods presented a report to seek

Members approval of the Tenancy Policy (2013-17) which introduces 5 year fixed term tenancies.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods asked for an amendment to be made to recommendation 2.4 so that it reads 'Members note the proposed implementation date for the tenancy policy for as soon as practically possible after the 1st April 2013.'

Discussion took place about the advantages of reviewing tenancies and the impact that this will have on the availability of the housing stock. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods highlighted that the Tenancy Policy does not include existing tenancies but only covers new applications.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Tenancy Policy (2013-2017), which seeks to introduce five year fixed term tenancies on all new general needs housing applications be noted and approved.
- 2) an element of Affordable Rented provision be accepted in principle.
- 3) those tenant groups that will not be affected by the introduction of fixed term tenancies be accepted in principle.
- 4) the proposed implementation date for the tenancy policy be for as soon as practically possible after the 1st April 2013 be noted.

C30. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT & SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

Councillor Gordon entered.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to provide an outline of the LSCB's and SAB's main activity and achievements during 2011-12. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods drew Members attention to para 3.3 which identifies 5 key priorities for the boards for the next 3 years.

Members stated that they would encourage a report from the boards that outlined actual work that the boards had undertaken, the difference made and what is happening in this area.

RESOLVED that the LSCB annual report and the SAB Annual Report be approved.

C31. FUEL POVERTY & GREEN DEAL COMPETITION 2013

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report to inform Members that there has been a successful competition bid by the Leicestershire Authorities to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) for funding to roll out Fuel Poverty Initiatives and Green Deal.

The Environmental Protection & Safety Manager informed Members that there is £387,000 funding available to Melton Borough Council which has to be spent

before April 2013. It was clarified that this would have to be funded upfront to then be reimbursed by DECC and that the monies can be used on private and council properties.

Discussions took place over a continued problem that residents have with condensing boilers.

RESOLVED that the project mandate and business case be approved, the business case be submitted to PFA (Policy, Finance and Administration) Committee, and that the scheme and funding of up to £387k be brought into the Capital Programme for 2012-13.

C32. ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report seeking Members approval to move forward towards the signing up to the Community Covenant Pledge and to establish a task and finish group for this purpose.

Members showed support for the covenant and a Member suggested that The British Legion be brought into the process because of great work that they do.

Following a request from the Chair for interested Members to be part of the group it was agreed that the task and finish group be made up of Councillor S. Lumley, P. Chandler, V. Manderson, M. Gordon, J. Douglas and M. Twitney.

RESOLVED that

- 1) further work to progress actions be supported which will support the delivery of the principles contained within the Community Covenant Pledge.
- 2) the establishment of a task and finish group be approved in line with the terms of reference identified in para 3.6 of this report.
- 3) Officers bring a report back to the 20 March 2013 Community & Social Affairs Committee with progress and view to sign the Community Covenant Pledge.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30p.m, closed at 7:40 p.m.

Chairman