



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

18th September 2013

PRESENT:-

Councillors D.R. Wright (Chairman) V.J. Manderson (Vice Chairman), P. Chandler, M. Graham, S. Lumley, J. Moulding, P.M Posnett, J.B. Rhodes, M. Twitney

As Substitute

Councillor T. Moncrieff (as substitute for L. Horton)

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

C17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr L. Horton.

C18. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th June 2013 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

C19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Rhodes and Councillor Posnett declared a personal and non pecuniary interest in relation to any issues concerning the Leicestershire County Council by virtue of them being County Councillors.

C20. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other committees.

C21. UPDATE ON DECISIONS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted an update on decisions from the previous meeting of this committee.

RESOLVED that the update on decision be noted.

C22. TASK GROUP

A Housing Foyer task group was re-established, the terms of reference as follows;

To recommend to the Communities and Social Affairs committee a feasible business case for the development of a Housing Foyer Scheme in Melton.

RESOLVED that the Housing Foyer task group be made up of the following members; D. Wright, P. Posnett, T. Moncrieff, S. Lumley, P.Chandler, M. Twitney.

C23. BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO JUNE 2013

The Senior Accountant brought Members attention to para 3.3 outlining an overall underspend of £46K.

Members asked questions about particular areas of underspend.

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

C24. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT- BUDGET MONITORING 1 APRIL 2013- 30 JUNE 2013

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide Members with information on actual expenditure and income incurred on the Housing Revenue Account compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1st April 2013 to 30th June 2013.

Members attention was brought to para 3.4 showing the potential working balance surplus at 31 March 2014 as £1,390,967.

Discussion took place over the repairs and maintenance underspend.

RESOLVED that the financial position on the HRA to 30th June 2013 be noted..

C25. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 31ST AUGUST 2013

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to update the committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 31st August 2013.

The Senior Accountant referred to Appendix A stating that the areas in which there will be a forecasted variance are disabled facilities grants, private sector major minor loans and Fuel Poverty and Green Deal.

The Senior Accountant explained to Members that Appendix B and B2 were not to request any funding but to incorporate it into the capital programme.

Discussion took place about the disabled facilities grants being sanctioned by Occupational Therapists and the backlog that this is causing.

The Environmental Protection & Safety Manager stated that these figures are what has been spent to date, however more of this money is already committed.

Discussion turned to Appendix B and B2 to which Members responded with support of a replacement pavilion. A Member raised concern about the lack of consultation that had taken place in the past and urged officers to carry out a detailed consultation, using the website, Melton Times and posting letters to residents near the Country Park pavilion.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The progress of each capital scheme be noted
- 2) The Project Mandate for the Melton Country Park Pavillion (Appendix B) be approved and a public consultation be carried out using the website, Melton Times and posting letters to residents near the Country Park pavilion.

C26. **CORPORATE REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES**

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide information on the various fees and charges that are made by this committee.

Councillor Moulding left the meeting

Discussion took place about the standard size of the allotments.

It was suggested that the stage lighting equipment loan scheme outlined in Appendix A be promoted further to provide additional income.

Councillor Moulding returned to the meeting

RESOLVED that the committee determines the level of charges for 2014-15 for each of the services set out in the attached table from 1st April 2014.

C27. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2014/15**

The Head of Central Services and the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a joint report to provide information on the various fees and charges that are made by the Communities and Social Affairs committee for the HRA.

A Member raised a query over para 3.2 Accommodation charges, stating that informing residents of this increase in charge will cost more than the charge itself. It was clarified that the charge would be added to an existing letter to tenants so that no extra charge is incurred

RESOLVED that the level of charges for 2014/15 be approved for each of the services as set out in Appendix A.

C28. **FUEL POVERTY & GREEN DEAL FINDING FROM DECC**

The Head of Regulatory Services and the Head of Communities and

Neighbourhoods submitted a joint report to update members on the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) funding for the Leicestershire Authorities to roll out Fuel Poverty initiatives and Green Deal.

Environmental Protection & Safety Manager brought Members attention to para 3.6 outlining improvement work that had been done on a Melton property and explained to Members that 52 properties in the Melton Borough have had Solar Panels installed which is more than any other authority in Leicestershire.

Members congratulated the Environmental Protection & Safety Manager and the rest of the team for excellent work on this.

RESOLVED that the progress made on the use of the funding and impact on addressing fuel poverty be noted.

C29. **'WORK IN DEFAULT' ON FILTHY & VERMINOUS PREMISE**

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report to inform members of an emergency 'work in default' carried out with regards to a filthy and verminous premise occupied by a vulnerable householder. The Environmental Protection & Safety Manager clarified that the charge will now be placed on the property so that Council should re-coup the funds when the property is sold.

The Environmental Protection & Safety Manager stated that the referral had come through the Warm Homes team.

RESOLVED that the spending of £6,000 to cover the cost of a 'work in default' to clear the property of a vulnerable hoarder be noted.

C30. **THORPE ROAD CEMETERY REVIEW 2013**

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to provide members with a general update and overview of the current cemetery service and to seek Members determination in regards to identifying an option to best address the issue of diminishing burial space.

The Principal Assistant (Environment) stated that parts of the cemetery are now deemed usable when not using mechanical methods to dig.

After the Chairman asked about the figures in 3.6 it was clarified that the average increase in population is not taken into account in these figures. Discussion took place around natural burial sites and the possibility of looking for a partner who wants to diversify their land.

Discussion moved on to the options for the cemetery lodge and the advantages and disadvantages for each option were considered.

Members felt it important to have more in-depth information before proceeding fully with an option.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The development and current delivery of the Thorpe Road Cemetery Service be endorsed.
- 2) Option 1 (residential use) be supported and a business case for residential and commercial use be brought back to committee
- 3) The approach suggested at 3.21-22 in regards to establishing a natural burial provision be endorsed.

C31. COMMUNITY GARDEN LICENSE EXTENSION

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to update on the progress of the 'Melton Grow Your Own' community Garden projects and to seek members support for renewing/extending their license.

The Principal Assistant (Environment) explained that the current license ends just short of the funding schedule therefore to secure the funding that the community group have managed to require an extension will be needed. The Principal Assistant (Environment) stated that the group has already cleared the area designated and installed a drainage system.

Cllr Posnett declared an interest by virtue of her being on the committee that awards this funding.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The work of the Melton Grow Your Own Community Garden group be supported and endorsed.
- 2) The revoking and reissuing of the current license be agreed as detailed at 3.9
- 3) Full delegated powers be given to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Head of Central Services and the Solicitor to the Council in regards to agreeing and adding terms and conditions to any further licenses as detailed in 3.10.

C32. MELTON CHILDRENS CENTRES OFSTED INSPECTION

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to provide members with an update in relation to the outcome of the Melton Sure Start Ofsted inspection carried out on the 17th and 18th July.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods brought it to Members attention that Ofsted graded Meltons Sure Start centres as 'Good' overall and asked Members approval of the Improvement Plan and the Action Plan.

The Leader of the Council stated that this was an exceptionally good outcome.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the report which has graded Melton Sure Start Programme as 'Good' overall and the recommendations made by Ofsted be noted.
- 2) The improvement and action plan be approved.

C33. WATERFIELD LEISURE CENTRE- UPDATE AND 2014/15 CHARGES

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report asking Members to note the impact of the full refurbishment of Waterfield Leisure Centre and approve the charges proposed for 2014/15.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods drew Members attention to para 3.3 which shows the increased participation since the refurbishment and Appendix A outlining the proposed charge increase.

A Member offered congratulations to the Chairman of the committee for supporting the refurbishment of Waterfield Leisure Facility.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The impact following full refurbishment of Waterfield Leisure Centre be noted
- 2) The charges proposed for 2014/15 at the Waterfield Leisure Facility be approved.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30p.m, closed at 8:40 p.m.

Chairman