



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

16th September 2015

PRESENT:-

Councillors D.R. Wright (Chairman) T.S. Baines (Vice Chairman), T. Beaken, P.M. Chandler, T. Culley, M. Graham, A. Pearson, J.B. Rhodes.

Strategic Director (KA), Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, Central Services Manager, Community Policy Officer, Administrative Assistant for Communities and Neighbourhoods.

C15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hurrell.

C16. MINUTES

The minutes from the previous meeting held on the 17th June 2015 were authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

C17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

C18. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other committees.

C19. UPDATE ON DECISIONS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a update on decisions from the previous meeting of the committee which was noted by Members. The Leader in regards to Item C12 on the update stated that 36 libraries have been affected by the removal of funding and all of these libraries have expressed an interest in running a community library.

C20. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT- BUDGET MONITORING 1 APRIL 2015-30 JUNE 2015.

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide information on actual expenditure and income incurred on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1st April 2015 to 30th June 2015.

A Member asked officers what was being done about the bad and doubtful debts figure as outlined in the Appendix. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that in regards to debt per se there is a proactive approach to recovery and resources are in place to maximise the monies owed to the council.

The Central Services Manager explained that the figure outlined in the Appendix was the provision of monies for outstanding debt; therefore if this figure was lowered there would be a chance that the budget provision wouldn't be enough.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Wright and seconded by Councillor Pearson

RESOLVED that the financial position on the HRA to 30th June 2015 and the yearend forecast be noted.

C21. BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO JUNE 2015

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide actual expenditure and income incurred on this Committee's services compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1st April 2015 to 30th June 2015.

An amended report was circulated to Members, showing an amendment to the table in para 3.3. The General Expenses variances underspend were amended from -359,766 to -329,242.

The Central Services Manager explained that many of the special expenses previously covered by this committee now fall into the Town Area Committee remit who will now be receiving reports on these matters.

The Central Services Manager summarised the key variances in paragraph 3.6 outlining overspends and underspends within specific areas.

A Member asked if any provision had been made in the homelessness budget to accommodate a possible quota of refugees. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained that this was too early to anticipate the future situation but explained that the committee will be kept fully updates regarding this issue.

RESOLVED that the financial position on each of this committee's services to 30th June 2015 and yearend forecast be noted.

C22. A CORPORATE REVIEW OF CHARGES 2016-17

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide information on the various fees and charges that are made by this committee and to recommend changes to these charges to operate from 1st April 2016.

The Central Services again asked Members to note that many of the charges that used to fall in this committees remit would now be covered by the new Town Area Committee.

Members asked questions about the Strategic Art and Sports development charging fees for equipment. Members suggested that this equipment should be more widely publicised to increase the uptake.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Graham and seconded by Councillor Pearson.

RESOLVED that the level of charges for 2016-17 for each of the services set out in the table at Appendix A be approved to operate from 1st April 2016.

C23. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)- REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2016/17

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

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained that the charges in this report reflected many of the actual costs of the services.

In reference to para 3.12 a Member asked why non-council tenants were charged a higher rate than council tenants to hire a garage. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that he would provide an explanation outside of this meeting to the Member posing the question, however advised that it related to the source of funding used to manage and maintain the garage.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Graham and seconded by Councillor Pearson.

RESOLVED that the level of charges for 2016/17 for each of the services set out in the table at Appendix A be approved.

C24. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 31 AUGUST 2015

The Head of Central Service submitted a report to update the committee on the progress of scheme within the Capital Programme to 31st August 2015.

The Central Services Manager outlined the report covering the general fund and housing revenue account for the areas in this committee remit and drew attention to paragraph 5.2 forecasting that the expenditure is in line with the budget.

Members asked questions about why the stamp duty was not included in the Leisure Vision budget which resulted in a £23K overspend.

Members wanted their displeasure about the Leisure Vision overspend to be made aware to the Chief Executive to deal with.

Discussion took place about the Disability Facilities Grants. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained that the Environmental Protection & Safety Manager is confident that the allocated budget will be spent once more referrals come through from Occupational Health workers.

RESOLVED that the progress on each capital scheme be noted.

C25. COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES UPDATE

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to update Members on the latest community and volunteer sector initiatives that have recently taken place in the Borough and to summarise potential plans for the future of the sector.

The Community Policy Officer outlined the recommendations in the report and drew Members attention to paragraph 3.5 summarising the key actions that the Council are looking to be developed.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Graham and seconded by Councillor Culley.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The report be noted
- 2) The development of a 'Road to Resilience Strategy' as an outcome of recent community initiatives be noted.
- 3) The events of similar nature over the next year be approved.

C26. ME AND MY LEARNING/SURE START INTEGRATION AND FUTURE CUSTOMER SERVICES ARRANGMENTS AT CHILDRENS CENTRES

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to seek Members approval to allocate £87,000 from the corporate priorities reserve towards integrating Me and My Learning with Sure Start Services and agreeing an interim model of Customer Service delivery at three children's centres in Melton Mowbray.

An amended 2.1 recommendation was circulated to Members.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stated that as highlighted in previous reports to this committee there are potential integration opportunities with the Sure Start centres and Me and My Learning which also links into the transformation programme of this Council.

The Strategic Director (KA) outlined the events that had led to the locality budgets for the Sure Start Centres being centralised and the change in management of the children's centres.

The Strategic Director (KA) furthermore advised members that the proposals in this report very closely related to the Council's transformation agenda. He

advised Members that this approach took into account the reducing the number of people contacting the council and would link into and compliment services provided at the Me and My Learning Centre based at Phoenix House.

Discussions took place about tackling the root cause of problems that vulnerable people may face.

A Member expressed concern about all of the services being run from Phoenix House stating that a lot of people who use the Sure Start centres are not families and wanted to ensure that provision was made for these people.

Discussion took place about the branding of Me and My Learning and the Strategic Director (KA) advised that if branding ever became a barrier to people engaging with services, then this would be reviewed.

In reference to recommendation 2.3 an outline of the relevant services that Melton Vineyard provide was presented to Members.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Graham and seconded by Councillor Pearson.

RESOLVED that

- 1) a one off allocation of £87K from the Corporate Priorities Reserve be recommend to the Policy Finance and Administration Committee to invest in initiatives that will maximise the opportunities for and targeting of vulnerable people and families to engage with Me and My Learning, with the aim being to get more of these people and families living their lives independently or more independently in the future, thereby contributing positively to us dealing with our anticipated budget pressures
- 2) The continuation of a customer services presence at the Cove, Fairmead and the Edge be agreed until the 31st March 2016 and the Head of Communications be instructed to undertake a review of how the Council will deliver front facing customer services from 1st April 2016.
- 3) The licence be granted to Melton Vineyard subject to County Council approval, for them to occupy part of the Cove and it be noted that an income of £4000 per annum will be generated. It be noted that the current lease with Leicestershire County Council will need amending to accommodate this request.

C27. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30 p.m, closed at 7.58 p.m.

Chairman