



## COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016

### PRESENT:-

Councillor T Bains (Chairman), M. Graham, A. Pearson, J.B Rhodes, E Holmes (sub)  
Strategic Director (KA), Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, Central Services  
Manager, Administrative Assistant for Communities and Neighbourhoods

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#### C51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Wright, Councillor Greenow, Councillor Chandler, Councillor Culley (sub E Holmes), Councillor Hurrell, Councillor Beaken.

#### C52. MINUTES

The exempt and public minutes from the previous meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 were authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

#### C53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

#### C54. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations received from other committees.

#### C55. 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.

#### **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) C49 will be presented to Members at the CSA meeting to be held in June 2016 prior to a full review in September 2016.
- 2) C50. Is still awaiting government decision on housing benefit cap as per all Members' Briefing paper sent out on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016. The Head of

Communities and Neighbourhoods will update Members once the review is known.

C56 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING APRIL 2015 – JAN 2016

The Head of Central Services presented a report to update the Committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

The Central Services Manager drew Members' attention to the Recommendation Section 2.1 and 2.2 in regard to the progress made on each capital scheme and the adjusted HRA capital programme both as per Appendix A.

Members were advised that section 5.3 relates to the earlier comment from the Head of Communities and Neighbourhood in regard to the Members' Briefing paper sent out on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016 that the Government is looking at capping housing benefit which is currently used towards support charges for this type of accommodation and as such the project will not be cost afforded for the young people who will be staying there. The review by Government may take 10 months therefore the Project is currently on hold as the Council cannot afford to commit to a 125 year lease. It was highlighted that the delay is not through a lack of funding but a change of the rules for housing benefit. It was also highlighted that this capping will also affect other tenants in council supported properties.

The Central Services Manager drew Members attention to section 5.5 and a discussion was held to clarify where the additional funding of £50k was coming from and what would be the outcome if the funding was not awarded. The additional £50k will be expected to be funded via the Football Foundation and notification of this award is due by end March 2016. Though the Council is confident that this will be awarded, if not the additional spend will have to be met from the Council's own reserves. It was advised that work will start before the funding is announced.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods highlighted the underspend in section 5.6 to that of contract works being delayed due to procurement issues which have now been resolved.

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The progress made on each capital scheme be noted.
- 2) The adjusted HRA capital programme, as referred to in Appendix A be approved. It be noted that the budgets are being adjusted between projects and the total programme has not changed.
- 3) That Policy, Finance and Administration Committee be recommended to increase the Melton Sports Village project from £90k to £140k with the additional £50k funded through external funding.

C57. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO DECEMBER 2015 – GENERAL FUND

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide information on actual expenditure and income incurred on the Committee's services compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

The Central Services Manager drew Members' attention to section 3.4 where it was highlighted that though there is showing an overspend at present, this will have been mitigated through underspends elsewhere and it is proposed that it is on budget for a small underspend or balance out by the year end.

The Central Services Manager drew Members' attention to section 3.5 in particular the overspend for the Leisure Development of £17,790 and advised that in this case there was an administration error in that an invoice had been raised twice and a re-payment of unspent 2014/15 funding was made to LCC was not accrued. It was noted that the Members were pleased with the honesty of advising this mistake and that lessons have been learnt in the administration of invoices.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods drew Members attention to section 5 to advise that a review is undergoing for the allocated budgets and will be brought to Members in the next meeting in June 2016.

**RESOLVED** that the financial position on each of this Committee's services to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 and yearend forecast be noted.

C58. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO DECEMBER 2015 – HRA

The Head of Central Services submitted information on actual expenditure and income incurred on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

The Central Service Manager drew Members' attention on section 3.4 in regard to the forecast underspend to date and the effect on the working balance by the year end.

A discussion took place in regard to section 3.6 and the underspends in General Management, Special Services, Repairs and Maintenance and Excess Income.

A question was raised in regard to the costs in Appendix A line 5 – Bad & Doubtful debts, this was clarified as rents which have not been collected and will not be collected, where tenants have been taken to court for arrears and all channels have been exhausted for collection of these debts. It was noted that, Melton Borough Council has a good collection of rents overall.

**RESOLVED** that the financial position on the HRA to 31 December 2015 be noted.

C59. FEES AND CHARGES – WHEELS TO WORK / WATERFIELD LEISURE CENTRE

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to seek approval for fees and charges for 2016/14 for these services.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods drew Members' attention to section 3.2 where it is highlighted that the W2W operated by Melton Borough Council is currently one of the cheapest in the region and will remain so even with the interim charge proposed and a move to weekly charges for 125cc scooters and 50cc scooters. The move to a weekly charge has been brought in due to a request by users for a more flexible approach and payment.

It was advised that the electric scooters will stay on a monthly charge as they are covered by a grant, which are separately accounted for and all overheads are claimed back.

A discussion took place regarding section 3.3 – Waterfield Leisure, regarding the personal trainer fees and why the fees are not set by the trainer themselves. It was advised that the personal trainers are SLM staff.

**RESOLVED** the Recommendations be approved by Members for the W2W fees and charges subject to the addition of

- 1) Incorporate a student discount of £10 a month
- 2) A review of the scheme and charges be brought back to Committee in 6 months time.

**RESOLVED** that the interim fees and charges for the W2W service and the proposals relating to the Waterfield and King Edward VII Leisure Centres be approved by Members.

Councillor Holmes left the meeting at this point.

C60. NATURAL BURIAL GROUND PROVISION UPDATE 2016

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to provide Members with an update in regards to potential partnership or joint working arrangements with a local landowner expressing interest in partnering with the Council to establish a local 'Natural Burial Ground' (NBG)

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that as the current cemetery in Melton has only approximately 5 years of space left, Members are asked to consider the possibility of NBG and provided details and costs of NMB grounds within the Melton area and as per appendix A sites possible local sites.

Members decided that at present it will be best to concentrate on conventional sites though it was recognised that this cannot be left too late. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that a Cemetery paper will be presented to the Committee later in the year.

**RESOLVED** that Members consider the existing provision in the area is sufficient to meet demand in the area and recommend that no further work be undertaken at this time in regards to developing a Melton Mowbray NBG facility

#### C61. HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN (HAMP) UPDATE

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to update Members on the progress of the HAMP and seek Members approval on major HAMP projects for 2016-20.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods brought to Members attention to sections 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7 and advised that Tenders were going out for the Beckmill and Granby House regeneration:

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods also brought Members attention to Section 3.11 which seeks Members approval to buy some or all of the S106 affordable housing provision developers contribute as part of new developments.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that a business case will be brought to committee later this year for the Fairmead Regeneration project as per section 3.12. Attention was made to Appendix A showing amounts and years projected. Attention was made to Appendix B showing the revenue implications, a positive HRA balance and that it is financially affordable. Emphasis was made on how this will transform the lives of the people living in this area.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised members of a number of central government proposed changes to Housing that related to, rent reductions, Benefit Cap on Housing Benefits aligned to Local Housing Allowance and review of impact on Supported Housing and selling off of high value Council properties to offset introducing the RTB for Housing Associations.

All these will have financial implications and impact on the HRA Business Plan and members will be kept up to date with these changes and the Chief Executive is looking to prepare a briefing paper on this. .

A Member suggested that priority must be the Fairmead regeneration as this was promised years ago.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) The progress on Major projects within the Housing Asset Management Plan (HAMP) be noted.
- 2) The HAMP budget programme for 2016-20 be approved subject to priority being given to the Fairmead Regeneration Project after completion of the ongoing (numbered) projects before further investment is made in Affordable Housing purchase and rebuild.
- 3) The HAMP key project plan, be approved.

Members would like it noting to thank Councillor Wright for his determination into the HAMP and acknowledge his dedication on this subject.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30p.m and closed at 7.51p.m.

Chairman