



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

14th September 2016

PRESENT:-

Councillor A. Pearson (Chairman), S. Lumley (Vice-Chairman) T Beaken, P Chandler, T Culley, J. Douglas, M. Graham, P. Posnett.

Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, Central Services Manager, Wheels to Work Coordinator, Administrative Assistant for Communities and Neighbourhoods (standby)

C16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Manderson and Councillor Greenow.

C17. MINUTES

The minutes from the previous meeting on the 22nd June 2016 were authorised to be signed by the chairman.

C18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Pearson 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.

C19. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations received from other committees.

C20. UPDATE ON DECISIONS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted an update on decisions from the previous meeting of the Committee which was noted by Members.

The Leader of the Council stated that Bottesford football club has received their grant fund and sent thanks to the Council

C21 BUDGET MONITORING APRIL - JUNE 2016 (GENERAL FUND)

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide information on actual expenditure and income incurred on this Committee's services compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1st April 2016 to 30th June 2016.

The Central Services Manager brought Members attention to the table at 3.3 showing the year-end underspend of £20K. 3.5 outlined the rent rebate underspend within which the subsidy is currently higher than budgeted for due to lower claimant errors than previously predicted.

It was noted that a report will be brought back to this Committee regards the Supporting People Service which will give more detail regarding the financial forecast.

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

RESOLVED that the financial position on each of this Committee's services to 30th June 2016 year-end forecast be noted.

C22. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT- BUDGET MONITORING 1 APRIL 2016- 30 JUNE 2016

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 1 April 2016 to 30th June 2016.

The Central Service Manager brought Members attention to the table in para 3.3 and the £11,800 variance underspend.

Discussion took place about the increase in Right to Buy applications that had increased expenditure due to higher surveyor costs and an increase in applications.

RESOLVED that the financial position on the HRA to 30 June 2016 and the year-end forecast be noted.

C23. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 31 JULY 2016

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to update the Committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 31st July 2016.

The Central Services Manager stated that potentially the Housing Foyer Project will be moving out of the capital programme and that some money for the Beckmill Court regeneration has been transferred from the re-roofing budget.

It was stated that the County Park Car Park renewal is still going ahead but is £5K less than originally thought.

The recommendations was moved by Councillor Culley and seconded by

Councillor Graham.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The progress made on each capital scheme be noted.
- 2) The business case for the CCTV Upgrade be approved for submission to the Policy, Finance and Administration Committee.

C24. CORPORATE REVIEW OF CHARGES 2017-18 (GENERAL FUND)

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

The Central Services Manager stated that Appendix A outlined charges that are outside of officer delegation and that Appendix B outlines the services that are currently offered free of charge.

After a discussion about gym passes, the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stated that he would confirm via email to Members how much is being spent on gym passes relating to SLF referrals and advise if this figure is over £1K.

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

RESOLVED that the level of charges for 2017-18 for each service be approved as set out as suggested from 1st April 2017.

C25. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT – 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 for the HRA.

The Central Services Manager drew attention to para 5.1 Financial and Resource implications for the income from garage rental.

Discussions took place regarding the income generated from garage income and garage usage. It was also discussed about why council and non-council tenants pay separate rates for garage rental.

A Member stated that she felt that the £7.70 midday meal charge in para 3.9 was too expensive. It was agreed that the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods will check the midday meal charge and will clarify to Members via email.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Posnett and seconded by Councillor Beaken.

RESOLVED that the level of charges for 2017/18 for each of services set out in the appendix subject to further clarification on the midday meal charge.

C26. REVENUE BUDGET UPDATE 2016-17-HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

(HRA)

The Head of Central Services and the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to update the Committee on any effects on the HRA Revenue budget 2016/17 from the Government's announcements as reported to this Committee in January 2016.

Discussion took place regarding the Pay to Stay policy in para 3.5 and the impact that this policy may have.

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

RESOLVED that the known effect of the recent Government announcements, the passing of the Housing and Planning Act and the Welfare Reform and Work Act on the HRA Revenue budget for 2016/17 and the working balance for 31 March 2017 be noted

C27. WHEELS TO WORK- FEES AND CHARGES

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to inform Members on the progress of Wheels to Work scheme and gain approval for the increase in fees and charges associated with delivering the Wheels to Work programme.

The Wheels to Work Coordinator outlined the purpose of the report and the key issues placing emphasis on the fact that the charges have previously been restricted because funders wanted to keep charges as low as possible to ensure affordability.

It was highlighted that the scheme will need to be more commercially run in the future bringing in increased income so that the project is sustainable without relying heavily on funding.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stated that another report will be brought back to this Committee in January 2017 after the outcome of recent 'Access Funding' bids was known.

Members raised concern around the amount of debt that had been incurred and how much of this could be recovered. The Wheels to Work Coordinator stated that the team are currently pro-actively trying to recover the debt and now are concentrating on reacting to debt more quickly. However, he recognised that debt recovery was an essential aspect of a successful Wheels to Work Scheme.

He further stated that looking across the County Scheme, Melton is one of the cheapest, and therefore the suggested increase would still be affordable and competitive.

The Wheels to Work Coordinator informed Members that the scheme has been extremely successful with Rutland and Market Harborough and that Leicestershire County now on board with the scheme. Working with Northamptonshire is also being explored supported by close links with DWP.

Members were informed that University Hospitals are also embracing the scheme and will be promoting W2W and the green scheme.

Discussion took place about whether or not to charge local authorities more.

A Member stated that she felt that this increase in charge was too much.

A Member suggested that a bigger deposit is needed and that some help is given to the department regarding recovering the debt and managing the finances. This Member also suggested that a set of accounts and budget papers be made available to Members.

The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods advised that this would be part of the report brought back to members in January 2017, as well as reporting the impact of the increase from 1 October 2016.

It was agreed that the deposit be increased to £20.

Members also suggested that further support be given to the scheme to pro-actively pursue Debt and Chagres. The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods advised that the Sundry Debt Officer will be closely working with officers in the project to address this issue.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The progress of the W2W scheme be noted and its future development be endorsed.
- 2) The interim increase in fees and charges be approved with the deposit being raised to £20 and the charges to take effect from 1st October 2016 to 31st March 2017.
- 3) Recommendation 2.3 to be deferred to the meeting in January 2017.
- 4) A report to be brought back to this Committee outlining how much debt has been recovered and the outcome of the access fund application.

C28. MELTON BOROUGH COMMUNITY LOTTERY

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to gain agreement from Members to finalise the criteria that 'Good Causes' need to comply with in order to be accepted as a beneficiary.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods drew attention to the criteria outlined in Appendix A.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Douglas and seconded by Councillor Culley.

RESOLVED that the criteria for 'Good Causes' need to apply with those outlined in the Appendix.

C29. URGENT BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM 2

The Leader of the Council asked that an item regarding Homelessness be added to the agenda for the November 2016 Committee..

The meeting which commenced at 6.30p.m and closed at 8.05p.m.

Chairman