

Minutes

Meeting name	Community & Social Affairs Committee
Date	Wednesday, 15 November 2017
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor R. de Burle (Chair)

Councillors T. Beaken M. Blase
P. Chandler A. Freer-Jones
S. Lumley M. Sheldon
D. Wright

Observers

Officers Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods
Corporate Services Manager
Head of Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services

Minute No.	Minute
C30	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Posnett and Councillor Pearson.</p>
C31	<p>Minutes The minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2017 were approved to be signed by the Chair.</p> <p>The exempt item from the meeting held on 13th September 2017 was approved to be signed by the Chair.</p>
C32	<p>Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest.</p>
C33	<p>Recommendations from Other Committees There were no recommendations from other committees.</p>
C34	<p>Update on Decisions The Head Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report for Members to note the update on decisions made from the previous meetings of this Committee. In reference to item number C48 of the reports, a Member asked if this will be completed in time for the legal changes that commence 1st April 2018.</p> <p>The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods confirmed the consultation is on-going and expected to be complete by this time.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that The Update on Decisions be noted.</p>
C35	<p>Capital Programme Monitoring to 31 October 2017 and Capital Programme 2017-2022 The Corporate Services Manager submitted a report to update the Committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 31st October 2017. The Report sought to determine the Committee's Capital Programme for 2017-2022 based on a review of spending in the current year's programme and schemes included in the programme for later years.</p> <p>The Corporate Services Manager gave an overview of the report, bringing Members' attention to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.1.2 of the report noting the General Expenses underspend of £77,000. • 3.1.3 of the report showing that the forecast is generally in line with the budget with the exception of the following General Expenses: Disabled Facilities Grants is expected to have an underspend of £67,000, The Warm Homes Grant Budget which has been reduced by £10,000 to reflect the refund of a 2016/17 grant repayment.

- 3.1.4 of the report explaining that the HRA is expecting to be significantly underspent in 2017/18. The key issues affecting this have been around bedding in the Corporate Property Services Team and closing key projects outlined in the report. The programme has been re-profiled and adjusted in line with project requirements and Members will be presented with the HAMP at the January 2018 Committee which will outline an ambitious and affordable programme over the next five years.
- The Capital Programme 2017-22 Appendix B shows that there are no schemes currently being submitted for funding as part of the budget setting in 2018/19.
- A member questioned the £45,000 funding from the Football Foundation, as per Appendix A. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods confirmed this was for floodlights.

The Chair sought a proposer and seconder to move the recommendations. All Members were in favour.

RESOLVED that

- (1) Members noted the progress made on the capital schemes as per Appendix A and
- (2) The Committee approved the revised Capital Programme for 2017-22 as per Appendix B and noted that there were no schemes being submitted for funding as part of the 2018/19 budget setting.

C36

Housing Repairs Contract Procurement Update

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to update Members on the progress in procuring a longer term Housing Responsive, Planned and Void Repairs Contractor.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods asked Members to approve a two month extension with the current Repairs Contractor to ensure a suitable Dialogue and Mobilisations period is built into the process.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods drew Members attention to:

- The project plan attached as Appendix A
- The outline of milestones attached as Appendix B
- 3.3 of the report showing the current phase that builds on recommendations from the Task Group for longer term procurement
- Emphasised the dialogue period necessary to deliver a bespoke programme as the reason for the request of a two month extension as in 3.4 of the report. The start of the contract is proposed for 1st August 2018 after appointing a new contractor in early spring.

A Member asked if a two month extension was sufficient, The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods explained that he is conscious to not keep extending the current contractor; he is confident that two months will be sufficient.

A Member asked if it would mean giving any voids to the current contractor very close to the contract end date. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods confirmed that the current responsive repairs contractor, Wates, will have to carry on and there may be an overlap of perhaps a few weeks.

The Chair sought a proposer and a seconder to move the recommendations. All Members were in favour.

RESOLVED that

- (1) Members noted the progress made in procuring a longer term Housing Responsive, Planned and Void Repairs Contractor as highlighted in section 3.3.
- (2) Members approved a short extension of the current contract with Wates until 31st July 2018 to enable to complete the whole Procurement process for a new contract to be undertaken.
- (3) Members delegate to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Corporate Director to negotiate the terms for the extension.

C37

Application for Access from New Development into Country Park (East Boundary)

The Chair brought this item forward to the beginning of the meeting for the convenience of the members of the public that were in attendance.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report for Members to consider a request from the Developers of a new development to provide access to the Melton Country Park. The Development Framework Plan was attached as Appendix A.

Councillor Chandler asked on behalf of the owners of the site to defer due to their concerns of potential damage to land and fencing. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods established that this matter was brought to the Committee as a land owner for request of an access point and is not influenced by planning application or progress. Councillor Chandler abstained from further discussions regarding this item.

A Member requested to see a clearer map as a Development Framework showing more detail. The Chair replied that he considered the map to be clear, showing the suggestions of access in the South West corner however this is subject to change depending on the outcome of an ecological study.

A Member asked if another access point could increase chances of vandalism or anti-social behaviour. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods drew Members attention to section 4.2 of the report and asked Members to look at the

suggested access point in principle further to ecological study, for this reason it would be wrong to specify a definitive area. It was suggested that the matter return to this Committee after the study after approval in principle.

A Member suggested that there are already a sufficient number of access points that currently warrant maintenance and that another access may be one too many.

A Member considered points 2.1(i) and 2.1(ii) of the report to be ambiguous and called for a long term plan to be constructed for future requests for access. Also, it was suggested that the matter also be taken to the Town Area Committee.

A Member suggested harvesting the information of the study and consultation (11.1) and returning the approval to this Committee after addressing any concerns.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods reiterated that Members were being asked to approve the access in principle before the ecological study and consultation. Otherwise, the cost of the study falls onto the Committee.

A Member agreed the need for a strategic plan and would support an ecological study being undertaken, however cannot approve in principle.

The Head of Regulatory Services advised that if Members do not agree in principle, then a 106 cannot be put in to fund the study, therefore the onus would fall on the Council to finance the study. This would be £10,000 plus associated costs.

The Chair clarified that agreeing access in principle would release financial responsibility.

The Chair sought a proposer and seconder. Members voted 2 in favour and 5 against. Councillor Chandler abstained.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised Members to propose a difference recommendation to move forward.

A Member emphasised the concern over the negative implications of another access to the park.

A Member proposed that no access will be approved for developers until an investigative study for future strategic use of country park access has been taken.

A Member raised that the consultation will focus the plan once approved in principle as per 2.1(iii).

A Member confirmed that there is no cost to the consultation and this was a matter of course.

A Member suggested no action be taken until a consultation with interested parties was had.

The Chair noted that without approval in principle, the matter cannot move forward

with any 106 request.

A Member proposed conducting own study and consultation for future requests and allowing developers to do own study of proposed access points.

The Chair drew Members' attentions to immediate proposal, not long term.

A Member questioned the democracy of altering the recommendation after it had been voted against.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods urged Members to resolve and direct this matter.

A Member proposed that current access to the Country Park is adequate and to call for a feasibility study into future developments.

A Member proposed to note the request of access and reserve final decision on the outcome of an ecological study and consultation, after which the matter would return to this Committee.

The Chair sought a proposer and seconder. Seven Members were in favour. Councillor Chandler abstained.

RESOLVED that

(1) Members note the request for access to the Country Park by the developer, however, reserve final decision until a full ecological study of the area to determine the most appropriate access locations and further consultation with members of the Town Area Committee and other stakeholders is undertaken. Furthermore members instruct the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods bring a report back after this work has been undertaken to make a final determination.

(2) Members approved that the £10,000 towards the ecological study is funded from existing resources, but if officers are unable to, a formal request will be made to the Policy, Finance & Administration committee to allocate £10,000 from the Corporate Priorities Reserve in order for the Ecological study to be undertaken.

C38

Melton Lottery - Good Causes - Amendment to Grants to Organisations

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report that sought Members' approval to an amendment to the current grants to organisations that requires them to register to the Melton Lottery before consideration is made on any award of Grant.

As outlined in section 5.1 of the report, the 2017/18 budget allocated £71,710 to a variety of organisations for annual grants. It was recommended that the application be amended that organisations apply to be a 'good cause'. This allocation would thus be reduced when organisations start to generate further income from the Lottery.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods outlined this as an ideal opportunity to mitigate the reliance on Council finances.

A Member questioned the legality of this amendment in the grant application process. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods clarified that grants are approved by the Council and not a statutory requirement. This amendment would give incentive for eligible causes to find other means of funding.

The Chair sought a proposer and seconder to move the recommendations. All Members were in favour.

RESOLVED that Members approve amendments to the Grant to Voluntary Organisations and Community Facilities Grants application forms to ensure that any organisations applying for grants are signed up to the Lotter-good causes and pro-actively promote the Lottery for their organisation.

C39

URGENT BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Business.

The meeting closed at: 7.40 pm

Chair