



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

PARKSIDE, STATION APPROACH, BURTON STREET, MELTON MOWBRAY

13 SEPTEMBER 2017

PRESENT:-

Councillors A. Pearson (Chair) T. Beaken,
M. Blase, P.M Chandler, A. Freer-Jones, S. Lumley,
P.M Posnett, M.R.Sheldon, D. Wright.

The Chief Executive,
Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, Central Services Manager,
Strategic Housing Officer, Administrative Assistant for Communities and
Neighbourhoods.

C17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were given for Councillor de Burle.

C18. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Committee held on the 21 June 2017 were approved to be signed by the Chair with the addition of Councillor Chandlers' apologies for absence to be added.

The AD HOC Committee held on the 12 July 2017 were approved to be signed by the Chair.

C19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Pearson declared a personal interest in any matters relating to Leicestershire County Council on behalf of his membership as a County Councillor.

C20. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other committees.

C21. UPDATE ON DECISIONS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report for Members to note the update on decisions from the previous meetings of this Committee.

RESOLVED that The Update on Decisions be noted.

C22. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 31 JULY 2017

The Corporate Director 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 2017 to 30th June 2017.

The Central Services Manager gave an overview of the report, bringing Members attention to:

- Appendix A of the report showing the Capital Programme Progress Report 2017/18– Jul 2017.
- 5.2 of the report noting the General Expenses underspend of £27,000.
- 5.3 of the report noting the forecast is generally in line with the budget with schemes progressing although much expenditure has yet to be incurred. The three exceptions to this are: The Disabled Facilities Grants, which is expected that there will be an underspend against budget of £67k for which alternative uses are being explored. However, it is difficult to predict given the changes due to come in October regarding lightbulb. The Warm Homes Grant budget will be reduced by £10k as part of the budget setting process later in the year to reflect the refund of a repayment of a grant from 2016/17 which was partially funding the budget in 2017/18. The Central Services Manager paid particular attention to the third exception which was Tenders in relation to the Public Conveniences project; these have been received and evaluated with the anticipated costs of the main contract and other associated costs being £50k over budget. Members were asked to consider either increasing the programme or developing only one of the two sites (likely Wilton Road) and are asked to instruct officers as per recommendation 2.3.

A Discussion was had regarding Housing stock in regards to whether they have all had full electric checks, as a Member had read a report stating they have not. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods noted that the checks have been done minus 4 properties that MBC are still awaiting access to. It was also noted that a full re wiring contract is being procured.

A Member enquired as to whether the work which is starting on Beckmill will involve cladding and sprinklers, to which the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods noted that neither Granby House nor Beckmill court will have cladding. With regards to sprinklers, there are no properties over three floors that require sprinklers. A Member noted that a MBC officer had told them that there would be cladding at Beckmill, which may want to be looked into.

A Member noted that the Park Lane public convenience site would have more potential value if it receives planning permission.

A brief discussion took place regarding the Fairmead regeneration project with the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods noting that this project is re starting and expecting delivery for 2019/20.

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

RESOLVED that

- (1) The progress made on each capital scheme and that the capital programme will be amended as part of the budget setting process as outlined in sections 5.3 and 5.4 be noted by Members.
- (2) The revised HRA capital programme under the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods delegation as detailed in paragraph 5.4 be noted by Members.
- (3) Members recommend a supplementary estimate to the Policy, Finance & Administration Committee for approval of £50,000 to be funded from capital receipts in order to progress the Public Conveniences Project for the construction of two new facilities.

C23. BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO JUNE 2017

The Corporate Director 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 2017 to 30 June 2017.

The Central Services Manager gave an overview of the report, bringing Members attention to:

- 3.3 of the report noting the general expenses over spend of £12,960.
- 3.6 of the report showing more detail on which areas are overspending and underspending. It was noted that a report on Wheels 2 Work will be brought back to this Committee at a later date.

A Discussion was had regarding Wheels 2 Work (W2W). A Member noted that although they are a keen supporter of the scheme they feel it does need to 'pay its way', the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods noted that this scheme is in fact contributing and paying for itself however against the profile that MBC over predicted it looks like it is down. It was also noted a more in depth review will be brought back to this Committee. Another Member noted that they were impressed that the age range that W2W will accept has been increased to age 45, as not just young people need this help and believed this could also bring in more users.

The chair sought a proposer and seconder to move the Recommendation. All Members were in favour.

RESOLVED that the financial position on each of this Committee's services to 30th June 2017 and year end forecast be noted by Members.

C24. HRA – BUDGET MONITORING 1 APRIL 2017- 30 JUNE 2017

The Corporate Director and The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods 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 2017 to 30 June 2017.

The Central Services Manager gave an overview of the report, bringing Members attention to:

- 3.3 of the report showing a summary of the total income and expenditure for the Housing Revenue Account compared to the approved budget at June 2017.
- 3.4 of the report highlighting the predicted potential underspend of £22,000.
- 3.5 of the report noting a deficit of £59,910 has been budgeted for in 2017/18 to reduce the working balance to ensure that large balances are not carried in the revenue account and surpluses are transferred into the Regeneration and Development Reserve.
- 3.6 of the report which outlines the reasons for the current potential year end underspend and the action currently being taken by officers to ensure that value for money, efficiency and effectiveness are at the forefront of the service provision.

The Chair and Members noted that this was a very positive report.

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

RESOLVED that the financial position on the HRA to 30 June 2017 and the yearend forecast be noted by Members.

C25. HRA- REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2018/19

The Corporate Director and The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to provide information on the various fees and charges that are made by this committee for the HRA and to recommend changes to these charges to operate from 1 April 2018, other than Council dwelling rents which will be subject to a separate report to be presented to this committee in January 2018.

The Central Services Manager gave an overview of the report, noting that the majority of the income changes are only minor increases and decreases.

A Discussion was had regarding the second recommendation of the report to 'delegate authority be granted to the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Corporate Director to re-set these existing charges and that the constitution of the Council be changed in order to reflect this delegation.' Members felt that although they understand this requisition they would not want to approve it. Members feel that as they are ultimately the people who are responsible for the decisions they should see them. A Member noted that as they have a lot of direct contact with residents they need to know the correct information in order to help and give advice correctly.

A Brief discussion took place regarding how the communal areas cleaning is currently being performed, The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods noted that currently MBC are providing 'deep cleans' however a cleaning contract is

currently being procured and this will be brought to this Committee for approval in 2018/19.

The Chair sought a proposer and seconder for Recommendation 2.1 of the report. All Members were in Favour.

Recommendation 2.2 of the report was not approved.

RESOLVED that the Committee Members determined the level of charges for 2018/19.

C26. A CORPORATE REVIEW OF CHARGES 2018-19

The Corporate Director submitted a report to provide information on the various fees and charges that are made by this committee for General Fund services and to recommend changes to these charges to operate from 1st April 2018.

The Central Services Manager gave an overview of the report, noting the Public conveniences, Strategic Sports and Homelessness charges. Members' attention was brought to Appendix A of the report showing the review of fees and charges.

It was noted that the Waterfield Leisure Centre and Melton sports Village as well as the Wheels to work will be brought back in a separate report to this Committee at a later date.

A Member enquired as to how the Wheels 2 Work advertises in the public domain, the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods noted that it is advertised in lots of form i.e. online and through Me and My Learning.

Councillor Sheldon left the meeting at this point.

The Chair sought a proposer and seconders to move the Recommendation, All Members were in Favour.

RESOLVED that the Committee determined the level of charges for 2018-19 for each of the services set out in the attached table to operate from 1st April 2018

C27. HOMELESSNESS REVIEW 2017 & HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY CONSULTATION.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to present Members with the Homelessness Review (2017) and the Towards a New Homelessness Strategy Consultation document and subject to Member approval undertake a period of consultation to help develop a new homelessness strategy.

The Strategic Housing Officer gave an overview of the report bringing Members attention to the 'Homelessness Review' and the 'Towards a New Homelessness Strategy Consultation'. It was noted that officers will have more information once official guidance comes through.

Councillor Sheldon entered the meeting at this point.

A Discussion took place regarding the private housing sector noting that the current rent prices are very high although some agents will take on tenants who are receiving benefits, this usually only happens if they can give money in advance.

A Member enquired as to whether MBC is looking into site for potential housing e.g. the old hospital site. The Chief Executive noted that he will be looking at opportunities around Melton area to develop housing.

A Discussion was had regarding the local plan and proposed distributor road, with the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods noting that the County is creating an application for a new housing infrastructure fund which could be more viable for the distributor road.

A Discussion was had regarding using or creating more projects e.g. the healthy housing scheme to help with the housing situation and to pre-empt the new law coming in.

The Chair and Members noted that this was an excellent report.

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

RESOLVED that

- (1) Members approved and noted the Homelessness Review (2017).
- (2) Members took note, made comments and approved the Towards a New Homelessness Strategy consultation document, to be released for consultation.

C28. URGENT BUISNESS

There was no Urgent Business.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RECOMMENDED that the public be excluded during the consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (Access to information: Exempt Information) under paragraph 3.

C29. EXEMPT- PUBLIC CONVENIENCES- REPLACEMENT PROPOSALS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods and The Corporate Director submitted a report to seek delegation from members to deal with the staffing issues arising from the Public Conveniences replacement proposal.

RESOLVED that the Recommendation of the report be approved by Members.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30 p.m. closed at 7.39 p.m.

Chairman