

Minutes

Meeting name	Place Committee
Date	Wednesday, 9 January 2019
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor M. Sheldon (Chair)

Councillors

A. Freer-Jones (Vice-Chair)	T. Beaken
M. Blase	G. Botterill
R. de Burle	E. Hutchison
M. Glancy	J. Simpson

Observers

Officers

Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services
Administration Assistant (HA)
Corporate Services Manager
Director for Growth and Regeneration

Minute No.	Minute
PC40	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE An apology was received from Councillor L Higgins.</p>
PC41	<p>MINUTES The minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 2018 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Councillor Simpson commented that, the amendment to the Minutes that were made and agreed need to reflect exactly what was said not just to reflect what was intended.</p>
PC42	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest.</p>
PC43	<p>REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2019-20 - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) The Corporate Services Manager submitted a report regarding the settings of the rents of Council dwellings, approval for thee HRA estimates for 2019-20 and the setting of the working balance for 2019-20.</p> <p>The Corporate Services Manager, highlighted 3.1 (b) of the report in that following the budget in 2015 social rents were reduced by 1% resulting in rents in 2019/2020 being £310k less than they could be bringing the average rent to £74.20 per week. However, a recent consultation paper on rents has been issued which suggests that from 2020-2021 rents will be able to increase once again by CPI + 1%. This is reflected in Appendix A.</p> <p>The Corporate Services Manager brought members attention to section 3.3 of the report highlighting that there has been an increase in arrears from the move to Universal Credit which could be critical to the business plan as 45% of MBC tenants are claiming Universal Credit. In the period April to September 2018 the number of MBC tenants in receipt of Universal Credit in arrears increased from 83 to 148; the majority of new rent accounts do not receive payment until week 6 at the earliest.</p> <p>There is a continuing contribution of £80k in 2019-202 to the General Fund from the HRA to support this via the 'Me and My Learning' scheme.</p> <p>The Corporate Services Manager advised that budget proposals for 2019-2020 are set based on conditions known at this time however, as other priorities are developed which will impact on the HRA budgets these will be considered in conjunction with the HRA Business Plan and the Council's Capital Strategy and will be brought back to committee in due course.</p>

Councillor De-Burle proposed the recommendations and Councillor Blase seconded the motion.

All voted in favour.

RESOLVED that

- (1) A rent decrease of 1% for all Council dwellings for 2019-20 will take effect from 1 April 2019 and that when a property is re-let the rent continues to be brought into line with the Governments formula rent was approved;
- (2) The estimates for 2019-20, subject to the receipt of the limit rent Determination, were approved;
- (3) Delegated authority will be given to the Director for Corporate Services in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive to amend the estimated working balance based on any changes to this determination be approved with changes reported back to committee;
- (4) A working balance of £963,579 budgeted for at 31 March 2020 based on a 1% rent decrease will be approved.

PC44

CLOSURE OF THE WHEELS TO WORK PROGRAMME

The Director for Growth and Regeneration, provided a report, following previous committee consideration from the CSA committee in March 2018, of the Wheels to Work (W2W) programme, to update Members on the steps taken since and to acknowledge that irrespective of the council's efforts. The programme remains unviable and is now recommended for closure, enabling resources to be re-directed to other priority projects and services.

The Director for Growth and Regeneration informed Members that there has been a shortfall in funding and by the end of 2017 there had been a significant reduction in the number of users alongside an increasing and unsustainable debt.

This time last year the scheme had a total of 40-60 users operating at any one time, to date, the scheme now has 6 users.

The Director for Growth and Regeneration advised Members of the three options given for the future of the Wheels to Work scheme, which is listed under the second 3.6 section on the report. However, as it is not believed that there is sufficient will amongst partners to help fund the programme and not sufficient demand amongst the local population to make the scheme self financing, it is recommended that the scheme be wound down over the next three months.

The Manager for Corporate Services advised that: the budget is sufficient to cover the running, winding down and redundancy costs until 31 March 2019; that partners have been invoiced; income will be mitigated by the sale of assets and equipment

and the unit at Snow Hill Industrial Estate can be released and rented out at commercial rate.

Councillor Glancy advised the decision is disappointing but is aware that it was a costly project.

Councillor De-Burle moved the recommendation and Councillor Botterill seconded.

All voted in favour that the Wheels to Work programme would be closed as per (3) below.

RESOLVED that

- (1) The closure of the Wheels to Work programme and notice to be served on Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council be approved;
- (2) Authority to be delegated to the HR and Communications Manager to deal with any associated employment matters including, if relevant, redundancy or redeployment options in line with existing policies and procedures including making any associated payment;;
- (3) Authority to be directed to the Director for Growth and Regeneration to negotiate the terms of the withdrawal and closure of the W2W scheme with partners be approved.

PC45

LIGHTBULB PROJECT

The Assistant Director of Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services provide a report to explain progress on the Lightbulb Project for transforming practical housing support in Leicestershire seeking approval for the details of the Council's involvement going forward, including its financial contribution.

The Assistant Director of Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services made reference to 3.18 of the report advising that the initial funding for Lightbulb draws to an end on 31 March 2019 and that it is time to review the resources allocated for 2019-2020 and following years Four options have been prepared for consideration. As per the report, it is suggested that partners are requested to sign up to a new 5 year Legal Agreement to provide service and staffing stability based on these options. Councillor Glancy asked if there is a get out clause on the 5 year commitment and it was advised that MBC would work to ensure that it is included in the subsequent legal agreement/MoU.

The Assistant Director of Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services made reference to 5.1 in the report advising that Capital contributions for DFG's are currently met in full from the grant provided and in 2018-2019 these were sufficient to fully meet demand and alleviated the need for any Capital contribution from the Council. However, both the demand and the grant awarded are volatile and further requests may be submitted through the Capital programme. The overall financial

contribution 2018-2019 from MBC towards the project is £46,893, of the four options presented in the Business Case MBC contribution would be £48,703.

Reference was made to 5.3 of the report advising the Council is able to meet a proportion of its costs by the capitalisation of funds expended on the delivery of DFG's and that Melton's contribution from the revenue budget would be £22,890 (maximum), the 2018-2019 budget for this was £22,110.

Councillor De-Burle moved the recommendations and Councillor Simpson seconded.

All voted in favour.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) Agree to participate in 'Lightbulb' on the basis of 'option 4' set out at paras 3.18 below
- (2) In the event of partners failing to agree to 'option 4' set out at paras 3.18 below, delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Planning of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Chair of Place Committee to agree to one on the alternative options set out at paras 3.18 below
- (3) Delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Planning of Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Director of Legal Services, to agree to and sign legal agreements committing the Council to the Lightbulb deliver model a period of 5 years from April 2019;
- (4) Approves the costs of £48,706 per annum.

PC46

URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at: 6.55 pm

Chair