

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

30th January 2020

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Roberts (Chairman) Councillor Pegg (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Atkin, Corbin, Churchill, Mrs Haines, Dr Perry and Mrs Wheelton

Labour Group

Councillors Mrs Heath, Mulgrew, Rhind, Richards, and Shepherd

HCS/70 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that no apologies had been received

HCS/71 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st November 2019 were noted and approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

HCS/72 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that no declarations of interest from Members of the Council had been received.

HCS/73 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

HCS/74 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

HCS/75 **REPORTS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There were no Overview and Scrutiny Reports to be submitted.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

HCS/76 **HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

The Strategic Director (Service Delivery) presented the report to the Committee highlighting the following extended consultations the maximum household eligibility income had been raised from £40,000 to £60,000. The Housing Services Manager explained that the final policy document will be finished later in the year.

RESOLVED:-

- 1.1 That the responses to the consultation on the Housing Allocations Policy be accepted for inclusion within a revised policy which to be presented to the Housing and Community Services Committee later this year.***
- 1.2 That the Committee agreed to review the options for the procurement of a new Choice Based lettings system during 2020/21.***

HCS/77 **HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY**

The Housing Services Manager presented the report to the Committee explaining that it was necessary to carry out a comprehensive review as it had been 10 years since the last review of homelessness and that the Government's homeless advisor is supportive of our approach.

Councillor Churchill enquired whether headlines covered within strategy document are fixed and Councillor Richards asked for clarity whether the impact of Universal Credit on homelessness will be considered. The Housing Services Manager informed the Committee that the LGA toolkit guidance will be used which tells the Council what the review should include. Members were also informed that changes to benefits will be in the scope of the review.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That the Committee noted the content of the Homelessness Strategy Statement be submitted to the Ministry of Community Housing and Local Government.***
- 1.2 That the Committee approved the procurement of an external provider to carry out a comprehensive review of homelessness services and produce a Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Temporary Accommodation Strategy.***

HCS/78 **TRANSFER OF HOUSING REPAIR CALLS INTO CUSTOMER SERVICES**

The Head of Customer Services presented the report explaining then need to address customer dissatisfaction with the currently housing repairs call service.

Councillor Churchill enquired how will the improvement in service be measured. The Head of Housing Services informed Committee that customer satisfaction feedback forms will be used to measure the success of the changes.

Councillor Rhind asked how many of calls currently received are linked to reporting of outstanding repairs. The Housing Services Manager explained that as there are only two telephone lines available a lot of customers cannot get through but it is expected that by moving the calls to Customer Services this will help identify when repairs have not been carried out in time.

Councillor Perry enquired how will the Service know what the success rate is of the follow up calls regarding the progress of repairs. The Head of Customer Services informed the Members that both Customers Service Feedback and auditing will be used.

RESOLVED:-

1.1 That the Committee approved the transfer of Housing Repair calls into Customer Services which will require the creation of an additional Customer Services Advisor post on the Council's establishment, which will be either a full-time Modern Apprentice, or a part-time skilled Customer Services Advisor.

1.2 That the Committee approved the financial and staffing implications of the transfer of calls be referred to the Council's Finance and Management Committee on 13th February 2020 for approval.

HCS/79 **ADOPTION OF THE STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT (SHMA)**

The Strategic Housing Manager delivered the report to the Committee explaining that this research can be used by the Council as a tool for future building including elderly provision and homes.

Councillor Atkin raised concern about the need for more elderly care provision and how this can be delivered. The Strategic Housing Manager informed the Committee that there is a reduction in residential care beds and therefore future proofing of homes to allow for increased provision for care in the home is needed.

RESOLVED:-

- 1.1 That the Committee formally adopted the updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) as per Appendix 1 of the Report.***
- 1.2 That the Committee noted the content of the Executive Summary document and the implications of the findings for South Derbyshire.***
- 1.3 That the report be referred to Environmental and Development Services Committee for its endorsement for use as a material consideration to assist in the determination of future planning applications.***

HCS/80 **SWAD IN BLOOM**

The Head of Cultural and Community Services presented the report to the Committee outlining the main purpose and intentions of the “Swad In Bloom” Group (SIBG).

Members were very supportive of this and keen that this movement will only help to improve many areas within Swadlincote. Councillor Atkin asked whether private sites could be used as well as Council Sites and if there was any funding available from the Council. The Head of Cultural and Community Services explained that all types and ranges of sites will be targeted and the Council was not giving the money to the movement but will support them to get sponsorship.

RESOLVED:-

- 1.1 That the Council join in with and support the national Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) “In Bloom” Scheme.***
- 1.2 That the Council supports the “Swad in Bloom” Group (SIBG) and its Action Plan.***
- 1.3 That the Committee approved permission for the SIBG to maintain and improve, in partnership with the Council, the areas of Council land, as delineated on the plans Appendix 1 and 2 of the Report.***
- 1.4 That the Council provides advice, help and support to the formative SIBG on volunteering protocols, insurance, risk assessment, proposed projects etc.***
- 1.5 That the Council supports the SIBG in any application for permissions, grant-aid and funding which affects Council land or impacts on the visual amenity of the town.***

HCS/81 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

RESOLVED:-

The Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.

HCS/82 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

RESOLVED:-

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

MINUTES

The Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st November 2019 were received.

TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11

The Committee was informed that no questions had been received.

STRUCTURE REVIEW CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Members approved the recommendations in the report.

The Meeting terminated at 7.05 pm.

COUNCILLOR A ROBERTS

CHAIRMAN