

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
(SPECIAL)

17th April 2003

PRESENT:-

Labour Group

Councillor Southern (Chair), Councillor Lauro (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Dunn, Mrs. Mead, Mrs. Rose, Taylor and Whyman M.B.E.

Conservative Group

Councillors Douglas and Hood.

In Attendance

Councillor Harrington (Labour Group).

APOLOGY

An apology for absence from the Meeting was received from Councillor Routledge (Labour Group).

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

HCS/119. **ONE-STOP DISABLED ADAPTATIONS AGREEMENT**

At its Meeting on 21st November 2002, the Committee authorised the establishment of a unified disabled adaptations service. Members had requested improved liaison and service arrangements between the partner agencies. Negotiations had been undertaken with Derbyshire County Council and the following improvements were proposed to the service:-

- (i) A liaison meeting was to be held in South Derbyshire once each month between the Service Manager of Social Services, the County Council's Clerk of Works and private sector housing staff from this Council's Environmental Health Division. The purpose of the meeting was to progress/chase outstanding jobs, monitor budgets and look for continual improvement.
- (ii) The County Council had agreed that the Architectural Technician in the private sector housing section could be the responsive Officer for problems that might occur. The Officer would have the support of the County Council for any decisions made.
- (iii) Social Services would use Occupational Therapists for initial assessment of grant applicants, to give a consistent approach across all tenures.
- (iv) A Clerk of Works would hold a weekly meeting with Officers of the Environmental Health Division to discuss particular jobs.
- (v) The package of measures would be reviewed after 3 months to assess its effectiveness.

Details were given of the improvements achieved to date, which comprised reducing waiting times for minor adaptations, reducing waiting list times for Council house tenants and anticipated savings to the Housing Revenue account of approximately £50,000 after twelve months. In order to deal with the extra administrative burden of a unified service, it would be necessary to recruit a part-time administrative officer to the private sector housing section. The costs for this post had previously been approved out of fee income.

In response to a Members' question, clarification was provided on the revised operational arrangements. Members were pleased that the Occupational Therapist was being used to assess tenants' needs and they welcomed the increased efficiencies and reduced waiting times. Officers were seeking to reduce the remaining backlog of applications and comment was made on possible uses for the anticipated savings to the Housing Revenue Account.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Committee approves the outcome of negotiations with Derbyshire County Council, as a basis for agreement.***
- (2) That the recruitment of an additional part-time administration post and salary details be referred to the Finance and Management Committee for approval.***

HCS/120. **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.

REVIEW OF STRUCTURES TO DELIVER STRATEGIC HOUSING ROLE AND IMPROVE DELIVERY OF HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES (Paragraph 11)

The Committee considered a revised structure for certain aspects of the Strategic and Landlord housing functions.

INTERIM MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS – COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT (Paragraph 11)

The Committee approved interim management and financial arrangements for the Community Services Department.

R.W. SOUTHERN

CHAIR