

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

12th JUNE 2014

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillors Hewlett (Chairman), Councillor Smith (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Ford, Harrison, Mrs Hood, Murray and Stanton (vice Councillor Lemmon)

Labour Group

Councillors Dunn, Frost, Mulgrew, Rhind, Richards and Shepherd

In attendance

Councillors Atkin, Mrs Plenderleith

HCS/1 **APOLOGY**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Lemmon (Conservative Group).

HCS/2 **Minutes**

The Committee considered the open minutes of the meeting held on 17th April.

RESOLVED:-

To approve as a true record the open minutes of the meeting held on 17th April.

HCS/3 **Choice Based Lettings**

The Committee considered a report from the Director for Housing & Environmental Services on how the district's Choice Based Letting (CBL) scheme had operated during 2013/14. This made it clear that fewer properties had been allocated as emergency lettings, to those households which the Council has a statutory duty to rehouse. Members welcomed this and especially the preventative work carried out by the Housing Options Team to ensure better overall use of the housing stock.

Members were also informed that following the consultation exercise carried out during last autumn, minor changes had been made to the Homefinder Allocations Policy. The Committee was now asked to make a range of further changes to the policy. These were explained in the report.

RESOLVED:-

To note the outcome of the 2013/14 operation of the South Derbyshire Homefinder Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme.

To approve progress and the timetable in the implementation of the amended South Derbyshire Homefinder Allocations Policy.

To approve further minor amendments to the allocation policy, as set out in the report.

HCS/4 **Facility Development Update**

The Committee then considered a report by the Director for Community & Planning Services on the progress to date in improving sports and cultural facilities. These improvements included a major refurbishment programme for the Green Bank Leisure Centre and the installation of a full sized floodlit artificial grass pitch at the Etwall Leisure Centre.

The Committee discussed these improvements and what actions had been taken. Members welcomed in this context the opportunity for a site visit to the Green Bank leisure centre, so that they could see for themselves the changes being made.

Members of the Committee were also informed that the Council had successfully submitted an expression of interest to Sport England for a scheme to increase participation by young people in sporting activities. Following on from this, the Council had now been asked by Sport England to submit specific proposals. These would involve greatly improved facilities for young people at both the Grove Hall and Green Bank leisure centres. Under the proposals, Sport England would meet the vast majority of the capital costs of the improvements.

The Committee welcomed the expression of interest and the work carried out to date. Members also agreed that the authority now submit a formal application to Sport England to fund the proposed improvements at Grove Hall and Green Bank leisure centres.

RESOLVED:-

To note the progress on sport and cultural facility development.

To approve the submission of the Sport England Improvement Fund Application for the re-development of the Grove Hall and the Green Bank leisure centres.

HCS/5 **Corporate Plan 2009-14: Performance Management Year End Report 2013/14**

Members considered a report by the Directors of Housing & Environmental Services and of Community & Planning Services on the Corporate Plan 2013/14. This focused on the 'outcomes' which the Committee was

responsible for delivering under the 'Safe and Secure' and 'Lifestyle Choices' themes.

The Committee considered the information. Several errors were identified in the text, which it was agreed would now be rectified.

RESOLVED:-

Note the achievements and out-turn performance at year end, in relation to the Council's Corporate Plan 2009/14

Note where progress had failed to achieve the specified targets and the remedial action taken.

HCS/6 **Service Plans 2014-15**

The Committee then considered a report from the Directors of Housing & Environmental Services and Community & Planning Services, setting out the service plans for the Housing & Environmental and Community & Planning service areas. Members were reminded that these service plans formed a key part of the Council's performance management framework; explaining the key achievements during the year, highlighting specific service strengths and pointing out the areas for further improvement.

RESOLVED:-

To approve the Service Plans for Community & Planning Services and Housing & Environmental Services as the basis for service delivery over the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

HCS/7 **Work Plan**

Members of the Committee received a report from the Directors of Community & Planning Services and Housing & Environmental Services setting out the suggested work programme for the Committee during the 2014/15 local government year.

RESOLVED:-

To note the work programme for the year.

HCS/8 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (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.

HCS/9 **Exempt Minutes**

The Committee considered the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 17th April.

RESOLVED:-

To approve as a true record the exempt minutes of the meeting held on the 17th April.

HCS/10 **Housing & Environmental Services – proposed changes to staffing structure**

Finally, the Committee considered a report from the Director of Housing & Environmental Services explaining the proposed restructure of Housing & Environmental Services directorate. He explained the rationale for the changes. In particular, he pointed out that the reorganisation would free-up capacity to enable more work to take place in priority areas; and especially to further improve the Council's already impressive track record in preventing homelessness.

During the subsequent discussion, members asked about the potential impact on employment and possible redundancies.

RESOLVED:-

To approve in principle the proposed changes to the Housing and Environmental Services Directorate set out in the report.

Cllr Hewlett
CHAIRMAN

The meeting terminated at 6.55 p.m.