

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

17th April 2014

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Hewlett (Chairman) and Councillors Ford, Mrs.Hall (substitute for Councillor Lemmon) Harrison, Mrs. Hood, Roberts (substitute for Councillor Murray) and Smith.

Labour Group

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

In attendance

Councillor Taylor (Labour group).

HCS/.50 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillors Lemmon and Murray (Conservative Group).

HCS/.51 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th March 2014, were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

HCS/.52 **MOBILE HOMES ACT 2013 – LICENSING OF RESIDENTIAL PARK HOMES**

A report was submitted to inform members of the changes to the Mobile Homes Act 2013 including the introduction of fees and charges and additional enforcement powers for local authorities.

The Officer explained that there were 2 significant changes those being:

1. The option for local authorities to charge,
2. The local authority would now be able to issue compliance notices for breach of conditions attached to a licence.

It was noted that there were currently 20 park homes within South Derbyshire, charging would enable the council to recover some costs associated with the licensing function. Based on the existing sites the annual fee income is estimated to be £3,200.

The proposed new policy was attached to the report as appendices and is based on government guidance.

Members asked questions of the Officer.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) Members approve the proposed draft Fees Policy (Appendix A) for Residential Park Home Sites as a basis for wider consultation.**
- (2) That authority is given to the Director of Housing and Environmental Services in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, to agree any minor amendments to the draft policy arising from wider consultation prior to implementation from April 2015. Any proposed material amendments will be the subject of a further report to Committee.**
- (3) That Members approve proposals to review all the existing Site Licences and attached Conditions for all of the existing Residential Park Homes across the district and that fees are not charged as part of this review.**
- (4) Members give delegated powers to the Director of Housing and Environmental Services with regards to enforcement powers of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 as amended by the Mobile Homes Act 2013.**
- (5) That if no material changes are proposed following the consultation process, as assessed by the Chairman of the Committee, the Leaseholder Management Policy is adopted and implemented immediately. Any proposed material changes arising out of the consultation to be the subject of a further Committee report.**

HCS/.53 COUNCIL NEW BUILD – HCA BID AND HRA RESOURCES

A report was submitted for members to consider a proposal to submit a bid for grant funding to the Governments Affordable Housing Programme 2015-18.

The Director of Housing and Environmental Services explained that phase 1 of the new build development was making progress and that planning permission had been granted for 39 new homes across 4 sites.

A further planning application will be submitted for a site in Pennine way and whilst funding is available for this site, fewer resources would be available for subsequent builds, therefore there is a need to utilise external sources of funds when opportunities arise.

The report weighed up the positives and negatives of applying for a bid, the main positive being that the council would establish a track record with the Homes and Communities Agency which could open further opportunities in the future

The officer then explained that if a grant was awarded the grant earning properties would have a strict condition that they be let at affordable rents which are generally higher by at least 20% than the normal social rent, but this in turn would generate more revenue income and therefore the debt incurred could be paid off more quickly.

Finally it was proposed that a joint member/tenant HRA Business Plan working group be established with 3 members from the controlling group and 2 members from the opposition group.

Members asked questions on the report.

Councillor Rhind nominated himself and Councillor Richards to sit on the Working group from the Opposition group.

Councillor Harrision confirmed the controlling members would be put forward at the next Council meeting.

RESOLVED:-

(1) Members agree to the Council submitting a bid for grant funding to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Affordable Housing Programme for 2015-18.

(2) Members approve the formation of a joint member/tenant Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan working group and appoints five Council members to the group.

HCS/.54 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members were asked to consider the updated work programme and review its content where appropriate.

RESOLVED:-

That the updated work programme be approved.

HCS/.55 **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.

MINUTES

The Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th March 2014 were received.

J. HEWLETT

CHAIRMAN