

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

12th March 2009

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Lemmon (Chairman), Councillor Grant (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Atkin, Ford (substitute for Councillor Harrison), Hewlett, Mrs. Patten, Roberts and Mrs. Wheeler (substitute for Councillor Murray).

Labour Group

Councillors Dunn, Mrs. Gillespie, Mrs. Lane, Rhind and Shepherd.

In Attendance

Councillors Mrs. Farrington and Jones (Conservative Group) and Councillor Richards (Labour Group).

HCS/53. **APOLOGIES**

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

HCS/54. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th October 2008 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

With regard to these Minutes, Councillor Mrs. Wheeler gave the following statement:-

“I have reflected on my comments made at the last Meeting of the Committee with regard to the debate on the Extra Care Housing Project (Exempt Minute No. HCS/51), and wish to apologise unreservedly to those Members who may well have been offended by my remarks. I hope that those Members may now accept my sincere apologies and I will endeavour to ensure that this will not be repeated in the future”.

HCS/55. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Hewlett declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Minute No. HCS/60, Community Partnership Scheme, as a Member of the Board of the Citizens Advice Bureau. Councillor Lemmon declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Minute Nos. HCS/60 and HCS/64, Community Partnership Scheme and Online Booking and Membership IT System, New Leisure Centre, Etwall, as a Director of Sharpe's Pottery Heritage and Arts Trust, and as a Member of Etwall JMC respectively. Councillor Mrs. Patten declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Minute Nos. HCS/60 and HCS/64, Community Partnership Scheme and Online Booking and Membership IT System, New Leisure Centre, Etwall, as a Director of Sharpe's Pottery Heritage and Arts Trust, and as a Member of Etwall JMC respectively. Councillor Shepherd declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Minute No

HCS/60 and HCS/64 Community Partnership Scheme and Online Booking and Membership IT System, New Leisure Centre, Etwall, as a Member of the Board of the Citizens Advice Bureau and as a Member of the Etwall Joint Management Committee respectively.

HCS/56. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 11, Councillor Mrs. Wheeler asked the following question:-

“Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No. 11, I would like to ask the Chairman what were the issues discussed at the recent LGA Conference regarding housing subsidy, and could he provide a report to the Committee?”

Councillor Lemmon responded that he had attended this conference along with 50 other delegates from 39 councils, all of whom had retained their council housing. The conference had been arranged by the LGA to provide councils with the opportunity to hear the latest thinking from key players who had been involved in the Government's review of the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy System. He gave two examples of councils, one of which was in negative subsidy and one of which was currently in positive subsidy.

He also confirmed that during the Government's review, the LGA's submission to justify change in the HRA had been built around the following facts:

- 75% of local authority landlords were already in negative subsidy with the amounts paid annually and this was increasing year on year.
- The number of local authority landlords that were receiving positive subsidy was reducing year on year.
- The Government Treasury surplus was increasing year on year. During 2008/09 it would have increased by 55%. This equated to £194 million and by 2009/10 the Government Treasury surplus would have risen to £300 million.
- The ability of local authority landlords to manage their housing stock effectively was being eroded.
- All of these factors would result in the tenants getting less value for money in terms of the rent that they paid. The situation was something that the LGA was attempting to avoid.

HCS/57. **REVIEW OF THE PROVISION OF NHS DENTISTRY AND OUT OF HOURS SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT**

A report was submitted advising Members of the process and outcome of a review of the provision of NHS Dentistry and Out of Hours Services in the District.

For the purpose of the review, the Head of Urgent Care and the Head of Dental and Eye Care Commissioning at the Derbyshire County Primary Care Trust (PCT) had been invited to give presentations on the general role of the PCT, Out of Hours Service and NHS Dentistry. A list of questions had been circulated prior to the Meeting and these were referred to during their presentations.

A list of items were covered within the presentations, and further details were provided in the report under the following headings:-

- Derbyshire County PCT – Overview.
- Health in South Derbyshire (Health Profile 2008).
- Out of Hours Services.
- NHS Dental Provision.

The review highlighted that the main issue arising was the lack of awareness and general publicity of services for residents. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that it would use the Council's website and other communication channels to assist with publicity wherever possible and practical. It was also agreed to include an article in the Council's Team Brief to raise awareness for District Council staff on the NHS Dentist aspects of the review.

RESOLVED:-

That the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, following its recent review of the provision of NHS Dentistry and Out of Hours Services be received.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

HCS/58. **STATUS TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY**

Members were advised of the results of the STATUS Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2008. Overall satisfaction for services delivered to general needs tenants was reported as an indicator value for National Indicator (NI) 160, Local Authority Tenants' Satisfaction with Landlord Services. All of South Derbyshire District Council's tenants were surveyed between September and October 2008, to return figures for NI 160 and overall tenants satisfaction, so that comparisons could be made with the 2006 result. 2086 completed survey forms were returned, which represented a response rate of 67.82% of tenanted properties. This was an extremely high response rate to a written survey.

The 2008 survey had returned overall satisfaction of both general needs and sheltered tenants at 90.60%. This was an overall increase of approaching 2% on levels of satisfaction recorded in 2006. In addition the 2008 survey had returned overall satisfaction levels amongst general needs tenants as 87.90% satisfied and sheltered tenants at 94.80 % satisfied.

Whilst overall tenant's satisfaction with services was high, there were some areas highlighted in the report that would require attention to maintain and improve standards. Officers would be drawing up action plans to address these areas.

Members expressed their thanks and congratulations to all staff concerned for achieving high levels of satisfaction, through their commitment and hard work.

RESOLVED:

That the results of the STATUS Tenants Satisfaction Survey 2008 be noted.

HCS/59. **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT (1st APRIL TO 31st DECEMBER 2008)**

A report was submitted detailing achievements for the quarter ending 31st December 2008, in relation to this Committee's contribution to the four key strands of the Council's Performance Management Framework. Full details were included in appendices entitled:-

- Corporate Plan.
- Community Strategy Action Plan.
- National Indicator Set Performance Indicators.
- Local Performance Indicators.
- Service Level Key Tasks.

Further information was provided in response to Local Performance Indicators BVPI 66(a) and (b) with regards to housing rent.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the key achievements and performance for the quarter ending 31st December 2008 in the Committee's area of responsibility be noted.***
- (2) That Members note where performance had failed to achieve a specified target and accept the response submitted.***

HCS/60. **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP SCHEME**

It was reported that the Community Partnership Scheme offered Capital Grants of up to £25,000 to projects brought forward from the voluntary and community sector. This scheme had previously had an annual budget of between £50,000 and £150,000 since its reintroduction in 2002/03. However, there was currently no annual budget and the current scheme was operating through scheme or project under-spend from situations where grants had been allocated, but projects had not managed to progress and awards had been taken back into the scheme. The remaining total budget currently stood at £78,687.

The following applications were received and considered;

- Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Etwall Primary Parent Teachers Association (PTA).
- Groundwork.
- Sharpe's Pottery Heritage and Arts Trust.
- Stapenhill Football Club.
- Swarkestone Cricket Club.

The Community Partnership Scheme Assessment Panel met on 12th February 2009 to score the applications against the previously agreed questions and weightings. Details were given of the projects' final score once weightings had been applied.

Prior to making a recommendation, the panel considered the schemes past performance, current budget position of £78,687 and projected receipt of further applications.

There was insufficient funding to support all the of the lodged applications in full, and weighting was given to the fit of the projects with the Council's aims and objectives and the necessity of the Council's support to attract additional funding into the District.

RESOLVED:

- (1) ***That the recommendations of the Community Partnership Scheme Assessment Panel be considered and grants awarded of:***
- ***£5,000 to Citizens Advice Bureau – Grant to act as 3rd party contribution (matched funding) to support application to Landfill Community Funds, to enable purchase of property to house their operations.***
 - ***£15,000 (maximum) to Etwall Primary PTA – Grant to support the development of a Community Learner Swimming Pool. There are several funding applications outstanding for this project, which, if successful, would reduce the contribution required from the Scheme.***
 - ***£4,327 to Groundwork – Grant to enable the development of community open space at Sandhills, Swadlincote. There has been extensive community consultation and this grant will contribute to the implementation of the project.***
 - ***£5,000 to Sharpes Pottery Heritage and Arts Trust – Grant to act as 3rd party contribution (matched funding) to support applications to Landfill Community Funds to enable the restoration of the Kiln.***
 - ***£15,000 to Stapenhill FC – Grant to contribute to the redevelopment of the club facilities. The original building has been damaged beyond repair as a result of arson.***
 - ***£12,500 to Swarkestone CC – Grant to contribute to the development of a new pavilion. As well as acting as a sports pavilion it will be the only building available for use by local groups other than a public house.***
- (2) ***That progress of the Community Partnership Scheme as detailed in the report be noted.***

(Councillors Hewlett, Lemmon, Patten and Shepherd declared a prejudicial interest in this item and withdrew from the Meeting during the consideration and determination thereof).

HCS/61. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members were asked to consider the updated work programme and review it's content where appropriate.

RESOLVED:-

That the updated work programme be approved.

HCS/62. **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 8th January 2009 were received.

ONLINE BOOKING AND MEMBERSHIP IT SYSTEM, NEW LEISURE CENTRE, ETWALL (Paragraph 3)

Members approved the setting aside of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules to allow a contract to be entered into to provide an online booking and membership IT system at the new Leisure Centre, Etwall.

FORMER TENANTS ARREARS (FTA's) – WRITE OFF (Paragraphs 1 & 3)

Members agreed to write off the Former Tenant Arrears as listed within the report.

J. LEMMON

CHAIRMAN