

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

19th April 2022

OPEN

PRESENT:

Labour Group

Councillor Rhind (Chair) and Councillor Mulgrew (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Richards, Dunn, and Tilley

Conservative Group

Councillors, Muller Ford, Haines, and Smith

Independent Group

Councillors Dawson and Roberts.

Non-Grouped

Councillors Wheelton and Churchill

HCS/91 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that apologies had been received from Councillor Shepherd (Labour Group) and Councillors Corbin and Ackroyd (Conservative Group).

HCS/92 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that declarations of interest had been received from Councillor Tilley, Councillor Muller, Councillor Dunn and Councillor Wheelton in relation to item HCS/102 by virtue of being Members of the Planning Committee and that they would leave the meeting when the item was to be discussed.

HCS/93 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

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

HCS/94 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

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

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE**HCS/95 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE (POS) HISTORICAL ADOPTIONS**

The Strategic Director (Service Delivery) presented the report to the Committee summarising the history and outlining the issues regarding a number of unadopted parcels of land.

Councillor Ford raised concern regarding the poor upkeep of public open spaces by the management companies and sought clarity about what powers the Council had to reduce the burden on the Authority. The Strategic Director (Service Delivery) informed the Committee that the issue was complicated and the Authority had limited powers but Government was looking at legislation on the issue.

Councillor Churchill expressed concern that the management companies had damaged the Council's reputation and how important this work was.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 *The Committee agreed to officers negotiating the transfer of parcels of unadopted land at the following locations:***
 - *Grampian Way/Nairn Close, Stenson Fields***
 - *Auden Close, Church Broughton***
 - *Eureka Park, Belmont Primary School***
 - *Kingfisher Lane, Willington***
 - *Bretby Heights, Newhall.***
- 1.2 *The Committee agreed to the Strategic Director – Service Delivery negotiating the transfer of land at Manor Farm Cadley from the developer into the Council's ownership with an accompanying additional S106 contribution.***
- 1.3 *The Committee endorsed the process by which land be transferred to Management Companies and monitored thereafter be fully reviewed and a new policy statement be included in the new Local Plan.***
- 1.4 *The Committee confirmed the Council's general policy not to sell public open space and authorised officers to take all appropriate action to recover land subject to encroachment.***

1.5 The Committee agreed that the report, in respect of the proposed land acquisition matters, be referred to the Finance and Management Committee for approval.

HCS/96 **COUNTY WIDE HOMELESS STRATEGY**

The Head of Housing presented the report to the Committee and outlined how the strategy would help to keep people in accommodation. It was noted that the strategy would build on the Council's role and that whilst there was not a huge number of street sleepers the issue in the District was one of hidden homelessness with many sharing accommodation, sofa surfing or having insecure tenancies.

RESOLVED:

1.1 The Committee endorsed the Draft Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy subject to clarification on the agencies and forums that will assist in delivering the actions contained within it.

HCS/97 **COUNCIL HOUSE RELETS**

The Head of Housing presented the report to the Committee and outlined progress made with reletting Council properties during 2021/22 and highlighted actions taken to improve the performance of letting Council properties.

Members raised concerns about the Council having to comply with Right to Buy and it not applying to Housing Associations, the possibility of bringing housing repairs in house and adaptations to properties as standard.

The Head of Housing advised Committee that Housing Associations were under some pressure with Right to Acquire and advised that reletting repairs had been discussed at the previous Committee meeting where it was noted that there was a shortage of skilled trades people to carry out the work. The Head of Housing clarified that the Council had to ensure that adapted properties were let to those individuals who required that allocation.

The Strategic Director (Service Delivery) addressed the Committee and confirmed that the driving force was to create homes to match the needs of those on the waiting lists which included specialist accommodation provision.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 The Committee noted the progress that had been made in reducing the overall number of empty Council properties and the number of properties under repair.***
- 1.2 The Committee was to receive further reports on progress in this area along with additional information regarding the reasons for property offers being refused by applicants, the reasons for current tenants vacating Council dwellings and the impact of reclassifying sheltered dwellings for general needs use.***

HCS/97 SUSTAINABLE WARMTH FUNDING AND LOW CARBON HOMES

The Head of Housing presented the report to the Committee and sought approval from the Committee for the Council to accept the secured Sustainable Warmth Funding grant and for the establishment of a Low Carbon Homes Team to manage and administer the scheme. In addition, the Head of Housing outlined the proposal to appoint Marches Energy Agency to pipeline and market the grant to encourage residents into the process.

Councillor Richards congratulated the team on the successful bid.

Members raised queries regarding additional costs in relation to IT systems and shared concern about residents applying for the government grants and suggested a flyer being sent with bills for Council Tax. The Strategic Director Service Delivery advised the Committee that there was a low risk to IT regarding delivery and that information had been shared with residents regarding the grant.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 The Committee accepted the Sustainable Warmth Fund grant allocations totalling £1,214,800.***
- 1.2 The Committee authorised the Chief Executive to sign the relevant agreements and declarations necessary to accept the Sustainable Warmth Fund allocations.***
- 1.3 That details of all further carbon reduction bid opportunities submitted under the Constitution's delegated powers be reported to Environment and Development Services Committee through the annual report of the work of the Corporate Environmental Sustainability Group.***

1.4 The Committee approved the establishment of a Low Carbon Homes Team consisting of two new temporary additions to the establishment:

- **Low Carbon Homes Team Manager**
- **Low Carbon Homes Delivery Officer**

1.5 That the financial, contractual, and human resource aspects of the report be referred to Finance and Management Committee for approval.

HCS/98 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Strategic Director (Service Delivery) presented to report to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.

HCS/99 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

The Chairman may therefore move:

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.

ANY EXEMPT QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11

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

ACTIVE COMMUNITIES AND HEALTH STAFFING

RESOLVED:

RESOLVED:

That the Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

ACQUISITION OF NEW COUNCIL HOUSING AT MOAT STREET

RESOLVED:

That the Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

The meeting terminated at 18:55 hours

COUNCILLOR G RHIND

CHAIR