

## Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 20 January 2011 starting at 6.30pm  
Present: Councillor S Hirst (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Brunskill	M Robinson
R Hargreaves	C Ross
B Hilton	G Scott
K Hind	J S Sutcliffe
J Holgate	D Taylor
E M H Ranson	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Head of Environmental Health and Strategic Housing Officer.

### 606 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors M Fielding and J Waddington.

### 607 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Ranson referred to Minute 463 with regard to the introduction of a hierarchy for local connection that would be used in future 106 Agreements. The Housing Strategy Officer informed Committee that a more detailed definition of next of kin along with working hours had been drawn up. This would be made available for Committee information. Councillor Ranson went on to express concern about the drawing up of Section 106 Agreements and how the current procedure allows for renegotiation after Planning and Development Committee and Health and Housing Committee have agreed the content. To avoid this situation Section 106 Agreements should be taken to Committee finalised, removing the opportunity for later amendments. It was felt that this should be considered in more detail.

RESOLVED: That a report on Section 106 Agreements be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

### 608 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

### 609 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

610 REFERENCES FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no references from Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

611 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2010/11 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMME 2011/16

The Director of Resources submitted a report to approve the revised programme for the current year and also the future five year Capital Programme for this Committee. With regard to the original programme for 2010/11 she informed Committee that it included schemes at a total estimated cost of £395,500, unfinished schemes from 2009/10 had totalled £169,100 and additional approvals had totalled £199,700. The revised estimate for this Committee was £679,300. With regard to the draft programme for 2011/16 the Director of Resources informed Committee that officers had been asked to submit any new schemes for consideration. The additional schemes were submitted to Committee in detail and an explanation given of how each particular scheme links to the Council's ambitions. There were a total of six new proposals put forward for this Committee. She reminded Committee that this was a possible programme at this stage which would require further consideration by the Budget Working Group and by Policy and Finance Committee who would want to make sure that both the capital and revenue costs were affordable to the Council. Committee considered the additional proposed schemes and felt that although all schemes were reasonable to add at this stage in the budget process, that priority ought to be given to disabled facilities grants and landlord/tenant grants and that should it be required money from the VAT shelter receipts reserve should be used.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the revised Capital Programme for 2011 as set out in the report;
2. approve the future five year programme for 2011/16 as outlined in the report to go forward into the budget process; and
3. agree that priority should be given to disabled facilities grants and landlord/tenant grants.

612 REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2010/11 AND ORIGINAL ESTIMATE 2011/12

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to agree a revised revenue budget for 2010/11 together with a draft revenue budget for 2011/12 for submission to Policy and Finance Committee subject to the consideration of savings for 2011/12 by the Budget Working Group.

She reminded Committee of the grant settlement received for the next financial year and what this would mean for the Council in that there was a need to identify substantial savings in the base budget. The report detailed the revised revenue budget for 2010/11 which was £12,910 higher than the original estimate. The report also gave details of the movements and expenditure and income with

the main reasons highlighted. With regard to the 2011/12 draft revenue budget the Director of Resources informed Committee that following the grant settlement the amount of savings needed for 2011/12 was £660,000. She also highlighted that other potential problems would have a significant impact on the budget, these included the effect of the economic downturn on service income levels, the level of investment income received, future public sector funding and pension fund contributions. She informed Committee that the estimates had been prepared on the current levels of service and included provision for price increases of 3% and pay increases in line with Government pay policy for public sector workers. In view of the amount of savings needed the budget requiring approval for 2011/12 represented the draft base budget for this Committee and did not account for any service or structure changes that had been identified to date. All savings would be put forward and considered by the Budget Working Group in order for the Council to reach an affordable and achievable budget for 2011/12. Committee considered the base budget as outlined in the report for each service heading and asked questions relating to these. She highlighted where there was significant changes with regard to either increase costs or considerable savings/income.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the revised budget for 2010/11; and
2. approve the revenue budget for 2011/12 for submission to the next Policy and Finance Committee subject to the consideration of savings for 2011/12 by the Budget Working Group.

613 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENFORCEMENT POLICIES

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to consider and approve the updated Ribble Valley Borough Council Food Safety and Health and Safety Enforcement Policies. The Head of Environmental Health informed Committee that generic policies had first been prepared and approved in June 1998 and that these had been adapted following guidance over the following years. To meet relevant performance indicators and good practice a revised Enforcement Policy had been prepared in line with current guidance and taken into account best practice from such institutions as the Crown Prosecution Service in relation to the food safety and health and safety functions. The draft documents were included as part of the report so that Committee could consider them. These would be placed on the Council website for reference purposes.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the updated Food Safety and Health and Safety Enforcement Policies for implementation within the Borough of Ribble Valley.

614 APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC ANALYST AND FOOD EXAMINER

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to consider and confirm the appointment of Dr Andrew Smith as the Council's Public Analyst, Food Examiner and Agricultural Analyst. A letter had been received from the Lancashire County Laboratory advising of a change of personnel at the Public

Analyst Laboratory in Preston asking for ratification to act on behalf of the Council for relevant related matters.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the authorisation of Dr Andrew Smith as Public Analyst, Food Examiner and Agricultural Analyst to act on behalf of Ribble Valley Borough Council.

615 CHANGE TO SUPPORTING PEOPLE FUNDING

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information of a change to how Supporting People funding is allocated. Almost all of the Supporting People grant funds support for people in sheltered accommodation, namely the warden service. In contrast 76% of households of pensionable age in Lancashire are owner/occupiers and therefore currently unable to access Supporting People funding. This lack of support available to owner/occupiers had been considered by the Commissioning Board and the report contained a review of the options available as to how community based support could be delivered.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

616 GENERAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information which included an update on recent enforcement action with regard to food safety and health and safety, the Environmental Agency Liaison Meeting, flood protection property grants, transfer of responsibility for private sewers, Slaidburn public water supply and control measures against flu to be re-established within Council offices.

Concern was expressed with regard to the state of some of the public sewers in the Ribble Valley and whether they were capable of coping with the development of more houses. It was felt that more information and a proper dialogue was needed with United Utilities and, as such, it was felt that a representative from United Utilities should be invited to the next meeting of this Committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the Head of Environmental Health invite a representative from United Utilities to attend Committee.

617 HEALTH PROMOTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES

Councillor Bridget Hilton gave Members a verbal update on the NHS reforms which are starting to take shape, public health and Clitheroe Hospital.

618 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be an Exempt Information Under Category 7 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

619

## EMPTY PROPERTY UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report in response to a request by Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a performance clinic to assess a performance indicator the delivery of bringing empty properties back into use. The clinic requested that working with the Council Tax Department that a report be prepared identifying all properties empty for more than three or four years. This had been done and it was proposed that all owners on the list would be contacted and made aware of the options available to them, including the offer of grant assistance. Once this information had been collated about each property and, dependent on the reason for being property empty they would then join the priority list. The report also highlighted three properties that had been on the empty property list for more than five years where considerable effort had been made to encourage the owners to bring these properties back into use. It was felt that enforcement action of compulsory purchase might be appropriate.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. accept the new list of priority empty properties; and
2. agree to inform the owners of three long term empty properties that a compulsory purchase order would be considered if the units are not brought back into use within a specified length of time.

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## AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information on the affordable housing schemes in progress and proposed in the Borough.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

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## GRANTS

The Chief Executive submitted details of two disabled facilities grants and three landlord tenant grants which had been approved.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Marshal Scott (414400).

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OH/JS