

Minutes of Community Services Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 10 January 2012 starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor R J Thompson (Chairman)

Councillors:

J E Alcock	R Newmark
S Brunskill	M Robinson
S Carefoot	R Swarbrick
J Hill	G Scott
G Mirfin (Arr 6.55pm)	J White

In attendance: Director of Community Services, Director of Resources, Head of Engineering Services and Head of Cultural and Leisure Services.

Also in attendance: Councillor N Walsh.

603 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Bennett, A Knox and L Rimmer.

604 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

605 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

606 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

607 REFERENCES FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no references from Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

608 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/2012 AND PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/2015

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to approve the revised programme for the current year and also the future three-year capital programme for this Committee. She reminded Committee that the original capital programme for the current year included schemes at a total estimated cost of £270,000 and at its meeting in July 2011, this Committee had approved the slippage of unspent budget from 2010/2011 to the 2011/2012 financial year which related to seven capital schemes and amounted to £38,290. There had

also been an additional approval to the programme of £118,580 which related to Longridge adventure play facility and Whalley Moor woodland paths and nature trail, both of which were schemes fully funded from external grants with this Council acting as the accountable body. A summary table showed the original estimate being £270,000; the revised estimate being £206,790 with actual expenditure to date of £100,684. It was recommended that a sizeable amount of the current year's budget be transferred to the 2012/2013 financial year in relation to two particular schemes. She also highlighted that the budget for the purchase of a replacement refuse collection vehicle had been reduced quite considerably from £200,000 to £165,000.

With regard to the draft programme for 2012/2013 to 2014/2015 the Director of Resources informed Committee that in August 2011 the Budget Working Group had agreed a focus for the future capital programme based on the current life of the Council and split into categories of capital spend. The heads of service had been invited to submit scheme bids for this programme. Five new bids had been submitted for this Committee totalling £434,000. This programme would require further consideration by the Budget Working Group and by Policy and Finance Committee.

RESOLVED: That

1. Committee approve the revised capital programme for 2011/2012 as set out in the report; and
2. it be recommended to Policy and Finance Committee that the future three year programme for 2012/2013 to 2014/2015 as set out in the report

609 REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2011/2012 AND ORIGINAL ESTIMATE 2012/2013

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to agree a revised revenue budget for 2011/2012 together with a draft revenue budget for 2012/2013 for submission to Policy and Finance Committee. She reminded Committee that the grant settlement received confirmed the need for the Council to identify substantial savings in its base budget. The proposed budget within the report represented the base budget for this Committee taking into account the service review savings proposals that had been approved previously at Policy and Finance Committee.

The revised budget for 2011/2012 was £270,300 lower than the original estimate. This reduction allowed for transfers to and from earmarked reserves. A comparison between the original and revised budgets for each cost centre was shown with the main reasons identified.

With regard to the 2012/2013 draft revenue budget, the Director of Resources informed Committee that the three year forecast to Policy and Finance Committee in September highlighted the need for savings in the region of £635,000 in the 2012/2013 financial year. She informed Committee that the estimates included savings from the service review savings package agreed at

Policy and Finance Committee on 22 November 2011 and also included provision for price increases of 2.5%. The estimates under each cost centre were detailed with relevant comments appended. The Director of Resources highlighted several of these for Committee to consider. The draft budget was also summarised both objectively and subjectively for Committee's information. She brought to Committee's attention that the net costs to this Committee were projected to fall by £409,710 between financial years and gave the main areas of savings for this Committee, which included

- Net savings of £58,000 in the Community Services department budget, in respect of the deletion of posts;
- Rationalisation of the provision of public conveniences saving £40,000;
- Additional income for refuse collection and recycling credits £20,000 and additional collections £16,000 together with savings in expenditure of £13,000.
- Closure of Longridge Gym saving £32,000;
- Savings totalling £22,000 at the Platform Gallery/art development following staff reductions;
- Savings of £15,000 in curatorial fees from Lancashire Museums in respect of Clitheroe Castle Museum; and
- Further reductions of £105,000 had been made as a result of reduced depreciation charges particularly on the CCTV service.

She reminded Committee that fees and charges for this Committee had been agreed in November 2011 and would be applicable from 1 April 2012.

Councillors asked questions with regards to various issues included in the budget report and Councillor Swarbrick asked to put on record his agreement in the rationale for the closure of the gym at Longridge.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the revised budget for 2011/2012; and
2. agree the revenue budget for 2012/2013 for submission to the special Policy and Finance Committee subject to any further consideration by the Budget Working Group.

610 FUTURE OPEN SPACE PROVISION

The Director of Community Services submitted a report informing Committee on the proposals from the Working Group that had been set up to explore the development of open space policies in the new Core Strategy. He reminded Committee that, given the number of current and potential planning applications, the need to have evidence to strengthen the Council's negotiations around Section 106 Agreements and associated commuted sums was imperative and of equal importance for Committee was any ongoing revenue implications of adopting facilities such as play areas after developments had been completed.

The Working Group had considered an analysis of current open space provision, developing an evidence base for future developments, determining future

priorities and minimising the financial impact to the Council, with a view to incorporating an evidence base in the future Core Strategy.

Councillors discussed the ideas around open space in the Ribble Valley and the need for varying facilities for different age groups including the elderly and how developers could be engaged to achieve best results.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. note the contents of the report and endorse the proposals of the Working Group; and
2. ask officers to incorporate the proposals in the future Core Strategy backed up by additional evidence where needed.

611 ALTERATIONS TO THE FREE FISHING ARRANGEMENTS

The Director of Community Services submitted a report proposing amendments to the free fishing arrangements currently made available to young persons who are resident in Clitheroe. The report gave the background to a long established arrangement whereby young people between the ages of 8 and 18 years of age who are resident in Clitheroe could fish without charge on a Council owned stretch of the River Ribble. He informed Committee that the approach to this particular stretch of water was quite hazardous and for health and safety reasons it would be better to transfer the scheme to a more suitable stretch of river to which the Council owns the fishing rights, downstream of the Edisford Caravan Site. He also recommended that the condition with regard to young persons resident within Clitheroe should be amended to include the whole of the borough.

RESOLVED: That

1. Committee approve the transfer of the free fishing from the current location upstream of Edisford Bridge to the length of embankment downstream of Edisford Caravan Park between the grid references 372688/440940 and 372677/440716; and
2. the qualifying residential criteria of Clitheroe be replaced with borough.

612 REVIEW OF THE PROVISION AND OPERATION OF PUBLIC TOILETS

The Director of Community Services submitted a report updating Committee on the findings of the Public Conveniences Working Group and seeking approval to implement the resultant recommendations in respect of the operation of the Council's public conveniences. He reminded Committee that the Working Group had been formed to consider officers' proposals in the development of an acceptable and sustainable solution for the provision of the conveniences across the borough that were accessible to the public. It is intended that the rationalisation of the provision of public conveniences will save £40,000 per annum as agreed as part of the Council's recent service review. It had been acknowledged that in order to maintain and in some instances, enhance the

provision of publicly accessible toilets, there would need to be tailored solutions for each locality. At its meeting in November, Committee had agreed to the early launch of the boroughwide community toilet scheme and development and trial of automated locking systems. The community toilet scheme had been launched in both Clitheroe and Longridge on 1 December and to date a total number of 36 businesses had agreed to support the initiative. This number was growing as more businesses were targeted. It was also noted that the locations of some of the CTS facilities were such that the additional toilets could provide alternatives for the RVBC public conveniences but that some were also in locations where no Council facilities existed and therefore were seen as an addition to the overall amenity of the area concerned.

Automatic unlocking and locking systems had now been installed successfully in six locations that meant separate trips by Council staff to merely lock or unlock the facilities were no longer required. This will contribute to the ongoing financial saving.

The sustainability of the RVBC conveniences was an issue also considered by the Working Group who recognised that the continued operation of all 24 sets of conveniences was not financially sustainable and although there were alternative and innovative ways to support and maintain some of these facilities, there was a need for others to be closed. Alternative uses for these facilities would be considered by the Council's Asset Management Group at a future date. The Director of Community Services informed Committee that in order to minimise the effect of closure of any facilities on the public, the ones where usage remained considerable and where no suitable alternative facilities existed would be retained. The selection criteria considered were included in the report for Committee's information and the conclusions of the Working Group were outlined in detail by location of each public convenience, which resulted in the closure of 8 sets of facilities.

Councillor Walsh was given permission to speak on this item and informed Committee that he was disappointed that Mellor public conveniences were included on the closure list, as he felt that it was a large enough village to warrant public conveniences being paid for by the borough.

Committee were supportive of the work carried out by the Working Group and were impressed with the community toilet scheme and the fact that this added available conveniences throughout the borough.

RESOLVED: That

1. Committee approve the recommendations of the Working Group as outlined in the Appendix to the report to be implemented prior to April 2012;
2. Committee accept the proposed funding from Clitheroe Town Council as a contribution for the continued operation of the town centre facilities in Clitheroe as outlined in the report; and

3. the operation of the revised service be reviewed by the Working Group and the outcome be reported back to Community Services Committee in the 2012/2013 cycle of meetings.

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GENERAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Director of Community Services submitted a report informing Committee of the progress of various issues falling under this Committee's remit. This included the CCTV monitoring, waste management and arts development service.

The Director of Community Services informed Committee that with regard to the rationalisation of household waste recycling centres, although this decision had been called in by the Lancashire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the decision had been upheld which meant that the HWRC at Great Harwood would close. He also informed Committee that the trade waste charges that the Lancashire County Council had intended to increase from April 2012, had now been left at the same level for the 2012/2013 financial year.

He also informed Committee that the annual maintenance had taken place at Ribblesdale Pool over the Christmas closure period.

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REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

A report had been submitted by Councillor Simon Hore on the North West Sound Archives at Clitheroe Castle. The Director of Resources highlighted that the future of this facility was being considered as funding was under threat of being withdrawn.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact John Heap (414461).

APPENDIX B – “Overall Proposals”

Toilets	Area	Potential Peak Usage	Comments	Retain/Close	Servicing Arrangements
Bolton-b-Bowland	Bolton-b-B	High	Located on car park / potential for coach parties	Retain	Pursue local servicing arrangements
Sawley Road	Chatburn	High	Supports recreational area & local business.	Retain	Guardian & RVBC Mobile Cleaner
Chipping	Chipping	High	Located on car park / potential for coach parties	Retain	Guardian & RVBC Mobile Cleaner
Brungerley	Clitheroe	Low	Poor standard. Cemetery Toilets as alternative	Close	Not applicable
Castle Field	Clitheroe	Medium	High incidence of parent and children users. Very high summer use	Retain	Auto locks & RVBC mobile cleaner
Cemetery	Clitheroe	Low	Facility integral to the cemetery facility	Retain	Site staff & RVBC mobile cleaner
Church Walk	Clitheroe	High	High usage (ex Sundays) Suitable CTS available	Retain	Auto Locks & RVBC mobile cleaner
Clitheroe Mkt	Clitheroe	Medium	Public facility Market days only. Alternative CTS facilities available	Retain	Site staff & RVBC mobile cleaner
Edisford Bridge	Clitheroe	High	Very high summer recreational use, particularly children	Retain	Auto Locks & RVBC mobile cleaner
Woone Lane	Clitheroe	Low	Poor standard. Rebuild required. Low use. Adequate CTS available	Close	Not applicable
Downham	Downham	High	Located on car park / potential for coach parties	Retain	Guardian & RVBC mobile cleaner
Dunsop	Dunsop	High	Located on car park / potential for coach parties	Retain	Pursue local servicing arrangements
Mill Lane	Gisburn	Low	Alternative CTS facilities available	Close	Not applicable
Avenue Road	Hurst Green	High	Occasional coach parties / No suitable CTS alternatives	Retain	Guardian & RVBC mobile cleaner
Berry Lane	Longridge	Low	Poor condition / Alternative CTS facilities available	Close	Not applicable
Market Place	Longridge	Low	Alternative CTS facilities available / “Mothball” for community events	Close	RVBC mobile cleaner
Stonebridge	Longridge	Low	Integral to local business use.	Retain	Pursue local servicing arrangements
Mellor Lane	Mellor	Low	Low usage / limited CTS facilities available	Close	Not applicable
Newton	Newton	Low	Very Low usage	Close	Not applicable
Ribchester	Ribchester	High	Located on car park / potential for coach parties	Retain	Guardian & RVBC mobile cleaner
Sabden	Sabden	High	Located on car park / potential for coach parties	Retain	Guardian Auto Locks - RVBC mobile cleaner
Slaidburn	Slaidburn	High	Located on car park / potential for coach parties	Retain	Pursue Local servicing arrangements
Slaidburn Rd	Waddington	Low	Low usage – adequate local CTS as alternatives.	Close	Not applicable
King Street	Whalley	High	Essential for bus station & town centre - provide enhanced servicing	Retain	Guardian -Auto Locks – RVBC mobile cleaner