

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 29 August 2013 starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor B Hilton (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Bibby	E M H Ranson
S Brunskill	L Rimmer
K Hind	M Robinson
J Holgate	C Ross
S Hore	I Sayers
J Holgate	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Environmental Health Services, Head of Financial Services and Housing Strategy Officer, Bob Harbin and Caroline Holtom (Public Health – LCC).

Also in attendance: Councillor J Shervey.

207 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Hargreaves, J Hill and R Newmark.

208 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 May 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

An update was given on the proposed cosy home in Grindleton.

209 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

210 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

211 PRESENTATION BY PUBLIC HEALTH LANCASHIRE 'HEALTH IN THE RIBBLE VALLEY'

Bob Harbin and Caroline Holtom gave Committee an overview of the health in the Ribble Valley. They informed Committee that the population in Ribble Valley had increased by 7% at the 2011 census and that most of this was due to migration rather than birth. In summary, the health in Ribble Valley is generally better than the England average and main issues included lower deprivation, an older population, barriers to housing and services in relation to the? of the area, diabetes and heart disease and alcohol related illnesses.

The Chairman thanked Bob Harbin and Caroline Holtom for attending the meeting.

212

NOTICE OF MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR KEN HIND

A Notice of Motion was submitted in the name of Councillor Ken Hind 'this Ribble Valley Borough Council recognises the importance of the 100 rural health centres and medical practices in sparsely population areas where transport links to urban centres are limited and patients spread out over wider geographical areas and urges'

1. Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board, Lancashire County Council, to press HMG, NHS England to support these practices to avoid their closure.
2. Urges HMG to make GP practices such as Slaidburn special cases for funding accepting the particular needs and problems that they have to deal with by:
 - a) reversing the policy of phased withdrawal of the minimum practice income from these practices to avoid their closure; and
 - b) establishing a funding formula which will secure the future of these rural practices and avoid elderly and vulnerable patients having to travel too many miles to Clitheroe and other distant urban centres for health care'

Committee debated this issue.

RESOLVED: That letters be written to the Chairman of the Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board, Public Health Lancashire County Council, and the Secretary of State for Health.

213

HEALTH AND SAFETY INTERVENTION PLAN 2013/2014

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to consider and approve the Ribble Valley Borough Council Health and Safety Intervention Plan for 2013/2014. Local authorities were required to produce an annual service plan relating to health and safety enforcement including how they would meet their stated obligations. Recent supporting guidance had established a lighter touch approach concentrating on higher risk businesses, tackling serious breaches of the rules and to carry out an annual programme of only 'high' risk health and safety premises. This guidance had been incorporated into the Council's service plan. The Head of Environmental Health Services drew Committee's attention to the service activity and service improvements achieved during the last financial year and the proposals for the forthcoming year. He informed Committee that currently Ribble Valley has 1148 premises on the health and safety database with a further 1400 in relation to smoke free enforcement transferred from the Health and Safety Executive. Of these, 10 were currently identified as 'high' risk Category A premises. With regard to smoke free workplace enforcement

inspections would only be undertaken in response to observed or reported non-compliance or complaint, as businesses had recognised and generally embraced their duties in this regard.

Committee debated the service activity set out in the plan and were pleased with performance achieved and obvious expertise of the officers. A question was asked as to whether in times of ever reducing finance, there would be merit in considering joint working with other authorities. The Head of Environmental Health Services explained this had been considered several years ago with neighbouring authorities in East Lancashire on the past two years when no financial savings or service benefits were identified in the interests of Ribble Valley and its residents.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the Health and Safety Service Intervention Plan 2013/2014 as set out for implementation in the current financial year;
2. approve the proposed discontinuation of routine smoke free enforcement audits and that inspections will only be undertaken in response to observed or reported non-compliance or complaint; and
3. a report be submitted to Committee in due course summarising potential joint working with other authorities.

214

DEMAND FOR OLDER PERSONS ACCOMMODATION

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to reiterate the demand for older persons accommodation in the borough and the lack of delivery by the housing market over the past five years resulting in a policy requirement for homes built to lifetime homes standard. The Housing Strategy Officer reported that the policy to deliver affordable and market older persons accommodation on large sites (over 30 units) had come under scrutiny at recent planning inquiries with the evidence of the need for specific housing types be questioned along with the grounds for requesting older persons accommodation. She reminded Committee of the demographic evidence which showed that 19.7% of the population in Ribble Valley were over 65 years old and that this number was increasing rapidly. Many of the borough's older residents live in remote rural areas and six parishes in the borough are in the bottom 10% nationally for access to services. The housing waiting list and length of time households wait on the waiting list for accommodation was also a key factor in demonstrating need.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree that the Council continues to request older persons accommodation on all new developments of over 30 units as a key part of the Council's housing strategy.

215

RIBBLE VALLEY COMMUTED SUM POLICY

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to review the commuted sum policy contained within the Addressing Housing Needs

document, which was approved in January 2012. A commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision had not previously been accepted by the Council, however the Addressing Housing Needs policy does include a commuted sum requirement.

In response to current discussions with developers, the Strategic Housing Working Group requested a review of the current policy and a comparison with other authorities in terms of the method of calculation of the commuted sum. It was recommended that the method for calculating the sum remained the same but should include the requirements for the applicant to enter into a Section 106 Agreement to ensure payment of the sum prior to the occupation of any market units. It was also recommended that the Council set out key priorities for the commitment of any commuted sum funds and that the following wording be included within the document that any contribution would be held in an affordable housing fund and used to meet the Council's affordable housing objectives and contribute towards:

- additional affordable housing to be provided by housing associations
- additional affordable housing to be provided by private developer
- purchasing properties on the open market to use for affordable housing
- purchasing an equity stake in open market properties with the outstanding balance being paid by a local qualifying person
- supporting community land trust affordable housing schemes
- addressing housing needs in the Parish
- additional housing for the elderly (units built to the lifetime homes standard) to be provided by housing association or private developers.

Reference was also made to Eden District Council's policy where they asked for an affordable housing contribution in the form of a commuted sum from all small sites of less than four dwellings and asked that this be investigated.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree that the commuted sum policy should remain as set out in the Addressing Housing Needs document with the further details included as set out and that any changes would be subject to consultation, the consultation response and subject to the approval of the Chair and Vice Chair of Health and Housing Committee.

216 DIGNITY CODE

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to consider signing up to the Dignity Code produced by the National Pensioners Convention.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree to sign up to the Dignity Code and that it be displayed on the Council website.

217 2012/2013 YEAR END PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information outlining detailed performance against local performance indicators for the year ending 2013/2013. The report included comments from the relevant Heads of Service with regard to performance and targets.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

218 REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE 2012/2013

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information reviewing the service delivery key local performance indicators within the Environmental Health service for 2012/2013. Particular reference was made to relevance of elevated results in 2012/2013 for Nitrogen Dioxide in the Whalley Road. Air Quality Management Area in Clitheroe where ongoing monitoring was taking place and their consideration in relation to housing development applications.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

219 REVIEW OF THE HOUSING WAITING LIST

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information giving a more detailed assessment of the housing waiting lists. The report highlighted the difference between the number of households on the list and the number of households in housing need.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

220 RIBBLE VALLEY HOUSE PRICE AND AFFORDABILITY INFORMATION

The Chief Executive submitted a report providing Committee with up to date information on house sales in the borough for 2012.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

221 CAPITAL MONITORING 2013/2014

The Director of Resources submitted a report providing Committee with information relating to the progress of the approved Capital Programme for 2013/2014. Slippage from the previous year was also reported. To date just over 43% of the annual capital programme for this Committee had been spent or committed.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

222 REVENUE OUTTURN 2012/2013

The Director of Resources submitted a report on the outturn for the financial year 2012/2013 in respect of the revenue budget for this Committee. There had been an overall underspend for this Committee of £67,544 decreasing to £36,623 after allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

223 REVENUE MONITORING 2013/2014

The Director of Resources submitted a report informing Committee of the position for the first four months of this year's revenue budget as far as this Committee was concerned.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

224 GENERAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Committee considered the General Report of the Chief Executive which had been submitted to Committee for information and included minutes of the liaison meeting between Ribble Valley Borough Council, the Health Protection Agency and the Environment Agency, Clitheroe Cemetery extension and dog warden update.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

225 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP GROUP

Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Group meetings held on 17 July and 14 August 2013 were submitted for Committee's information. The Chairman informed Committee that they had been invited on a tour of the new Clitheroe Hospital in due course.

226 DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS IN ENGLAND – A RESEARCH REPORT

The Chairman had prepared an information report outlining the main headlines and recommendations of a research report for the District Councils Network and the Society of District Council Treasurers on disabled facilities grants in England.

227 REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

A report updating the Committee on the work carried out by Carers Link within the Ribble Valley was submitted for Committee's information.

228 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be an Exempt Information under Categories 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

229 LAND AT RIDDINGS LANE, WHALLEY

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to agree to pay compensation to Ribble Valley Homes for the garage site at Riddings Lane, Whalley. He gave the background to the garage sites in the Ribble Valley in relation to the transfer of the housing stock to Ribble Valley Homes on 1 April 2008. He informed Committee that the garages on the site at Riddings Lane, Whalley had been removed last year and the site cleared. Ribble Valley Homes

were now entitled to compensation for the site as they were not able to develop the site themselves and it would need to be sold on the open market.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. agree to pay compensation of £20,000 to Ribble Valley Homes; and
2. request Policy and Finance Committee to fund the compensation payment from funds set aside in the VAT shelter reserve fund.

230 GENERAL REPORT – GRANTS

The Chief Executive submitted details of eight disabled facilities grants, two landlord tenant grants and five boiler replacement grants that had been approved.

231 AFFORDABLE HOSING UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted an update on the affordable housing schemes in progress and proposed in the borough. These had been split into applications which had been submitted and were either approved or waiting determination subject to Section 106 Agreements being completed.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

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