

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 1 September 2016 starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor S Hore (Chairman)

Councillors:

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| S Bibby | B Hilton |
| S Brunskill | R Newmark |
| P Dobson | M Robinson |
| P Elms | R Sherras |
| M Fenton | J White |
| L Graves | |

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Environmental Health Services, Strategic Housing Officer and Senior Accountant.

188 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor R Elms. Councillors R Hargreaves and K Hind were also absent from the meeting.

189 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

190 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no pecuniary and non-pecuniary declarations of interest.

191 ENFORCEMENT POLICY – ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Chief Executive submitted a report requesting approval of an Enforcement Policy for the Environmental Health Department. The background of requirement for consistent and transparent enforcement was explained, together with a summary of the Regulator's Code introduced by the Government.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. agree to the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy; and
2. agree that any minor amendments to the Policy and updates following annual reviews be delegated to the Head of Environmental Health Services.

192 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Chief Executive submitted a report requesting approval of a Policy for Enforcement regarding Private Sector Housing. This is an integral part of the

Council's Private Sector Housing Strategy which applies to Registered Providers (formally Registered Social Landlords) as well as private sector landlords. The range of powers and notices available was reviewed and the enforcement process and options were identified, including the ability to seek to recover costs for undertaking works and the extent of delegation to the Head of Environmental Health Services with regard to enforcement. The powers may require liaison with other authorities or bodies, who would be consulted before action was taken.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the content of the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy.

193 AUTHORISATION OF ALTERNATIVE PROPER OFFICER

The Chief Executive submitted a report, explaining changes in Personnel and organisation of public health services, and identifying officers of Public Health England, Cumbria and Lancashire Health Protection Team, based at Preston County Hall with responsibility for Public Health issues.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the authorisation of Dr Mark McGivern as the Proper Officer and of Dr John Astbury, Grainne Nixon and Nicola Schinala as alternative Proper Officers to act on behalf of Ribble Valley Borough Council for the duties listed in the report.

194 HEALTH AND SAFETY INTERVENTION PLAN 2016/2017

The Chief Executive submitted a report seeking the approval of Committee for the Health and Safety Intervention Plan prepared for 2016/17. The plan set out standards for pro-active work, taking into account revised guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Priorities had been adjusted, requiring focus on high risk operations, and increased information to be made available for small businesses.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the Ribble Valley Borough Council Health and Safety Intervention Plan 2016/2017 for implementation in the current financial year; and
2. note the performance in relation to 2015/2016 which was affected by the larger than normal food safety inspection target for that year.

195 UPDATE ON LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET CUTS TO SUPPORTING PEOPLE FUNDING

The Chief Executive presented a report on the impact of cuts to funding by Lancashire County Council to deliver support for people in temporary accommodation. This would affect both floating support (a free visiting service to provide support for people with problems linked to housing) and the support service for a wide range of vulnerable people for whom accommodation is provided. In Ribble Valley this would impact on the support for homeless families at 90 Whalley Road, Clitheroe and a unit at Longridge. There would also be loss

of support for young, homeless people at The Sidings accommodation in Clitheroe, with the nearest alternative accommodation being in Hyndburn. This is 15 supported units in total.

Committee were informed that it is not intended that 90 Whalley Road, the Council's temporary accommodation, should be closed, but that there would need to be a review as to how the accommodation could be operated in a safe way.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. accept that these cuts will have a seriously detrimental impact on the housing service available to Ribble Valley residents;
2. ensure every effort is made to press Lancashire County Council to provide funding to enable the scheme to remain; and
3. approve a full review of the delivery of temporary accommodation in the current accommodation due to the removal of support.

196 CHARGING FOR HOUSING ACT 2004 ENFORCEMENT NOTICES

The Chief Executive submitted a report, explaining the range of powers available under the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy, and the ability to introduce charges to recover the costs associated with the service of notices. Such notices could be served on providers of rented properties or, very rarely, owner/occupiers. The Housing Act 2004 introduced a power for Local Authorities to charge for steps taken to investigate, liaise with appropriate bodies and property owners, and prepare and serve notices. In line with current officer costings, the work would equate to £550 per notice.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the introduction of charges from 1 April 2017 for Notices detailed in the report at sections 3.2 and 3.4;
2. agree that owner/occupiers shall be exempt from the charging scheme in exceptional circumstances and that Committee shall be advised of decisions taken to exempt an owner/occupier at a subsequent meeting; and
3. delegate authority to the Head of Environmental Health Services to agree the reduction or waiver of fees and that Committee should be advised of decisions taken to reduce or waive fees at a subsequent meeting.

197 CEMETERY POLICY

The Chief Executive submitted a report, outlining the current cemetery provision and seeking approval for the adoption of revised regulations for Clitheroe Cemetery.

RESOLVED: That Committee:

1. note the report; and
2. approve the revised Cemetery Regulations.

198 SUPPORT FOR THE DECC CENTRAL HEATING FUND FOR RIBBLE VALLEY

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the availability of a central heating fund to be made available for Ribble Valley residents without central heating. Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council have succeeded with a bid for funding to be used alongside eco funding to provide heating for off-gas grid, fuel poor households, who do not currently have a central heating system, across Lancashire. Each Lancashire district council had been requested to sign up to a Memorandum of Understanding setting out the delivery of the scheme in their district. The scheme is means tested, and provides an alternative to the affordable warmth budget that has been withdrawn.

It was suggested that this scheme be publicised at the Parish Council Liaison Committee and at other points of contact with the public.

RESOLVED: That Ribble Valley Borough Council endorse involvement in the scheme and signature of the Memorandum of Understanding and make the grant available for Ribble Valley residents.

199 CHRISTMAS MARKET 2016

The Chief Executive submitted a report as an overview of the Christmas activities promoted by the Council's Market including the Christmas Market proposal, lighting scheme, events and integrated communications campaign. Members considered that it would not be appropriate to charge cabin holders £50 each to cover the costs of extra resources required and to the provision of the Christmas tree and Christmas lights.

Although the intention was to promote the Market on a stand alone basis, consideration could be given to co-ordination of publicity with the Chamber of Trade and Clitheroe Town Council.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the recommendation of a non-refundable fee of £150 including VAT for a pitch or stall during the festive period upon the market;
2. agree a 10% discount to charity stallholders (£135 including VAT); and
3. show commitment to the Christmas Market and the retail trade within this area during the festive period 2016.

200 ABANDONED VEHICLE POLICY

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the Council's procedures for dealing with abandoned vehicles. There had been an average of between 13 and 14

vehicles per year removed over the last 5 years. Following checks, removals were carried out by a registered vehicle recovery company, who carried out their own appropriate checks before any unclaimed vehicle would go to auction or be destroyed.

RESOLVED: That Committee note the report.

201 YEAR END PERFORMANCE INFORMATION 2015/2016

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information outlining details of performance against our local Performance Indicators. Regular performance monitoring was essential to ensure that the Council was delivering effectively against its agreed priorities both in terms of the national agenda and local needs.

The Chief Executive highlighted the intention to relaunch presentations to schools by the Dog Warden.

RESOLVED: That Committee note the report.

202 CAPITAL MONITORING 2016/2017

The Director of Resources submitted a report providing Committee with information relating to progress of the approved Capital Programme for this year. Slippage from the previous year was also reported. As at the end of July 2016, only 9.8% of the annual capital programme for this Committee had been spent or committed and it was noted that the majority of the Capital Programme for this Committee was grant related. Expenditure was driven by the applications that are received for funding.

The Landlord/Tenant Grants budget was on track to be fully committed in-year, based on the approvals made in August 2016 and other applications currently being considered.

The Disabled Facilities Grant budget may not be fully committed in year, based on the level of applications received to date against the increased level of funding received from the DCLG in 2016/17.

It was noted that the scheme for Market Improvements was on hold, and was not expected to be spent in the current year.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

203 REVENUE OUTTURN 2015/2016

The Director of Resources submitted a report on the outturn for the financial year 2015/16, in respect of the revenue budget for this Committee. There was an overall underspend of £117,387 for this Committee and, after allowing for transfers to and from earmarked resources, the underspend decreased to £108,637. The main variations for this underspend were highlighted.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

204 REVENUE MONITORING 2016/2017

The Director of Resources submitted a report relating to the progress of this Committee's 2016/2017 revenue budget as at the end of July 2016. The variations between budget to date and actuals had been split into groups of red, amber and green variance. Red and amber variances were highlighted for Committee's information. The comparison between actuals and budget to date shows an underspend of £49,842, as at the end of July 2016. After allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves, the underspend is increased to £52,778.

RESOLVED: That Committee note the report.

205 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Hilton gave Committee a verbal report on developments with the Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board, where the Sustainability and Transformational Plan would change the landscape for health and social care. There would in future be one Lancashire and South Cumbria Health and Wellbeing Board, under which there would be five Health and Wellbeing Partnerships, with Ribble Valley being in the Pennine Partnership. District councils would have an enabling role, and there was intended to be increased integration between District councils and general practitioners. There would be a detailed report to the next meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Hilton had also attended a seminar through the District Councils Network, organised by the King's Fund, and presented for summary and recommendations on how Ribble Valley Borough Council can move forward, which would also be the subject of a detailed report.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Hilton be thanked for her work and presentation.

206 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 7 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

207 GENERAL REPORT – GRANTS

The Chief Executive submitted details of 9 Disabled Facilities Grants, 2 Landlord and Tenant Grants and 2 Boiler Replacement Grants. There had also been 120 applications for Household Property Flood Resilience Grants, of which 79 had been approved, and 15 had been completed and paid. There had also been 18 applications for businesses, of which 9 had been approved, and 2 had been completed and paid.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

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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. The minutes of the Housing Working Group held 18 July 2016 were included for Committee's information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.

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