

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 20 October 2016, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor S Hore (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Brunskill	R Hargreaves
P Dobson	B Hilton
P Elms	R Sherras
M Fenton	J White
L Graves	

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

318 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Bibby, R Elms, R Newmark and M Robinson. Councillor K Hind was also absent from the meeting.

319 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

320 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

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

321 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

322 PEST CONTROL FEES SERVICE REVIEW

The Chief Executive submitted a report presenting a review of the Pest Control Service, evaluating options for the future delivery of the service and recommending fee levels. Whilst there is no statutory duty for the Council to provide such a service, legislation imposed certain other duties and also gave the Council power to take certain actions and charge for those services.

The review of current fees had identified certain fees for commercial and domestic services which were below the level charged by some other authorities in Lancashire and a private provider for comparable services, and there was a recommendation for increase of fees to levels that would still be competitive in comparison to those other providers.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the request for a new approach to the delivery of the pest control service; and
2. approve the new proposed charges from 24 October 2016 onwards as follows:

RVBC Pest Control - Fees and Charges 2016/17 proposed new fees

Service Area	Service	RVBC Proposed Charge 2016/17 £
Pest Control	Commercial - Single Treatment Charge (per hour plus materials - minimum charge 1 hour)	50.00
	Commercial - Annual Contract - Per Visit	36.10
	Domestic Single Treatment Charge (Rodents)	44.00
	Domestic Single Treatment Charge - Out of Hours (Rodents)	88.00
	Domestic Callout Charge - Per Visit (unspecified reason)	44.00
	Domestic Single Treatment Charge - Public Health Pests (eg. cockroaches and bed bugs)	No Charge
	Missed Appointments	44.00
Non-Public Health Insect Treatment (eg. wasps, ants, flies, carpet beetles and fleas)	WASPS, FLEAS, ANTS, OTHERS - Single Visit Charge during working hours	44.00
	WASPS, FLEAS, ANTS, OTHERS - Each additional nest treated on same visit	No Charge
	WASPS, FLEAS, ANTS, OTHERS - Out of Hours	88.00
	Missed Appointments	44.00

323 **PEST CONTROL ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

The Chief Executive submitted a report explaining that, whilst the Council has an overarching Council Enforcement Policy, it was important to have the Pest Control Policy which would provide consistency of service and approach from officers and awareness to members of the public of what may be expected. A proposed policy was put forward for consideration, setting out the proposed approaches to be adopted in various situations, procedural matters for authorisation of officers and co-operation with other agencies and departments of the Council and setting out the criteria to be considered where prosecution was contemplated.

RESOLVED: That Committee adopt the Pest Control Enforcement Policy.

324 **PUBLIC HEALTH FUNERALS POLICY**

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the responsibility of local authorities to arrange funerals where a person has died without known relatives or other people who were willing or able to arrange the funeral. The Council did not

currently have a policy to cater for such funerals. It was considered desirable for there to be a clear and transparent policy to which to refer bereaved relatives and others, such as nursing homes, with an interest in the affairs of deceased residents.

The draft Policy that was put forward provided for flexibility to be able to adapt to individual or unforeseen circumstances. It provided for services that the Council can provide, and outlined what the Council could not do in relation to the funeral or estate of deceased residents.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve and adopt the Council's Public Health Funerals Policy and Procedure, including the proposed fee rate of £49 per hour for Council Officers' time.

325 EXHUMATION POLICY

The Chief Executive submitted a report setting out the responsibilities of the Council in the relatively rare cases where a body has to be exhumed, and the role of the Environmental Health Officer in that process. There was discussion of the circumstances in which this could arise, including construction of new roads or other development on the site of previous burials.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve and adopt the Council's Exhumation Policy should an exhumation be requested within Ribble Valley; and
2. adopt the hourly rate for an EHO of £37 per hour and ability to recover any further costs incurred.

326 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking Members' approval to increase Committee's fees and charges with effect from 1 April 2017. These proposals were the first stage in the review of this Committee's budget for the forthcoming 2017/2018 financial year. The review takes place on an annual basis as part of the budget setting process. The Council's latest budget forecast allows for a 1.5% increase in the level of income received from fees and charges. This forecast currently shows a potential budget deficit for 2017/18 of £265,000 after taking £300,000 from general fund balances. Therefore, Service Committees were requested to consider raising the fees and charges in line with the 1.5% target.

Budget holders and Heads of Service have worked with financial services to raise most of the fees and charges in line with the 1.5% increase, rounded up to minimise any problems with small change where appropriate.

Certain issues were highlighted. 14 new fees and charges had been introduced. All pest control and non-public health insect treatment fees have been reviewed. All licenses proposed fees have been uplifted by 1.5% and rounded up to the next £5, as the existing fees were set at a low rate considering the input of officer time. The fee for the basic food hygiene course had been removed as the service was no longer offered.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the charges as set out at Annex 2 to the report for implementation with effect from 1 April 2017.

327 AFFORDABLE WARMTH GRANT POLICY

The Chief Executive submitted a report, updating Committee on the availability of funding to deliver an affordable warmth programme in the borough for Winter 2016/17. Lancashire County Council had provided £1m of funding across the county for the coming 2 years. The allocation to Ribble Valley for 2016/17 was £25,629. Members were advised of works for which funding was available and the criteria for eligibility which had been set by Lancashire County Council. Members were advised that payment would be released in two tranches, with the second being released after 50% of the total amount had been spent, and were encouraged to publicise the scheme.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve a Ribble Valley Affordable Warmth Grant Policy will be drafted in accordance with the conditions set out by LCC. Final sign-off to be delegated to the Chief Executive and Strategic Housing Working Group to allow prompt delivery of the scheme.

328 WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information on the White Ribbon Campaign, raising awareness of domestic abuse and encouraging men to promote a change of attitude to violence against women. Lancashire County Council, as the key agency, and many District Councils, including Ribble Valley Borough Council, mark White Ribbon Day on 25 November each year and 16 days of action immediately thereafter through events and social media action. An Action Plan had been prepared to promote the campaign.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

329 CLITHEROE CHRISTMAS MARKET 2016 – EVENT UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information, updating Members on the delivery of the 2016 Clitheroe Christmas Market Event Programme. Uptake had been successful with all stalls and pitches being filled. Entertainment was scheduled to take place 3 times on each of the 4 Saturdays of the market, with the Christmas lights being switched on at 4pm on Saturday, 26 November 2016 by Ella Shaw of Langho, who will perform in the company of the Mayor of the Ribble Valley.

Co-ordination of the event and the supporting administration and operation of services on site and waste management would be directed by the Environmental Health team.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

330 UPDATE ON WELFARE REFORM

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the recent Welfare Reform measures and their implications for the housing service in Ribble Valley. Whilst there were

a number of changes, the most significant alteration was reduction of housing benefit rates for under 35 year olds, as at the proposed rates young people would not be able to afford to access social housing. Housing options in the borough for young people claiming housing benefit would be limited, and options were being investigated to adapt properties to be suitable for house sharing and development of bedsit apartments.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

331 CAPITAL MONITORING 2016/17

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information, relating to the progress of the approved Capital Programme for the period April to September 2016, with regard to schemes which fall under the responsibility of this Committee. There was a total of 3 Capital Programme Schemes for this Committee, with total planned capital spend for the current year of £545,640. To date, just over 23% of the annual capital programme for this Committee had been spent or committed. The budget for landlord/tenant grants was likely to be fully committed in the current financial year. The main variations to date were on disabled facilities grants and the Clitheroe Market Improvement Scheme. There may be some underspend on disabled facilities grants, based on the level of applications received to date and increased funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government. The Clitheroe Market Improvement Scheme is on hold.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

332 REVENUE MONITORING 2016/17

The Director of Resources submitted a report informing Committee of the progress of the 2016/17 revenue budget as at the end of September 2016. There was an overall net overspend of £3,699 on the net cost of services, after allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves. The main areas of variation, including an overspend to date on housing benefit administration, were summarised for Committee's information. The housing benefit administration overspend to date is likely to rectify itself by year end.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

333 STRATEGIC HEALTH UPDATE

The Head of Regeneration and Housing gave a presentation to Committee on developments in health service provision, identifying the complex range of bodies involved in delivery of services and administration of health related functions. The current moves are to integrate health and social care, and to promote Prevention – ie early intervention and responsibility of the individual to maintain and enhance their health rather than reaction by NHS services to treat health issues that have developed.

New opportunities for strategic management of health services arise with the Sustainability Transformational Plan for all Lancashire (including Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen) and South Cumbria, and the Combined Authority.

The important role of District Councils had been recognised, with many services which were provided augmenting health service provision, and a Pennine Lancashire Public Health offer being formulated to which Ribble Valley would be invited to sign up.

RESOLVED: That the Head of Regeneration and Housing be thanked for his presentation.

334 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Hilton reported on her attendance at a meeting to improve the latest draft of the Sustainability Transformational Plan for submission for Government approval. She identified issues with particular pockets of health issues, and reported on the general shortage of medical and nursing staff in Lancashire. She emphasised the focus on individuals taking more responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

335 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.

336 GENERAL REPORT – GRANTS

The Chief Executive submitted details of one disabled facilities grant. There had also been 142 household applications for household property flood resilience grants, of which 122 have been approved, 34 completed and paid and 11 partially completed with interim payments made. 20 business applications have been received, of which 11 had been approved, 3 completed and paid and 3 partially completed with interim payments. With the imminent expiry of the grant period on 9 December 2016, efforts were being increased to follow up outstanding works with a particular issue being the lead times for work to be done due to the volume of work being carried out nationally.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

337 AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information on the affordable units for which permission had been granted from April 2015 to March 2016. Committee were informed of issues that can arise on changes in policy and legislation, including the impact of the Vacant Buildings Credit scheme, whereby affordable provision was no longer required on brownfield sites.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.28pm.

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