

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 13 September 2018 at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor B Hilton (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Bibby	R Hargreaves
S Brunskill	K Hind
P Dobson	R Sherras
M Fenton	J White
L Graves	

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

254 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Elms, R Newmark, M Robinson and R Thompson.

Not in attendance: Councillors R Elms and D Smith.

255 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

256 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

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

257 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

258 REVISITING MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOL

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Members to take a further look at the Member/Officer Protocol. One of the recommendations of the Peer Challenge review was that the Council should revisit this Member/Officer Protocol as an opportunity to make suggestions as to how the protocol could be strengthened or improved.

Members raised queries about the lack of gender neutral language in the current Protocol and the respective accountability of elected Members and employed officers.

Members specifically requested that the Chief Executive report to Accounts and Audit Committee on three issues. Firstly, it was considered that the Protocol should include a specific timescale for its periodic review – intervals of 2 years or 3 years were suggested. Secondly, it was suggested that the protocol be revisited in the Committee cycle in June/July 2019 after election of the new

Council, to instruct new Members and remind returning Members of the Protocol. Thirdly, it was suggested that the Protocol be included in training for new Members, and that there be formal recognition of the mentoring/buddy system to support new Members.

RESOLVED: That the Chief Executive take the following issues to Accounts and Audit Committee:

- a) a specified review period to review the Protocol;
- b) revisit the Protocol in the Committee cycle after the 2019 election;
- c) incorporate the Protocol in training for new Members.

259 HOUSING ALLOCATION REVIEW

The Chief Executive submitted a report informing Members of a review of the housing allocation system, resulting in a refresh of a number of documents used in the allocation of affordable rented accommodation by Registered Providers. Approval was sought for the introduction of the revised documents.

Members were reminded of the ongoing responsibility of the Council to facilitate a system for allocation of social housing to meet housing need in the area. The need for review had arisen following changes to the homelessness legislation, a discrepancy in definition of 'local connection' in Section 106 Agreements between the Council and developers compared to the definition in the application form, and alterations arising with the transfer of administration of the housing waiting list to Onward Homes.

Members raised various queries regarding content of the proposed forms, including difficulties with regard to Parish boundaries, issues for service personnel on application, support which was available for those completing the forms, and the impact of an applicant having refused a reasonable offer of accommodation. The Strategic Housing Officer was to review the proposed forms in the light of the comments.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve

1. the amendments made to the housing application form;
2. the amendments made to the allocation of points for the housing waiting list;
3. the nomination agreement between Registered Providers and RVBC for the allocation of units; and
4. the introduction of a monitoring return for all nominations in the borough.

260 CEMETERY REGULATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

The Chief Executive submitted a report updating Members on the rules which applied in other cemeteries and graveyards in relation to memorabilia and other items placed on graves and in other locations. It was noted that there was a growing trend for such memorials, and there was a need to develop and maintain

good practice. It was acknowledged that this is a sensitive issue, and direction was sought from Members on the approach to be taken.

Members considered a range of issues, including education for purchasers of graves as a priority, the existing regulations including the stronger guidelines already in place in respect of the woodland burial area, the unsuitability of certain items on graves and the potential impact of memorabilia on neighbouring graves. Members considered that an incremental approach was desirable, commencing with the woodland burial area, and supported by an educational initiative for new purchasers of graves.

RESOLVED: That Committee support

1. the clearance of any objects from the woodland burial area; and
2. the Council's educational drive on the cemetery regulations.

261 REVENUE OUTTURN 2017/2018

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the outturn for the financial year 2017/2018 in respect of the revenue budget for this Committee. There was an overall underspend of £44,108 for this Committee and, after allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves, the underspend was decreased to £41,030. The main variations related to this underspend were highlighted and detailed information was also provided.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

262 REVENUE MONITORING 2018/2019

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information relating to progress of the Committee's 2018/2019 revenue budget as at the end of July 2018. The comparison between actual expenditure and budget to date showed an underspend of £4,254 as at the end of July 2018. After allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves, the underspend was decreased to £198. The main variations related to this underspend were highlighted.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

263 CAPITAL MONITORING 2018/2019

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the progress of the approved Health and Housing Committee 2018/2019 capital programme for the period to the end of July 2018. The report gave a summary of the capital programme expenditure to date and variances, and also included detailed financial information and budget holders comments for each individual capital scheme. At the end of July 2018, £269,719 had been spent or committed which equated to 30.4% of the annual capital programme budget for this Committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

264 2017/2018 YEAR END PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

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 leads.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

265 RIBBLE VALLEY COUNTRY LEISURE, PAYTHORNE CARAVAN SITE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information on the grant of a new licence for a caravan site at Ribble Valley Country Leisure, Paythorne, a site for which planning permission had been granted, and for which, therefore, a licence had to be granted subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

266 HIGHER FARM LODGES, PAYTHORNE CARAVAN SITE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information on the grant of a new licence for a caravan site at Higher Farm Lodges, Paythorne, a site for which planning permission had been granted, and for which, therefore, a licence had to be granted subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

267 MINUTES OF THE TARMAC LIAISON COMMITTEE DATED 7 AUGUST 2018

The notes of the Tarmac Liaison Committee meeting held on 7 August 2018 were circulated for Committee's information.

268 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Committee received a report circulated by Councillor Bibby as the Older People's Champion on 'Living well in the Ribble Valley'.

Councillor Sherras reported that he would update the Strategic Housing Working Group on housing issues reported in the Rural Services Network newsletter.

Councillor Hind reported that he and Councillor Hilton, together with the Head of Regeneration and Housing, were to meet the Chair and Chief Executive of Mersey Care in December 2018 with regard to the Calderstones site. Members considered that it would be beneficial for the Committee to visit the site, including consideration of its possible suitability for use as a dementia village.

Councillor Brunskill reported on courses to be delivered in the Ribble Valley by Lancashire County Council as part of the Positive Parenting Programme to support parents of children with particular issues or in certain age groups. Members agreed that it would be useful for the Committee to attend a workshop with regard to the problems encountered by children and young people.

269 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.

270 18 SIDDOWS AVENUE, CLITHEROE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information updating them on communications with the owner of 18 Siddows Avenue and his representatives. The property had not yet been sold, and arrangements had been put in place for the Strategic Housing Officer to inspect internally at the end of September 2018.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

271 GENERAL REPORT – GRANTS

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information of approval of 11 Disabled Facilities grants, 5 Affordable Warmth grants and one Landlord/Tenant grant.

182 applications had been made for Household Property Flood Resilience grants, of which 180 had been approved. 176 had been fully completed. Two owners had decided not to proceed with the scheme. 4 approved applications had not progressed to completion and the applications had been closed with no payments being made.

32 business applications had been approved and fully completed and payments had been made.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.53pm.

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