

CABINET (HOUSING) COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 4 July 2018

Attendance:

Councillors
Horrill (Chairman)

Brook

Miller

TACT:

Mr M Fawcitt
Mrs M Gill

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Scott

1. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 26 MARCH 2018 (LESS EXEMPT MINUTE)**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Cabinet (Housing) Committee held 26 March 2018, less exempt minute, be approved and adopted.

2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no questions asked or statements made.

3. **THE FUTURE OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES AND SUPPORT IN WINCHESTER**

(Report CAB3054(HSG) refers)

The Head of Housing Options and Allocations introduced the report and responded to questions from Members.

During debate, Members endorsed the proposal to support co-commissioning of services with the County Council. Members believed that this offered better value for money, provided a satisfactory deal could be reached. The Chairman suggested that an all Member briefing be arranged to update all Councillors on the proposals.

Mrs M Gill (TACT) confirmed that the proposals had been discussed at a TACT briefing earlier in the year where they were generally supported.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined above and set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the principle of “co-commissioning” of support services in partnership with Hampshire County Council be supported.
2. That the Homelessness Prevention Fund Reserve and Flexible Homelessness Grant be used to fund the commissioning of community and floating support services and that a detailed spending plan be brought back to this Committee to approve proposals for 2019 and beyond.
3. That the Corporate Head of Housing be authorised to respond to the Hampshire County Council consultation on proposed changes to Homelessness Support Services (Social Inclusion Services) on the basis of the above recommendations.

4. **PROPOSED DISABLED FACILITY GRANT POLICY UPDATE**
(Report CAB3051(HSG) refers)

The Corporate Head of Housing introduced the report and outlined the reasons for the proposals. He requested that Recommendation 3 be amended to delete the words “subject to consultation with Portfolio Holder and appropriate panel approval” as the intention was to give the Officer delegation up to £100,000. This was agreed.

The Chairman emphasised that the report proposed that there be no cap on the level of a grant. The Corporate Head of Housing advised that if the recommendations were agreed, there was a current case that would require Portfolio Holder approval for a grant of approximately £250,000.

In response to questions, the Corporate Head of Housing advised that the underspend in the previous year was due to initial low demand for the grants. The Council were seeking to increase awareness and access to the grants and had employed an occupational therapist to assist with this process. The grants were not available for adaptations to Council owned properties (these would be funded through the Housing Revenue Account, as appropriate).

During debate, Members highlighted the benefits of enabling a person to remain in their own home, both in terms of the individual/families directly affected and savings to the wider public purse.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined above and set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the policy not to cap discretionary grants be approved.
2. That for grants larger than £30k, full specifications and drawings are required for approval by a pre-appointed officer panel (which should include a Council appointed Quantity Surveyor).
3. That the Corporate Head of Housing be given delegated authority to approve grants up to £100,000.
4. That in event of a larger than £100k grant, the Portfolio Holder for Housing be given authority to approve via a Portfolio Holder Decision Notice.

5. **EXPANSION OF HMO MANDATORY LICENSING**

(Report CAB3052(HSG) refers)

The Corporate Head of Housing introduced the report. He advised that the fee proposed would enable the Council to fully cover the costs of implementing this new statutory licensing obligation.

In response to Members' questions, the Corporate Head of Housing confirmed that measures were being taken to advertise the new licensing requirements, including details on the Council's website and contacting all lettings agencies in the district. Members suggested Housing Officers work closely with the Communications Team to increase publicity and awareness as widely as possible, for example by reaching occupiers of HMOs in addition to the landlords. This was agreed.

The Committee also agreed a review should take place in one year's time.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined above and set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the new requirements resulting from the changes introduced by the new legislation to expand HMO mandatory licensing be noted.
2. That the HMO licence fee be set at £900 (per 5 year licence).
3. That the additional resource requirements be supported.
4. That the Corporate Head of Housing, in consultation with the Corporate Head of Resources, be authorised to negotiate

terms with Idox for the provision of additional licensing software to support the administration of the additional licensing, as set out in the report, and a Direction be made under Contracts Procedure Rule 2.4 a) accordingly.

5. That a review be undertaken in one year's time and a report be submitted to the Committee accordingly.

6. **ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**
(Report CAB3053(HSG) refers)

The Corporate Head of Housing introduced the report and outlined the reasons for the changes proposed. He also responded to questions thereon.

In response to questions from the TACT representatives present, he advised that as part of the revised strategy, there would be a wider review of sheltered housing schemes. The membership of the Asset Management Strategy Working Group currently consisted of Council Officers only, with no direct Councillor or TACT input. He would give consideration to how the Working Group could report back to TACT through an appropriate Panel.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined above and set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress made against priorities outlined and agree the future priorities set out in Appendix 2 be noted.

2. That the existing property value thresholds included in the Property Disposal policy be amended and approved as set out in this report.

3. That the Corporate Head of Housing be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Corporate Head of Resources and the Leader with the Portfolio Holder for Housing to review the scope of the Southampton City Council 'ECO and Green Deal Delivery Scheme' Framework and, if eligibility and compliance criteria met in accordance with Contracts Procedure Rules, to sign up to the framework to support work to improve the energy efficiency of non traditional housing stock.

4. That the Wise Move incentive payment scheme be increased to £2,500 per household for each move for a trial period of 12 months.

7. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT AND HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME
OUTTURN 2017/18**

(Report CAB3036(HSG) refers)

The Head of Housing Finance introduced the report and outlined the reasons for the main variances and proposals contained therein.

On behalf of TACT, Mrs Gill thanked the Head of Housing Finance for a thorough explanation of the contents of the report at a recent TACT meeting. The Chairman echoed these thanks on behalf of the Committee.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined above and set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the HRA Outturn figures for 2017/18 be approved as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2.
2. That the carry forward items from 2017/18 be noted the Re-forecast HRA Budget for 2018/19 be approved as detailed in Paragraph 11.2 and Appendix 3.
3. That the provision of up to £100,000 for costs related to the rollout of Universal Credit in the Winchester area be approved with delegated authority to the Corporate Head of Housing to spend as required.
4. That the Housing capital programme outturn for major works and new build developments as detailed in Paragraphs 11.5 to 11.6 and Appendices 4 & 5 be noted.
5. That the funding of the HRA capital programme be approved, as detailed in Paragraph 11.8 and Appendix 6;
6. That the re-forecast capital programme budget of £17,606,400 for 2018/19 in Paragraphs 11.9 to 11.12 of the report and detailed in Appendix 7 be supported.
7. That the additional expenditure required to complete the Mitford Road development be approved, as detailed in Paragraph 11.12.d).
8. That the proposal detailed in paragraph 11.12.m) to buy back former Right to Buy properties in line with the Asset

Management policy to ensure the full use of 1-4-1 Right to Buy receipts in 2018/19 be approved.

9. That the Corporate Head of Housing, in consultation with the Corporate Head of Resources, be authorised to negotiate terms with Galliford Try's mechanical and electrical equipment advisor and installer at Chesil Lodge for the provision of the first year's support for specialist systems as detailed in Paragraph 11.2.iv) in the report, and a Direction be made under Contracts Procedure Rule 2.4 a) accordingly.

8. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
##	Exempt minute of the previous meeting) Information relating to the) financial or business affairs of) any particular person (including) the authority holding that) information). (Para 3 Schedule) 12A refers)

9. **EXEMPT MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 26 MARCH 2018**

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minute of the Cabinet (Housing) Committee held 26 March 2018 be approved and adopted.

The meeting commenced at 4.35 pm and concluded at 6.00 pm

Chairman