

CABINET**Tuesday, 22nd October, 2019**

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

Councillors Blank
T Gilby
Ludlow
Holmes

Councillors J Innes
Mannion-Brunt
Sarvent

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

**43 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Serjeant.

45 MINUTES**RESOLVED –**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 1 October, 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

46 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the four month period 1 November, 2019 to 29 February, 2020 was reported for information.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

47 DELEGATION REPORT

Decisions taken by Cabinet Members during September, 2019 were reported.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Delegation Report be noted.

48 MINUTES OF THE SHEFFIELD CITY REGION MAYORAL COMBINED AUTHORITY BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority Board held on 23 September, 2019 were reported for information.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Minutes be noted.

49 QUARTER 2 BUDGET MONITORING 2019/20 & UPDATED MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The Acting Chief Finance Officer presented a report outlining the Council's budget position at the end of the second quarter of 2019/20, and the updated medium term financial forecast through 2023/24.

A revised year end deficit of £203k had been reported to members on 17 July, 2019. At the end of the second quarter, the deficit had changed to a surplus of £52k (forecast position) at the year end.

A table containing the key variances that had contributed to the improved budget position was included in paragraph 4.1 of the officer's report. The variances included additional income from the Derbyshire Building Control Partnership and reduced expenditure due to vacant posts in the Spirepride and building cleaning services.

The report noted the anticipated movement in the council's reserves. An uncommitted balance of £1.073m remained in the budget risk reserve and service improvement reserve however there would be significant demands on these reserves in the future to fund investment in transformation projects and staffing restructures.

The General Fund Capital Programme was forecast to receive £4.5m from capital receipts in 2019/20. Further capital receipts from land and property sales would need to be identified beyond 2020/21 to fund new capital projects and reduce the pressure on the General Fund revenue budget.

The Housing Revenue Account budget was detailed in section 8 of the officer's report. It was noted that the HRA Business Plan would be reviewed shortly, which would lead to revisions needing to be made to both the HRA revenue and capital budgets.

***RESOLVED –**

That it be recommended to full Council:

1. That the financial performance in the first half of the financial year and the new medium term financial forecast be noted.
2. That the changes to the medium term financial forecast, as outlined in section 4 and section 6 of the officer's report, be approved.
3. That the proposed use of reserves and the new applications for funding, as set out in section 5 of the officer's report, be approved.
4. That the updated capital programme, as detailed in section 7 of the officer's report, be noted.
5. That the proposed additions to the capital programme, as detailed in paragraph 7.2 of the officer's report, be approved.
6. That the position of the Housing Revenue Accounts budgets, as detailed in section 8 of the officer's report, be noted.
7. That the budget preparation guidelines, as set out in paragraph 9.1 of the officer's report, be approved.
8. That the planned approach to budget consultation, as detailed in paragraph 9.3 of the officer's report, be approved.

REASON FOR DECISIONS

To actively manage the Council's finances in the current financial year and forecast forward the emerging budget position to future financial years.

50 **HOUSING ACQUISITIONS POLICY**

The Assistant Director – Housing presented a report seeking approval for a revised Strategic Housing Acquisitions and Right of First Refusal Policy.

The existing policy was adopted in February, 2015 following the council housing finance reforms that took place in 2012. Since the introduction of the policy, a budget for acquisitions had been provided in the HRA Capital Programme. In addition, the policy included financial criteria to inform acquisition decisions, including a maximum price payable for a property.

Under the Housing Act 2004, the Council has a Right of First Refusal on properties sold under Right-To-Buy within 10 years of the purchase date. The report noted that the value of former council homes had increased beyond the current policy criteria; consequently the criteria needed to be reviewed.

The revised policy, attached at appendix 2 of the officer's report, incorporated an acquisitions calculator which had been developed to ensure that value for money was assessed and considered on an individual property by property basis, and that a property could be purchased without causing a financial loss to the HRA in the future.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That the changes to the Strategic Housing Acquisitions and Right of First Refusal Policy be approved.
2. That the Assistant Director – Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, be granted delegated authority to purchase properties that meet the requirements of the Strategic Acquisitions and Right of First Refusal Policy within the budget agreed in the Housing Capital Programme.
3. That the revised Strategic Acquisitions and Right of First Refusal Policy be reviewed after 12 months.

4. That, where any property being considered for purchase falls outside the criteria set out in the revised Strategic Acquisitions and Right of First Refusal policy, the Assistant Director – Housing and the Cabinet Member for Housing be required to consult with the Finance and Performance Board prior to exercising their delegated authority to make such a purchase.

REASON FOR DECISIONS

To ensure that the Council can deliver on the Council Plan objective to build or acquire a minimum of 100 new council homes.

51 ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS

The Assistant Director – Housing submitted a report seeking approval for the Annual Report to Tenants for 2018/19, as required by Homes England. A copy of the Annual Report was attached at appendix 1 of the officer's report.

The Annual Report included details on performance, service delivery and future improvements in relation to:

- repairs and maintenance;
- allocating homes;
- rent collection;
- tenancy and estate management;
- careline;
- value for money.

The Annual Report would be published in the next edition of the Council's 'Your Chesterfield' newsletter.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That the Annual Report to Tenants for 2018/19 be approved.
2. That the Annual Report be published on the council's website and be issued to all tenants and households in the Borough through 'Our Homes' within 'Your Chesterfield.'

REASON FOR DECISIONS

To comply with regulatory requirements.

52 APPROVAL OF LEASE OF NEWBOLD COURT

The Assistant Director – Housing submitted a report seeking approval to agree a new 10 year lease of Newbold Court to Action Housing.

The Council owns Newbold Court, Bromehead Way, which is an 18 unit building consisting of 16 single person bedsits and 2 units used as office facilities. The property was previously let to South Yorkshire Housing Association who terminated their lease in March, 2019 and handed the property back to the Council.

Action Housing proposed to lease Newbold Court for a minimum period of 10 years and had successfully applied to the Move-On fund to enable the delivery of a supported accommodation service for vulnerable adults with high level support needs. The service would aim to enable individuals to move along a planned housing pathway towards the longer-term goal of independent living.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That the need for increased provision of supported accommodation for vulnerable adults in Chesterfield be noted.
2. That the 10 year lease of Newbold Court to Action Housing be granted on the terms set out in the officer's report.
3. That the Property, Procurement and Contracts Law Manager be granted delegated authority to deal with any late amendments to the terms of the lease.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

1. Newbold Court and its use as supported accommodation will form an essential part of Chesterfield Borough Council's homelessness prevention activity and has previously demonstrated its need and importance by supporting vulnerable people and enabling the Council to fulfil its statutory duties.

2. It is expected that the service will enable a reduction in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation.

53 **SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUP REPORT ON THE FUTURE OF THE OLD QUEEN'S PARK SPORTS CENTRE**

The Lead Member of the Future Use of the Former Queen's Park Sports Centre Site Scrutiny Project Group, Councillor Simmons, presented the report and recommendations of the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the future use of the former Queen's Park Sports Centre site.

The full report of the Scrutiny Project Group was attached at appendix A to the Cabinet report.

The recommendations of the Scrutiny Project Group had been considered and approved by the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 3 October, 2019.

The Committee's recommendations were now required to be considered by Cabinet and a formal response provided to the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Procedure.

In December, 2017 Cabinet endorsed the business case for providing an artificial sports pitch on the site. The Project Group acted as a sounding board and monitored progress during the design and building stages of the chosen use. The Group's findings were detailed in section 5 of the Scrutiny Project Group report and focussed on ensuring that:

- the design of the sports pitch and surrounding landscaping protected and enhanced the heritage value of the park;
- the framework contract arrangement to deliver the design and construction of the pitch worked effectively and enabled the project to be completed in a timely manner and within budget;
- the marketing and pricing structure would be designed to enable use by a variety of service users and community groups.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That the use of the new sports pitch be monitored through the Council's normal management processes against the objective of

balancing the need to achieve a commercial return and provide opportunities for community and health and wellbeing development.

2. That the marketing approach and pricing structure for the sports pitch be reviewed as necessary as part of the Council's overall marketing and pricing of its sports and leisure services.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

1. To contribute to the objective of balancing the need to achieve a commercial return and provide opportunities for community and health and wellbeing development.
2. To ensure that the marketing approach and pricing structure for the sports pitch is effective and consistent with the Council's overall marketing and pricing of its sports and leisure services.

54 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUP REPORT ON COMMUNITY ROOMS

The Lead Member of the Community Rooms Scrutiny Project Group, Councillor Caulfield, presented the report and recommendations of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee on the Council's community rooms, which are managed by the careline and support service.

The full report of the Scrutiny Project Group was attached at appendix A to the Cabinet report.

The recommendations of the Scrutiny Project Group had been considered and approved by Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee on 26 September, 2019.

The Committee's recommendations were now required to be considered by Cabinet and a formal response provided to the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Procedure.

The Scrutiny Project Group reviewed the 6 community rooms managed by the housing service to understand the usage, income and expenditure, suitability of facilities, booking process and promotion of the rooms.

The Lead Member thanked the Careline and Support Services Manager for his input into the review.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That the Cabinet Member for Housing initiates conversations with the Chesterfield Care Group regarding the hiring of community rooms.
2. That the Cabinet:
 - a. Supports the refurbishment and retention of Bonsall Court as a community room.
 - b. Notes and endorses the arrangements to lease Burns Close to the Umbrellas Cosy Group on a five year lease.
 - c. Agree that alternative uses be explored for Monkwood Road in line with the Council's health and wellbeing priorities.
3. That the website be updated and amended to include a central location for finding room hire information for all venues across the Council including the community rooms.
4. That a dedicated phone line for community room enquiries be established within the Careline and Support Service with a voicemail facility.
5. That the call centre staff be provided with up to date information on the hire of community rooms.
6. That the promotion of community rooms on the Council's website be improved, making the rooms more obvious to potential hirers.
7. That a new leaflet be produced that includes details of all the community rooms.
8. That a promotional drive take place to coincide with the completion of the work to the sheltered schemes.
9. That a booklet be produced that incorporates terms and conditions for the community rooms along with how to use the facilities in the rooms.

10. That the door entry systems that have been installed at Wimborne Crescent and Winster Court be kept under review to understand if this is the most effective way for hirers to gain access.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

1. To increase the usage of the community rooms by improving awareness of the facilities, reaching new potential hirers and consolidating information on all the Council's venues for hire into a central place.
2. To have a clear and transparent process for managing the rooms, ensuring the rooms are used by all hirers under the same terms and conditions and that the accounts show a true reflection of the income and expenditure costs.