

CABINET**Tuesday, 5th April, 2016**

Present:-

Councillor Burrows (Chair)

Councillors	T Gilby	Councillors	Huckle
	T Murphy		Ludlow
	Blank		Serjeant
Non Voting	J Innes		Wall
Members	Hollingworth		

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

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

With regard to agenda item 8, Councillor Burrows wished to declare, that while not a pecuniary interest, that the solar panels on his home had been installed by ASG Ltd.

183 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bagley, Brown and A Diouf.

184 MINUTES**RESOLVED –**

That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 22 March, 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

185 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the four month period 1 April – 31 July, 2016 was reported for information.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

186 DELEGATION REPORT

Decisions taken by Cabinet Members during March were reported.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Delegation Report be noted.

**187 FUNDING TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS
2016/17 - SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS**

The Development and Growth Manager submitted a report seeking approval for a reduction in the funding made available to support voluntary and community groups in Chesterfield via Service Level Agreements (SLA's), in order to support the Council in being able to deliver a balanced budget.

In July, 2015 Cabinet agreed the allocation of funding to voluntary organisations for the period 2015/16; alongside this a recommendation was agreed that funding should be reviewed during the year with a view to making savings (Minute No.46 2015/16). In order to give the organisations holding SLA's with the council time to adjust to a potential reduction in grant funding, all were contacted in November, 2015 to advise that a reduction of funding was being considered and to ascertain as to what potential impact a reduction of funding would have on their service delivery. Meetings were subsequently held with all organisations to discuss how potential cuts in funding would impact on their respective delivery capabilities. It was noted that the meetings with the organisations affected had been positive, and that they were accepting of the Council's need to reduce funding as a response to the Government cuts made to its own funding.

It was proposed that a uniform cut of funding to all organisations of 10% should be made for 2016/17; the report also included information and considerations on how this reduction in funding could affect the services delivered by the organisations. The report noted that the proposed 10% reduction in funding for voluntary and community organisations was

significantly lower than the overall year on year budget cuts being experienced by Chesterfield Borough Council.

Members commended the excellent and valuable work carried out by voluntary and community organisations in Chesterfield and noted the importance of continuing to work closely with them in the future in order to deliver quality services to the people of Chesterfield.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That the level of funding for Service Level Agreements be reduced by £26,210 to £239,544 for 2016/17 onwards.
2. That the Service Level Agreements be developed with recipient groups (based on the outcomes as included in the pro-forma in Appendix 1 of the officer's report) following confirmation of the budget for 2016/17.
3. That authority to sign off the completed Service Level Agreements be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing.
4. That a re-prioritisation exercise be undertaken in 2016/17 to ensure that the Council is able to provide a balanced budget and continue to support existing and emerging community needs and Council priorities.

REASON FOR DECISIONS

To ensure that the future delivery of funding to Voluntary and Community Groups meets the priorities of the Council and the needs of the residents of Chesterfield within a realistic and sustainable budget.

188 RIGHT TO BUY SOCIAL MOBILITY FUND UPDATE

The Housing Manager submitted a report to provide an update on the Right-to-Buy Social Mobility Fund and to seek approval for the continuation of a scaled back local version of the Right-to-Buy Social Mobility Scheme for 2016/17.

In June, 2015 Cabinet approved the implementation of the Right-to-Buy Social Mobility Scheme (Minute No.11, 2015/16). The Right-to-Buy Social Mobility Fund was a national initiative to provide certain categories of

tenants with the opportunity to access home ownership where taking up the RTB on their current property was not feasible. Chesterfield Borough Council accessed £200,000 of Government funding to offer the Right to Buy Social Mobility Scheme to those living in designated defective non-traditional property types, giving eligible households the opportunity to access £20,000 towards the cost of purchasing a home on the open market. Alongside the implementation of the Government's scheme, a local scheme offering an alternative to the Right-to-Buy in high demand areas of the Borough was also launched.

It was noted that despite targeted publicity regarding the government scheme, and a high number of initial enquiries, only two applications for the grant had been completed, and that the government had advised that the scheme would be closed from April, 2016. It was also noted that despite some initial interest from tenants the local Social Mobility scheme had had no uptake since its launch. The report advised that even with access to a £20,000 deposit many households had struggled to secure finance to purchase on the open market, and had therefore been unable to take advantage of the schemes.

It was proposed that despite the local scheme not meeting expectations, a scaled down version with reduced funding of £60,000 be offered in 2016/17. It was noted that as there were still some tenants interested in the scheme, the continued operation of a local scheme provided an opportunity to reduce the number of properties sold under Right to Buy, but that if the allocated budget had not been spent by the end of the current financial year, the scheme would be closed.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That the outcomes of the Right-to-Buy Social Mobility Scheme be noted.
2. That it be noted that the government backed Right-to-Buy Social Mobility Scheme has now closed.
3. That a scaled back local version of the Right-to-Buy Social Mobility Scheme be approved and implemented for 2016/17, and that the associated costs are met from the Housing Capital Programme.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

To meet the Corporate Plan Objectives:

- To increase the supply and quality of Housing in Chesterfield Borough to meet current and future needs.
- To become financially self-sufficient by 2020, so we can continue to deliver the services our communities need.

189 SOLAR PV MONITORING AND MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Housing Manager submitted a report requesting Cabinet approval for an exemption to be made to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in order to enable the appointment of a new contractor to maintain, manage and monitor the performance of the Solar PV installations on the Council's Housing Stock.

In 2012 the council had awarded the contract for the installation of Solar Panels on Council house roofs, as well as the contract for their on-going management and maintenance to Nationwide Solar. In early 2015 the Council had been notified that Nationwide Solar had gone into receivership, and that subsequent attempts by officers to contact the official receivers to discuss arrangements in respect of the maintenance agreement had been unsuccessful.

As an interim solution A Shade Greener Maintenance Ltd (ASG Ltd), a Solar PV company based in Sheffield, had been approached to carry out repairs where systems appeared to be faulty. There had subsequently been discussions with ASG Ltd about entering into an on-going Maintenance, Management and Monitoring Arrangement with the council. The proposed Service Level Agreement with ASG Ltd. was appended to the officer's report, where it was noted that the proposed arrangement was on more favourable terms, and at a lower price than the arrangement with Nationwide Solar had been.

In order to have an effective maintenance arrangement in place as soon as was practicable it was proposed that the Council's Contract Procedure Rules be waived in order to directly award the maintenance, management and monitoring contract for Council Housing Solar PV installations to ASG Ltd. It was noted that if a waiver were not granted the contract would need to be openly tendered which could result in a delay of up to a further six

months before the systems were adequately managed, maintained and monitored.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (Section 4.2.5), in respect of the procurement of a new contractor to maintain, manage and monitor the performance of the Solar PV installations on the Council's Housing Stock, be waived.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

To contribute to the Council's Priorities of improving the quality of life for local people and providing value for money services.