

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 2 June 2011, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor S Hirst (Chairman)

Councillors:

C Bartrop	B Hilton
S Bibby	K Hind
S Brunskill	R Newmark
R Elms	M Robinson
R Hargreaves	C Ross

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Finance, Head of Regeneration and Housing and Strategic Housing Officer.

49 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Holgate, M Ranson and L Rimmer.

50 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Hind referred to minute 763 with regard to the number of affordable housing units and commented that we are currently under siege by planning applications that appeared not to have any sheltered accommodation included in their affordable allocation. This was a message that we needed to convey to developers.

51 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

52 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

53 REFERENCE FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no references from Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

54 BRIEFING ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Head of Regeneration and Housing gave a brief resume of the housing responsibilities that come under the remit of this Committee. He informed Committee that the current strategies and policies in place were in need of revisiting in order to take housing forward in the light of changing Government

policy; financial challenges and new partner relationships. This would include increased partnership working where there were opportunities to either do joint funding or pooling of resources. The other main functions of housing were the operational issues which included homelessness and grants. To support the work of the Committee there were two main areas including the Housing Forum and the Strategic Housing Working Group. He informed Committee that over the next 12 months there would need to be a fundamental review of the housing strategies and policies, to meet these new challenges facing the authority.

In the absence of the Head of Environmental Health Services the Chief Executive gave Committee an overview of the services covered by the Environmental Health staff which included food hygiene inspections, health and safety inspections, air pollution control, pest control and the dog warden service, complaints, licensing enforcement and emergency planning. The information report submitted by the Head of Environmental Health Services outlined the work undertaken and the performance achieved for these areas in 2010/11.

55

AUTHORISATION OF PROPER OFFICER

A report was submitted for Committee to consider and confirm arrangements in relation to the authorisation of a proper officer appointments with the Local Health Organisations. As a district council Ribble Valley Borough Council is required to authorise medical officers to give advice and act on its behalf under the legislation of the Public Health Act 1936, Public Health Act 1961, Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 (as amended), the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010, the National Assistance Act 1948 and the National Assistance (Amendment) Act 1951.

The report informed Committee that following significant changes in both associated legislation and the structure of the organisations, these services would in future be provided through the offices of Cumbria and Lancashire Health Protection Unit on behalf of either the East Lancashire PCT or the Health Protection Agency. After discussions with this unit suggestions had been made.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the authorisation of the following officers for the duties listed to act on behalf of Ribble Valley Borough Council:

Dr Sohail Ashraf – Consultant in Health Protection
Dr John Astbury
Dr Kenneth Lamden
Dr Steven Gee
Kate Brierley
Jeff Scott
Dr Sohail Bhatti
Dr Mark Smith
Dr Anthony Sudell
Dr Aidan Kirkpatrick
Karen Thompson
Sue Harvey

56 AUTHORISATION OF OFFICERS IN RELATION TO SECTION 108 OF THE ENVIRONMENT ACT AND THE MAKING OF WEB ENABLED ENQUIRIES WITH THE DVLA

A report was submitted asking Committee to confirm formal authorisation of officers to undertake data enquiries with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, Swansea. This was in order to trace vehicles to identify offenders and take appropriate enforcement action in relation to fly tipping and littering, abandoned vehicles, noise nuisance, dog fouling, fly posting, nuisance vehicles, caravans.

Because of the number of significant changes to both staff and job titles, it was necessary to reconfirm the authorisation of officers for this purpose.

RESOLVED: That Committee authorise the officers as listed for the purposes as outlined and for any regulations made thereunder or amending or replacing the same:

- Head of Environmental Health Services;
- Head of Engineering Services;
- Senior and District Environmental Health Officers;
- Environmental Health Technicians including Pollution Control Officer;
- Cemetery and Grounds Maintenance Officer;
- Market Superintendent;
- Dog Wardens;
- Enforcement Officer (Licensing and Environmental Health)
- Engineering Manager;
- Waste Management Officer;
- Cleansing Manager;
- Amenity Cleansing Manager;
- Amenity Cleansing Operatives;
- Any other officer duly authorised by the Chief Executive.

57 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The Chief Executive submitted a report providing Committee with an updated homelessness strategy for 2008-2013. The strategy and action plan was reviewed at the Homelessness Forum in March and following a consultation period of 1 month and following the forum. The forum was well attended with representatives from all partner registered providers and support services in the borough. The Housing Strategy Officer informed Committee that the main focus of the strategy is the prevention of homelessness rather than dealing with people that are made homeless so that no family needs to go into temporary accommodation; this included housing advice and support.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the action plan contained within the strategy.

58 HEALTH WORKING GROUP

The Chairman suggested that in the light of the various public health issues that are currently under consideration, that the Health Working Group be re-appointed

in order to be able to meet regularly to discuss these issues. He proposed that the group be chaired by Councillor Hilton and that it include five Conservative representatives and 1 Liberal Democrat.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the re-appointment of the Health Working Group as outlined.

59 HEALTH PROMOTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES

Councillor Bridget Hilton gave Members a verbal update on the NHS reforms, Lancashire County Council public health and the local issues of oral health and Clitheroe Hospital. Committee discussed various aspects of these issues.

60 GENERAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information which included the minutes of the Hanson Cement Liaison meeting, a flood protection grant update, Clitheroe Cemetery extension update, national food hygiene rating scheme and information about exercise Watergate: an emergency planning exercise, based upon a flooding incident taking place at Mearley Book, Clitheroe and the surrounding area that would be hosted by Ribble Valley Borough Council on the 5 July 2011.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

61 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be Exempt Information Under Category 7 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

62 GRANTS

The Chief Executive submitted details of five disabled facilities grants and 1 home improvement loan which had been approved. The report also outlined a list of grants approved for the financial year 2010/11 and in the current financial year.

63 AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information on the affordable housing schemes in progress and proposed in the borough.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

64 REQUEST FOR A DECISION IN PRINCIPLE

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to consider a request for a decision in principle to provide financial assistance for the provision of an adaptation. He referred to a report that had been presented to the previous Health and Housing Committee requesting a loan for the provision of

recommended adaptations. He informed Committee that at that meeting they had resolved to ask the Housing Strategy Officer to speak with the Social Services involved to ascertain the situation and ask the applicant to look again at alternate sources of contribution. He updated Committee on the current situation with regard to this request.

RESOLVED: That Committee ask the Chief Executive to inform the applicant that the Ribble Valley Borough Council will not approve a grant or a loan for the cost of the adaptations at the property concerned.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

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