

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 23 January 2014, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor B Hilton (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Bibby	R Newmark
S Brunskill	E M H Ranson
R Hargreaves	M Robinson
J Hill (arr 6.40pm)	I Sayers
K Hind	J Shervey
J Holgate	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Resources.

554 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Hore and L Rimmer.

555 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Updates were given on Minute 406 regarding the approval of Model Licence Conditions for Dog Day Care Facilities and Minute 413 with regard to Slaidburn Doctors Surgery.

556 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

557 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

558 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14

The Director of Resources submitted a report requesting Committee's approval of the Revised Capital Programme for the current financial year for this Committee. The original Capital Programme for the 2013/14 had been approved by Policy and Finance Committee in February 2013 and since then regular updates had been presented quarterly to this Committee on progress with the Capital Programme. The original Capital Programme had included schemes at a total estimated cost of £240,000. In addition there had been £201,620 of the budget from 2012/13 moved into the 2013/14 financial year, slippage totalling £38,630 and further approvals of £38,260.

Each of the schemes in the Capital Programme had been discussed in detail with budget holders and the revised programme had been formulated to reflect the likely expenditure this year. All capital evaluation forms had been completed by the responsible officers.

There had been a small increase to the revised estimate from the previously approved capital budget for this Committee due a slight overspend on one scheme for a replacement pest control vehicle, however it was anticipated that all the capital schemes would be completed by the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the revised Capital Programme for 2013/14 as set out in the report.

559 PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/17

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking Committee's approval for the proposed future 3 year Capital Programme (2014/15 to 2016/17) for this Committee.

The report viewed the draft programme of schemes to be carried out in the following 3 years based on the bids that had been received from Heads of Service. The scheme bids for this Committee were outlined in detail showing how each particular scheme linked to the Council's ambitions. It was noted that at this stage these were only potential bids that would require further consideration by the Budget Working Group and by Policy and Finance Committee who would want to ensure that the budget was affordable both in capital and revenue terms. It was also noted that the bids contained in this report only represented those submitted with regard to this Committee's services and that they would be considered alongside other bids received from other Committees.

The Director of Resources also informed Committee that we had recently been notified of our allocation of disabled facility grant funding for the 2014/15 financial year. This would come through the Department for Communities and Local Government and will be £119,536. It had also been announced that as from 2015/16 funding for disabled facility grants would instead be provided by the Department of Health and although the initial allocation had been announced for this as £161,000 there was still a degree of uncertainty as to whether this would actually be received.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the 3 year programme for 2014/15 to 16/17 as outlined in the report; and
2. recommend to Policy and Finance Committee the programme as outlined for this Committee's services.

560

REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2013/14

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to agree a revised revenue budget for 2013/14 for consideration at Special Policy and Finance Committee. The original estimate for this current financial year had been set in March 2013. To allow a better comparison of the budget to the revised estimate the original budget had now been restated and was outlined in table format for Committee's consideration. The Director of Resources highlighted the main changes to the budget which included virements with regard to localised Council Tax support administration and the Dog Warden and Clitheroe Market. All the reasons for variations were outlined for Committee's information. The conclusion being that the difference between the revised and restated estimate was a decrease in net expenditure of £118,300 after allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves.

A question was asked regarding the impact of the spare room subsidy on this Council. The Director of Resources referred to the discretionary housing payments we receive from government and how this was used to support those affected by this change.

It was suggested a report should be produced which detailed the impact of the spare room subsidy.

Committee had some discussion around the effects of the changes with universal credit and benefits and asked for a report to Committee in due course. There was also a discussion surrounding homelessness and the general types of deprivation in Ribble Valley and it was felt it would be useful to draw together information from various areas to try and get an overall picture that would be the subject of a future report to Committee.

RESOLVED: That

1. Committee approve the revised revenue budget for 2013/14 with the inclusion of a subscription to the older peoples' network of £200 and submit it to the Special Policy and Finance Committee subject to any further consideration by the Budget Working Group; and
2. further reports be submitted to Committee as outlined.

561

ORIGINAL REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to agree the draft Revenue Budget for 2014/15 for consideration at Special Policy and Finance Committee. She reminded Committee that the 3 year forecast to Policy and Finance Committee in September showed that significant reductions to the budget would be necessary based on our indicative grant allocation from the Government.

A provisional settlement funding assessment had now been received and this represented a reduction of 12% and 26% respectively for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

However the Government compare spending power which includes income from Council Tax payers new homes bonus and other grants when quoting our funding allocations so according to the Government we would only face a reduction of 2.3% and 3.6% respectively.

The Budget Working Group had been meeting regularly to consider the Council's budget and had suggested 4 options to address any shortfall:

- Whether the Council Tax should be increased for 2014/15.
- Examination in detail of underspends and overspends to ensure the base budget is accurate.
- Consider increasing the amount of new homes bonus used to finance the revenue budget.
- Examination of how much business rates growth can realistically expect to be relied upon.

With regard to the draft revenue budget for 2014/15 the estimates had been prepared on the current levels of service allowing for price increases of 2.75%. A provision for a 1% pay award had also been included.

Individual budget areas for this Committee were shown in detail including reasons for main variances. The Director of Resources highlighted some of these.

The report also showed the draft budget summarised both objectively and subjectively for Committee's information as well as giving the reasons why net costs for this Committee would increase by £32,660.

The Director of Resources reminded Committee that they had agreed the increase of fees and charges by an average of 2.75% that would be applicable from 1 April 2014.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree the revenue budget for 2014/15 to be submitted to the Special Policy and Finance Committee subject to any further consideration by the Budget Working Group.

562 MINIMUM PERCENTAGE SHARE ON SHARED OWNERSHIP UNITS

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to consider whether to accept a minimum of 35% buy-in on shared ownership properties. He reported that over the past few years there had been increasing requests to increase the minimum percentage buy-in for shared ownership units from 25%. Most of the providers have experienced that the majority of applicants who buy-in at 25% usually remain with just 25% ownership and that it is uncommon for them to purchase a greater share. This had an effect on the viability for registered providers purchasing the units to deliver them as shared ownership. It was therefore proposed that this percentage buy-in be increased to 35% for first time buyers.

Committee considered this request and felt that it was not reasonable to expect first time buyers to commit to more than 25% for affordable housing.

RESOLVED: That Committee refuse the request to increase the minimum buy-in on shared ownership properties to 35%.

563 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP

The minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Group meeting held on 8 January 2014 were submitted for Committee's information.

564 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor S Brunskill submitted a report on behalf of the Children's' Trust.

565 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be Exempt Information under Categories 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

566 GENERAL REPORT – GRANTS

The Chief Executive submitted details of 10 disabled facilities grants that had been approved.

567 AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted an updated on the affordable housing schemes in progress and proposed in the borough. These had been split into application which had been submitted and were either approved or waiting determination subject to Section 106 Agreements being completed.

The minutes of a recent Strategic Housing Group were also included for Committee's information.

The meeting closed at 8.07pm.

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