

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 21 March 2019, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor B Hilton (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Bibby	R Newmark
S Brunskill	M Robinson
R Elms	R Sherras
L Graves	R Swarbrick
K Hind	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Strategic Housing Officer, Head of Environmental Health Services.

711 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors P Dobson, R Hargreaves, D Smith and J White.

712 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Clarification was requested with regard to Minute 570 regarding 18 Siddows Avenue, Clitheroe. The Strategic Housing Officer informed Committee that there would be a change of approach to this issue in the light of new information received.

713 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest.

714 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

715 ANIMAL WELFARE LICENSING 2019/20 FEES

The Chief Executive submitted a report with regard to setting the Council's 2019/20 fees under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018. The Regulations bring a number of existing animal licensing regimes together under one broad set of Regulations and introduce additional powers to suspend, vary or revoke licences.

The Head of Environmental Health Services reminded Committee they had resolved on 8 November 2018 that the new licence fees to be charged under the Regulations would be set at this meeting. This was to allow time for the fees to be costed and set on the basis of more accurate time taken information and estimates from undertaking initial inspections for granting a licence under the

new scheme and having more information to set compliance (unannounced inspection) fees, enforcement fees and rescore fees.

Although the Council can charge a fee for the consideration of an application for the grant renewal or variation of a licence it was not lawful for the Council to make a profit from its licensing functions and the proposed fees must be set based on the law set out and the reasonable estimate of the costs in undertaking this.

The initial round of licence applications under the new Regulations had been completed. There was considerably more work involved to administer the new regime when compared to the previous regime and this was reflected in the proposed fees set.

The fees cover licence application processing, compliance/enforcement (unannounced inspections), licence variations and rescore inspections in the following animal welfare areas:

- Boarding in Kennels.
- Boarding in Catteries.
- Home Boarding.
- Day Care for Dogs.
- Breeding of Dogs.
- Selling Animals as Pets.
- Hiring out Horses.
- Exhibition of Animals.

The current Animal Welfare Legislation had been repealed and had been replaced by a new framework extending the range of activities that require a licence.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the animal welfare licensing fees for 2019/20 as set out in the Appendix to the report.

716 REVIEW OF DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted a report providing Members with a review of the current position and delivery in 2018/19 in terms of Disabled Facilities Grants and propose a revised Policy for delivery in 2019/20.

In May 2017 it was reported to Committee that the Better Care Fund allocation allowed a more flexible approach to the delivery of disabled adaptations. Various amendments were proposed to the Policy and approved by Committee and these amendments had been incorporated into the Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant Policy that was first adopted in January 2018.

A review of the delivery on the Disabled Facilities Grants one year from the introduction of new Policy had now taken place.

The key changes to the Policy was the introduction of a Discretionary Grant. This offers a grant of a maximum of £5,000 towards one adaptation

recommended. To date the Council had completed 32 Ribble Valley adaptations and therefore it was proved to be very successful. In total there had been £113,293 committee to Ribble Valley adaptations over the year and this year it was proposed to cap the maximum amount spent of Ribble Valley adaptations at £80,000 to ensure the spend on Ribble Valley adaptations was restricted and mandatory grants remained the priority.

Minor amendments had been made to some wording to provide clarification around the cases where a contribution from the household had been calculated.

Another type of discretionary grant, a Top Up Grant, was also introduced under the new Policy. This could be considered the most successful aspect of the new Policy. The Top Up Grant is only available where the maximum mandatory grant cannot meet the cost of the works. This Top Up Grant enables those households with the most complex needs to have their specialist housing needs met. To date 5 households had been assisted with this type of grant a further 2 were at application stage.

Members asked various questions with regard to the Grant Policy.

RESOLVED: That Committee accept the contents of the report and agree the amendments to the DFG Policy as outlined.

717 SETTING A MAXIMUM VALUE FOR AFFORDABLE DISCOUNT SALE PROPERTY

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted a report proposing a maximum value of affordable discount sale units developed in the borough in order to ensure the units met the affordable housing definition.

This proposal was report to the January Health and Housing Committee and it was agreed that it would go out to consultation for 6 weeks. The report had been sent to all attendees of the Housing Forum and also published on the website as a consultation document. Two written responses had been received, both of which supported the policy being introduced in the proposed format.

Home ownership has become increasingly difficult to access, particular for first time buyers as house price growth has outstripped growth in wages. The National Housing Federation for housing markets in the North West shows a table that sets out all the house price to income ratios across the North West and highlighted that Ribble Valley is in the top 5 with a ratio of 8:1.

The proposal was to set a maximum value of an affordable discount sale housing unit in the borough. Discount sale units in the borough had always proved to be in high demand and a popular affordable home ownership option. The operation of delivery of an affordable unit by securing the discount had in some cases been used where a holiday let restriction was being lifted on a property and there was a requirement for the property then to become affordable. In these examples it was important that the value of the property remained accessible to those households in housing needs. In certain parts of the borough even applying a discount may not provide a property which is accessible to households in affordable housing need hence the proposal to set a maximum value.

The proposal was therefore for a value to be set which would be calculated using a formula – the average weekly full time income in the borough x 1.5 = the weekly household income x 52 for the annual income x 4 for which is the standard mortgage calculation. Currently this equates to a value of £188,729. This would therefore be fixed as the upper limit that any affordable discount sale unit could be sold for at first sale. It was proposed that this straight forward calculation would be included in the Section 106 definition of discount sale.

Committee discussed this issue in some detail and the issue of an outdated SHMA was discussed and the need for detailed information regarding housing need in each village. It was important that this information be refreshed during the review of the Core Strategy and that lobbying continues for the rural areas through the Rural Network.

RESOLVED: That Committee agreed to introduce a formula to calculate the maximum value of a discount sale affordable property in the borough as set out in the report.

718 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the schemes which had been approved for inclusion in the Committee's 2019/20 Capital Programme. The total for this Committee was £2,164,600 over the five year life of the programme, £545,000 of this relates to the 2019/20 financial year.

The Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme was funded by a yearly grant allocation from the Government and had been included at an indicative value of £320,000. The final scheme budget would be set to match the actual Government grant funding received in year once the Council was notified of it.

The Clitheroe Market improvement scheme had been moved from the 2018/19 Capital Programme to the 2019/20 Capital Programme. This was because the scheme was currently on hold awaiting the final plan for any development on the market site.

The Chief Executive informed Committee that a report would be brought to a future meeting setting out options for improvements to the existing market.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

719 REVENUE MONITORING 2018/19

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information providing them with information relating to the progress of the 2018/19 Revenue Budget as at the end of January 2019. The comparison between actual expenditure and budget for this Committee showed an underspend of £1,546 at the end of January 2019 after allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves. A report would be submitted to Committee in the new municipal year.

The Chief Executive informed Committee that consideration may be given to unfreezing half of the post of Pest Control Officer to include Dog Warden duties should Committee feel this was necessary.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

720 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies.

721 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be an 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.

722 GENERAL REPORT – GRANTS

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted details of 8 Disabled Facilities Grants; 4 Adaptation Grants and 2 Affordable Warmth Grants. No Landlord and Tenant Grants had been approved since the last report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

723 AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Director of Economic Development and Planning 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.

The Chief Executive thanked all Councillors that had served on this Committee during the life of this Council.

The meeting closed at 7.27pm.

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

Proposed Animal Welfare Licensing Fees – 2019/20

	Processing Application Fee	Compliance/ Enforcement Fee	Variation Fee (with inspection)	Variation Fee (no inspection)
Boarding in Kennels	£234	£110	£168	£76
Boarding in Catteries	£234	£110	£168	£76
Home Boarding	£203	£80	£137	£76
Day Care for Dogs	£203	£80	£137	£76
Breeding of Dogs	£234	£110	£168	£76
Selling Animals as Pets (Single Species)	£180	£57	£114	£76
Selling Animals as Pets (Multiple Species)	£257	£133	£191	£76
Hiring Out Horses	£291	£162	£225	£76
Exhibition of Animals	£234	N/A	£168	£76

	Extra Fees
Extra fee for each Additional Activity on a Multiple Activity Licence, where applicable	£31
Extra fee for each Additional Host inspected for Franchise Licence applicants/holders	£46

	Re-score Fee
Re-score Inspection, where requested	£127

Vets fees	Charged at cost in addition to the fees shown above
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Note – the above fees replace the licence fees charged under the previous animal licensing regimes for Animal Boarding Establishments, Home Boarding/Doggy Day Care, Dog Breeding Establishments, Pet Shops and Ridings Establishments.