

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 1 October 2020, starting 6.30pm
Present: Councillor B Hilton (Chair)

Councillors:

J Alcock	A Knox
T Austin	R Newmark
D Birtwhistle	D O'Rourke
J Hill	D Peat
M Hindle	M Robinson
B Holden	R Sherras

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Regeneration and Housing, Head of Environmental Health Services, Senior Accountant, Strategic Housing Officer.

748 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor S Atkinson.

749 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

750 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

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

751 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

752 PURCHASE OF AN AFFORDABLE PROPERTY IN CLITHEROE

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted a report for members to consider the purchase of a property in Clitheroe using commuted sum monies that could be rented out as an affordable property using the same model as the two properties recently purchased in Longridge.

The Council had received off site commuted sum monies from two development sites in Clitheroe and Barrow which was required to be spent on delivering affordable housing in the locality. It was proposed to purchase a property in Clitheroe in accordance with the requirements of the planning obligations and registered in the Council's ownership. Once the property was purchased, the nomination of the tenant would come from the Council's affordable housing waiting list. It was anticipated that the property would be a 2-bed terraced within walking distance of the town centre with access to services.

Commuted sums of £123,840 from a development site in Barrow, and £17,000 from a site in Clitheroe had been secured providing a total sum of £140,840. This would cover the purchase of a property and any repair works needed within the project budget.

Management of the property would be in line with the current model of a 5-year management agreement with Moss Care St Vincent's (MSV) in order to protect it from right to buy and therefore ensure that we could continue to offer an affordable property for rent. MSV would manage the day to day management services, maintenance and repairs. A standard agreement would be drawn up replicating that done for the properties in Longridge.

Members discussed the issue and were in favour of the purchase, however they felt that a strategic plan should be drawn up for the future that covered the need for affordable housing throughout the villages as well as the main service centres of Clitheroe and Longridge. Investigation should also take place into whether the monies could be used for 'buy to let' properties at 30/40% to enable more properties for the sum overall.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. agree to the purchase of an affordable property within Clitheroe using the commuted sum monies, and authorise the Chief Executive to undertake negotiations and approve the purchase of a suitable property;
2. agree to follow the established management model with Moss Care St Vincent's and that the setting of the yearly lease income be delegated to the Chief Executive; and
3. that a long-term strategy for the purchase of affordable housing properties be drawn up and presented to committee in due course.

753 PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS DISCRETIONARY GRANT POLICY

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted a report asking committee to consider revising the private sector housing policy and the disabled facilities grant offer to households.

Members were reminded that the current discretionary disabled facilities grant policy was adopted in January 2018 and had now operated for two years. This had introduced the provision of a non-means tested discretionary grant for one item recommended by the OT to a maximum of £5000; allowed a £10,000 top up grant above the mandatory maximum; and a 10% admin fee for all DFGs and RVAs.

It was now proposed that:

- the non-means tested discretionary grant for one item and associated works recommended by the OT be increased to a maximum of £7,000 per application;

- the top up grant be maintained at £10,000 except in those cases where the total value of the grant exceeds £40,000 (plus admin) where the applicant may request additional discretionary funding up to a maximum of £15,000 (plus admin) if approved by the Director of Economic Development and Planning in consultation with the Chair of committee;
- the 10% admin fee continues to be charged on all DFGs and RVAs.

The proposed policy would be consulted upon with all relevant partners and any feedback would be considered by the Director of Economic Development and Planning and Chair of Committee.

It was reported that there were currently 4 grants in progress that have works that would exceed the current grant maximum that could benefit from the change in the policy should it be changed. The mechanism for approving such cases was discussed and it was agreed they be approved as required by delegated powers to avoid delays in progressing the grants.

Members were supportive of the proposed changes to the policy.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. agree to the proposed changes to the DFG policy as outlined in the report, and that they be subject to a 6-week period of consultation, following which, subject to there being no issues of significance raised, delegated to the Director of Economic Development and Planning in consultation with the Chair of Health and Housing committee the policy be adopted and operational as soon as practicable thereafter; and
2. ask the Policy and Finance committee to consider and approve the financial implications of these proposed changes to the DFG policy.

754 DOG CONTROL PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking committee to note the outcome of the recent public consultation and consider the proposed extension to the Dog Control and Dog Fouling Public Spaces Protection Order 2017 for a further 3-year period.

Members were reminded that on 20 October 2017 the Council made the PSPO 2017 to address the problem of dog fouling and problematic dog behaviour across the borough for a 3-year period and that it would expire on 20 October 2020 unless it was reviewed and extended.

Since the PSPO had been made the Council had continued to experience a high volume of complaints about dog fouling, and it was therefore considered necessary to extend the PSPO to prevent the occurrence or reoccurrence of the issues identified when the order was made and to prevent an increase in the frequency or seriousness of those activities. Not extending the order would take away the powers for the Council to deal with the issues of dog fouling and enforcement against irresponsible dog owners.

To extend the PSPO the Act requires that a full consultation take place with the local community, local interest groups, parish and borough councillors, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police. This had been carried out and the results were summarised for committee's information. Once made, the regulations require that the Order is published on the Council website and notices are erected sufficient for members of the public to be informed. It was proposed that the council officers work closely with the Police to ensure appropriate controls and enforcement.

Members supported extending the PSPO for a further three years and asked that enforcement of it be a priority for the dog wardens.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the extension of the 2017 PSPO for another 3 years as set out in the report having regard to the provisions of Section 60 of the Act, and
2. authorise the Chief Executive to make the Order.

755 REVENUE OUTTURN 2019/20

The Director of Resources submitted a report for committee's information on the revenue outturn for 2019/20. After allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves there was an overall underspend of £63,036 for this committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

756 REVENUE MONITORING 2020/21

The Director of Resources submitted a report for committee's information relating to the progress of the 2020/21 revenue budget as at the end of August 2020 for this committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

757 CAPITAL OUTTURN 2019/20

The Director of Resources submitted a report for committee's information on the 2019/20 capital programme outturn for this committee, and on slippage on some capital schemes that had been moved from 2019/20 to 2020/21. Actual expenditure in 2019/20 was £595,815. Slippage from 2019/20 to 2020/21 amounted to £658,890 on five schemes.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

758 CAPITAL MONITORING 2020/21

The Director of Resources submitted a report for committee's information relating to the progress of the 2020/21 capital programme for the period to the end of August 2020 for this committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

759 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

760 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

761 UPDATE ON GRANT APPROVALS

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted a report informing committee of recent approval for 15 Disabled Facilities grants, 18 Ribble Valley Adaptation Grants and 2 Landlord Tenant Grants.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

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

Meeting closed 7.50pm.