MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY, 5 JULY 2016 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair - Councillor G A Boulter Vice-Chair - Councillor F S Broadley

COUNCILLORS (8):

G S Atwal Dr T K Khong
Miss A R Bond Mrs H E Loydall
D M Carter K J Loydall

Mrs S B Morris R H Thakor

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE (6):

S J Ball Mrs A E Court S Glazebrook M Hone Ms A Lennox S Nash

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE (1):

Ms Q Quinney

Min Ref.	Narrative	Officer Resp.
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	An apology for absence was received from Councillors L A Bentley, J W Boyce, Mrs L M Broadley, Ms M K Chalk, Mrs L Eaton and Mrs S Z Haq.	
2.	APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES	
	Councillors Mrs H E Loydall and Mrs S B Morris substituted for Councillors Mrs L Eaton and J w Boyce, respectively.	
3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	In respect of agenda item 13, Councillor K J Loydall declared a non- pecuniary interest insofar as he was a member of the Oadby & Wigston Lions Club as referenced in the report (at page 119).	
4.	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 22 MARCH 2016	
	RESOLVED THAT:	
	The minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 22 March 2016 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.	
5.	ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MARCH 2016	
	The Director of Services informed the Committee that:	
	(i) dog fouling patrols had now been extended to cemeteries within the Borough and that the public notices therein had been updated;	

	 (ii) further amendments were being made to the Draft Tree Strategy by the Arboricultural Officer prior to consultation; and (iii) an update regarding the car park at Blaby Park Road, South Wigston featured in the report at agenda item 15. 	
	RESOLVED THAT:	
	The Action List be noted by Members.	
6.	PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS	
	None.	
7.	PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE OUTTURN REPORT - 2015/16	
	The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 11 – 17) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.	
	The Interim Chief Finance Officer reported that the overall Committee spend was within budget denoting a strong performance in terms of service delivery and a realisation of overarching Council objectives.	
	The Chair requested that the Service Head 'Water Charges Day Centre' be corrected to 'Walter Charles Day Centre' in Appendix 1 (at page 14).	MHo CR
	RESOLVED THAT:	
	(i) The reported outturn positions be noted by Members; and(ii) The requested revenue carry forward be noted by Members.	
	In accordance with Rule 7.3 of Part 4 of the Constitution, the Chair moved for the order of business to be altered and taken in the order as reflected in the minutes.	
	RESOLVED THAT:	
	The order of business be altered, accordingly.	
8.	DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFG'S) AND THE LIGHTBULB PROJECT	
	The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 67 - 108) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Community Services Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.	
	The Interim Community Services Manager added that although the subject-matter of DFG funding did not affect whether the Council joined the Lightbulb Project (LbP), the Council was not able to guarantee that in the future it would have the same available resources to top-up the grant to previous levels. He further stated that an option also existed for the LbP to assume responsibility for adaptations to Council-owned properties and that a review was currently being undertaken to ascertain if there were any	

opportunities for improvements in services for which a further report would be brought back to a subsequent meeting of the Committee.

Ms Quin Quinney, a representative of the LbP, addressed Members.

Ms Quinney summarised the history of the LbP's inception and described the current mechanism through which DFG's were delivered as being too narrow and overly bureaucratic. The LbP was said to be a single-access point service that sought to provide a holistic assessment of service-users' needs so to transform and maximise the delivery of practical housing support to targeted groups, most notably in the early preventative stages, whilst providing a scope for savings. She reported that schemes administered by two Trusted Assessors (TA's) with the involvement of an Occupational Therapist (OT) in one-third of schemes in the Blaby and North West Leicestershire District areas had been delivered more quickly at a cost saving of 17%. She noted that the LbP required an incremental approach to be fully implemented and that a locality meeting would first take place to ascertain the Borough's requirements.

Councillor Mrs H E Loydall enquired as to whom undertook the initial assessment(s), their professional background and relevant qualifications.

Ms Quinney advised that most assessments were to be undertaken by TA's – formerly housing co-ordinators – re/trained by, and working in partnership with, the OT service at Leicestershire County Council (LCC) and assuming part of an OT's role. It was said that an OT's involvement would be reserved to more complex cases.

Councillor Mrs S B Morris sought to clarify how assessment turnaround times were comparatively quicker and what was meant by 'assistive technology' at Appendix 1. She further noted the importance of providing the right equipment to service-users.

Ms Quinney stated that a start-to-end mapping process had been used in order to identify and remove any duplication of resources thus resulting in quicker turnaround times and at a cheaper cost. 'Assistive technology' was said to be a tool available to TA's in order to meet the qualitative needs of particular, but not all, service-users.

Councillor Miss A R Bond enquired as to whether the LbP: worked in partnership with Social Services at LCC; extended to the provision of assistance guide-dogs for the blind/partially-sighted; and who was to attend the locality meeting.

Ms Quinney advised that the LbP formed part of the Social Services' Steering Group at LCC under which the OT service operated. She said that each locality had a Programme Board (PB) whose members were decided by its designated officers. She stated that assistance guide-dogs were not considered within the remit of the LbP but users would be appropriately signposted to other agencies where necessary.

The Interim Community Services Manager advised that the locality meeting for this Borough was to be organised and interested Members would be invited to attend.

Councillor R H Thakor enquired as to whether the scheme presented a funding cut to DFG's and, with reference to the table outlining the available spend for DFG's in Leicestershire in 2016/17 (at page 93), whether the total was an estimated figure.

The Interim Community Services Manager advised that the existing funding arrangements had no material impact upon joining the LbP. He further reported that only £177,000 of the total £316,000 sum awarded by the government to Oadby and Wigston was paid to this Council via the Better Care Fund (BCF) as administered by LCC, with the remainder sum diverted into other County-wide projects. He noted that this Council and another Council were still in dispute with LCC regarding this matter and that it would be reported back to a subsequent meeting of this Committee. He stated that although there was to be no funding cut, this area often spent above its allocation thus requiring the Council to top-up the grant from capital funds in previously successive years.

Ms Quinney advised that the total available spend was an estimated figure and that the omitted amounts in respect of the BCF element for the Charnwood and Oadby and Wigston areas and Countywide BCF funded DFG activity were yet to be confirmed because of the ongoing and aforesaid dispute with LCC.

Councillor G S Atwal asked if a saving was to be accrued to this Council under the LbP.

Ms Quinney advised that the initial pilot scheme (before full transformation) had generated a saving of 17% at existing resource levels - mostly absorbed by the work of TA's - and that the total sum of savings would be fully calculated in respect of the Borough once the salient facts had been gathered. She noted that case studies often showed that service-users only required certain elements of a given package and that the LbP delivered neither an overly pre-emptive or prescriptive programme.

Councillor Mrs H E Loydall sought clarification as to why one of the two pilot schemes in the Borough did not proceed and what was meant by 'satisfactory' at paragraph 3.2 of the report (at page 67).

The Interim Community Services Manager reported that one scheme did not proceed as the service-user simply chose not to go ahead with the installation and that 'satisfactory' was otherwise synonymous to a high standard of work, delivered on time for which positive customer feedback had been received.

The Chair enquired as whether the LbP complied with procurement regulations and retained the service-user's right to choose the contractor. He further raised a concern in that short-term assessments of service-users' needs may not accurately reflect a long-term provision of necessary support and the associated costs thereof.

Ms Quinney advised the no procurement exercise was undertaken by the LBP as this remained an issue to be addressed by each authority in accordance with their own regulations. She stated that service-users' did retain the choice of contractor.

Councillor K J Loydall enquired as to whether: the £1m start-up granted awarded to the LbP was still current; who was to vet the professional competency of external contractors; and if a falls in standards would result in mostly replacing OT's with TA's.

Ms Quinney advised that the financial position of the LbP was to be reported to each PB in due course. She stated that the procurement of contractors would be steered by the PB and the procurement criteria process. It was said that the majority of the assessment work could be appropriately undertaken by TA's who were said to receive training that led to a qualification and that an OT's input was still available.

Councillor S B Morris asked whether the TA's qualification was a government-recognised or LbP accredited qualification. She further stated that the financial implication 'CR1' of the report (at page 68) required additional exposition.

Ms Quinney advised that it was a nationally-recognised qualification from an independent awarding body.

Councillor Mrs S B Morris moved and amended the substantive recommendation at paragraph 2.1 of the report (at page 67) to 'That Members consider whether in light of the pre-business case that has been submitted and the feedback from the pilot schemes they wish *in principle* to joint Lightbulb Project to administer DFG's and adaptations to the Council's housing stock' (emphasis added).

Councillor Mrs H E Loydall seconded the recommendation as amended.

The Interim Community Services Manger confirmed that this subject-matter would return to a subsequent meeting of the Committee for further discussion and resolution.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

Members consider whether in light of the pre-business case that has been submitted and the feedback from the pilot schemes they wish in principle to join the Lightbulb Project to administer DFG's'.

9. COMMUNITY SERVICES UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 18 - 66) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Community Services Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

The Interim Community Services Manager advised Members to note that the year's referenced in recommendations 2.1.a, 2.1.b and 2.1.d of the report (at page 18) were to read '2016/17' as opposed to '2015/16'.

The Interim Community Services Manager added that the Community Flat at Boulter Crescent, Wigston had now been completed and returned to normal use since Thursday 30 June and that the concrete repairs and external decoration at Chartwell House, Oadby was currently out to tender. He reported that of 58 new homes at Kirkdale Road, South Wigston, 48 were

affordable homes for rent and 15 were shared-ownership properties. He confirmed, in addition, that Longhurst Housing Association had since reached an agreement with the site developers at Station Road, Wigston regarding the affordable housing element of the scheme which would provide 8 shared ownership properties and 10 affordable homes for rent. It was said that regular meetings were to be held with the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Helping Community Trust to monitor their performance in respect of advisory services which would be reported back to Members at a subsequent meeting of this Committee.

The Housing Services Manager reported that homelessness was on the increase within the Borough due to an increasing reduction in the availability of private tenancies and higher private-sector rents. The Homelessness Strategy was said to include a number of initiatives to alleviate homelessness levels and associated costs thereof to the Council. It was said that, if Members were minded to endorse the Strategy, a consultation period would follow with the Council's partners and that the Strategy would be brought back thereafter to a subsequent meeting of this Committee.

The Chair advised Members that a grievance had been submitted against LCC in respect of its £1.3m top-slicing of the BCF (DFG's). It was said that only this Council and one other Council had raised an objection. He further raised a concern that LCC could potentially top-slice again the award for 2019-2020 and that this Council was not to set a precedent to progressively top-up significant short-falls.

Councillor K J Loydall requested that information be sought from LCC as to why a top-slicing had occurred, what County-wide projects the remainder sum had been invested in and if the outcome of the investment(s) was directly attributable to the residents of the Borough. The Member further requested Officers to gauge the response of consultees regarding fair rent regulations as part of the Homelessness Strategy consultation process.

The Chair reiterated that it was resolved at a previous meeting of this Committee (or its predecessor) that the Lease for the rooftop telecommunication site at Chartwell House, Oadby was not to be renewed and, consequently, the equipment removed. He further requested that policy work be undertaken to assess the viability of the re-introduction of terrace-house refurbishment grants.

Councillors Miss A R Bond and R H Thakor enquired as to whether communication signals would be affected in the Borough area in the event of the equipment's removal and if an alternative site had been identified.

The Interim Community Services Manger advised that the Member's enquiry was of no material consideration to this Council and that health and wellbeing of the Borough's residents was its primary concern. He stated that, if Members were minded not to extend the Lease, negotiations may well be forthcoming with the Site Operator (EE Limited) to identify an alternative site within the Borough.

Councillor Mrs S B Morris asked whether enquires were made by this Council to ensure that services were provided by Housing Associations (HA's) from tenant-funded association sink funds.

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MHo SG The Interim Community Services Manager advised that the Council had no jurisdiction over such matters and that HA's were directly accountable to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

Councillor Mrs H E Loydall commended the reductions achieved in tenant arrears and asked whether the reductions were *on par* with other Leicester/shire District and Borough Councils. She further commended the Homelessness Strategy.

The Interim Community Services Manager advised that benchmarking exercises were consistent for reporting purposes across Leicester/shire's Councils.

Councillor Mrs H E Loydall moved the recommendations *en bloc* set out at paragraphs 2.1. to 2.1.f. (at page 18) and moved and amended the substantive recommendation at paragraph 2.1.g. to not extend the Lease for the rooftop telecommunication site at Chartwell House, Oadby and, consequently, for the telecommunications equipment sited thereon to be removed.

Councillor D M Carter seconded the recommendations as amended.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- (i) The contents of the report be noted by Members;
- (ii) The current tenant gross arrears target for 2016/17 of 2.5% of the annual rent debit be approved;
- (iii) A former tenant arrears target for 2016/17 of 1.5% of the annual rent debit be approved;
- (iv) The revised Former Tenants Arrears Policy be approved:
- (v) A void turnaround time for 2016/17 of 20 working days be approved;
- (vi) The Homelessness Strategy be approved;
- (vii) the Energy Conservation Strategy and the proposed external wall insulation works arising from the Strategy be approved; and
- (viii) The Lease for the rooftop telecommunication site at Chartwell House, Oadby not be extended and, consequently, for the telecommunications equipment sited thereon to be removed.

10. | PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 109 - 111) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Community Services Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

The Interim Community Services Manager added that in total this year, the Council will receive a New Homes Bonus of £442,000 through properties being indentified that were previously thought to be unoccupied.

Councillor D M Carter commended the report and welcomed the action proposed in respect of the five long-term empty properties at paragraph 3.8 (at page 110).

Councillor Mrs H E Loydall expressed that she did not wish empty properties attributed to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) on Namur Road, South Wigston

to feature in any future and, or, similar report and requested that Community Services liaise with the MoD or the MoD's agent regarding the short-term letting of the same void properties.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The information provided within the report be noted and the action going forward be endorsed by Members.

11. | CHOICE BASED LETTINGS OPTIONS

The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 112 - 114) as delivered and summarised by the Housing Services Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

The Chair expressed his preference to remain in the current Leicestershire Choice Based Lettings Partnership (LCBLP) and stated that an independent system would potentially create long-term issues and increased overheads. He said that the allocations policy had been previously amended to provide much needed flexibility.

Councillor D M Carter opined that it was preferable to opt for a new or independent in order to reduce ongoing running costs yet sought to clarify with Housing Services Manager his preference.

The Housing Services Manager advised that any given option resolved by Members was workable. He stated that an upgrade to version 8 of the existing software included much sought-after functionality demanded by service-users, of which the upgrade costs were appealing to other partners but entertained higher running costs *vis-a-vis* the higher start-up costs of a new system entertaining lower running costs.

Councillor Mrs S B Morris enquired as to: how proven the software upgrade to version 8 was; if the upgrade has been rigorously tested by the Council; if Members were minded to resolve an independent system, had a quote been obtained in respect of the migration of system data; and whether there was sufficient budgetary allocation to realise the software transformation and proper implementation timeframes.

The Housing Services Manager advised that significant assurances had been provided by the existing software provider who had soft-marketed the more modern-looking software upgrade to demonstrate its added functionality. It was noted however that it was Officers responsibility to ensure optimum system performance who were keen to move to a smarter-technology solution within a two-year process. He said that a detailed specification and reality-testing of the application would be completed at a later stage and that the move would require robust forward-planning and a dialogue with all partners. The Housing Services Manager advised that the housing register for this Borough was relatively small (430) and that data could either be exported from the system at minimal or no expense or service-users' asked to simply re-register. The figures detailed in the report were said to be base costs, excluding possible negotiated amendments by the LCBLP which would attract additional overheads. He confirmed that sufficient budgetary allocation did exist.

Councillor Mrs H E Loydall moved and amended the substantive recommendation at paragraph 2.3 of the report (at page 112) to 'In the event the partnership cannot be maintained or if the timetable cannot be achieved, that the Senior Management Team *in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee* be granted delegated authority to form a smaller partnership or to pursue independent action' (emphasis added).

Councillor K J Loydall seconded the recommendation as amended.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

In the event the partnership cannot be maintained or if the timetable cannot be achieved, that the Senior Management Team in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee be granted delegated authority to form a smaller partnership or to pursue independent action.

12. CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 115 - 117) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Community Services Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

Councillor Mrs S B Morris noted an increase in fly-tipping incidents outside the immediate vicinity of the Borough-area (along the A1559 to Husbands Bosworth).

The Chair reported that a record of fly-tipping occurrences within the Borough and their associated clean-up costs was being kept.

Councillor R H Thakor noted an increase in the number of public and privately-owned sites in the Oadby area affected by graffiti (including, amongst others, the front wall to the ASDA supermarket and the back wall to the BP petrol station on the A6).

The Interim Community Services Manager advised that the Council was liaising with the police to identify offenders and was hopeful that a persistent course of action to remove graffiti would ultimately tire future potential offenders. He added that the Environmental Development and Operational Services (EDOS) Team would be notified of affected sites aforementioned.

RESOLVED THAT:

The information provided within the report be noted by Members.

13. LEISURE SERVICES UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 112 - 114) as jointly-delivered and summarised by the Director of Services and Interim Health and Leisure Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

The Interim Health and Leisure Manager added that there had been a disappointingly low uptake of tickets for outdoor performances staged at the Jubilee Amphitheatre at Brocks Hill Country Park during the Summer -

notwithstanding extensive publicity - and that work was to be undertaken to ascertain why such was the case.

The Director of Services added that an additional option for increased carparking capacity at Brocks Hill (BH) / Parklands Leisure Centre (PLC) included land at Oak Avenue at BH. She stated that Members' views were sought so that a fully-assessed and costed report could be brought back to a subsequent meeting of this Committee for resolution.

Councillor Miss A R Bond congratulated the success of the small activity events recently hosted at BH which had attracted people from in/outside the Borough.

Councillor D M Carter commended the pro-activity at BH and PLC. In respect of increasing car-parking capacity, the Member expressed that BH's Ridge and Furrow field was not an option owing to its historical antecedents being part of Oadby's green wedge. He opined that the combination of small parcels of land was the most commonsensical solution in addition to the reconfiguration of the parking bays at BH and the inclusion of Oak Avenue. The Member also enquired as to whether the land situated immediately after the Oadby Town Football Club (OTFC) was a feasible option for inclusion and consideration. He further cited the promotion of sustainable travel plans by service-users under the Greening of the Borough Strategy.

The Interim Health and Leisure Manager advised that land to the right of Washbrook Lane, Oadby was mostly under the private-ownership of the OTFC however the land to the left (on the near-end of the Ridge and Furrow field) possessed the capacity for an additional 20-25 car parking spaces.

Councillor Mrs H E Loydall agreed with Councillor D M Carter. The Member stated that the open space at Wigston Road, Oadby was not a viable option given the potential for nuisance implications to the residents at The Oval, Oadby and instead advocated the opening of a footpath across the open space to provide a more convenient access route and to encourage more service-users to walk to the site.

The Chair clarified that the Ridge and Furrow field was unanimously considered by Members to be excluded as a viable option and the land to the left of Washbrook Lane and Oak Avenue were to be considered for inclusion. He further stated that any incorporation of land on Washbrook Lane was to avoid the use of tarmac surfacing.

Councillor K J Loydall requested that due consideration to pedestrian traffic and separation be factored into any subsequent report.

Councillor R H Thakor enquired as to whether any input had been sought from the Council's Planning Control department in respect of mapping the car park's layout. He further requested information as to the development costs of the Amphitheatre and asked whether local schools, community groups etc. were approached to offer the use of the same to them.

The Interim Health and Leisure Manager advised that the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Officer had undertaken a mapping exercise which concluded that any reconfiguration of the existing PLC car park layout did not yield additional capacity. She stated that the requested information

was not immediately available at the meeting but would be provided to the Member outside the meeting in due course.

The Chair confirmed that local schools and community groups has been approached.

RESOLVED THAT:

- (i) The information provided within the report be noted by Members; and
- (ii) The need to increase car parking spaces at Brocks Hill / Parkland Leisure Centre, and Members comments thereon, be noted.

14. CUSTOMER SERVICE TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 133 - 134) as delivered and summarised by the Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

Councillor Mrs S B Morris commended the Customer Services Centre's efficient handling and re-direction of service-users' and Councillors' calls and enquires alike.

Councillor Mrs H E Loydall reiterated the need to retain those non-self serve and (offline) communications channels for those residents who were not as tech-savvy.

RESOLVED THAT:

The information provided within the report be noted by Members.

15. | FACILITIES SERVICES UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 135 - 136) as delivered and summarised by the Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

The Chair reiterated that the proposed revision of the Borough of Oadby and Wigston (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2015 would apply to both car parks at Blaby Road Park and Station Street, South Wigston.

RESOLVED THAT:

The information provided within the report be noted by Members.

16. OPERATIONS SERVICES UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 137 - 139) as delivered and summarised by the Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

The Director of Services reiterated to Members that the additional verge cut as resolved at the previous meeting of the Committee and now deemed necessary was to be undertaken at 50% of the cost (i.e. £2,350.00) by Blaby District Council.

RESOLVED THAT:	
The information provided within the report be noted by Members.	

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.26 PM

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CHAIR
TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2016