

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY 07 JULY 2015 COMMENCING AT 7:00 PM

<p><u>IN ATTENDANCE:</u> Chair - G A Boulter Vice Chair - Mrs S Z Haq</p> <p>Councillors: G S Atwal; L A Bentley; Ms A R Bond; J W Boyce; F S Broadley; Mrs L M Broadley; D M Carter; Ms K Chalk; K J Loydall; and R H Thakor.</p> <p>Officers in attendance: Mrs A Court; C Raymakers; Ms A Pathak-Mould; Miss G Ghuman; and S Ball</p>

Min Ref.	Narrative	Officer Resp.
1.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>An apology for absence was received from Councillors Miss M V Chamberlain and Dr T Khong.</p>	
2.	<p>APPOINTMENTS OF SUBSTITUTES</p> <p>None.</p>	
3.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>None.</p>	
4.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH 2015</p> <p>A Member enquired as to whether a verbal update was to be given at this meeting in respect of Bennett Way (Min Ref. 62). The Chair confirmed this was to be included in the Community Update by the Head of Community.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on Tuesday 10 March 2015 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.</p>	
5.	<p>PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS</p> <p>None.</p>	
6.	<p>COMMUNITY UPDATE</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in the report (at pages 6 - 12) which should be read together with these minutes as a</p>	

composite document.

Rent Arrears

The Head of Community reported that rent arrears were comparatively higher at the end of this March and measures were to be implemented to examine services to enable collections and support tenants experiencing difficulties in paying. She advised Members that the issue of arrears did not involve significant numbers of bedroom tax cases but rather implicated the “working poor”. Members were advised that the Community Team are liaising with other service-areas in order to maximise the incomes of those affected and to facilitate tenant re/payment plans. The service was noted to be worked by temporary officers with an aim to seek permanence staffing levels to ensure greater stability. The work was considered to be a priority for the Community Safety Manager who continues to monitor the situation on an ongoing, weekly-basis.

A Member enquired as to the exact quarterly percentage for rent arrears with reference to the 3% target (at page 9). The Head of Community advised that the percentage for rent arrears currently calculated at above 3.5%.

A Member was of the opinion that the issue of rent arrears was likely to worsen given the government’s budget to render the working poor marginally poorer and *vice versa*. There was uncertainty as to ongoing housing benefit entitlement, suggesting the need to devise an action plan (to include the resources to service the same) relating to the collection of rents. A more realistic budget provision and collection target was also sought in this respect (at page 7).

The Head of Community commented that the comparative analysis work undertaken district-by-district concluded that the Borough had the highest proportion of “working poor” suggesting more residents were in lower-paid employment. It was cited that the Chartered Institute of Housing advised a 98% rate of collections for those top-performing organisations, from which a recommendation was being sought to incorporate into the HRA business plan.

Gas Safety

The Head of Community gave an update on gas safety performance as requested by Members that this is a Standing Item.

A Member sought clarification as to the Council’s assurance regarding gas contractors’ compliance, gas safety certification and that all fitters are qualified.

The Head of Community reassured Members that gas safety certification was a prerequisite to contract procurement, adding that contractors were auditing on a monthly basis and that a 100% rate of compliance was recorded until the end of July.

Update on Capital Programme 2014/15 and Decent Homes

The Head of Community directed Members' attention to Appendix 1 of the report (pages 11-12), adding that the volume of work has been achieved within the Capital Programme across several areas. Work at Boulter Crescent was reported to be at a halfway point and other projects such as subsidence works are completed.

A Member noted the achievements made and commended the Officers on their hard work.

Boulter Crescent Community House

The Head of Community stated that an opportunity was to be explored to further improve the community facilities following the House's recent refurbishment as part of the Capital Programme. She advised that the scheme was taking longer than anticipated due to consultations with the community/residents. She noted the Officer's work at Elizabeth Court and invited Members to attend upcoming Community Housing events for additional information.

A Member congratulated the work at the House insofar as the objectives set by the Community Partnership in terms of reducing anti-social behaviour.

Aids and Adaptations in Council Properties

The Head of Community outlined the aids and adaptations made to Council-owned properties (at page 8) from Occupational Health referrals, forming part of a waiting list held by Landlord Services. No backlog was reported save for those significant adaptations requiring the necessary planning permission.

Supporting Leicestershire Families (SLF) and Early Help

The Head of Community reported that these areas were at their greatest change at County-level in respect of mid-term financial strategies to consolidate services. She advised Members that discussions had been held in terms of services not being duplicated within the Borough, and the targeting of those services to end-users, with lesser rhetoric on the cutting of services to find savings. She said the Council would continue to work in partnership with Leicestershire County Council during this transitional phase in the hope that a more definite structure will follow. The feedback received was positive and she stated it may warrant the possibility of a closer, working partnership with Officers in this Council as opposed to being relocated elsewhere. It was said that a report was to be brought forward to this Committee detailing the support received by families in this Borough once that information was made available by Supporting Leicestershire Families.

A Member stated that it would not come as a surprise if Early Help was due another spending cut stemming from the government's budget implications. He stated that although the logic was sound in the long-term to provide a saving, that saving would not accrue back to this Council. It was hypothesised that if the service was to be presented in a

stand-alone report, it would struggle to win approval given the inability to clearly identify its advantages or disadvantages. It was said this was not necessarily a critical reflection of its workers.

It was suggested that a review of the service take place at the next meeting of this Committee and at the meeting of the Steering Group on 29 September 2015, with a view to ascertain:

- (i) what financial contribution is currently being made by this Council;
- (ii) the estimated financial contribution to be made by the Council in the future;
- (iii) to cross-reference those contributions *vis-à-vis* the tangible output in the Borough; and
- (iv) to devise a plan to mainstream some elements of the existing service into this Council's own. It was said that a significant amount of work was necessarily required.

The Head of Community confirmed that the Council's contribution over a three year-period amounted to £23,000 per annum, furnishing three workers and a team leader based at the Council Offices who would work in partnership with other service-areas. She advised that to employ a single Housing Officer at the £23,000 would not achieve the same work requirements as the above. The cost benefit analysis was said to be outstanding from Leicestershire County Council which, once made available, would enable an evaluation for better service-delivery.

The Member asserted that the said cost benefit analysis has been on-promise for the last two years, suggesting that initial reports seen presented a cost benefit yet failed to identify the beneficiary. He stated that although the current arrangements yielded a greater return to the Council from its investment, this return was not guaranteed therefore prompting a need to put the appropriate budgetary provisions in place to provide a contingency.

A Member stated that significant funding had been provided by the government to facilitate this project, raising unanswered questions as the prudent use of such funds and the need for a further subsidy provided by this Council and. He added that a presentation delivered at Leicestershire County Council had purported to use the cost benefit analysis to forecast an overspend on a district-level, thus suggesting no overall cost benefit. The Member also enquired as to which agency the benefit would/saving accrue in view of a deficit. If not to the Council. A meaningful analysis of input *versus* output was therefore required.

Housing Related Support for Older People Update

The Head of Community reported that progress for housing-related support was contingent on the receipt of staff consultations, having had the funding confirmed for the end of September. A structure was to be put in place to provide tenancy support across the Borough, incorporating homelessness and complications arising from the private-sector, however noted there was a marginal delay in its implementation given the recent turnover of new staff.

Dog Fouling

The Head of Community stated that in response to a negative press release regarding dog fouling within the Borough, a joint-initiative between Corporate Enforcement, Environmental Health and Community Housing had been launched. The high visibility patrols were said to be positively received by residents of the Borough and would continue to operate along-side the "Keep Britain Tidy" campaign.

The Chair stated that the protocol for the removal of graffiti from private property was still outstanding. The Head of Community confirmed that such a protocol had been the subject of discussion as the latest Corporate Enforcement Team Meeting and would be noted on the Action List.

The Chair commended the Officers in respect of the dog fouling initiative.

A Member further congratulated the dog fouling initiative, yet emphasised the need for continuity and consistency to guarantee its ongoing effectiveness. He added that should a prosecution arise, it ought to be publicised to strengthen the initiative's deterrent effect within the Borough. The Member enquired as to several omissions made in the report in respect of where and when these patrols were to be deployed in order to ascertain the initiative's impact.

The Head of Community confirmed that a comprehensive analysis had been conducted into fouling "hotspots" citing an example of a park in Oadby (whereby a patrol had attend between the hours of 7-9 am) and activity reported outside school-areas. Further discussions at the latest Corporate Enforcement Team Meeting also proposed the training of members of the "Clean and Green" Team in addition to Officers on-the-ground. The first patrols were noted in the first instance to be an educative exercise, with any prospective prosecution serving as validation behind the issuing of fixed penalty notices.

A Member presented a dog fouling bin-bag scheme currently implemented by Falkirk District Council, citing a 50% reduction in dog fouling in that district area. She recommended that this Council emulate a similar scheme, whereby bags would be readily distributed to the public a various Council outlets. It was opined that such a scheme could be a potential cost-effective solution. The Head of Community requested that a bag sample be provided for inspection.

A Member raised a concern regarding the deteriorating condition of dog foul bins across the Borough. She suggested that foul should not be disposed of in the ordinary bins. Urban foxes were also said to be problem insofar as they would strew the contents of refuse bins whilst foraging.

A Member supported the initiative and enforcement action and suggested a rota be implemented to systematically patrol the parks in the Borough, citing numerous fouling incidents he had witnessed dog-

walking in Knighton Park. He further raised a concern in respect of the inaction taken to remove graffiti from private property within the Oadby Uplands Ward, rendering the affected areas less attractive and emphasising the anti-social nature of such activity.

The Chair referred to several failing agreements entered into with companies to remove graffiti from privately-owned junction and post boxes, impressing the need for the aforementioned protocol to be made available imminently to address the matter. He confirmed that the FPN for dog fouling was now £100.

A Member stated dog fouling was not limited to parks and school-areas, but implicated neighbouring streets prompting residents to affix “No Fouling” signage to their front-gates, thus requesting patrols to be widely deployed.

The Chair invited Members to direct any information of areas likely to be affected by dog fouling to the Head of Community.

A Member enquired as to whether a grant was available in order to facilitate the bin-bag scheme earlier referred to by another Member. The Head of Community confirmed that revenue streams existed in the Community Safety budget under the remit of dog fouling being tantamount to anti-social behaviour. She reiterated that the issue was a community-wide problem requiring partnership action and pooled resources in order to overcome.

A Member suggested that the issue be brought before, and the scheme potential sourced from, the three Residents’ Forums in the Borough.

A Member stated that if a cost effective bin-bag solution was to be implemented, that the necessary budgetary provisions be put in place.

Community Payback Scheme

The Head of Community reported that the Community Payback Scheme had recently provided for the painting of approximately 30 lamp posts, whereby materials had been supplied by the Council and the labour by payback offenders. The Scheme been had extended into other service-area (e.g. Support Leicestershire Families) with further areas to be explored.

The Chair suggested that works to bus shelters be added to the Scheme.

Heat or Eat

The Head of Community reported that “Heat or Eat” was a Local Welfare Fund which has had success in the Borough in identifying individuals and families requiring heating vouchers and/or food parcels, with a regrettable increase in the latter. The service was described overall as a good and responsive one.

RESOLVED THAT:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report be noted by Members. 2. The targets set for rent arrears be agreed. 	
<p>7.</p>	<p>CHOICE BASED LETTING SYSTEM</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in the report (at pages 13 - 14) which should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>She stated that the report was for information only in terms of the district-wide sub-group's progress in securing an IT-based choice-based letting system without a formal recommendation as a decision had yet to be made.</p> <p>The Vice-Chair described the scheme as notable example of a good-working partnership and enquired as to whether it had impacted on re-housing lists and waiting times. The Head of Community advised that, although such a question was a difficult one, the scheme has provided for better transparency to dispel erroneous perceptions surrounding waiting-time: the provision of more affordable housing was said to be the solution to reduce waiting times.</p> <p>A Member stated that a recommendation was effectively made out at para. 4 of the report (at page 13) for the negotiation of a further 12 month contract extension, and proposed a substantive recommendation for the same.</p> <p>A Member enquired as to whether a provision was in place to enable tenants to substitute and/or exchange properties. The Head of Community advised that such a mechanism was extensively developed last year operating as a separate scheme, with signings to various websites (including a nation-wide platform) and information disseminated to tenants. The Member suggested that periodic updates be circulated to tenants about this mechanism so to accommodate any changes to tenants' requirements and circumstances.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report be noted by Members. 2. A further 12 month contract extension be negotiated. 	
<p>8.</p>	<p>HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY - RIGHT TO MOVE</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in the report (at pages 15 - 17) which should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>She said the report sought the approval from Members to revise the Housing Allocations Policy as a statutory requirement to reflect the legislative changes as outlined in Appendix 1 (at page 17), adding that the "Right to Move" was another government-originating initiative akin</p>	

to that of the "Right to Buy" initiative.

The Chair advised Members that the report had to be noted, accordingly.

A Member sought clarification as to the following information:

- (i) if 1% of the total lettings and not lettings stock was to be made available under the initiative;
- (ii) if the initiative solely applied to social tenants moving from one district to another, as opposed to from the private-rented sector, and the Housing Associations' involvement; and
- (iii) if those exercising the right automatically displaced existing, resident-Borough applicants on the housing waiting list.

The Head of Community confirmed the above, adding that applicants would be routinely added to the register and their housing needs assessed in accordance with the standard adopted criteria: there would be no extraordinary priority/treatment with the same right being afforded to residents of this Borough to move locality. She stated that an allocation of *up to* 1% of the lettings was to be made available, subject to applicant demand.

The Member raised a concern as to the number of prospective applications given the desirable suburban character of the Borough, questioning whether the Council was obliged to accept all applicants or up to the 1% threshold.

The Head of Community advised the threshold was capped at 1% and that the research suggested the number of applications would be fewer than expected due to the need for applicants to secure/demonstrate long-term employment in Borough, which is accepted to be less competitive in terms of job-creation.

The Chair requested that, in view of the amendment made by Leicester City Council to their Allocation Policy prescribing a minimum two-year residency condition, this Borough's minimum six-month residency condition be reviewed at the next meeting of this Committee with a view to amend the Policy in accordance with that of Leicester City Council.

A Member opined that the initiative was another measure imposed by central government, dictating what can and cannot be done in the Borough: it was said that if the Council enjoyed more autonomy, the likelihood of success would be more favourable. The Member raised a hypothetical concern as to the position an applicant would find himself in should he subsequently become unemployed after securing tenancy. He welcomed the policy review so to eliminate any unfair advantages gained or disadvantages suffered as a result.

A Member raised a question as to the reputational damage to be potentially suffered to the Borough and thus agreed with the foregoing discussions.

A Member denounced the initiative as particularly poor example of

	<p>politics insofar as it did not reflect the reality that individuals seldom move, in effect giving consideration to an irrelevancy which nevertheless must be approved.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT: The Housing Allocations Policy be revised to reflect the statutory changes as outlined in Appendix 1.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>HOMELESS DISCHARGE OF DUTY TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in the report (at page 18) which should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>She noted that the policy was adopted last year by Members and was pleased to report the same had not been needed to be used to date.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT: The report be noted by Members.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>HOMELESSNESS TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR FAMILIES</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in the report (at pages 19 - 20) which should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>She informed Members of the current arrangements for temporary accommodation following the closure of Graytone House Hostel last December. A report was previously put before Members outlining the previous difficulties in sourcing a short-term lease for an appropriate property in the Borough in view of the market. The Council has continued to look at the proposal with a view to source a long-term lease. Discussions have been had with a registered partner of Council-owner property in the hope that they are agreeable to returning the lease to provide the required temporary accommodation. It was noted that there was some uncertainty as to how long this process would continue but reassured Members that interim provisions were in place.</p> <p>A Member enquired as to what limitations, if any, prohibited residents of Kennedy House claiming homelessness following its imminent closure given residents' purported right to housing having been resident in the Borough for a period of six months. It was also asked what contingency plans were in place should the registered partner not agree to go ahead so to avoid potentially placing residents in already scarcely available Council-house properties.</p> <p>The Head of Community advised that the closure of Kennedy House was to be given separate consideration in an independent report at a later point in the meeting (agenda item 12). She confirmed that the proviso (as amended 18 months ago to address the same Members' concern) for six-month residency in the Borough applied to "stable" residency only, so excluded housing entitlement to hostel-type residents for want of "permanent" residency.</p>	

	RESOLVED THAT: The report be noted by Members.	
11.	<p>DISABLED FACILITY GRANTS (DFG'S)</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in the report (at pages 21 - 25) which should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>She stated that the report detailed the commitments for the last three financial up to, and including, this financial year. It was noted that although the Council was in receipt of a grant from Leicestershire County Council to discharge its statutory duty, this grant was successively insufficient each year thus requiring top-up funding to ensure minimal backlogs and maximum service-delivery. A top-up of £78,068 for this financial year (down on previous years) was sought in order to deliver the programme for 2015/16, returning to 2012/13 funding levels with reference to Table 1 (at page 21). Further information was provided to Members on 2016/17 at Appendix 1 (at pages 24-27), subject to the budget integration in terms of various health and social care services.</p> <p>Other areas of work referred to include the Light Bulb Project, an integrated housing-care initiative which shall determine whether DFG's are to be determined by Leicestershire County Council or this Council in the future with further information awaiting. It was confirmed that the Council continue to have a good ongoing working relationship with its local Occupation Health provider.</p> <p>The Chair raised a concern regarding the discrepancy between this Council being legally responsible for discharging its statutory duty in respect of DFG's whilst Leicestershire County Council being in account of the essential budget.</p> <p>A Member stated that if the Light Bulb Project was to become the delivery mechanism for DFG's, an invoice may be raised against this Council for the additional funding. The Member said that the Project would require the appropriate governance and financial controls and needed to be relayed back to Leicestershire County Council in time for budgetary preparations commencing in September. He said the Project lacked clarity thus rendering the matter of budgeting more difficult.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT: Members recommend to the Policy, Finance and Development Committee that the additional capital funding of £78,068 be made available.</p>	
12.	<p>CLOSURE OF KENNEDY HOUSE HOSTEL</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in the report (at pages 28 - 29) which should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>She reported that most residents from Kennedy House originate from</p>	

	<p>outside of the Borough as it was a pan-district used facility and also accommodated a number of homelessness cases due to a historical policy flaw. Pro-active steps were said to have been taken to mitigate any risk of short-notice housing relief, with Officers having collated a preliminary register of eight cases under the jurisdiction of the Borough who have begun to assess these individuals' support needs. She advised that three cases have been identified as belonging to Blaby District Council who have been advised of the same. She cited a Supreme Court ruling insofar this Council's responsibility to initially house affected residents which may potential entertain a financial implication, however confirmed that reserve funding was available to meet any temporary accommodation costs.</p> <p>The Chair informed Members that Kennedy House had served notice to its residents on 07 July, although this was yet to be confirmed by the House.</p> <p>A Member added that although Kennedy House had informed the neighbouring Day Centre that notice had been served, they did not confirm if they shall be vacating the premises entirely, raising questions as to what the House's prospective purpose/intentions were. He requested that Officers make enquires when next in contact with the House to ascertain any future Council involvement, stating that its closure may not be an overall negative.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT: The report be noted by Members.</p>	
13.	<p>FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICE PLAN</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in the report (at pages 30 - 52) which should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>She noted that the report required approval annually to comply with the Council's statutory duty. The plan had been prepared by the Environmental Health Team Leader, who has since left the Authority. The Head of Community confirmed that Finance had since verified the figures contained in the report as correct.</p> <p>A Member requested that in the future a draft of the Service Plan be brought to this Committee in sufficient time for Member's to have an input.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Food Safety Delivery Plan for 2015/16 be noted and approved by Members. 2. The substitution of new roles of officers within the detailed plan as and when appropriate resources are recruited to the Environmental Health Team be authorised. 	
14.	<p>LEISURE CONTRACT PERFORMANCE MONITORING</p>	

	<p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Director of Services as set out in the report (at page 53) which, together with Appendix 1 circulated at the meeting as it was omitted from the report, should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The report was said to provide an overview of performance for the first contract year, with 426,000 attendances recorded marking a significant increase from previous years. It was reported that gym and group-class memberships had increased by 77% and 66% respectively, totalling 3, 086 new members. The health and safety incident record was noted to be below the leisure industry's average. The Building Programme in respect of Parklands Leisure Centre and Wigston Swimming Pool were confirmed as on target for November 2015.</p> <p>A Member requested that a system of checks be implemented for accurate recording for profit-sharing purposes.</p> <p>A Member stated that profit-sharing in place on certain activities may or may not have been paid due an inadequate profits audit. He enquired as to whether recourse to a process could be made to audit the accounts to ascertain accurate profit records so to request the appropriate amount due.</p> <p>The Director of Services confirmed that there had been close-monitoring of the contract and suitable audits undertaken.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT: The report be noted by Members.</p>	
15.	<p>BROCKS HILL AND OPERATIONS UPDATE</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Director of Services as set out in the report (at pages 56 - 62) which should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Brocks Hill</p> <p>The first part of the report was said to provide an update on the activity at Brocks Hill Country Park and Centre as was reflected at the Greening of the Borough Working Group (at pages 56-57).</p> <p>A Member enquired as to the progress made from the interim arrangements for SLM and café delivery to cater events. The Director of Services stated that the procurement was due to begin imminently.</p> <p>Operations</p> <p>The issue concerning bus shelters were raised before Members in considering alternative provisions and shelter designs for the future. She reported that research had been undertaken in respect of a proposal for an advertising company to install and maintain bus shelters in the Borough at minimal or no cost to the Council, in return for advertising rights granted to the company on the shelters installed</p>	

(subject to content approval). Further enquires made confirmed that a Council contribution to the capital cost of the shelter would return a negotiable proportion of the advertising revenues generated and multiple shelter designs were available for Members to consider.

Three options were outlined, namely:

- (i) to continue with the current, bespoke corporate design;
- (ii) to continue with the refurbishment of existing shelters, installing new-design shelters on an *ad-hoc* basis endorsed by Leicestershire County Council; or
- (iii) a combination of the above two options. It was noted that more information was needed before a final decision could be made, particularly in respect of revenue-sharing if Members wish to pursue the advertising company's option.

The Chair stated that although the advertising company had given some indication of sites that may be suitable with further information to be obtained from the company on further sites across the Borough. It was suggested that the standard Borough design be used on such sites due to its proven vandal-proof properties with ongoing maintenance work to be assigned to offenders under the Community Payback Scheme.

A Member agreed that more information was needed regarding *inter alia* longevity, resilience and repairs/maintenance before a final decision was made. He agreed with the Chair's recommendation for the interim period.

A Member also agreed although queried the vandal-proof qualities of any alternative design given the amount of glass incorporated: the report did not specify if the advertising company would meet any of the replacement costs.

A Member stated that adequate seating provision must be provided for in any new design to accommodate the needs of those who were unable to stand for long periods of time (i.e. the elderly). It was also said that any new bus shelters ought to be correctly installed (i.e. inwardly facing the road).

The Chair stated that all new bus shelters were now provided with seating-perches with existing shelters were being retrofitted with seats resourced via the Residents' Forums and confirmed that existing shelters were outwardly installed to prevent commuters from being "splashed" by passing traffic.

The Chair requested that a report be brought to the next meeting of this Committee detailing further information regarding the areas upon which the advertising company's wished to operate, the revenue-sharing options and repairs/maintenance, defining who would bear the cost implications thereof.

The Director of Services reported that requests for wheeled bins for garden waste were continuing to be received. The new vehicles were

said to be easing the method of refuse collection and had been positively received in conjunction with the opting-in scheme. Notwithstanding this, it was noted that there were several outstanding issues surrounding dual-collections of bins and bags for garden waste predominately in relation to Health and Safety. The recycling participation rate for across the Borough was cited at 70% with 50% of materials collected being of a recyclable quality. It was reported that the closure of the pre-dominant paper mill had impacted on the paper-recycling industry. It was said that the Council has since contracted with a new provider still giving a favourable rate.

The Director of Services stated that the report outlined the cycles undertaken in terms of street cleansing and grounds maintenance in the Borough.

A Member enquired as to what arrangements were in place for the cutting of grass verges and weed-control in gutters in the Borough having received complaints from residents.

The Chair advised that it was this Council's decision not to return grass verge maintenance back in-house subsequent to out-sourcing the contract to Leicestershire County Council. It was confirmed that Blaby District Council currently maintains grass verges on the Council's behalf. It was reported that the weed-spraying contract commenced late this year and spraying was now completed in Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. Two spraying sessions were said to take place a year.

A Member stated that members of the public could no longer access the canal around the Ervins Lock footbridge, impacting on the amenity of leisure facilities, and enquired as to the progress made on the building of the bridge.

The Director of Services stated that a meeting request with the Canal and Rivers Trust made subsequent to the closure was yet to be agreed to by the Trust to discuss particulars and secure approval. The Regeneration Team and Facilities Manager were working in partnership to progress this matter.

The Member raised a concern in respect of the outstanding health and safety issues around the continued bag opt-in and enquired as to what course of action the Council was pursuing to eliminate the same and if extra resources were to be invested to expedite the dual-collection system. Further clarification as to the recycling participation rates/figures was also sought.

The Director of Services advised that the health and safety issues would continue as long as the opt-in remained (as confirmed by the Health and Safety Officer) with no mitigation possible other than to continue to promote the advantages/availability of wheeled bins for garden waste. The recycling participation rate was clarified as the percentage of residents in the Borough who engaged with the scheme. The recycling rate was clarified as the percentage of all materials collected being of a recyclable quality. It was noted that the Council remained the third top-performing authority in the country in terms of

	<p>weight per resident deposited in landfill.</p> <p>A Member requested that further evidence be provided to support the health and safety concerns. He stated that a proper conclusion could not be made unless the evidence first suggested that the appropriate training was implemented and that best-practice was being monitored during collections.</p> <p>A Member enquired as to whether the services provided by Blaby District Council extended to the Oadby area and requested that litter-picking be continued along the A6 central reservation, with a suggestion of litter patrols. The Chair confirmed that the services did extend to Oadby, however a separate arrangement existed in respect of the A6 as an arterial route. It was advised that any concerns regarding litter should be reported to Operations and The Depot.</p> <p>A Member enquired as to whether wheeled bins were to be provided for general waste. The Chair confirmed this was not the Council's intention.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT: The report be noted by Members.</p>	
<p>16.</p>	<p>PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT - 2014/15</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Principal Accountant as set out in the report (at pages 63 – 72 but excluding page 68 having been included in error) which should to be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>He advised that an under-spend in the general fund was reported in Committee expenditure owing to accounting regulations in terms of how revenue grants appropriated to the reserves for service-specific purposes are to be publish in the final accounts so to provide a more comparative analysis. The grants were said to be appropriated as they were due to be spent next year.</p> <p>A number of medium-sized under-spends across the budget were all identified (at page 66), most notably in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Community Development due to salary compression and the movement of the senior systems budget to another area; (ii) Brooks Hill due to a significant increase in income of 27% since 2014/15 with parts of the expenditure transferred to the Capital Programme so to discharge some s. 106 monies; (iii) Day Centres due to the non-payment of a group's management fee at Bassett Street; (iv) Transport of approximately £20,000 due to fewer vehicle repairs, re-shaping of purchases and lower fuel costs in the last 12 months; and (v) Refuse and Recycling. <p>A fall of approximately £100,000 in recycling disposal income was reported as a result of adverse market forces and the economy. The take-up of green wheeled bins for garden waste has seen a reduction of</p>	

	<p>£28,000 in spending on bags in addition to new income streams of £8,000 through the purchase of extra bins, with the savings materialising earlier than expected and/or budgeted for.</p> <p>A Member enquired as what the variance of £7,000 under the Grand Union Canal Footbridge Scheme related to (at page 71) and sought assurances that the £48,000 under the same scheme (at page 74) still remained in the budget and was not subject to time-limits. The Principal Accountant advised that it was agreed at a meeting of the Policy, Finance and Development Committee in February 2015 that some of Capital Programme Budget was to be carried over into 2015/16, inclusive of the £48,000. The variance was a result of intended initial works on the scheme which did not take place and the £7,000 was to be carried forward into next year (subject to approval). The availability of s. 106 funds was said to be monitored to ensure they were spent in time.</p> <p>A Member enquired as to whether the £67,000 apportioned to reserves would be returned. The Principal Accountant confirmed this would be the case, with some attributable to the under-spend on Sports Services Commissioning.</p> <p>A Member enquired as to reduction in the fees of the bowling clubs. The Principal Accountant confirmed that the income budget had been reduced by approximately £1,000 so that teams were able to play without paying a fee. He stated that the variance was too insignificant for it to be featured in the report.</p> <p>A Member enquired as to whether any of the allocated funds under the Play Area Refurbishment Scheme were to be invested in Ellis Park in Oadby. The Principal Accountant advised that definite answer would be sought from colleagues and the relayed to the Member in due course.</p> <p>A Member stated that the effective under-spend of one million pounds on the Housing Revenue Account ought to be categorised as a capital, as opposed to a revenue, spend. The Principal Accountant advised that this was due to the rescheduling of capital works across the years which, since the introduction of the new finance regime for Housing, had allowed for a substantial revenue contribution to the Capital Programme to be budgeted. He noted that the contribution increased the general housing revenue account reserve, however it was intended that this would be spent at the appropriate time nonetheless.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The reported outturn be noted by Members. 2. The requested revenue and capital carry forwards as set out in Appendix 5 be noted by Members. 	
17.	<p>COMMITTEE BUDGET REVIEW - APRIL TO MAY 2015</p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Principal Accountant as set out in the report (at pages 73 – 74) which should to be read together with these minutes as a</p>	

<p>composite document.</p> <p>He stated that discussions with Officers were due to be held to seriously consider expenditure over the next 12 months, budgets for the following year and identify any issues in capacity going forward given the overspends across numerous cost centres. It was also noted that income at Brooks Hill had fallen in the same quarter of last year due to a loss of a community-group booking.</p> <p>A Member enquired as to whether it was possible to secure funding for festive lights via the Residents' Forums as opposed to extending a revenue. The Principal Accountant stated that a request for this had been received from the Residents' Forums and more requests were to be expected. Alternative funding provisions were currently being investigated in respect of the matter.</p> <p>A Member stated that the core-funding for festive lights was contained in the main budget, with additional lights having been purchased by the Residents' Forums. He further questioned the consistency of this report to the preceding one in terms of an under-spend which ought to be reflect in next year's budget. The Principal Accountant advised that it was too early in the year to forecast expenditure levels. He noted that there had been under-spends which were budgeted for so reductions were not immediately forthcoming.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT: The current positions be noted by Members.</p>	
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The Meeting Closed at 9:13 PM