

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE
COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2016
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

<u>IN ATTENDANCE:</u>		
Chair - Councillor G A Boulter Vice-Chair - Councillor F S Broadley		
COUNCILLORS (9):		
G S Atwal Miss A R Bond J W Boyce	Mrs L M Broadley D M Carter Mrs L Eaton	R E Fahey Mrs S Z Haq K J Loydall
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE (5):		
S J Ball Mrs A E Court	S Glazebrook Mrs A Lennox MBE	C Raymakers

Min Ref.	Narrative	Officer Resp.
17.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> An apology for absence was received from Councillors L A Bentley, Ms M K Chalk, Dr T K Khong and R H Thakor.	
18.	<u>APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES</u> Councillor R E Fahey substituted for Councillor R H Thakor.	
19.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> None.	
20.	<u>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 05 JULY 2016</u> RESOLVED THAT: The minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 05 July 2016 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.	
21.	<u>ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 05 JULY 2016</u> The Interim Community Services Manager informed the Committee that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) an update regarding terrace-house refurbishment grants featured in the report at agenda item 9 (at page 34) and that a separate report was to be brought to the next meeting of this Committee to be held on 17 January 2017; (ii) an update regarding fair rent regulations featured in the report at agenda item 9 (at page 33); (iii) discussions with Leicestershire County Council (LCC) regarding the distribution of Disabled Facility Grants (DFG's) were ongoing and that a report was to be brought to a subsequent meeting of this Committee once a resolution had been agreed; and (iv) no response had been received from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) 	

	<p>and, therefore, it was to be assumed that the MoD's has no interest in the short-term letting of its void properties on Namur Road, South Wigston.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The Action List be noted by Members.</p>	
22.	<p><u>PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS</u></p> <p>None.</p>	
23.	<p><u>COMMITTEE BUDGET REVIEW (APRIL - AUGUST 2016)</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 14 - 17) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Finance and Accountancy Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor K J Loydall enquired as to whether there was any evidence to suggest additional financial hardship suffered by Borough residents as result of the 1% decrease in dwelling rents.</p> <p>The Interim Community Services Manager and Interim Finance and Accountancy Manager jointly-advised that no additional hardship had been found.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce expressed concern in respect of the worsening volatility of void properties and its impact upon overall deficit of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).</p> <p>The Interim Community Services Manager advised that the impact referred to long-term void properties only which were due to be removed from the system for recording purposes. He noted that voids performance in respect of "day-to-day" property voids had improved since the introduction of measures at the start of the calendar year.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce moved the recommendation as set out at paragraph 2 of the report (at page 14).</p> <p>Councillor K J Loydall seconded the recommendation.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The current position(s) be noted by Members.</p>	
24.	<p><u>PROPOSED SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 18 – 30) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Finance and Accountancy Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce commended the sensibility of the Proposed Scale.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendation as set out at paragraph 2 of the report (at page 18).</p>	

	<p>Councillor K J Loydall seconded the recommendation.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The Proposed Scale of Fees and Charges for 2017/18 be considered and recommended to the Policy, Finance and Development Committee.</p>	
25.	<p><u>COMMUNITY SERVICE UPDATE</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 31 - 43) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Community Services Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Interim Community Services Manager added that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The switchover of the call monitoring service to Charnwood Borough Council had been delayed due to issues regarding the reprogramming of equipment. It was said that switchover was scheduled to start on Monday 17 October and would take approximately 2-3 weeks to complete; (ii) Another private-sector empty property of concern was 37 Newton Lane, Wigston. It was said that a rate of 150% Council Tax was being paid on the property and that the owner had been written to, to ascertain his intentions as to the future of the property; (iii) Works to clear the asbestos from the incident at Kenilworth Drive, South Wigston were now complete and awaiting the final completion certificate from the contractor. The Council's Environmental Health Team was said to be shortly undertaking monitoring tests to the individual properties affected; and (iv) The final business case for the Lightbulb Project (LbP) had since been received and was currently being assessed. <p>Councillor Mrs L M Broadley enquired as to whether tenants at William Peardon Court, Wigston (a sheltered accommodation) were required to maintain a telephone phone line to access the warden call monitoring service. She further requested an update regarding the external works at Junction Road, Wigston.</p> <p>The Interim Community Services Manager advised that only tenants in dispersed properties required a phone line and that, although no tenants were known not to have a phone line, measures in respect of tenants who did not would be taken to ensure the installation and maintenance of the same.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the external works at Junction Road were out to tender.</p> <p>Councillor D M Cater enquired as to whether the notice periods in respect of the Notice duly served on the property known as 114 Uplands Road, Oadby had since expired.</p> <p>With reference to the four items served in the Notice as set out at paragraph 3.11 of the report (at page 34), the Interim Community Services Manager advised that items one, two and three had since expired and item four was due to expire imminently.</p>	

	<p>Councillor J W Boyce enquired as to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) whether the boiler system at Chartwell House, Oadby had been repaired; (b) if the Council remained statutorily-responsible for delivering DFG's; (c) if the LbP business case had been assessed as being comprehensive and genuine as a robust service-delivery mechanism. <p>The Member further stated that the LbP could not be progressed until discussions with LCC regarding the distribution of DFG's were satisfactorily concluded.</p> <p>The Interim Community Services Manager advised that the boiler system had been repaired. He advised that North West Leicestershire District Council had sought legal advice upon the matter of the distribution of DFG's which concluded that LCC had acted illegally. The matter was reported to be the subject of a meeting due to be held between the Chief Executives of the Leicestershire Districts and Boroughs. It was said that no opinion had yet been formed on the LbP business case ahead of a meeting with the Interim Finance and Accountancy Manager to review the same.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendations <i>en bloc</i> set out at paragraphs 2.1 to 2.4 of the report (at page 31).</p> <p>Councillor K J Loydall seconded the recommendations.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The contents of the report be noted by Members; (ii) The Homelessness Strategy be adopted; (iii) The Chair of the Committee write to the Minister of State for Housing and Planning requesting the re-introduction of a fair rent scheme for new tenancies in the private sector; and (iv) Officers be given authority to negotiate a new Lease in respect of the telecommunications equipment at Chartwell House, Oadby. 	
26.	<p><u>CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT UPDATE</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 44 - 45) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Community Services Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Interim Community Services Manager added that a separate and further report regarding taxi-licensing enforcement exercises was to be brought before the next meeting of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee to be held on 12 January 2017.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs S Z Haq enquired as to whether any regulatory enforcement action had been taken against the drivers of Leicester City Council licensed vehicles as identified at the enforcement exercise held on 30 September 2016.</p> <p>The Interim Community Services Manager stated that the requested information was not immediately available at the meeting but would be provided to the Member in due course.</p>	

	<p>Councillor J W Boyce enquired as to whether there had been an increase in fly-tipping incidents within the Borough as a result of the itemised-charging at Oadby Waste Site introduced by Leicestershire County Council from May 2016.</p> <p>The Director of Services and Interim Community Services Manager jointly-advised that no increase in fly-tipping incidents in the Borough had been noted.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The contents of the report be noted by Members.</p>	
27.	<p><u>LEISURE SERVICES UPDATE</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 46 - 55) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Health and Leisure Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Interim Health and Leisure Manager added that the combination alone of the smaller areas of land identified would not adequately future-proof the provision of car-parking at Brocks Hill Country Park (BHCP) / Parklands Leisure Centre (PLC). Although it was acknowledged that the open space at Wigston Road, Oadby was not Members' preferred proposal for consideration, the inclusion of this area was said to be sufficient to address any future-proofing concerns. The Interim Health and Leisure Manager further cited the promotion of increased participation in fitness and exercise activities by Borough residents under the Health and Wellbeing Board's strategy.</p> <p>The Interim Health and Leisure Manager further announced that Oadby and Wigston had secured a 'Gold Award' in the 'Small City' category in the 2016 East Midlands in Bloom (EMiB) competition.</p> <p>In respect of increasing car-parking capacity, the Chair stated that the adoption of any given area(s) would require the necessary planning permission and was to be given detailed consideration at that latter stage. With reference to the land left of Washbrook Lane (area 4 of Appendix A) he advocated the use of grasscrete to maintain the visual amenity of green space leading upto BHCP and PLC.</p> <p>With reference to Appendix A (at page 55), Councillor J W Boyce commended the adoption of areas 2, 3 and 5 for car parking provision. The Member shared the concern that the adoption of these areas alone would not future-proof the site. Areas 1 and 4 were noted for their respective green and spatial amenity value to the site.</p> <p>Councillor D M Carter stated that a longer term strategy was required and expressed reservations in developing area 4 for the reasons aforementioned by Councillor J W Boyce. He further enquired as to why there was a substantial cost differential between the quotes received between areas 1 and 3 per car space provided.</p> <p>The Interim Health and Leisure Manager advised that all quotes obtained were approximate estimates: most notably, it was said that area 1 required</p>	

	<p>more extensive works to be completed due to drainage systems being in situ on the area identified.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs L M Broadley stated that the inclusion of the open space at Wigston Road, in conjunction with improved vehicular and pedestrian entrance/exit arrangements, would adequately future-proof the site.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce warned that the open space in question may form part of Oadby's green wedge and therefore potentially undevelopable. He requested that further advice had been sought from Planning Policy and Control as to the feasibility of developing the open space.</p> <p>Councillor D M Carter enquired as to whether any alternative and sustainable travel plans for service-users to and from the site had been considered.</p> <p>The Interim Health and Leisure Manager advised such plans (viz. walking, cycling, and public transport) were actively encouraged to challenge a predominate "car-culture" however presented problems to larger user-groups such as families.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs L M Broadley raised a concern as to the lengthy call-handling times by the Borough's leisure facilities contractor Sports and Leisure Management Ltd (SLM).</p> <p>The Interim Health and Leisure Manager advised that SLM had increasingly limited call-handling resources to manage ever-higher call volumes as a result of increased participation. It was said that SLM continued to seek improvements to call-handling capacity and procedures by the better use of back-off personnel, allocating unanswered calls to a call-back facility and encouraging service-users to use self-service facilities (viz. online account, mobile application) to complete many enquires.</p> <p>With reference to a recently well-attended event at BHCP, Councillor Miss A R Bond raised a concern as to the poor highway access arrangements on Wigston Road, Oadby (B582) impacting on local ward residents. The Member was advised to relay her concern to the Highway Authority at Leicestershire County Council.</p> <p>The Interim Health and Leisure Manager reported that the event in question was an isolated incident and generated an unpredictable level of traffic to and from the site.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce congratulated the securing of the EMiB award.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>(i) The progress in relation to Leisure Services be noted by Members; and (ii) Planning permission be sought for areas 2, 3 and 5 (as set out in Appendix A) as approved additional car-parking provision at Brocks Hill Country Park and Parklands Leisure Centre.</p>	<p>AL AT TB</p>
28.	<p><u>CUSTOMER SERVICE TRANSFORMATION UPDATE</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 56 - 57) as delivered and summarised by the Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p>	

	<p>The Director of Services added that 12 October 2016 marked the Bell Street, Wigston Customer Service Centre's (CSC) first year anniversary.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce noted the high quality of service provision, improved efficiencies and savings provided through the CSC and commended all those involved in realising the marked success of the past year. He reiterated that the CSC project served as an excellent example of the transformational progress that was to be achieved in the years ahead in other service-areas of the Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The contents of the report be noted by Members.</p>	
29.	<p><u>FACILITIES SERVICES UPDATE</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 58 - 61) as delivered and summarised by the Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Director of Services advised Members to note that recommendation 2.2 and paragraph 5.4 of the report (at pages 58 and 60, respectively) were to read '<i>...a maximum of two per applicant...</i>' as opposed to '<i>...a maximum of two per family...</i>'.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce stated that the objective behind the proposed policy change to restrict the number of burial and cremation plots sought to address whether it was reasonable for applicants to purchase plots in bulk. The Member raised a concern as to restricting plots to two per applicant <i>vis-a-vis</i> address, opining that an alternative solution was needed and a long-term decision should be taken in consultation with residents first. He emphasised that all parts of the Borough ought to be treated fairly.</p> <p>Councillor D M Cater enquired as to whether the same policy pertaining to Oadby Cemetery could be extended to Wigston Cemetery. He stated that increasing the price of plots above the RPI (at 1.9%) may cause speculative buying of the plots.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the circumstances at Wigston Cemetery (in respect of burial capacity) were materially different to that at Oadby Cemetery and therefore the same policies could not be applied. He suggested that the recommendation be piloted and for the policy change to be subsequently reviewed by the Committee in 12 months.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendations <i>en bloc</i> set out at paragraphs 2.1 to 2.2 of the report (at page 58).</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce seconded the recommendations.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The information within the report be noted by Members; and (ii) The number of grave spaces that can be purchased in advance at Wigston Cemetery be restricted to a maximum of two per applicant for both burial and cremation plots. 	MS

	Votes For	10	
	Votes Against	1	
	Abstentions	0	

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.52 pm



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CHAIR

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TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2017
