

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE  
COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY, 20 MARCH 2018  
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

**PRESENT**

Councillor G A Boulter (Chair)  
Councillor F S Broadley (Vice Chair)

**COUNCILLORS**

L A Bentley  
Miss A R Bond  
J W Boyce  
D M Carter  
R F Eaton  
Mrs L Eaton JP  
K J Loydall JP  
R H Thakor

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

S J Ball (Senior Democratic Services Officer / Legal Officer)  
D M Gill (Head of Law & Governance / Monitoring Officer)  
M Hone (Interim Director of Services)  
A Thorpe (Head of Planning, Development and Regeneration)

**51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillors E R Barr, Mrs L M Broadley, Miss M V Chamberlain and Mrs S Z Haq.

**52. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES**

None.

**53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor K J Loydall declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 11 insofar as he was a member of the Oadby and Wigston Lions Club, an organisation named as being a co-sponsor of the 'Message in a Bottle' campaign (at para. 3.1 at page 74).

**54. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2018**

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

**The minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 23 January 2018 to be taken as read, confirmed and signed.**

**55. ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2018**

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

## **The Action List be noted by Members.**

### **56. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS**

None.

### **57. COMMUNITY SERVICES UPDATE**

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 11 - 54) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

#### **Current and Former Tenant Arrears**

It was raised by the Committee and advised upon by Officers that plans were in place to consolidate the Council's four debt recovery officers, currently assigned to different service-areas, and including the officer responsible for the collection of tenant arrears, into a single team. This restructure was said to hopefully provide additional income, result in less debt being written-off and build resilience. It was also noted by Members that a cost benefit analysis ought to be carried out in order to balance the sum of any given debt owed against the costs incurred in its recovery.

#### **Housing Allocations Policy**

It was raised by the Committee and advised upon by Officers that the proposed clarification of part-time work of less than 16 hours a week as not being sufficiently meaningful to create a "local connection" for the purposes of appearing on the Housing Register was a benchmark of reasonable in-work activity emphasising that residency within the Borough remained crucial to "qualifying persons" status.

It was requested by Members that evidence be gathered on the 16-hour limit by monitoring the numbers of persons who presented themselves under this criterion.

#### **Council's Tenancy Agreement**

In respect of the Council's draft Tenancy Agreement (TA) at Appendix 1, Members made a number of comments regarding: the lack of narrative detailing the approach to be taken against breaches of garden maintenance (at para. 10.1 at page 26); the prescriptive nature as to the number of animals to be kept (at para. 14.1 at page 27); and the use of legalese to describe the serving of notices (at para. 19.1 at page 30).

Accordingly, the Committee was advised that: any obligation contained in the TA that was broken or not performed by the tenant(s) were grounds on which the court may order possession; consent would not be unreasonably withheld if permission to keep more animals than that prescribed was sought; and it was necessary to exhaustively set out the legal requirements for what amounted to the effective service of notices. As a whole, assurances were given that the TA was to be applied pragmatically.

#### **Capital Programme Update 2017/18**

For clarification, it was raised by the Committee and accepted by Officers that, contrary to what was stated in Appendix 2, planning permission had not yet been obtained for the HRA Capital Project at 14 Junction Road, Wigston (at page 33).

#### **Disabled Facility Grants and the Lightbulb Project**

Whilst it was acknowledged by the Committee that this Council remained statutorily-responsible for the delivery of adaptions to homes through Disabled Facility Grants (DFG's), Members raised serious concerns regarding the implications arising from and between the Council's statutory duty, the integration of the Better Care Fund (BCF) and the Leicestershire-wide provision of DFG's by the Lightbulb Project (LbP).

In summary, it was mentioned that the Council's exposure to risk was significant should there be inconsistencies in performance across the Districts and Boroughs or widespread service-failure on the part of the LbP. There was also little explanation regarding the ring-fencing of allocations and, in particular, if there were any under or overspends across the County, whether the redistribution of allocations was legally-permissible. In view of these concerns, Members were of the opinion that robust overview, scrutiny and monitoring arrangements were essential to mitigate the risks.

The Committee was advised that whilst the objective behind participation in the LbP was to secure better value for money from the perspective of the Council's client-role, a commensurate need for the LbP to demonstrate good and sufficient governance was justified. It was emphasised that every effort would be made to ensure that the Borough's full DFG allocation was to be spent, and spent within the Borough, so as not to jeopardise future funding cuts and that, as the LbP was a separate entity, if cuts to grants were made, the LbP would need to revise its business plan accordingly.

It was requested that a further report be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee addressing Members' aforementioned concerns. As such, the report was to include, but not be limited to, information regarding the LbP's responsibilities, liabilities, decision-making capacity and ability to be held accountable, in addition to a comparative, year-on-year analysis of this Council's DFG allocation and spend.

The Committee also requested that a representative of the LbP be in attendance at the next meeting so to answer any further questions Members may have.

### **Borough Wide Cleaning Contract**

The Committee was advised that the Cleaning Contract did not feature on this meeting's agenda due to an ongoing audit review into its letting and monitoring currently being undertaken by the Council's Internal Auditors. It was reported that audit's findings would be reported to a subsequent meeting of the Policy, Finance and Development Committee as per the usual Internal Audit reporting process.

It was noted that complaints were still being received regarding the substandard quality of cleanliness being delivered under the Cleaning Contract.

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor J W Boyce and

### **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

- (i) **The contents of the report be noted, however subject to serious concerns being raised by Members regarding the governance of the Lightbulb Project and the implications thereof upon the Council;**
- (ii) **The clarification to the Housing Allocations Policy (at paragraph 3.11 of the report) providing Officers with a clearer working definition when dealing with housing applicants not relying on residence criteria be approved; and**
- (iii) **The process for updating and the amendment of the Council's Tenancy Agreement (as set out at paragraph 3.4. of the report) be approved.**

**58.**

## **SECTION 106 OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION CONTRIBUTIONS**

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendix (at pages 55 - 63) as delivered and summarised by the Head of Planning, Development and Regeneration which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

Whilst the Committee commended the up-to-date list as a sound forward-planning resource to be oft-used by planners and the mechanism to identify infrastructure requirements and funding, it was recommended that more Member input was required at the early negotiation stages of section 106 agreements in order to benefit from Members' intimate knowledge of infrastructure requirements in their wards.

The Committee was advised that further Member involvement would be built-in to develop existing processes, emphasising that Members were invited at any time to suggest adding/removing projects to/from the list and providing that any suggestion satisfies the rules as set out at paragraph 4.2 of the report (at page 56). It was reported that an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, as part of the Council's emerging Local Plan, was expedient when taking into account future development in the Borough.

Councillor Miss A R Bond requested that an update be provided to her outside the meeting regarding the provision on new play equipment at Ellis Park in Oadby.

It was moved by Councillor L A Bentley, seconded by the Chair and

### **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

- (i) **The list of potential open space, sport and recreation infrastructure requirements (as set out at Appendix A) be approved; and**
- (ii) **Members note that projects will be progressed in line with Council's Capital Programme process.**

**59.**

## **ADULT FITNESS EQUIPMENT AT UPLANDS PARK, OADBY**

The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 64 - 65) as delivered and summarised by the Head of Planning, Development and Regeneration which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor J W Boyce and

### **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

**A capital budget of up to £20,000 to install new adult fitness equipment at Uplands Park in Oadby be approved.**

**60.**

## **LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL: 'EARLY HELP' SERVICES REVIEW**

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendix (at pages 66 - 73) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

It was the opinion of most Members that the proposals put forward by Leicestershire County Council were a foregone conclusion and there was little, if any, consequence in consulting on the same. The Committee noted its opposition to the proposals.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

**RESOLVED THAT:**

- (i) **The proposals contained in the consultation document (as set out in the Appendix) be considered; and**
- (ii) **Guidance to allow the Interim Director of Services to draft a response to Leicestershire County Council, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and the Community Safety and Youth Coordinator, be provided.**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Votes For</b>     | 8 |
| <b>Votes Against</b> | 1 |
| <b>Abstentions</b>   | 1 |

**61. LEISURE SERVICES UPDATE**

The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 74 - 81) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

The Committee was advised that the recent developments at Parklands Leisure Centre (PLC) and Brocks Hill (BH), Oadby were unique in Leicestershire attracting more visitors and therefore generating additional revenue for Council under the profit-share arrangements with its leisure services provider, Sports and Leisure Management, which currently were not yet build-in nor reflected in existing budgets.

Members commended the developments at PLC and BH and recognised the pre-emptive need to support and accommodate sustained growth into the future.

It was requested that an update be provided to the next meeting of the Committee regarding the profit-share and additional revenue generated from PLC and BH and the funding bid submitted to the County Sport and Physical Activity Commission Group.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

- (i) **The contents of the report be noted by Members; and**
- (ii) **The range of opportunities available be endorsed and promoted by Members to the wider audience.**

**62. FACILITIES SERVICES UPDATE**

The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 82 - 86) as delivered and summarised by the Head of Planning, Development and Regeneration which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

The Committee commended the progress made towards the installation of the footbridge at Ervins Lock, South Wigston and anticipated its completion to timetable.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

**The contents of the report be noted by Members.**

**63.**

## **GREENING OF THE BOROUGH AND OPERATIONAL SERVICES UPDATE**

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 87 - 91) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

The Committee commended the various project outlined in the report and recognised the contribution of, and investment in, volunteers and the role of the wider community in achieving the successful outcomes of the Greening the Borough Initiative. Members were hopeful of maintaining the positive momentum and the taking of steps to recruit new and younger volunteers to sustain future achievement.

It was agreed that a joined-up campaign between volunteers, the Community Safety Partnership and the Council via the enactment of the recently approved Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for the Regulation of Dogs would be undertaken in order to promote responsible dog ownership in view of dog fouling at Brocks Hill County Park. This was to include the circulation of free "dog bags" and education on the PSPO.

The Committee was advised that the final stages of the PSPO's implementation required the erection of new signage in all the parks and open spaces across the Borough and publicisation of the PSPO. This was said to be actively underway and should be completed by the next quarter. An enactment date was to be confirmed.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

### **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

- (iii) The contents of the report be noted by Members; and**
- (iv) The range of opportunities available be endorsed and promoted by Members to the wider audience.**

**64.**

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 87 - 91) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Director of Services which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

### **Garden Waste Service Update**

The Committee was verbally updated regarding the most up-to-date uptake to the Garden Waste Service to be effective from the 1 April. It was reported that up to and including 19 March, 6,073 households had subscribed to the service totalling an annual income of £223,215 of which included £10,600 from additional bin requests.

It was noted that the anticipated 40% participation rate was to be meet and the income generated thus far was close to bridging the £250k funding gap identified, with final projected income to be over and above £500k. It was confirmed that if uptake did reach the 66% average achieved across the East Midlands, adequate service provision was in place in order to accommodate such increased demand.

Whilst the Committee accepted that the current payments methods accepted to subscribe to the service reflected modern business efficiency, concerns were raised regarding customers' inability to pay by cash or cheque. Members felt that given the need to maximise uptake, this did not make business or financial sense but rather disenfranchised potential customers. Similarly, Members believed that the hardship scheme based on the

receipt of Discretionary Council Tax Support was too limited.

It was therefore requested that a cash payment facility (possibly via a third party) be brought forward as an interim solution and that an alternative set of means-based criteria to determine discretionary relief be further investigated.

### **Recycling**

Members were confident that the new recycling bags effective from the 1 April had been appropriately risk-assessed in terms adequately accommodating glassware. It was also emphasised that residents ought to be made aware to take reasonable care as responsible "waste producers" to discard glassware in a safe and sensible manner.

It was requested that all Members be informed weekly as to any reported issues.

It was raised by the Committee and advised upon by Officers that this Council had no control over the destination/end-point for recycled waste as this was a contractual arrangement determined between Casepak and Leicestershire County Council as the responsible waste disposal authority.

### **'My Account' and Online Forms (Channel Shift)**

The Committee reiterated the need for future reports to include more details on, and to specifically identify the improvements made by, channel shift projects, most notably in terms of savings and service-delivery reflected in the report's implications.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

### **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

**The contents of the report be noted by Members.**

### **65. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

### **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:**

**The press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (Exempt Information) during consideration of the item(s) below on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph(s) 1, 2 and 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exempt item(s) outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.**

### **66. ASBESTOS CONTAMINATION AT MARSTOWN AVENUE, SOUTH WIGSTON (VERBAL UPDATE)**

The Committee gave consideration to exempt verbal update as delivered by the Head of Law & Governance / Monitoring Officer in closed session.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was:

### **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT**

**The exempt verbal update be noted by Members.**

**THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.55 PM**



**Chair**

**Tuesday, 10 July 2018**

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