

Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee

Minutes

Thursday, 24 January 2019 at 18:30

PRESENT:

Councillor Grant (in the Chair); Councillors Bird, Flaxman-Taylor, Hacon, Hammond, Martin, Smith-Clare, Wainwright & Williamson.

Councillor P Carpenter attended as a substitute for Councillor G Carpenter.

Councillor Robinson-Payne attended as a substitute for Councillor C Walker.

Councillor Jeal attended the meeting as an observer.

Mr N Shaw (Strategic Director), Ms K Sly (Finance Director & Section 151 Officer), Ms D Lee (HRA Service Accountant), Mrs J Beck (Head of Property & Asset Management), Mr D Hastings (Community Development Manager) & Mrs C Webb (Senior Member Services Officer).

Mr R Oliver (GY Norse).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Carpenter, C Walker & Drewitt.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman, Councillor Grant, declared a personal interest in item 11, GYN Liaison Board minutes, as he was a director of GY Norse. Councillors P Carpenter, Flaxman-Taylor, Hacon & Robinson-Payne declared a personal interest in item 7, Community & Voluntary Sector Grants as they were members of the Grants Panel. However, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, they were allowed to both speak and vote on the matter.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2018 were confirmed.

4 MATTERS ARISING

The Strategic Director reported that with regard to minute 8, GYBC Sports and Activity Survey, the survey results containing demographic information for the sports survey would be sent out via e-mail to all Members after the meeting for information.

5 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received & considered the Forward Plan.

Members were concerned that the item regarding Period Poverty did not yet have an assigned Committee date as they felt that this was a matter of urgency. The Strategic Director reported that this would be considered at the next meeting in February and the Forward Plan would be amended accordingly.

6 HRA REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2019-20

The Committee received and considered the report from the HRA Service

Accountant.

The HRA Service Accountant reported the salient areas of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget 2019-20 to 2023-24, HRA capital Programme 2019-20 to 2023-24, HRA Rent & Service Charge proposal 2019-20 and the revised HRA Revenue and Capital Forecasts for 2018-19.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee agree & recommend to Full Council the following:-

(i) To note the reduction in rents of 1%, as set out in the Welfare Reform & Work Act 2016,

(ii) To review and recommend the Revenue Budget for 2019-20 together with the forecast projections for the period up to 2023-2024,

(iii) To review and recommend the Capital Budget for the period 2019-20 to 2023-24,

(iv) To recommend the proposed Rent Service Charges for 2019-20; and

(v) To review the revised forecast for 2018-19.

7 COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS

The Committee received and considered the report from the Strategic Director & Community Development Manager.

The Strategic Director reported that after discussing the report with the Monitoring Officer and adhering to advice as laid out in the Local Government Act 1972, it was decided that the report should be open to the public and not be marked confidential. Members were unhappy with this decision as the recommendations from the Grants Panel had been published in the Great Yarmouth Mercury and if the Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee did not approve these recommendations, this could cause difficulties for both Members and the charities alike.

Members raised concerns that the charities should have been informed of the Committee's decision following this meeting and not via the press prior to the meeting. The Strategic Director reported that the Council had to adhere to Government policy to ensure that they were legally compliant.

A Member was concerned as the information contained in the report could be commercially sensitive to the charities concerned. The Strategic Director reiterated that this might be the case but as it was not for the Council, it had to be published as an open report.

The Chairman suggested that the Monitoring Officer should attend a future meeting and give a briefing on the Local Government Act 1972 and confidential reports.

RESOLVED:-

(i) That the Grants Panel recommend that Members approve the following Community & Voluntary Sector Grants for 2019/20:-

First Move Furnishaid	£19,000
Gyros	£17,000
Citizens Advice Bureau	£19,750
DIAL	£19,750
Homestart	£19,000
Foodbank Plus	£ 5,000

(ii) That the Committee recommends this proposal for consideration as part of the Council's 2019/20 Revenue Budget to be approved by Full Council.

8 LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES WEST ROAD & HARBORD CRESCENT

The Committee received and considered the report from the Head of Property & Asset Management.

The Head of Property and Asset Management reported the salient details of the tender returns in relation to long term void properties in West Road, Caister and Harbord Crescent, Great Yarmouth.

The Head of Property & Asset Management reported that the quotes for both properties had come in over budget and had therefore come back to Committee.

A Member was concerned that the property at Harbord Crescent would be turned from a three bedroom to a two bedroom property which would be out of keeping with the remaining homes in the area and result in loss of rental income. Members requested that a quote be obtained from the builder who had submitted the original tender for a quote to refurbish the existing downstairs bathroom and retain the three upstairs bedrooms. The GY Norse Manager reported that the approach to refurbishing 54 Harbord Crescent had been driven by the issue of viability and an upstairs bathroom was more desirable for tenants.

The Strategic Director reported that this would have to be clarified and adhere to our procurement process and if this was achievable, that delegated authority be given to the Chairman

RESOLVED:-

(i) To consider the needs analysis for both two and three bedroom properties within the area of 57 Harbord Crescent, Great Yarmouth, to obtain a quotation from the successful tender for works to refurbish as a three bedroom property rather than conversion and then refer to the Chairman of Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee for consideration and approval of the best option.

(ii) To approve the works to 17 West Road, Caister-on-Sea as per the tender received for £59,869.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was no other business of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

10 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

The Committee moved the following resolution:-

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act."

11 GYN LIAISON BOARD MINUTES

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

The meeting ended at: 19:15