

Minutes

Community, Health and Housing Committee Monday, 5th March, 2018

Attendance

Cllr Hossack (Chair)	Cllr Mrs Hubbard
Cllr Poppy (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Ms Rowlands
Cllr Clarke	Cllr Ms Sanders
Cllr Cloke	Cllr Wiles
Cllr Mrs Davies	

Apologies

Substitute Present

Also Present

Cllr Kerlake
Cllr Mrs Pound
Cllr Bridge

Officers Present

Kim Anderson	-	Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager
Stuart Anderson	-	Deputy Operations Manager
Claire Mayhew	-	Corporate and Democratic Services Manager
Stuart Morris	-	Housing Options Team Leader
Angela Abbott	-	Interim Head of Housing
Elaine Higgins	-	Principal Environmental Health Officer
Nicola Marsh	-	Housing Manager
Tracey Lilley	-	Enforcement Manager
Lorne Spicer	-	Business Development and PR Manager

284. Apologies for Absence

No apologies had been received.

285. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2017 were approved as a true record.

286. Verbal Update

KPI's Housing

Mrs Marsh gave the Members of the committee a summary of the Housing KIP's.

Rent collections

Rent collection has increased since Quarter 2. Housing Officer have embarked on a numerous arrears campaigns throughout Quarter 3. The appointment of 2 assistance income officers who will focus on lower level arrears to prevent them increasing.

Average re-let time

There has been an increase since Quarter 2, this is due to the new Asbestos Management regime which has been introduced. This adds a minimum of 2 days onto the voids turnaround time plus any additional dates if asbestos is present.

Sheltered Housing re-let have seen a large increase in turnaround times due to a number of less desirable properties being re-let after a long period of time.

Customer Satisfaction

Repairs satisfaction is being monitored closely as there are peaks and drops in the ongoing performances. Issues seem to lie with first time fix.

Urgent repairs

Slight decreases on Quarter 2 from Wates. Officers are working with the contractor to ensure they are delivering 99% target. Closely monitored to make sure the improvements continue.

Oakray continue to deliver Urgent repairs above target. This will be monitored to ensure the performance continues.

Appointments Kept

A sighting decrease on Quarter 3 has been address in progress meetings, this will be monitored.

KPI's Empty Homes

An update on the Empty Homes KPIs was presented to Members and this will continue to be monitored.

Whittington Road – Garage Site update

There had been some delays in progress on this development due to cost issues that have been resolved. A number of further surveys are required to support the planning application which have now been approved for progress.

A meeting was arranged with the architects for later that week to agree timescales for the planning submission. We are anticipating that the planning application will be submitted fairly soon.

Community Safety Team – Anti-Social Behaviour Officer

With the support of Housing Services, a housing officer has been seconded to the Community Safety team to perform the role of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Officer for a six-month period. The purpose was to improve the Council's response to ASB and release remaining housing officers to focus on rent arrears and tenancy management issues whilst improving the service to our residents and improving our case management in relation to ASB cases.

The secondment came into effect from 8th January 2018 and there has been fantastic achievements to date in the first month of the secondment. The highlights are:

- 18 cases dealt with since January 2018.
- A Notice Seeking Possession (NSP) has been served on an address following the execution of a Warrant by Essex Police.
- An NSP has been served and an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) signed by tenant regarding his behaviour. No further complaints have been received in relation to the address.
- Two ABCs signed by residents in relation to a neighbour dispute.
- Injunction obtained with Power of Arrest and Power of Entry against an individual who has been causing serious nuisance to tenants where he was residing with a vulnerable tenant. In addition, the tenant has been safeguarded and a management move is being arranged to provide further safeguards.
- Safeguarding visit made to a vulnerable tenant in partnership with Essex County Fire & Rescue Service. Action plan drafted, and referrals made to appropriate agencies.
- Strategy meeting attended to safeguard a young person and place them on Child Protection Register.

287. Variation of the agenda

The Chair **MOVED** that item 12 - Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order be considered before item 4.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

288. Town Centre Public Space Protection Order

Following a series of complaints and incidents in and around Brentwood town centre involving anti-social behaviour of several types, the Corporate Enforcement Team had investigated the use of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to assist in controlling activities that are causing concern.

A draft Order had been produced to address evidenced issues in the town centre following liaison with Essex Police, legal advisers and stakeholders in the area proposed to be covered by the Order.

The draft Order covers the main Brentwood town centre area including the High Street and surrounding areas and incorporating roads down to Brentwood rail station.

A summary outline of the report was given to Members by Ms Lilley.

Members of the Committee asked whether other areas around the borough could be considered under an Order.

The Chair, advised Members to endorse the High Street Order first before looking at outlining areas.

Members thanked Ms Lilley and her team for all the work carried out

Vice Chair of Environment and Enforcement, Cllr Bridge was resent praised the team for the recent work undertaken in the Ingatestone Ward.

Cllr Hubbard asked for the apparent signage be displayed, so that people are aware of the Order being in place.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

- 1. That Members authorise officers to undertake a public consultation on the proposed draft Public Spaces Protection Order and to report back to a future meeting to consider the results of the formal consultation and to determine whether to implement the Order in the Borough.**

Reasons for Recommendation

To effectively address issues of anti-social behaviour in and around Brentwood Town Centre and reduce the fear of crime. To enable the use of fixed penalties to deal with problems covered by the Order in the area onto Council and Parish Council land in the Borough and to reduce the impact of additional expenditure, particularly on-site clearance.

(Cllr Clarke declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of being a retailer within the area of the Public Spaces Protection Order).

289. Health & Wellbeing Workplan

The report updated Members on the health and wellbeing workplan for Brentwood.

Members of the Committee thanked Ms Higgins for her hard work.

Cllr Poppy, expressed his concerns on the small grant issued to the Dementia Action Alliance and asked if this could be reviewed.

Cllr Mrs Hubbard suggested that voluntary groups dealing with people recovery from addiction could get involved through a rehabilitation programme. Ms Higgins to discuss with Cllr Hubbard going forward.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

1. That the progress with the health and wellbeing workplan be noted.

Reasons for Recommendation

At the Community, Health and Housing Committee of 18 September 2017, it was agreed that an update to the workplan be brought to the Committee every six months.

290. Leisure Strategy

The Leisure Strategy is one of the key strategies as set out in the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19 document. The Council has ageing facilities and needs to ensure that its leisure facilities are not only fit for purpose now but for the future. The Strategy and action plan sets out the vision, what the Council needs to achieve, the challenges it faces and how the priorities and outcomes have been identified. The Leisure Strategy is a large piece of work, so it has been split into workstreams to enable its delivery. The Strategy will cover a period of 10 years, but the supporting action plan will be a live document which will be reviewed and updated regularly to note the progress on the delivery of the Strategy.

A presentation to Members was given by Mrs Anderson.

Members thanked Mrs Anderson for the work carried out.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendations in the report, subject to an additional recommendation to state: -

- 2.3. *That the final Leisure Strategy will brought back to the relative committee for approval after consultation.*

After a full discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED.**

1. **That Members agree to the draft Leisure Strategy and action plan.**
2. **That Members refer the draft Leisure Strategy to Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 12 March 2018 for their approval.**
3. **That the final Leisure Strategy will brought back to the relative committee for approval after consultation.**
4. **Subject to approval at Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 12 March 2018 and the required resources and budgets being agreed that delegation is given to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of Community Health and Housing Committee to appoint a Leisure Development Partner to develop a business case for the improvements to King George's Playing Fields.**

Reasons for the Recommendation

As part of the Council's due diligence in delivering a successful Leisure Strategy, Members and officers need to have a complete picture of the current associated costs, risk profiles of the Borough's Leisure facilities and identify opportunities for income generation.

Comments received from Sport England as part of the Local Development Plan consultation, stated that a Leisure Strategy is required that assesses Council owned sports and leisure facilities in order that the Council can continue to work with partners to ensure that appropriate provision is made for the residents of Brentwood. The strategy should not only consider how the Council can provide services, but also how other partners can. The strategy should also use current sports facility evidence to identify strategic priorities to then inform what will be included in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Following this feasibility work, the Council will then be able to determine which projects will be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and those funded by planning obligations.

The Council's Asset Management Strategy 2014/15 also sets out the need to obtain maximise income where possible from its asset portfolio.

(Cllr Ms Rowlands declared a pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of her position as a Trustee for Brentwood Leisure Trust, therefore Cllr Rowlands did not take part in the debate or vote. Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue for his position on being Council Representative on Brentwood Rugby Club and Hartswood Golf Course, both situated at King George's Playing Fields).

291. Warley Playing Fields

As part of the emerging Leisure Strategy a phased approach has been agreed for any work streams identified as part of it. One of these streams is to investigate opportunities at King George's Playing Fields and Warley Playing Fields.

As part of the work around Warley Playing Fields it has been identified that the play area is in need of refurbishment following the removal of a number of items of equipment.

At the 4th December 2017 Community and Housing Committee Members agreed to authorise Officers initiate a refurbishment of the play area at Warley Playing Fields.

A procurement exercise has been concluded and the winning submission is before Members for endorsement so that Officers may proceed with awarding the contract and initiate works.

Mr Anderson presented a summary of the report to Members.

Members thanks Mr Anderson for all the hard work and the speedy delivery of the project.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

1. **Members approve the HAGS SMP refurbishment scheme for Warley Playing Fields as the preferred option and authorise Officers to initiate the refurbishment of the existing play area at Warley Playing Fields pending outcome of Chairs meeting with supplier.**
2. **Members approve remaining monies from the S106 funds to be proportioned towards the provision of any outdoor gym[s].**

Reasons for the Recommendation

To allow for the refurbishment of a degraded and aged play facility at Warley Playing Fields.

To ensure a safe and engaging facility is provided for the expanding local community.

To support the emerging Leisure Strategy ensuring that a pragmatic and proactive approach is taken with regard to leisure facilities in the Borough and

that these facilities are to a high standard and appeal to all members and groups of the community.

292. Larkins Playing Fields

The report considers a request by Brentwood Youth AFC to provide the club with long term tenure at Larkin's Playing Fields, subject to the relevant planning permission being granted and subject to contract with Brentwood Borough Council. In order that Brentwood Youth AFC can secure external funding to improve facilities at Larkin's Plying Fields, external funders such as the Football Association require a commitment from the landowner (Brentwood Borough Council) that will support their improvement plans and provide the club with long-term tenure at Larkin's Playing Fields. It is proposed that the attached letter of intent will be sufficient evidence of the Council's commitment to support improvement to the whole site. As this relates to one of the Council's Assets it is recommended that the report is also referred to Policy, Projects and Resources Committee for their consideration.

A summary outline of the report was given to Members by Mrs Anderson.

Cllr Mrs Davies, requested that parking and the use of the open space still be accessible to the general public.

Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Mrs Vicky Davies **SECONDED** the recommendations and following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

- 1. That Members agree to the proposed letter of intent to Brentwood Youth AFC.**
- 2. This report is referred to the Council's Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 12 March for their consideration.**

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council's Draft Leisure Strategy was also before Members tonight and some of the key recommendations within the Strategy is the improvement to leisure facilities across the Borough and working in partnership to deliver the expected outcomes from the Strategy. Comments received from Sport England as part of the Local Development Plan consultation, stated that a Leisure Strategy is required that assesses Council owned sports and leisure facilities in order that the Council can continue to work with partners to ensure that appropriate provision is made for the residents of Brentwood. The strategy should not only consider how the Council can provide services, but also how other partners can. The strategy should also use current sports facility evidence to identify strategic priorities to then inform what will be

included in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Following this feasibility work, the Council will then be able to determine which projects will be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and those funded by planning obligations.

The Council's Asset Management Strategy 2014/15 also sets out the need to obtain maximise income where possible from its asset portfolio.

293. Housing Audit Update

This report is intended to update the Community, Health & Housing Committee of the outcome of the 2016/17 and 2017/18 Audit review for Housing Services as part of the Council's approved Audit plans for 2016/17.

The outcome of the 2016/17 internal audit review was reported to the Audit Committee on the 27th September 2017 (Appendix A).

The outcome of the 2017/18 internal audit review was reported to the Audit Committee on the 14th December 2017 (Appendix B).

Both Audit reports will enable the Housing Service to concentrate on specific areas highlighted by both Audit reports to implement the essential service improvements as part of the ongoing transformation programme.

The vice-chair noticed that the date of the Audit Committee stated in 1.3 of the report was incorrect. The date of the meeting was 24th January 2019 this is pointed out to the clerk.

Following a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Poppy **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

1. That the Committee receives and notes the progress made in addressing the contents of both Audit reports.
2. That the Committee agree that a further report on progress made on implementing the recommendations is presented to the next Committee.

Reasons for Recommendation

To monitor the progress of work against the highlighted actions recommended arising from the Audit Report and management actions in response to those recommendations.

(Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of his spouse being a Council Tenant. Guidance was given by the Monitoring Officer who advises that specifically in relation to items

8,9,10 & 11, that although these generally relate to Housing, the general content of the reports is such that a conflict shall not arise and that I therefore may still stay and debate and vote on these items).

294. Estate Management Strategy

This report sets out the background and recommendation to adopt a formal written Estates Management Strategy ('the Strategy'). The Strategy will allow for a more focussed and transparent approach to service provision.

The Council does not currently have a written and published Strategy and the 2018 internal audit highlighted this as an area for improvement to move towards substantial assurance.

The introduction and implementation of the Strategy will allow for strategic and policy review to ensure efficiency, economy and excellence of service provision as a social landlord.

Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Poppy **SECONDED** the recommendations and following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

1. That the Committee formally approve Option 1 (to implement the draft 'Estates Management Strategy 2018' (Annex A)).

Reasons for Recommendation

Option 1 is recommended as the most transparent option for the Council and supports the 'Getting our House in Order' transformation programme for Housing Services. It also ensures compliancy with audit report recommendations.

Taking no further action will fail to advance corporate priorities and would be counter to our modernisation approach.

(Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of his spouse being a Council Tenant. Guidance was given by the Monitoring Officer who advises that specifically in relation to items 8,9,10 & 11, that although these generally relate to Housing, the general content of the reports is such that a conflict shall not arise and that I therefore may still stay and debate and vote on these items).

295. Aids and Adaptations Policy

The report sets out proposals for a new Aids and Adaptations Policy to be implemented within the Housing Department.

The Policy provides the Council with the ability to manage adaptations within its Housing Stock to ensure that properties already adapted for disabled needs, are utilised before further adaptations are done.

Members welcomed this report but concerns were raised whether this would pro-long the time taken in which adaptations were made.

Members requested that Brentwood Access Group be consulted and encouraged feedback from Tenant Talkback.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendation to an amendment to state:

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve Option 2 of the new Aid and Adaptions Policy.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Committee is asked to approve Option 2 of the new Aid and Adaptions Policy.

Reasons for Recommendation

Aids and Adaptation requests are becoming more and more commonplace. The numbers being referred and the cost to implement these are mounting.

There has previously been no Policy outlining how the Council intends to manage Aids and Adaptations. This has meant that there has been very limited grounds for the Council to refuse or provide an alternative to the recommendations put forward by the Occupational Therapist.

This Policy will allow the Council to explore alternative options whilst still demonstrating Value for Money as well as meeting the requirements of the Tenant.

(Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of his spouse being a Council Tenant. Guidance was given by the Monitoring Officer who advises that specifically in relation to items 8,9,10 & 11, that although these generally relate to Housing, the general content of the reports is such that a conflict shall not arise and that I therefore may still stay and debate and vote on these items).

296. Termination of Meeting

At 9.00pm in accordance with Rule 10.1 of the Council's procedural rules, Members resolved to continue the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

297. Housing Garage Site Update

At the 5th December 2017 Community, Health & Housing Committee it was resolved unanimously that the Committee authorises Officers to investigate in more detail the following:

- i. Options in relation to the development of the Council's Housing Garage sites including modular housing.
- ii. Options in relation to developing a local assembly plant within the Borough to provide modular housing.

The report provided an update on the options available for the future provision of the Council's Housing Garage Sites following the previous committee.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Cloke to approve the recommendations in the report subject to an additional recommendation to state:

2.4 That this Committee request officers provide clarity as to whether a modular housing project can be progressed at a specified garage site.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

- 1. That the Committee authorises Officers to investigate the options in relation to the development of the Council's Housing Garage sites including the recent progress of a Joint Venture Partnership.**
- 2. That a further report on the options be provided to the next appropriate Community, Health & Housing Committee.**
- 3. That this Committee request officers provide clarity as to whether a modular housing project can be progressed at a specified garage site.**

Reasons for Recommendation

To enable BBC to maintain its responsibilities and fulfil its obligations as a landlord.

A review of all the Council's garage sites will be required to ensure asset management decisions are based on sound information.

It is vital that the Council has up to date information about condition of the HRA stock in order to support its investment decisions each year. The risks in not having this information include the failure to provide adequate resources

to tackle repairs and maintenance that subsequently leads to the need for replacement at a much higher cost.

(Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of his spouse being a Council Tenant. Guidance was given by the Monitoring Officer who advises that specifically in relation to items 8,9,10 & 11, that although these generally relate to Housing, the general content of the reports is such that a conflict shall not arise and that I therefore may still stay and debate and vote on these items).

298. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 9.05pm