

## COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JULY 2013

### REPORT OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

19 June 2013

Present: Councillors Ward (Chairman), Griffiths (Vice-Chairman), Beirne, Bell, Dholakia, Morrall, B Patel, Scarborough, Timms and Waters.

Mr M Kilpin (Principal Planning and Building Control Manager), Mr A Stevenson (Conservation Officer), Mr S Aley (Legal Adviser) and Mrs F Marshall (Democratic Services Officer).

(Councillor Maguire did not attend the meeting).

(Councillor Emerson attended as a speaker).

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**RESOLVED** to note that no apologies for absence were received.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**RESOLVED** to note that in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and rules of procedure, the under-mentioned Councillor declared an interest in the following item:

Councillor	Minute No	Item	Description of Interest
Scarborough	7	Planning Application WP/2013/0189(F)	Other interest - some years ago the applicant carried out works for the Kingsway Centre of which Councillor Scarborough was then Treasurer. Councillor Scarborough had no business or other relationships with the applicant since then.

#### 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2013, be confirmed and signed.

#### 4. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

**RESOLVED** that the annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development, on the applications for planning permission, conservation area consent, building regulation approvals and appeals information, be received.

**5. PLANNING APPLICATION WP/2012/0296(FM) – JOHN PARKINS AND COMPANY LIMITED, 200 DODDINGTON ROAD, WELLINGBOROUGH**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received, on planning application WP/2012/0296(FM), for a residential development of 50 dwellings, landscaping, roads and sewers. All housing association plots – changes to layout and design in response to various consultation responses at John Parkins and Company Limited, 200 Doddington Road, Wellingborough for Mr O Boundy (Metropolitan Housing Trust).

The report detailed the proposal, description of the site, the planning history, relevant planning policies, outcome of consultations and an assessment of the proposal.

The Head of Planning and Local Development recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

The Site Viewing Group visited the site on 18/06/2013, and a record of the visit was set out in the circulated notes.

A request to address the meeting had been received from the developer.

The Chairman allowed the speaker to address the meeting for a maximum of 3 minutes.

Having heard the views of the speaker and taking account of the officer's report, the Chairman invited the committee to determine the application.

Councillor Griffiths was disappointed that Ward Councillors had not been consulted about the plans for the site and had concerns about the over massing on the site. He also had strong reservations of potential flooding in Spur Road and felt more landscaping and green space should be created on the site. Several Councillors reiterated the comments of Councillor Griffiths.

It was moved by Councillor Bell and seconded by Councillor Dholakia that planning permission be deferred and the developer re-submit a more appropriate scheme for the site.

On being put to the vote, the motion was agreed by 8 votes to 2 votes to defer the application.

**RESOLVED** that the planning permission be deferred and the developer re-submit a more appropriate scheme for the site.

**6. PLANNING APPLICATION WP/2012/0482(FM) – LAND ADJACENT TO CORN MILL CLOSE, IRTHLINGBOROUGH ROAD, WELLINGBOROUGH**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received, including late correspondence, on planning application WP/2012/0482(FM), for the construction of 13 dwellings, 6 affordable and 7 private with associated road – amended plans at land adjacent to Corn Mill

Close, Irthlingborough Road, Wellingborough for Mr P Hughes (Mayfair Holdings).

The report detailed the proposal, description of the site, the planning history, relevant planning policies, outcome of consultations and an assessment of the proposal.

The Head of Planning and Local Development recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the negotiation of a Section 106 Agreement for money for highway works and an administration fee and also subject to the conditions set out in the report.

The Site Viewing Group visited the site on 18/06/2013, and a record of the visit was set out in the circulated notes.

Requests to address the meeting had been received from the agent and Councillor Emerson (Ward Councillor).

The Chairman allowed the speaker to address the meeting for a maximum of 3 minutes and the Ward Councillor 5 minutes. The committee was then given the opportunity to ask questions of clarification.

Having heard the views of the speakers and taking account of the officer's report, the Chairman invited the committee to determine the application.

It was proposed by Councillor Morrall and seconded by Councillor Scarborough that the application be approved.

On being put to the vote, this was carried by 9 votes.

**RESOLVED** that the planning application be approved subject to the negotiation of a Section 106 Agreement for money for highway works and an administration fee and also subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
2. Before development commences representative samples of all external facing and roofing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out using the approved materials.
3. Before development commences a scheme for screen fencing/walling shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The approved scheme shall be implemented to the satisfaction of the local planning authority before the houses are first occupied.
4. Before development commences a landscape scheme shall be submitted to local planning authority for approval in writing. The scheme shall be implemented concurrently with the development and shall be completed not later than the first planting season following the substantial completion of the development. Any trees and shrubs removed, dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced by trees and shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted or other species as may be agreed.

5. Before development commences, and in connection with condition no. 4 above, a landscape management plan including management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than domestic gardens, shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.
6. Before development commences details of the permeable hard surfaced areas shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The development shall be carried out in accord with the approved details.
7. No development shall take place within the area indicated before the applicant, their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing.
8. Before any dwelling is occupied the highway improvement works illustrated on plan no. SR.13.05.13 Rev B shall be completed to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.
9. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) the hereby approved dwellings shall not be extended without the express planning permission of the local planning authority.
10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no outbuildings or structures shall be erected in the residential curtilages without the express planning permission of the local planning authority.
11. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no new windows shall be inserted above ground floor level without the express planning permission of the local planning authority.
12. Before the development is first occupied vehicle to vehicle visibility of 2.4m x 43m must be provided and maintained on both sides of the junction of the access road with Irthlingborough Road.
13. The first 5m of driveways and access ways in the rear of the public highway shall be constructed of a hard surfaced permeable material.
14. The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (JPP Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers, reference F-FRA-Q6242PP-01-A, of November 2012). Mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing/phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.
15. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted a remediation strategy to the local planning authority detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with and obtained written approval from the local planning authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

16. Before development commences a scheme for the importation of 500mm of certified clean topsoil shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
17. No development shall commence until details of a scheme, including phasing, for the provision of mains foul water drainage on and off site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No dwellings shall be occupied until the works have been carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reasons:

1. Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. In the interests of visual amenity.
3. In the interests of visual amenity, privacy and security.
4. In the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity.
5. To ensure the long term maintenance of the landscaped areas which are not in the control individual residential units.
6. In the interests of achieving sustainable urban drainage.
7. To ensure the features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 141.
8. In the interests of highway safety.
9. In the interests of preventing overdevelopment of the site and protecting the amenities of the occupiers of the development.
10. In the interests of preventing overdevelopment of the site and protecting the amenities of the occupiers of the development.
11. In the interests of privacy.
12. In the interests of highway safety.
13. To prevent loose material being carried onto the public highway in the interests of highway safety.
14. To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants.
15. To ensure that any unforeseen contamination encountered during development is dealt with in an appropriate manner.  
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution. Government policy also states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is presented (NPPF, paragraph 121).
16. In the interests of protecting human health.
17. To prevent flooding, pollution and detriment to public amenity through provision of suitable water infrastructure. In order to satisfy the above condition an adequate scheme would need to be submitted which demonstrates that there is (or will be prior to occupation) sufficient infrastructure capacity for the connection, conveyance, treatment and disposal of quantity and quality of water within the proposed phasing of development.

**7. PLANNING APPLICATION WP/2013/0189(F) – 5 EDINBURGH ROAD, WELLINGBOROUGH**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received, on planning application WP/2013/0189(F), for the removal of the existing garage and outbuilding and to build a new 3 bedroom, detached residential dwelling with off road parking for 2 vehicles to create new off road parking to 5 Edinburgh Road, Wellingborough for Mrs H Pittams.

The Head of Planning and Local Development recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

The Site Viewing Group visited the site on 18/06/2013, and a record of the visit was set out in the circulated notes.

Requests to address the meeting had been received from an objector and the agent.

The Chairman allowed the speakers to address the meeting for a maximum of 3 minutes. The committee was then given the opportunity to ask questions of clarification.

Having heard the views of the speakers and taking account of the officer's report, the Chairman invited the committee to determine the application.

Councillor Griffiths felt that the proposal would be out of place and did not fit in with the street scene. Councillor Scarborough said if this was approved it could set a dangerous precedent for future applications on this estate.

It was proposed by Councillor Griffiths and seconded by Councillor Scarborough that the planning permission be refused due to street scene, loss of amenity and precedent.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried by 7 votes, with 2 against and 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED** that the planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development by reasons of its position, massing, layout, appearance and scale would detrimentally harm the character and appearance of the area and would not respect and enhance the character of its surroundings. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in conflict with Policy 13 (h) 'General Sustainable Development Principles' of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework [paragraphs 17, 56, 61, 63 and 64].
2. The proposed development by reason of its position, massing, layout, appearance and scale would detrimentally harm the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties in relation to loss of light, loss of privacy and visual outlook being impaired by an oppressive and overbearing structure. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in conflict with Policy 13 (l) 'General Sustainable Development Principles' of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial

Strategy and inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework [paragraphs 17 and 56].

**8. PLANNING APPLICATION WP/2013/0162(F) – LAND AT BOZEAT GRANGE, LONDON ROAD, BOZEAT**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received, including late correspondence, on planning application WP/2013/0162(F), for the siting of a 80m anemometer mast for a temporary period of 2 years on land at Bozeat Grange, London Road, Bozeat for RWE Npower Renewables Limited.

The report detailed the proposal, description of the site, the planning history, relevant planning policies, outcome of consultations and an assessment of the proposal.

The Head of Planning and Local Development recommended that planning permission be approved subject to the condition set out in the report.

A request to address the meeting had been received from the developer.

The Chairman allowed the speaker to address the meeting for a maximum of 3 minutes. The committee was then given the opportunity to ask questions of clarification.

Having heard the views of the speaker and taking account of the officer's report, the Chairman invited the committee to determine the application.

It was proposed by Councillor Waters and seconded by Councillor Morrall that planning permission be granted but at the request of the developer, the expiry date referred to in the condition be changed to 8 July 2015, to take into account the time for the work to be carried out.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED** that planning permission be approved subject to the following condition:

This permission shall expire on 8 July 2015.

Reason:

The development is not appropriate as a permanent feature.

**9. PLANNING APPLICATION WP/2013/0236(C) – REDWELL INFANT SCHOOL, BARNWELL ROAD, WELLINGBOROUGH**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development, was received on planning application WP/2013/0236(C), for the installation of a double mobile classroom at Redwell Infant School, Barnwell Road, Wellingborough for Mrs L Currie (Property Asset Management).

The report detailed the proposal, description of the site, the planning history, relevant planning policies, outcome of consultations and an assessment of the proposal.

The Head of Planning and Local Development recommended that the County Council be advised that no objections be raised to this proposal.

It was proposed by Councillor Morrall and seconded by Councillor Scarborough that the County Council be advised that no objections be raised to this proposal.

**RESOLVED** that no objections be raised to this proposal.

## **10. APPLICATION OUTSIDE THE BOROUGH**

### **1. WP/2013/0206(OB)**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on planning application WP/2013/0206(OB), for the installation of 77m (to tip) 3 blade wind turbine at White Lodge Farm, Kettering Road, Walgrave for Caroline Louise Farms Limited.

The report set out details of the proposal, a description of the site, the planning history, relevant planning policies and an assessment of the proposal.

The Head of Planning and Local Development recommended that the County Council be advised that no objections be raised to this proposal.

It was proposed by Councillor Beirne and seconded by Councillor Morrall that the County Council be advised that no objections be raised to this proposal.

**RESOLVED** that no objections be raised to this proposal.

### **2. WP/2013/0080(C)**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on planning application WP/2013/0080(C), for the expansion of school to form entry, including extension over existing ground floor classroom block resulting in an additional 3 classrooms, DT specialist classroom, toilets and ancillary spaces at Victoria Primary School, Finedon Road, Wellingborough for Northamptonshire County Council.

The report set out details of the proposal, a description of the site, the planning history, relevant planning policies and an assessment of the proposal.

**RESOLVED** to note that this was approved by Northamptonshire County Council on 23/05/2013 subject to the following condition:

The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission. Written notification of the date of commencement shall be sent to the County Planning Authority within seven days of such commencement.



Reason:

To conform with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

### **3. WP/2013/0132(C)**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on planning application WP/2013/0132(C), for a variation of condition 2 to alter the design of the building and condition 12 to allow public and bank holiday working hours on planning permission 11/00088/WAS for the erection of a new building, plant and machinery and installation of a biomass fuelled power plant for 3 and 4 (Larner Pallets), Bevan Close, Wellingborough for Mr D McEwan (Larner Timber Recycling Limited).

The report set out details of the proposal, a description of the site, the planning history, relevant planning policies and an assessment of the proposal.

**RESOLVED** to note that this was approved by Northamptonshire County Council on 23/05/2013 subject to the following condition:

This permission supersedes planning permission 11/00088/WAS.

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before 21 March 2017. Written notification of the date of commencement shall be sent to the Waste Planning Authority within seven days of such commencement.

Reason:

To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

## **11. APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION, BUILDING REGULATION APPROVALS AND APPEALS INFORMATION**

**RESOLVED** that the decisions on applications for planning permission and building regulation approvals determined by the Head of Planning and Local Development in accordance with delegated powers and appeal information as set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Local Development and received appeals, (Minute 4), be noted.

## **12. PLANNING APPEAL DECISION – LAND WEST OF HIGH STREET AND LAND OFF ALFRED STREET, IRCHESTER**

**RESOLVED** to note the annexed circulated decision letter dated 5 June 2013, in respect of 124 dwellings (including affordable homes) and a new medical centre, together with use of additional land for sport and recreation on land west of High Street, Irchester and land off Alfred Street, Irchester, which was dismissed.

On behalf of the committee, the Chairman felt delighted and vindicated in noting the outcome of the appeal. The Vice-Chairman congratulated Chris Stening and all those involved with 'Save Irchester Village' for a well organised campaign. The Council's Officers were also thanked for their help in connection with the appeal.

The meeting concluded at 8:15 pm.

Chairman

**COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JULY 2013**  
**REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

25 June 2013

Present: Councillor J Bailey (Chairman), Councillors Bell, Dholakia, Harrington, Henley and Simmons.

Also present: Mr R Micklewright (Director of Resources), Mr C Pittman (Head of Community and Committee Manager), Mrs L Elliott (Head of Finance), Mr M Watkins (CW Audit Services), Mrs S Knowles (Principal Accountancy Manager) and Miss E Davidson (Democratic Services Officer).

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**RESOLVED** to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bass.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED** to note there were no declarations of interest received in respect of the agenda items specified in accordance with the code of conduct:

**3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2013 be confirmed and signed.

**4. CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13**

The annexed circulated report of the Chief Internal Auditor was received on the work of the internal audit service and provided members with an opinion about the levels of financial control within the authority over the specified period.

Section 3 of the report highlighted three areas where only moderate assurance could be given as to the controls in place: Housing Benefits overpayments recovery; creditor payments; and the ICT partnership with East Northamptonshire Council. Members raised concern over the progress made with ICT disaster recovery, which had been ongoing for a number of years, and asked Mr Watkins to ensure that the matter was looked at again and also Mr Micklewright to raise those concerns at the next ICT board.

**RESOLVED** to note the report as part of the review of internal audit coverage and the internal audit annual opinion for 2012/13.

**5. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2012-13**

The annexed circulated Annual Governance Statement was received by the committee on the review of the council's system of internal control. Section 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 require the council to conduct an annual review and the findings of that review must be considered by the Audit Committee.

The statement provided examples of the council's governance arrangements and had been updated in accordance with guidelines from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

**RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2012-13.

**6. UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2012-13**

The annexed circulated report of the Director of Resources was received on the draft Statement of Accounts to be signed by the Director of Resources by 28 June 2013, and presented to the Audit Committee after completion of the audit in September 2013.

Whilst it was no longer a legal requirement for the committee to approve the draft statement, local policy remained to provide this to members for information purposes ahead of the final statement.

Mrs Elliott updated members on minor adjustments to the apportionment of creditors and debtors in sections 18 and 21 of the draft statement and the correction of a typographical error in the collection fund notes from a deficit to a surplus figure.

A member raised his concern about re-introduction of an asset to the investment property section (14). Mrs Knowles explained that the property had been incorrectly written out in the data cleansing process for 2011-12. The property was listed in a similar way to another asset at the time and was therefore believed to be a duplicate. Work to update the register showed a value for the property, hence its reintroduction. Mrs Elliott confirmed that external auditors were now completely satisfied with the new asset register and its integrity.

In reply to members' questions about why the bad debt provision had increased, Mrs Elliott clarified that tenants of property investment were taking longer to pay in the current climate; therefore debt was older. Mr Micklewright agreed to circulate a breakdown of the bad debt provision to members for further information on this point, as part of a briefing note to respond to other questions raised.

**RESOLVED** to note the content of the unaudited Statement of Accounts 2012-13.

The meeting concluded at 8:00pm.

Chairman

## COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JULY 2013

### REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

15 July 2013

Present: Councillors Morrall (Chairman), B Patel (Vice-Chairman), Ainge, Blackwell, Carr, Emerson, Higgins, M Patel, Simmons, V Waters and Watts.

Also present: Mr T Wright, Director of Services, Mr C Pittman, Head of Community, Mrs V Jessop, Principal Housing Manager, Mr C Culling, Assistant Principal Housing Officer, Ms A Morgan, Housing Development Officer, and Mr A Barron, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor G Lawman attended as an observer.)

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**RESOLVED** to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillor Raymond.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**RESOLVED** to note there were no declarations of interest received in respect of the agenda items specified in accordance with the code of conduct.

#### 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The chairman requested an amendment to the minutes in relation to item 7 – ‘Wellingborough Community Safety Update – Annual Review’. The minutes would record the committee’s request that subsequent Community Safety Update reports would include statistics for the recording of hate crime.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2013 be confirmed and signed.

#### 4. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE WASTE PARTNERSHIP – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

The annexed circulated report of the Director of Services was received to outline the requirement for all member authorities within the Northamptonshire Waste Partnership to enter into a revised Service Level Agreement for dealing with residual municipal waste within the county.

The Director of Services outlined to members that a new contract had commenced on 1 April 2013 and was necessary to continue with the treatment and disposal of residual municipal waste.

Members were satisfied with the report and had no queries in accepting the proposed actions.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (i) approve the Northamptonshire Service Level Agreement relating to Residual Waste
- (ii) authorise the Chairman of the Community Committee to sign the agreement on behalf of the Council.

**5. AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received to inform members of the affordable housing developments that took place between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013.

The Housing Development Officer outlined to members that seventy four affordable homes, across four sites, had recently been completed. A total of ninety one social and affordable rented homes and six shared ownership properties were currently being developed at a further five sites.

Members were informed that halfway through the 2011-2015 funding cycle a total investment of £17,743,381 had been secured for affordable housing in the borough, including over £15 million received from Registered Providers (RP's).

Members expressed concern with pressure on the waiting list for affordable homes. The Principal Housing Manager explained that, following changes to policy agreed by committee, those people already registered were being required to re-register. Members were assured that every attempt had been made to inform those on the register, especially the vulnerable clients, of the changes to the criteria and of the requirement to register again. Members heard that the service was confident that promotional activity for the register would give rise to an increase in the total numbers registered.

Members were informed of measures being taken by officers to increase the availability of shared ownership properties to better meet the needs of the community.

**RESOLVED** to note the delivery of affordable housing developments taking place in the borough from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

## **6. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING POLICY**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received. The report sought approval to consult upon a series of proposed changes to private sector housing policy and to produce a single policy document amalgamating all of the council's individual private sector housing policies.

The report discussed proposed changes such as reducing the maximum Renovation Grant or Loan from £20,000 to £10,000 enabling the completion of a larger number of grants.

A discussion ensued and members were concerned about whether it was appropriate that the option to waive the requirement to repay a grant be delegated to the Head of Finance to expedite the decision and whether Disabled Facilities Grants should be subject to the availability of adequate council financial resources. This was agreed to be considered at the December 2013 Community Committee.

Members requested additions to the policy such as a definition of the Decent Homes Standard and future information such as the total number of private landlords that attend the Landlords' Forum.

Members expressed concern at the amount of private sector properties in the Borough that were estimated to not meet the Decent Homes Standard as recorded in 2010.

### **RESOLVED to:**

- (i) authorise officers to conduct consultation with interested parties in respect of the changes to the Private Sector Housing Policy listed in paragraph 6.1
- (ii) instruct officers to report the results of the consultation to the December 2013 meeting of the Community Committee
- (iii) note the amalgamation of all of the council's individual private sector housing policies into a single document.

## **7. ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT ACTION PLAN**

The annexed report of the Director of Services was received to seek approval for a series of actions to deliver practical help and support to both current and past serving military personnel and their families, in order to deliver upon the commitment by the council to the Northamptonshire Armed Forces 'Community Covenant'.

Members welcomed the report and thanked the Director of Services for his efforts combined with those of other officers across the county who have contributed to the policy. Members enquired about aspects such as expanding on the education and training of ex-service personnel.



Members were concerned to understand how serving and ex-armed forces personnel and their dependants would learn about the action plan. They were advised that the major armed forces charities would be the first point of contact for many seeking help and that these would, in turn, request support from the council. Members were advised that the action plan represented an outline of the principle areas of support that the council would provide and that more detail would be developed as the action plan was delivered.

The Chairman moved an amendment to the resolution, requiring an annual report presented to the Community Committee. This amendment was agreed by the committee.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (i) approve the actions proposed to deliver practical help and support to both current and serving military personnel and their families as detailed at appendix one
- (ii) receive an annual report on the achievements of the Armed Forces Community Covenant Action Plan to committee.

**8. COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER AND EMPTY PROPERTY UPDATE**

The annexed report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received to advise members of the recent action taken in relation to the empty properties in the Borough.

The Assistant Principal Housing Officer outlined that the number of empty dwellings in the Borough had reduced significantly and that most properties only remain vacant for a short period of time.

The Assistant Principal Housing Officer provided detailed information on progress made against properties previously approved for Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) action (Appendix A). The committee were also invited to consider CPO action in respect of a number of new properties (Appendix B).

Councillor Carr declared a 'prejudicial other interest' at this point in the meeting in respect of personal knowledge of the owner of the property at 55 College Street, Wellingborough. Councillor Carr took no further part in the discussion regarding this property.

A discussion ensued and members were informed that the primary source of information regarding empty properties is through Council Tax records, although this sometimes produces irregularities. Members discussed the properties of 55 College Street, Wellingborough and 26 Allen Road, Finedon. In both cases the owners had requested a suspension of the Council's CPO action. Having carefully considered

the matter, members agreed to disregard these requests and to continue with the CPO action.

**RESOLVED** to note the action taken in relation to those properties listed in Appendix A.

**R1 RECOMMEND** that action commence to compulsory purchase those properties listed in Appendix B.

(Councillor Carr abstained from voting on the proposed action in the recommendation above).

The meeting concluded at 8.20pm

Chairman

## COUNCIL MEETING - 30 JULY 2013

### REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

16 July 2013

Present: Councillors Allebone (Chairman), Waters (Vice-Chairman), Bass, Elliott, Gough, Graves, Hawkes, Henley, Higgins, Warwick and Watts (11).

Also present: Mr S Wood, Head of Planning and Local Development, Mrs S Bateman, Senior Planning Officer, Mr J Udall, Townscape Heritage Project Manager and Mrs C A Mundy, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillors Bailey, Maguire and Simmons attended the meeting as observers.)

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**RESOLVED** to note that an apology for absence was received from Councillor L Lawman (1).

#### 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2013 be confirmed and signed.

#### 3. PRESENTATION BY TRESHAM

Mrs Elspeth Sully, Director of Technology, Innovation and Resources attended the meeting and presented the proposals for the redevelopment of the Wellingborough Campus of Tresham College.

She explained that Tresham had been working with Bond Bryan Architects and informed members what was on the current existing site, and that the large tower block would need to be demolished together with other buildings on the site as a phased programme of work to ensure as little interruption to the delivery of lessons during the construction of the proposed new college building.

She also explained, if funding was obtained, what the phasing strategy would be, and the proposed uses for the ground floor, the first floor and the second floor. The materials that were proposed to be used would be in keeping with the architecture of the town, particularly the listed buildings adjacent to the site. Mrs Sully's presentation concluded with a slide showing the final visualisation of the new college building in its surroundings. The whole site would consist of 6,000 square metres which would equate to accommodation for approximately 1,000 full time and part time students and further space for growth.

An application had been submitted for funding for the project and the college would be informed on Friday 19 July whether it had been successful. If it failed to obtain the funding it would apply again in September.

The college would continue to provide science, technology, English and maths along with the engineering workshops. Other courses would include creative arts, English for speakers of other languages, hospitality and catering, health care and child care along with many other options.

Members commented on the design and considered that this was a vast improvement on what was currently on the site. Others found it to be linear and a little uninspiring, though they were pleased that the material being used would harmonise with the town. Mrs Sully was also asked what the timescale was for the completion of the build and what standard of education would be provided.

Mrs Sully confirmed that the project would need to be completed by September 2015. She also clarified that the college would provide further education and higher education.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Sully for her very interesting presentation and wished her every success with the application for funding. Officers would let members know whether the funding application had been successful.

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be noted.

#### **4. TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE PROGRESS UPDATE**

The annexed circulated report and verbal update of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on the progress of the townscape heritage initiative.

The townscape initiative was being led by the council with significant funds obtained from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) which comprised of several elements designed to restore and promote the history of Wellingborough.

In April 2012 the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded £1,425,100 to the council for the scheme and a further £707,000 had been added by the council to the common fund.

The report detailed the progress made on the following projects:

- The Hind Hotel, Sheep Street;
- The Angel Hotel, 17 Silver Street;
- RAOB, 7 Broad Green;
- Church Hall, Church Street;
- Bake House, 2/3 Broad Green;
- Queen's Hall, High Street;
- Shop Front Scheme;
- Small Grant Scheme;
- The Heritage Trail and;
- Training and Education.

Appended to the report was the cash flow chart along with the project timeline for the Hind Hotel.

A member made reference to the shop front grant scheme where only one formal application had been received. The Project Manager explained that there had been a number of expressions of interest received from shop owners but the formal applications had not yet been submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the progress detailed in the report be noted.

## **5. MARKET WORKING PARTY**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received to agree to the continuation of the working party and therefore to appoint five Councillors, four Conservative and one Labour, to serve on the Market Working Party to review the market and street trading in Wellingborough town centre.

The previously agreed terms of reference for the working party were appended to the report along with the proposed items for discussion and review.

It was agreed that Councillors Allebone, Elliott, Higgins, Waters and Warwick be appointed to the working party.

**RESOLVED** that Councillors Allebone, Elliott, Higgins, Waters and Warwick be appointed to serve on the Market Working Party in accordance with the agreed terms of reference, and to continue the review of the market and street trading arrangements and propose improvements for the committee to consider.

## **6. DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on the Draft Statement of Community Involvement for consultation.

The report detailed the requirement that planning authorities prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how they would consult and engage with people over the preparation of development plan documents (DPDs) as well as on planning applications. The North Northamptonshire SCI was adopted by the Joint Planning Committee in 2006. A revised and updated SCI had been prepared for consultation.

The draft Statement of Community Involvement was appended to the report. The draft reflected changes made to the development plan system since its adoption in 2006 and the greater flexibility that planning authorities have when preparing Local Plans and the requirements of the Localism Act. The document was more streamlined compared to the previous version.

In considering the draft statement a member highlighted the concern that parishes often felt that their views were ignored and that there should be more involvement with, and more attention paid to, parish councils' views on individual planning applications. He also considered that views and comments from parish councils should be reported in full and separated in the report from those of others, similar to statutory consultees, rather than the current way of providing a précis.

Questions were also asked about the progress towards improved electronic consultation and how the consultation would take place. There were also issues with access to the planning portal which was often difficult to get onto.

The Senior Planning Officer explained that the consultation in relation to the Statement of Community Involvement would take place between 12 August and 8 October with a report returning to this committee in late autumn. The consultation would be carried out using the Limehouse web based software and the committee was reassured that the list of consultees was frequently reviewed and updated.

The Head of Planning and Local Development informed members that he had recently been looking at a new electronic system which was geographically based. This would give details of the planning history of a property and would detail the latest planning applications to allow much easier access to planning information. The council was continually looking at ways to reduce its base costs. Providing plans attached to planning applications to parish councils was a facility that cost a significant amount. Different ways of providing this service were being explored.

**RESOLVED** that the draft Statement of Community Involvement be agreed for consultation, subject to the Wellingborough contact details being amended and NHS England being added to the consultation bodies.

## **7. NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE INTERIM HOUSING POLICY STATEMENT**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received to agree the interim housing policy statement for consultation and to identify specific deliverable sites.

Appended to the report were the following:

- Draft interim policy statement on housing requirements in the North Northamptonshire housing market area.
- Schedule of deliverable sites.
- Potential additional sources of housing supply.
- Checklist for potential sites.

The report detailed the value of an interim statement, the calculation of a five year supply requirement, the identification of deliverable sites, the lapse rate, windfall allowances, five year supply assessment, the consequences of lack of

housing delivery and the action necessary to ensure increased housing delivery.

The Chairman allowed Councillor J Bailey to address the meeting.

Councillor Bailey expressed his concern, particularly in relation to the bullet points in the resolution 4.2, and urged caution in making any decisions. He was particularly concerned over the possibility of loss of income from the suspension of pre-application fees and delays to the S106 payments. He also referred to the potential development of Wellingborough North and Stanton Cross, to which he was opposed. He also considered that inviting landowners to bring forward sites which were outside the local plan should not be encouraged.

Members commented on the draft with some considering that Councillor Bailey's comments were valid and that the council should proceed with caution. Rural areas were, as a rule, quite happy to take infill, but struggled with large housing developments because of infrastructure constraints, such as lack of schools and medical facilities.

The Chairman reminded members that housing targets had only been met by the council on three occasions in the last twelve years. The Inspector at the recent Irchester appeal had commented that the Borough Council of Wellingborough had made little or no effort to maintain a five year supply. This could result in central government taking over the planning process which would lead to a loss of control for the council.

Other members considered that the council had not been forward thinking enough over the years and had become a 'poor relation' to neighbouring authorities with regard to development and that it needed to be more proactive. It was felt that more housing was needed for the people of the borough and for future generations.

**RESOLVED** to consult on the Interim Housing Policy Statement together with the specific deliverable sites identified.

**R1 RECOMMENDED** that a positive and proactive approach to delivering housing by making the commitment that the council will:

- in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), look for solutions rather than problems, and will seek to approve applications for sustainable development, wherever possible, through the use of planning conditions and S106;
- encourage pre-application discussions so that more issues can be resolved at an early stage. Consideration will be given to whether pre-application fees can be temporarily suspended;
- be proactive to seek to bring forward housing on sites within its own ownership particularly those previously agreed through the Site Specific Plan;
- continue to work proactively with housing associations to bring forward affordable housing schemes;

- continue to support the production of rural housing needs assessments to identify the need for, and support delivery of, housing to meet local needs;
- re-negotiate S106 agreements where this is affecting viability and will consider reduced or delayed payments where this could aid delivery;
- continue to support a Stanton Cross Steering Group and Technical Working Group to support delivery of this site;
- create a cross disciplinary team to support delivery of the Wellingborough North Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE);
- continue to support neighbourhood plans and the identification of suitable sites for housing;
- invite landowners of sites included with appendices 2 and 3 to confirm deliverability of their site in accordance with the checklist for potential sites suggested through the Harman Report and included at appendix 4;
- invite landowners to bring forward new deliverable sites for consideration. These will be assessed by officers and those sites that accord with the overall strategy of the plan and can be demonstrated to be deliverable will be considered by a future Development Committee for inclusion in the revised land supply calculation.

(Councillor Bailey left the meeting following this item.)

## **8. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on the services and level of support to individual parishes and neighbourhood forums to assist with neighbourhood plans.

The Draft Neighbourhood Planning Protocol was appended to the report.

The report detailed the general support that would be given to assist with the production of neighbourhood plans.

Members commented on the amount of work involved for parishes in the production of neighbourhood plans. Parishes had also expressed concern over the poor response rate from parishioners; anything to encourage this would be appreciated.

**RESOLVED** that the Draft Neighbourhood Planning Protocol be agreed and provided to each of the parishes or forums, subject to financial approval by the Resources Committee.

**RECOMMEND TO RESOLVE** that the Resources Committee approve that the support identified in the draft Neighbourhood Planning Protocol be provided.

Chairman.....

The meeting concluded at 8.50pm.



## COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JULY 2013

### REPORT OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

17 July 2013

Present: Councillors Bell (Chairman), Hollyman (Vice-Chairman) Allebone, Bailey, Dholakia, Graves, Henley, Morrall, Partridge-Underwood, B Patel, Scarborough and Waters (12).

Also present: Mr J T Campbell, Chief Executive, Mr R Micklewright, Director of Resources, Mr T Wright, Director of Services, Mr C Pittman, Monitoring Officer, Mrs L Elliott, Head of Finance, Mrs B Lawrence, Head of Resources, Mr S Wood, Head of Planning and Local Development, Mr N Robinson, Principal Revenue and Benefits Manager, Mrs S Knowles, Principal Accountancy Manager, Mr P Burnett, Principal Property and Facilities Manager, Mrs V Phillipson, Principal Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager and Mrs C A Mundy, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillors Bass, Hawkes, G Lawman and Simmons also attended as observers).

#### 1. APOLOGIES

**RESOLVED** to note that an apology for absence was received from Councillor Ward (1).

#### 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2013 be confirmed and signed.

#### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no verbal declarations made.

#### 4. PROPERTY DISPOSALS

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Resources was received on the possible disposal of council owned land to gain a capital receipt.

The report outlined the consultation undertaken with ward members to date and detailed various plots which could be sold, as follows:

- Residential land in Hardwick;
- Land to rear of 74-79 Fulmar Lane, Wellingborough;
- Land adjacent to Diamond Learning Community;
- Land at Wordsworth Road - 22-28 Grasmere Green;
- Plots at Windmill Close, Wollaston and Holme Close, Wellingborough.

The Chairman allowed Councillor G Lawman to address the meeting.

Councillor Lawman expressed his concern over the potential sale of the land adjacent to the Diamond Learning Community. He was concerned as this was public open space for community use. He believed the footpath was used and was of value to the community, and was concerned about car access through Guillemot Lane. He considered that this item should be deferred for a fuller report with options for the school to possibly lease the land which would enable the council to achieve some revenue funding. He also made reference to Holme Close where he had concerns about issues with drains, services and the lack of consultation. He believed this item should also be deferred.

The Head of Resources advised that all land sales would be subject to the receipt of planning permission, and issues such as access and drainage would be highlighted via planning consultation. They would then be taken into account by the Planning Committee.

Members discussed the options for each of the plots. Some considered that amenity land should be retained and not sold. It was suggested that the item relating to land adjacent to Diamond Learning Community be deferred for more detail. Concern was expressed that the land could be disposed of and that the school could potentially make a large capital gain. Other members believed that there should not be a deferral and referred to 6.5 (f) of the report which stated that covenants would be placed to restrict the sale of land for development.

The Monitoring Officer advised any members who were involved with Wellingborough Homes that they should refrain from voting on recommendation (iv).

Councillor Bailey left the meeting prior to the vote being taken on this item.

**RESOLVED** to dispose of the following areas of land at best consideration in order to gain a capital receipt:

- (i) residential land in Hardwick;
- (ii) land to the rear of 74 to 79 Fulmar Lane, Wellingborough;
- (iii) land adjacent to Diamond Learning Community;
- (iv) land to rear of 22 to 28 Grasmere Green, Wellingborough;
- (v) Plot at Windmill Close, Wollaston;
- (vi) Plot at Holme Close, Wellingborough.

Councillor Bailey returned to the meeting.

## **5. REVENUE MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2013 TO 31 MAY 2013**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to inform members of the forecast of the year and revenue budget position for 2013-14 based on the financial information available at 31 May 2013.

The monitoring statement gave an additional projected overspend at the end of 2013-14 of £156,000 (1.50% of net budget). The report detailed the main reasons for the movement, which was caused due to a mixture of budget pressures and savings and these were listed in more detail within the report.

One of the most significant changes since the budget had been set was the anticipated reduction in investment income as a result of the drop in the average rate of return the council is earning on its investment income portfolio.

Appended to the report was a summary of revenue budget monitoring as at 31 May 2013.

Members asked why the investment rate had fallen so much over such a short period of time. The Principal Accountancy Manager clarified that the income last year was 2.1% and the projection had been 1.4%. This had not happened and the actual return had been 0.4%.

**RESOLVED** that the projected outturn and explanations for the forecast variations at 31 March 2014 be noted.

## **6. TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT SECTION 106 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS**

The annexed circulated joint report of the Head of Planning and Local Development and the Head of Finance was received to identify Section 106 monies held by the council and to identify the priority areas for the monies to be spent.

The council held £770,519 of Section 106 monies which were identified in appendices 1, 3 and 4. The monies were held in trust and are outside of all current budgets and not included in the medium term financial plan.

The description of what the various amounts of Section 106 had been acquired for was shown in appendix 1. Appendix 2 provided information about the works that the council had undertaken using Section 106 monies during the last 12 months. Appendix 3 identified the committed sums, monitoring fees or projects that are committed to, or are seeking approval. This included four projects which had completed capital programme forms being Irchester play equipment, Croyland Park footpaths, pitch improvements and Croyland Park adult play equipment. These were schemes that needed to be undertaken as urgent improvements for reasons such as health and safety, submitted for consideration by the parish council or were restricted due to seasonal deadlines.

Members were asked to approve the following five improvement categories:

- Wellingborough park and open space improvements
- Sports changing facilities and playing pitch improvements
- Town centre improvements
- Rural projects
- Affordable housing projects.

The report detailed each of the five categories.

Members asked a number of questions including whether and when ward councillors would be consulted. They also raised concern that monies set down for certain schemes would be used in other areas.

The Head of Planning and Local Development explained that some of the Section 106 monies were deemed to be for borough wide use whilst others were specific to certain areas and for set use. A further analysis of specific projects together with any recommended projects from the parishes would be collated and reported to a future Resources Committee.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (i) agree that the five categories detailed in the report be used to allocate the Section 106 monies as identified in appendices 1 and 4;
- (ii) note that a further report be submitted to the next Resources Committee detailing projects that could be financed by using Section 106 monies using the five categories for the committee's approval and subsequent monitoring.

(Councillor Scarborough voted against this item.)

**7. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING & SECTION 106 REPORT 2013-14**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to inform members of the capital programme monitoring for the two months to 31 May 2013.

The total capital programme budget, as agreed at Resources Committee on 20 March was £3,391.604. In addition £3,253,948 capital spend had been re-profiled from 2012-13 giving a total budget for 2013-14 of £6,645.552.

The capital monitoring report up to 31 May 2013 was appended to the report along with the variation requests and the external funding schedule.

Concern was raised by a member that funding, which was specified for use in Stanley Road, Great Park Street and 1-9 Newcomen Road, was being used to improve a footpath in Croyland Park. Members believed that the Section 106 monies should have been allocated to the ward/area specified. The Head of Planning and Local Development clarified that a further report on Section 106 allocations would be submitted to the next Resources Committee. He would also issue a members briefing note regarding allocations.

Concern was also raised about the reclassification, of maintenance work needed to be carried out on the multi storey car park, into revenue. Officers explained that any reclassification would be reflected in the revenue monitoring once the figures had been finalised. Members considered that rather than reclassifying, a supplementary estimate should be sought. The Director of Resources clarified that he would provide a members briefing note explaining the reason for this in detail.

Members continued to raise concern about the request for additional projects to be funded from Section 106 monies and the Chairman suggested that this part of the resolution be deferred until September. One member was concerned about the health and safety aspect of the footpath repairs. The Chairman suggested that if this became an issue an urgent action be brought forward for consideration.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the projected outturn and anticipated variances as at 31 May 2013 as detailed in appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) agree the variations as detailed in appendix 2 to the report;
- (iii) agree the external funding as stated in appendix 3 of the report;
- (iv) defer the requests for additional projects to be funded from Section 106 monies as outlined in the report until the Resources Committee in September.

**8. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT ACTION – SECTION 106 SPEND**

The annexed circulated joint report of the Head of Planning and Local Development and Head of Finance was received on the urgent action taken to approve spending some of the Town and Country Planning Action Section 106 monies which the council held.

Two projects had been identified for pitch improvements and adult gym improvements.

**RESOLVED** to note the urgent action taken.

**9. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY PROJECTIONS – JULY 2013**

The annexed circulated report of the Director of Resources was received to update members on the projected financial position over the medium term to 2017-18 and detailed the financial pressure facing local government in general and the financial sustainability faced by smaller councils.

A report had been presented to committee in February 2013 as part of the 2013-14 budget report on the medium term financial position. The figures had been refreshed and were appended to the report along with the forecast level of reserves and a summary of the spending round for 2013.

The report also raised the concern that the risk of not delivering a balanced budget was becoming more acute as the level of revenue reserves diminished thus increasing the risk that the council would not be financially sustainable in the future and may not be viable as an independent body of local democracy and governance.

The report detailed the current financial position, the next steps towards a balanced medium term financial position, the financial sustainability and the future of service delivery.

**RESOLVED** to note the revised financial position and the content of the report.

## **10. TREASURY MANAGEMENT – ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received on the annual report of treasury management activity for 2012-13.

The report detailed the short term investments, the long term investments for periods greater than one year, the total investments for the year, the investment trusts, the fact that there was no outstanding borrowing, the interest received and future prospects.

The Head of Finance explained that due to the historically low levels and decreases in interest rates; she considered that a revision to the Credit Worthiness policy contained in the previously agreed Investment Strategy was necessary. This would enable a more flexible approach to investments to increase the return. Investments would be made in the top 20 building societies for a period of two years.

Members considered this to be a good way forward.

**RESOLVED** to note the review of treasury management activities in 2012-13.

**R1 RECOMMENDED** that the amended Credit Worthiness policy be incorporated in the council's Annual Investment Strategy.

## **11. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING**

The annexed circulated joint report of the Head of Planning and Local Development and the Head of Finance was received on the financial support that would be required to deliver assistance with neighbourhood planning.

The Development Committee at its meeting on 16 July 2013 had made a recommendation to Resources Committee that it approve the financial support identified in the draft Neighbourhood Planning Protocol which it had approved at that meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the support identified in the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol appended to the report in the sum of £15,000 be transferred from earmarked reserves.

## **12. IRRECOVERABLE COUNCIL TAX, NON-DOMESTIC RATES, SUNDRY DEBTS AND HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS**

The annexed circulated report of the Director of Resources was received to request approval for the write-off of irrecoverable non-domestic rates and to note amounts written off under delegated powers for council tax, non-domestic rates, sundry debts and housing benefit overpayments.

The report detailed that the sum of £18,267.16 of non-domestic rates which needed to be written off due to bankruptcy or insolvency.

The sum of £23,722.41 of irrecoverable council tax, non-domestic rates, sundry debts and housing benefit overpayments which had been written off under delegated powers.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the sum of £18,267.16 be written-off as irrecoverable non-domestic rates;
- (ii) it be noted that the amount of £23,722.41 had been written off under the delegated powers of the Section 151 officer.

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

**RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items in accordance with Section 100A(4) to the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information of the descriptions shown in schedule 12A to the Act:

<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Paragraph of Schedule 12A</b>
14	Hardship relief.	3
15	Redevelopment of the High Street/Jacksons Lane site – verbal update.	3
16	Restructuring of the Senior Management Team.	3

### **14. HARDSHIP RELIEF**

The annexed circulated exempt report of the Director of Resources was received on the application for hardship relief from Palm Beach Plaza Ltd.

The report detailed the request. The Council needed to consider whether it was satisfied of the following before the decision to grant hardship relief could be made:

- (i) that the ratepayer would sustain hardship if the relief was not granted;
- (ii) consideration be given to the interests of the council tax payers within the borough.

Members considered the above points in making a decision.

**RESOLVED** that hardship relief not be awarded to Palm Beach Plaza Ltd, 3 Commercial Way, Wellingborough, NN8 1ET.

## **15. REDEVELOPMENT OF THE HIGH STREET/JACKSONS LANE SITE – VERBAL UPDATE**

The Chief Executive gave a verbal update of progress since the meeting of the Resources Committee in June 2013.

He informed the committee that he had met with Quora Developments, along with the Head of Planning and Local Development, on 26 June 2013. Information had been received late on Monday 15 July 2013 on which initial advice had been sought from the council advisers, Pinsent Masons. Further discussion and clarification was required. A key matter that has not been resolved relates to indemnification of the council's costs.

He informed members that whilst there had been some progress there was still a long way to go before a full written report could be presented to this committee.

A lengthy debate ensued. A number of members considered that there were risks involved with the Quora/Asda proposal. Over a period of nine months there had been little progress. Residential development had been agreed for this site and Keepmoat should be encouraged to re-submit a planning application and continue to develop the area.

Other members were concerned that the key issue was the duty of the council to ensure that best consideration was obtained for the site. The issue was not about a particular retail use, it was about mixed housing and retail use for the site.

The Director of Resources advised members, as Section 151 officer, that the agreed intention for the development of the land had been residential; a formal procurement process had taken place and a preferred bidder had been chosen. Should there now be a requirement for retail-led development rather than residential led, a procurement process would need to be carried out again. The land would need to be disposed of at best consideration.

The Chief Executive commented further on the various points made.

The Chairman informed members that, as only guidance was being sought, they were not required to make a decision at this meeting.

Councillor Bailey proposed that officers produce a report with the information that they had to date and that a Special Resources Committee be called. This was seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood. On being put to the vote this was declared lost.

The Chairman suggested that a written report be produced for the Resources Committee in September. This was agreed.

**RESOLVED** that the verbal update of the Chief Executive be noted and that a written report will be submitted to the Resources Committee on 18 September 2013.



## **16. RESTRUCTURING OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The annexed circulated exempt report of the Chief Executive and the Head of Paid Service was received on a proposed revision to the senior management structure.

Appended to the report was the current senior level organisational chart, the proposed senior level organisational chart, the information relating to affected employees and an equality impact assessment.

The proposal was to streamline the structure by deleting two Director posts and one Head of Service. The Head of Service role also included the Monitoring Officer role, which is a statutory post. Appropriate revised arrangements for the Monitoring Officer post would need to be in place.

The council's Section 151 officer was also a statutory post and it was recommended that this role be designated to the Head of Finance from the time of the departure of the Director of Resources. There was also a need for a Deputy Section 151 officer and it was proposed that the Principal Accountancy Manager be designated to act as deputy.

The report also referred to officers maintaining registration to a professional body to keep up with current practice. It was recommended that one professional fee, where appropriate, for relevant employees be paid.

In April 2011 it had been agreed that all officers at Head of Service level would be appointed on Chief Officer terms and conditions. This had created an anomaly whereby Heads of Service were not able to receive time off in lieu to compensate for time spent at evening meetings and weekend events etc. The Chief Executive and Director posts have always had an informal arrangement in place and it was proposed that the time off in lieu policy should apply to Heads of Service.

(Councillor Bailey left the meeting at 9.15pm.)

### **R2 RECOMMENDED that:**

- (i) the proposals of the Head of Paid Service relating to the Senior Management Structure be endorsed by full Council;
- (ii) eligible employees identified in Appendix C of the report be retired early from the service of the council, in the interests of the efficient exercise of the council's functions with effect from a date to be agreed;
- (iii) eligible employees identified in Appendix C of the report receive pension scheme benefits with effect from their retirement date, in accordance with the provisions of Section 26 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997;
- (iv) with effect from the date of departure of the Director of Resources that the Head of Finance be designated as the council's Section 151 officer.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) an additional allowance for the role of Deputy Section 151 officer be introduced as set out in the report;
- (ii) the Chief Officers' terms and conditions of employment be amended to specifically include the provisions of the council's time off in lieu policy with effect from 1 August 2013;
- (iii) a policy of paying one appropriate professional fee for all relevant officers with effect from 1 August 2013 be agreed;
- (iv) all of the proposed changes to terms and conditions be subject to the usual consultation arrangements with a further report bring brought to the committee if necessary;
- (v) the Constitution Working Party be reconvened to consider a review of the council's governance and decision making arrangements.

Chairman.....

The meeting concluded at 9.35pm