

## COUNCIL MEETING – 19 NOVEMBER 2013

### REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

28 October 2013

Present: Councillors B Patel (Vice-Chairman acting as Chairman), Carr, Emerson, Higgins, M Patel, Raymond, Simmons, V Waters and Watts.

Also present: Mr T Wright, Director of Services, Mr C Pittman, Head of Community, Mr S Wood, Head of Planning and Local Development, Mrs G Chapman, Principal Community Support Manager, Mrs A Wilcox, Principal Health Protection Manager, Mr Q Allen, Sports Development Officer (NSport), Mr M Heekin, Finance and Performance Director, Wellingborough Homes, Miss H Grey, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service, and Mr A Barron, Democratic Services Officer.

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**RESOLVED** to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Morrall (Chairman), Ainge and L Lawman.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**RESOLVED** to note that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the council's code of conduct and the council's constitution, the under-mentioned councillors declared an interest in the following items:

Councillor	Minute No	Subject	Reason
Higgins	5	Wellingborough Homes Update Report	Registerable - Council appointed board member of Wellingborough Homes
Carr	9	Empty Property Update	Other – Personally aware of one of the owners of a property mentioned.

#### 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2013 be confirmed and signed.

#### 4. PRESENTATION FROM FIRE AND RESCUE ON STRATEGY FOR COMING YEAR

The Vice-Chairman welcomed Hazel Grey of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue, and invited her to begin her presentation outlining the recently published four-year Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), which provides the strategic direction of the service until 2017.

Members were informed that the three strategic objectives of keeping the public safe, providing value for money and keeping firefighters safe had not changed but that the priorities within each of those had been amended for further improvement.

Members welcomed the collaborative approach taken with, for example, the Police in engaging with communities and undertaking preventative activities. The committee was informed of further collaborative action taken with other Fire Services in the county in relation to the purchase of new equipment and the training of cadets. A cross county approach for attendance at certain incidents was also reported, which would help to meet the purpose of the Fire Service in protecting people, property and the environment and in engaging with all sectors of the community.

The Vice-Chairman thanked Miss Grey for her presentation and the work of the service in the borough, and invited members to ask questions.

Members enquired about the breakdown of figures regarding incidents for the Wellingborough area, as opposed to county wide, but were satisfied to receive this information at a later date.

Miss Grey provided members with literature and invited feedback from any member at any time.

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be noted.

## **5. WELLINGBOROUGH HOMES UPDATE REPORT**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received to update members on the progression of Wellingborough Homes since April 2013.

The Finance and Performance Director of Wellingborough Homes informed members of the changes applied to the report following the conclusion of the five year monitoring period. Members heard about recently completed developments in the borough and the current situation regarding future developments. Community events held by Wellingborough Homes were also outlined.

Mr Heekin, Finance and Performance Director of Wellingborough Homes, was delighted in being able to report that Wellingborough Homes were successful in being granted £354,000 in National Lottery funding for a project aimed at building community resilience. Members had concern that a duplication of efforts with other organisations would occur, but were satisfied with the assurance that this would not happen, and that as partners were involved in the bid they would continue to be involved in deciding upon the use of the funding.

Members welcomed further information at a later date in relation to community events held in the rural areas of the borough.

Members raised the importance of the Health and Wellbeing Forum's report on welfare reform being available in the public domain. The Head of Planning and Local Development addressed the meeting at this stage and stated that as the implementation of welfare reforms were still unfolding the impacts were still be evaluated. Members welcomed a future report on this issue.

**RESOLVED** to note the update report by Wellingborough Homes.

**6. WELLINGBOROUGH COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE:  
APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2013**

The annexed report of the Head of Community was received to inform members of the progress of the Wellingborough Community Safety Plan during 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013.

The Principal Community Support Manager gave Police Inspector Pauline Sturman's apologies for not being able to attend the meeting. She then outlined to members that the report had a stronger focus on the prevention of crime and impact of crime than previous reports, reflecting the changes introduced by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

She was pleased to inform the committee that recorded incidents of crime had fallen.

An enquiry about the Street Pastor scheme was raised, the officer would send a response to this via email. Members further enquired about the recording of hate crime figures, and it was noted that the Principal Community Support Manager would provide details directly to Councillor Watts.

Members sought clarification regarding domestic abuse and heard that although the number of incidents had increased the number of reported violent incidents had actually reduced slightly over the period.

Members welcomed the preventative measures underway in the borough and supported the actions being taken.

**RESOLVED** to note the report and support the delivery group actions.

**7. LEISURE CENTRES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT – PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The annexed report of the Head of Community was received to update members on the performance statistics of the Redwell and Waendel Leisure Centre for the first six months of the 2013-14 financial year and report on progress against the NSport service agreement. The report also examined some of the initiatives to encourage further use of the facilities.

The Principal Community Support Manager submitted the apologies from Mr S Churchman, Contract Manager, DC Leisure, but provided members with a statement prepared to develop the report further. Appended to the report was information about attendances at both Redwell and Waendel leisure centres

and whilst members heard that both centres are keen to improve on attendance figures, they also heard that activities such as squash are performing above the national average.

Members enquired about the refurbishment of Redwell Leisure Centre and its grounds, but were disappointed to hear that the issue of funding was currently preventing its redevelopment, even though income would be received from its use.

Members asked for further clarification on the net promoter score, a customer service comparator of DC leisure centres, which currently places Wellingborough in the top half of the table.

Members also received an update from Mr Allen regarding the efforts in place to encourage participation and were pleased to hear of the results.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report;
- (ii) continue to receive future reports on a regular basis.

## **8. SCRAP METAL LICENSING**

The annexed report of the Head of Community was received to inform members of the licensing requirements of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 and to seek approval for the scheme of delegation.

The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 came into force on 1 October requiring local authorities to be responsible for the administration and compliance activity in relation to the Act. The changes have been introduced as a reaction to the nationwide issue of increased metal theft.

The Principal Health Protection Manager outlined the changes and confirmed that the most appropriate licence would be discussed with each applicant because of the potential impact that this legislation may have on local businesses.

Members asked whether or not additional training would be required for members on the Licensing Committee, but were satisfied to hear that as licensing training was under review this new scheme would be involved in the review. Members welcomed an update in six months time.

**RESOLVED** that issuing of licences, enforcement activities and the revocation of licences under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 be delegated to the Head of Community until 29 November 2013 and thereafter to the Head of Planning and Local Development.

## **9. EMPTY PROPERTY UPDATE**

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

The Head of Planning and Local Development informed members of the significant reduction in the number of empty dwellings since 2008 until September 2013.

Members agreed that the compulsory purchase action was the correct action to take in order to reduce the number of empty properties. Members wished it to be reflected in the minutes that they were thankful to all officers involved in bringing this success story to the council.

Councillor Carr abstained from voting on this item.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (i) that if there is not significant progress towards the renovation and re-occupation of those properties listed as items 1, 2, 11, 12, 13 and 14 in Appendix B, by the end of January 2014, a recommendation for their compulsory purchase be taken to Resources Committee;
- (ii) to note the report and the progress made with those properties listed in Appendices A and B.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 8.30pm.



## **COUNCIL MEETING – 19 NOVEMBER 2013**

### **REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

29 October 2013

Present: Councillors Allebone (Chairman), Waters (Vice-Chairman), Bass, Blackwell, Gough, Graves, Higgins, Warwick and Watts.

Also present: Mr S Wood, Head of Planning and Local Development, Mrs J Bell, Project Co-ordinator, Mr J Udall, Project Manager, Mr A Stevenson, Conservation Officer, Mr J Nyakatawa, Planning Officer, Mr O Elcock, Legal Adviser District Law and Mrs C A Mundy, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor G Lawman attended the meeting as an observer.)

The chairman welcomed Councillor Blackwell to his first Development Committee meeting.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**RESOLVED** to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Elliott, Hawkes and L Lawman.

#### **2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2013 be confirmed and signed.

#### **3. MARKET WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on the activity of the Market Working Group.

The working group had discussed the relocation of market stalls; the Market Charter; parking issues; the Tuesday Bric-a-Brac market; the market regulations and marketing proposals. The Project Co-ordinator also circulated a slightly amended advertising banner and market logo.

The report detailed the recommendations of the working group on each of the issues and these are summarised below:

- i. the BID Christmas Market be used as a 'trial market area' to test whether the location would be successful;
- ii. that District Law progresses the registration of the market days and establishes them under Stage 3 of the Food Act 1984;
- iii. that officers liaise with District Law to progress the off-street parking order amendment;
- iv. that consultation on the market regulations take place with market traders.

Members discussed the recommendations. Particular comments were made over whether certain goods should be allowed to be sold on Wellingborough Market. Members considered that advice should be sought from District Law on this.

Questions were also raised over whether a survey had been carried out of market users and whether there were any footfall figures available. Officers clarified that there were no footfall figures for the market and that a survey had not been done of market users: however, the number of traders had consistently been around the same for a number of years.

The Market Working Group would continue to discuss options for improving the market and making the market more accessible for users.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the Market Working Group's recommendations be approved and implemented accordingly;
- (ii) delegated power be granted to the Head of Planning and Local Development, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to approve amendments to the off-street parking order, in relation to parking for All Hallows Church, as referred to in the report.

#### **4. REGULARISATION OF MARKET PROVISION**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on the registration of the Market Charter and to seek approval to regularise the market provision under Part III of the Food Act 1984.

The Land Registry had announced the requirement for all Charters, Letters Patent and prescription (giving rise to market franchise rights) to be registered by October 2013.

District Law had expressed some concern that the Land Registry would only register the Wednesday market. To ensure that the Tuesday, Friday and Saturday markets were protected, it had been advised that the council should establish these markets under Part III of the Food Act 1984.

**RESOLVED** that the Tuesday, Friday and Saturday markets be established under Part III of the Food Act 1984.

#### **5. CONSULTATION ON STRATEGIC HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT SITES – NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT CORE STRATEGY**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received in respect of strategic housing and employment sites to feed into the emerging joint core strategy (JCS), and to agree a response to the consultation.

A review of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy had been delayed until a decision was made on whether a major retail and leisure development should proceed at Rushden Lakes. The Secretary of State had advised that the decision would be made by 30 January 2014. With a view to progressing the plans as soon as possible, once the decision was made, consultation was taking place on the various elements of the plan.

In 2012 an 'emerging draft' version of the JCS was published for consultation, together with a draft background paper on strategic housing and employment sites. The consultation had resulted in the promotion of several new sites together with comments on the assessment of a number of the sites in the draft background paper. The detailed analysis was contained within the report.

Particular reference was made to the employment site of Appleby Lodge, Wellingborough, which was referred to as a 'commitment' following the granting of outline planning permission.

The strategic housing and employment sites within the borough to be included in the JCS were detailed in the report. No further strategic sites were proposed. These sites, plus the other committed sites, provided enough land to meet the strategic housing opportunity figures of 7,700 and the minimum job targets of 5,560 currently identified.

Members asked for clarification on the location of site reference 75 Ogee Business Park. Officers clarified that this was located on the northern corner of Finedon Road Industrial Estate. Clarification was also sought on whether outline planning permission had been granted for Appleby Lodge or whether this had only been for access. The Head of Planning and Local Development confirmed that outline planning permission had been granted for the site with detailed permission for the access. Members raised concern over highway issues and the perceived lack of infrastructure.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the progress on identifying strategic housing and employment sites for the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy be noted;
- (ii) support be given to the council's approach in the emerging Joint Core Strategy to *not* identify any further strategic housing and employment sites within Wellingborough beyond those already committed.

## **6. CONSULTATION ON DRAFT URBAN STRUCTURE STUDY – NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT CORE STRATEGY**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on the work that had been carried out in respect of a draft Urban Structure Study, and to agree the council's response to the consultation.

The report explained that the Urban Structure Study had been prepared to understand the framework of existing streets and open spaces within the town.

The study looked at how these would promote or inhibit movement and sets out improvements to address this.

The report detailed the spatial principles identified for Wellingborough. The proposed responses to the consultation were appended to the report.

Members raised particular concern over ‘humanizing’ the A45, lack of proper crossings at the ‘Sainsburys’ roundabout off Wilby Way, and the need to ensure that highways responded to the needs of the borough, particularly around the Stanton Cross development. The proposed response to the consultation was agreed.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the progress on preparation of the Urban Structure Study for the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy be noted;
- (ii) the proposed council response, as set out in the report, be agreed.

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

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received to give an update on the progress to date of the Townscape Heritage Initiative.

The report, and verbal update of the Project Manager, detailed the ongoing projects and gave an update on the progress made on each one.

**RESOLVED** that the progress made, as detailed in the report, be noted.

## **8. 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>
9	Townscape Heritage Initiative Budget	3

## **9. TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE BUDGET**

The annexed circulated exempt report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received to seek approval for changes to be made within the budget for the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). Appended to the report was the existing budget profile along with the proposed revised allocation of funding.

The Project Manager explained the reasons for the proposed changes to the budget. Members asked questions for the purpose of clarity, and agreed that the budget be revised, as per the proposal by the Project Manager.

**RESOLVED** that the revised budget profile for the Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme be accepted, and that agreement to this be sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

NB: The chairman reminded the committee that this was the Director of Services' last Development Committee meeting. He thanked Mr Wright for his hard work and commitment over the years and wished him well for the future.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 8.25pm.



**COUNCIL MEETING – 19 NOVEMBER 2013**  
**REPORT OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

30 October 2013

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

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, Mrs S Knowles, Principal Accountancy Manager, Mr R Watson, Consortium Business Rates Manager and Mrs C A Mundy, Democratic Services Officer.

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

**1. APOLOGIES**

**RESOLVED** to note that an apology for absence was received from Councillor Partridge-Underwood.

**2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2013 be confirmed and signed.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED** to note that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the council's code of conduct and the council's constitution, the under-mentioned councillors declared an interest in the following items:

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Minute No</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Henley	9	Mid year report on Treasury Management	Registerable – Employer is mentioned in the appendix.
Scarborough	5	Time off for public duties policy	Registerable – chairman of the Wellingborough Bench.
Scarborough	9	Mid year report on Treasury Management	Registerable – wife is freelance financial services professional currently on contract with principal building society

and has substantial  
shareholdings in  
Barclays Bank PLC.

#### **4. WELLINGBOROUGH NORTH – VERBAL UPDATE**

The Head of Resources gave a verbal update to the committee on the progress made to date.

She explained that a valuation report had been commissioned from Underwoods along with an additional valuation from a second valuer. Work was ongoing to check the detailed technical specification, and quotations for handling the negotiations for the sale of the site were being obtained.

Members asked for clarification on which phase this referred to and asked when a more detailed written report would be available.

The Head of Resources clarified that this initially related to Phase I. She was hopeful that a written report would be available for the December meeting, but this would be dependent on the progress of the negotiations.

**RESOLVED** that the verbal update be noted.

#### **5. TIME OFF FOR PUBLIC DUTIES POLICY**

(Councillor Scarborough left the room during discussion on this item.)

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Resources was received to seek approval on the updated policy relating to employees' time off for public duties.

In November 1990 approval was given to a policy enabling up to 15 days paid leave of absence per year to undertake duties as a Justice of the Peace. A review of the policy had recently been undertaken, taking into consideration the latest legislation and best practice. As Magistrates were now required to sit for a minimum of 13 days each year the policy had been reviewed to take this into account and was appended to the report.

**RESOLVED** that approval be given to the Time Off for Public Duties Policy.

(Councillor Scarborough returned to the meeting.)

#### **6. REVIEW OF POLLING STATIONS**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Resources was received on the review of polling stations undertaken after the county council election held on 2 May 2013.

A review of polling stations had been undertaken following information obtained from the electorate, polling station staff and officers of the council on the suitability of polling stations. A number of representations had also been

received, relating to the use of some schools, from head teachers, governors and electors, particularly those at Finedon, Ruskin and Wilby Primary Schools. It was noted that the council had requested that, where possible, schools should not be used if there was a suitable alternative.

In addition concern had been expressed over the use of the All Saints Church Hall, Earls Barton, because of the very steep ascent from the main road and incline for ambulant disabled and elderly electors.

Ward members from the polling districts affected had been given the opportunity to put forward their views.

The proposed changes of the Returning Officer are detailed below:

EA (Finedon)	Transfer to Finedon Independent Wesleyan Chapel.
FB (Wilby)	Transfer to Wilby Working Mens Club.
WDA (Earls Barton)	Transfer to Earls Barton Methodist Church.

Members discussed the changes, particularly in relation to the proposals for Finedon. Whilst appreciating that the council preferred that schools should not be used, members for Finedon ward noted that only eight complaints had been received, which they considered insufficient reason to move to the Finedon Independent Wesleyan Chapel. The ward members considered this alternative to be unacceptable as there was no off-street parking, the disabled access was poor and they were opposed to the suggested change. Fellow councillors were also supportive of their comments.

The Returning Officer responded to the concerns raised. He confirmed that there had been much discussion and communication regarding this review. As Returning Officer, he was duty bound to look at any complaints that were received irrespective of numbers. Having looked at all the alternative sites in Finedon he believed that the best alternative choice was the Finedon Independent Wesleyan Chapel.

**RESOLVED** to note the decision of the Returning Officer, in relation to the siting of the polling stations, as follows:

- (i) EA (Finedon) - Finedon Wesleyan Chapel, Affleck Bridge;
- (ii) FB (Wilby) - Wilby Working Mens Club, Main Road;
- (iii) WDA (Earls Barton) - Earls Barton Methodist Church.

(Councillors Bailey and Ward asked that their objection to the Finedon proposal be noted.)

## **7. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY PROJECTIONS – OCTOBER 2013**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received on the medium term financial position and updated members on the current financial challenges facing the borough.

The report made reference to funding, council tax, increases in spending power, increasing pressures on the expenditure budget, welfare reform, national insurance pressures, the refreshed financial position and options to deliver efficiencies, savings and further increased spending power.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the revised financial position, and the content of the report, be noted;
- (ii) the approach proposed be endorsed and officers be given responsibility to generate ideas to bridge the budget gap.

## **8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE 2013/14 – 2018/19**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received on the overview of the capital programme process for 2014/15 - 2018/19 along with an update on the 2013/14 - 2017/18 programme.

The report informed the committee that internal and external customers had been invited to submit proposals for new capital schemes and these would be prioritised by the Capital Working Group during November using the service assessment criteria as detailed in the report. Once scored they would be separated into three schedules as follows:

- Schedule 1 - a list of recommended schemes for inclusion in the capital programme;
- Schedule 2 - a list of schemes which, whilst desirable were not of such high priority, but which reflected the policy decisions of the council;
- Schedule 3 - a list showing the schemes submitted but which did not score sufficiently high enough to be considered for funding at the current time.

In addition there were projects in the waiting pool which would be re-scored to establish if there had been any changes or amendments that needed to be considered.

Details of the assessment criteria were included in the report along with a breakdown of how the programme would be funded. The results would be reported to the Resources Committee in December.

Members referred to the way in which the prioritisation of schemes worked and asked if a report, or a briefing note, could be provided to explain the rationale used in making the decisions. The Head of Finance clarified that details would be included in the report to committee in December.

The report also made reference to an urgent action taken in relation to the Lea Way, Compulsory Purchase Order. A query was raised in relation to the figures for the Lea Way, Compulsory Purchase Order, and the increase in the commitment. The Principal Accountancy Manager would provide a written response directly to the councillor.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the process for prioritising capital projects for the 2014/15 – 2018/19 programme be noted;
- (ii) the urgent action taken be noted;
- (iii) approval be given to the creation of a rolling capital fund for Compulsory Purchase Orders.

## **9. MID YEAR REPORT ON TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

(Councillor Scabrorough left the meeting during discussion on this item.)

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received on the treasury management activity.

Appended to the report were a summary of investment transactions at 30 September 2013 and a summary of the economic background and outlook.

The report detailed the key changes to the strategy, agreed in March 2013, the annual investment strategy, and the 2013-14 performance to date.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

(Councillor Scarborough rejoined the meeting.)

## **10. TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT SECTION 106 PROJECTS**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received on the allocation of Section 106 (S106) funding, and requested authority to allocate £471,959 of S106 funding to a programme of borough-wide improvements.

The chairman welcomed Edeltraud Freund, representing Castle Fields Community Group, to the meeting and allowed her to address the committee for three minutes. She expressed concern over the perceived lack of consultation and engagement with community groups over how, exactly, the section 106 monies should be spent, particularly in relation to Castle Fields and asked for more consultation to take place before a final decision was made on what should be included in the scheme.

The Section 106 Monitoring Group had considered a number of projects which were detailed in the report and recommended for approval to the committee.

A lengthy debate ensued with some members raising concern over what was proposed for each project. While acknowledging the quality of the information contained in the report a member felt that more consultation was needed with ward councillors, parish councils, partners and community groups. Other members were pleased with the report and fully supported the proposals as a positive way forward to use the S106 monies and encourage children and young adults to lead more active and healthier lives.

The Head of Planning and Local Development explained how the S106 funding had been obtained and how this report was seeking to earmark the funding for the projects detailed within the report. He gave an assurance that all the projects would be fully consulted on prior to any work being undertaken and that full consideration would be given to the views of ward councillors and community groups.

The Chairman also confirmed that ward councillors, community and user groups and others would be consulted and that a further report would be submitted to a future Resources Committee meeting.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the evaluation process and scoring method for S106 projects be agreed, and that it be noted that these will be reported in a regular S106 Monitoring Report to Resources Committee;
- (ii) approval be given to the projects identified being financed using the S106 contributions.

## **11. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT ACTIONS**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Community was received on the urgent actions taken in relation to Wellingborough Homes Annual General meeting, Scrap Metal Dealer and Collector Licence fees and the W3 Bus Service.

**RESOLVED** that the urgent actions be noted.

## **12. SENIOR MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

The annexed circulated report of the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service was received on the revised arrangements for the senior management.

The report gave details of the new senior management team (SMT) who would work alongside the senior officers of the council's shared services of Wellingborough Norse, IT Services, Legal Consortium (District Law) and Chief Internal Auditor. SMT would deal with the high level strategic and corporate issues and meet regularly with Principal Managers to form an extended management team (EMT) to deal with more operational issues.

The report also detailed the role and functions of the council's statutory officers such as the Head of the Paid Service and the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 officer) and who would undertake these roles in the future.

With regard to the role of Monitoring Officer it was proposed that the Head of the legal services consortium, District Law be appointed as Monitoring Officer. It was also recognised that it would be beneficial for there to be a local contact and accordingly it was proposed that the Principal Democratic Services

Manager would undertake this role. The new arrangement would be reviewed after a 12 month period.

Members asked where the new monitoring officer was based, whether she currently carried out the role elsewhere and whether a confidential briefing note could be provided on all costs and benefits.

The Chief Executive clarified that she was currently the Monitoring Officer at Kettering Borough Council and was based there. He also confirmed that he would provide a more costs detailed breakdown to members in the form of a briefing note.

Some members considered that a Monitoring Officer who was not based on site would be inadequate and ineffective.

The Chief Executive explained that this was not a unique scenario and that there were examples of this type of working across the country. He believed that it was the only viable option in the current circumstances and was the subject of a 12 month review which would allow the effectiveness of the arrangement to be further considered.

**RESOLVED** that the progress made with the implementation of the revised Senior Management organisational structure be noted;

**R1 RECOMMENDED** that:

- (i) Sue Lyons, Head of Democratic & Legal Services at Kettering Borough Council, be designated as the Borough Council of Wellingborough's Monitoring Officer, for a 12 month period, commencing on 30 November 2013.
- (ii) a further report be submitted to Resources Committee and Council prior to the end of the 12 month period to review the operation of these arrangements.

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

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

As members wished to discuss items in more detail this was moved to the exempt part of the meeting.

#### 14. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item 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:

Min. no.	Item	Paragraph of Schedule 12A
15	Exempt appendices - Irrecoverable Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, Sundry Debts and Housing Benefit Overpayments	E3

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

The exempt circulated appendices were received.

Members asked if information could be provided on current trends with regard to the number of people in arrears and the number of write-offs compared to previous years.

The Consortium Business Rates Manager reported that his service had been taking more enforcement action and had been offering different payment methods. There was a noticeable increase in debt recovery orders and bankruptcy orders and people disappearing with no forwarding address. Tracing packages had improved and often people were located and recovery action could be taken against them. The Head of Finance offered to provide a Members Briefing note on this topic.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the write-off of £124,947.41 of irrecoverable council tax, non-domestic rates and housing benefit be agreed;
- (ii) the amount of £42,739.93 had been written off under the delegated powers of the Section 151 officer.

NB: The chairman informed the committee that this was the last meeting for the Director of Resources, as Committee Manager, and also the last meeting for the Director of Services. He expressed his thanks and gratitude to both Mr Micklewright and Mr Wright for their service to the council and wished them good luck in the future.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 8.10pm.