

20 SEPTEMBER 2016

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held in The Bradbury Room, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Tuesday, 20 September 2016

* Cllr S P Davies (Chairman)
* Cllr D J Russell (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

D A Britton
* Mrs L D Cerasoli
* I C Coombes
* Ms K V Crisell

Councillors:

* A H G Davis
* Mrs P J Lovelace
* N S Penman
* M L White

*Present

In attendance:

Councillors:

J E Binns, Health & Leisure Portfolio Holder
Mrs J L Cleary, Housing & Communities Portfolio Holder
A D O'Sullivan

Also In Attendance:

Mr P Woodroof, Tenants' Representative

Officers Attending:

Ms J Bailey, G Bettle, C Elliott, Mrs L Evans, A Phipps, C Read, Ms M Stephens,
Mr R Stevens and Mr R Topliss

Apologies:

Cllr Britton

11 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by members in connection with an agenda item.

13 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

14 CCTV SERVICE PROGRESS UPDATE

The Panel considered the progress made against the recommendations of the CCTV Task & Finish Group (as set out in paragraph 1.1 of the report) which were supported by the Panel at their meeting on 15 March 2016.

Members were pleased to hear that good progress had been made in respect of the procurement arrangements for the transmission and maintenance contracts. Negotiations with BT Redcare, the only fibre-optic provider available to the Council, had resulted in £9,000 of savings to the annual transmission costs, a reduction of 10% on present contract costs.

In addition to the above, further savings of £9,300 per annum, had been identified through a collective procurement process, with Eastleigh, Fareham and Gosport Borough Council's for a CCTV control room and camera maintenance service.

Members were keen for discussions to commence with local town and parish councils with regard to their contributions to the cost of cameras in their area and the implementation of a Service Level Agreement to standardise this.

The Panel were pleased with the progress made to date in supporting and improving the CCTV service, which played a vital role in deterring and detecting crime, giving greater protection to the residents of the District.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made against the development plan be noted.

15 HOUSING SERVICE RE-STRUCTURE

The Panel received a verbal update on the progress made with the Housing Service re-structure.

Following the resignation of the Property Services Manager, the Executive Management Team had agreed to de-centralise property services by placing employees with specialist skills with their relevant departments.

The Housing Service had therefore been re-structured to accommodate these employees who had now been amalgamated with existing teams under the Community Service Manager, the Housing Service Manager and the Policy and Strategy Service Manager. The latest structure charts for these teams were circulated to members.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community expressed the view that the incorporation of property services employees would provide greater control of housing maintenance and repair activities and would ensure that works would be completed within deadlines.

Members thanked officers for the update.

16 COUNCIL HOUSING BUY-BACK & DEVELOPMENT UPDATE 2012/13 - 2015/16 AND FUTURE STRATEGY 2016/17 - 2018/2019

The Panel considered the Council's approach to the delivery of new council housing and the progress made against the housing buy-back & development programme over the last four years. The Panel also considered the future development programme for the next three years.

The Panel noted that as a result of changes to the housing finance regime and the agreement of the Cabinet to invest additional funds of approximately £7 million per year for five years, the Council had been able to start a programme in 2012 for the acquisition and development of housing stock. This had been achieved by purchasing former council homes previously sold under Right to Buy, development of new build homes on housing portfolio land, or by purchasing S106 units for private sector developers.

During the period 2013-2016 the Council had acquired 135 which were previously sold under Right to Buy, had completed 4 one-bed units built on a previous garage site in Totton and purchased 4 two-bed units in Milford on Sea.

Members noted that the future strategy would be to as a minimum maintain the size of the Council's existing housing stock. As the Council sold an average of 30 homes per year through the Right to Buy scheme, the Council would aim to acquire or develop on average 30 units per year.

Officers were hopeful that this could be achieved and schemes had already been identified. In particular, it was hoped that 35 units could be developed on the Compton and Sarum sites in Totton, and 20 units at Stocklands also in Totton. It was also hoped that the Council could purchase 40 units from a developer in Ringwood.

Officers informed members that through the local plan review, there would be further opportunities to purchase properties on new developments which would enable the Council to move away from the current reliance of purchasing through buy-back of houses previously sold under Right to Buy.

Members expressed their concern regarding the impact of new Government policy on the Council's ability to maintain and increase housing stock through the introduction of "the sale of higher value vacant housing" scheme which would come into force in April 2017. Officers were currently awaiting details of this policy. Members requested that this issue along with the new Government policy "pay to stay" be discussed at the Panel's meeting in November.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) That the Strategy be recommended to the Cabinet for adoption; and
- (c) That the "sale of higher value vacant housing" and "pay to stay" be added to the Panel's work programme for discussion in November.

17 HEALTH & LEISURE SERVICE UPDATE

The Panel considered the progress of the recent management restructure of the Health and Leisure Service, together with the future vision and business strategy for the service.

The new management structure, which included a new centralised team based at Appletree Court and new teams at each of the Health and Leisure Centres, had been in operation since 1 September 2016. The Leisure Service also now had a dedicated Senior Surveyor, responsible for a small maintenance team. It was hoped that this would enable the Service to complete planned maintenance work and projects on time and to budget.

The broader fundamental service review for the Service would commence in March 2017.

Members expressed the view that the structural changes would ensure the success of the Service moving forward.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report be noted.

18 WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel considered their future work programme.

The Panel agreed that the Dibden Task & Finish Group commence a contract review of Mytime Active and report back initial findings at the Panel's meeting in January.

The Panel agreed that a Community Grants Task & Finish Group be appointed to examine the community grants process. The following members were appointed: - Cllrs Cerasoli, Davies, Penman and White.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Panel's work programme as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes be agreed;
- (b) That the Dibden Task & Finish Group commence a contract review of Mytime Active and report back initial findings at the Panel's meeting in January; and
- (c) That a Community Grants Task & Finish Group be appointed to examine the community grants process, and that Cllrs Cerasoli, Davies, Penman and White be appointed to the Group.

19 PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' UPDATES

The Portfolio Holder for Health & Leisure reported the following: -

- The Portfolio Holder was pleased that Leisure Services had a dedicated Senior Surveyor and maintenance team. He hoped that this would allow the Service to complete maintenance projects to deadlines and budgets.

- The Portfolio Holder was pleased to announce the success of the Leisure Service Big Spin event held in May which raised £18,000. This would be split equally between four local charities.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board were currently developing their Action Plan.
- The Health and Leisure Centres had achieved their summer promotions targets.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Communities reported on the following: -

- The completion of the North Milton estate was on target
- The Appletree Careline wristbands had been successfully launched
- New Milton was now a dementia friendly high street
- The Domestic Homicides Reviews were nearing completion
- Stocklands & Cranleigh – sites were progressing well
- Favourable tenders had been received for the Compton and Sarum sites
- The Portfolio Holder was pleased that the Housing Service now had its own Surveyors. She hoped this would allow the Service to progress the maintenance programme more efficiently.
- Chief Inspector Tribe would be leaving post shortly.

20 MEETING DATES 2017/18

RESOLVED:

That the Panel meets on the following dates (all Tuesdays at 6.00 p.m.) in 2017/18:-

23 May 2017
19 September 2017
14 November 2017
16 January 2018
13 March 2018

CHAIRMAN

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COMMUNITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2016/2017

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	TIMING/LEAD OFFICER
HOUSING			
Welfare Reform	To review the transition to Universal Credit and impact on residents/tenants	Report to Panel	November 2016 Ryan Stevens
Sale of Higher Value Vacant Housing & Pay to Stay Policies	To consider the two new policies being introduced by the Government in 2017.	Report to Panel	November 2016 Ryan Stevens/Richard Topliss
CRIME & DISORDER			
Statutory Nuisance Task & Finish Group	To consider findings of the Group	Report to Panel	TBC Joanne McClay
Safer New Forest Partnership Plan/Community Safety Update	To consider inputting into the Plan	Report to Panel	January 2017 Grainne O'Rourke
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE			
Health & Wellbeing of Gypsy, Traveller, Romany Community	To consider the health & wellbeing of the GTR particularly young people/children in the New Forest	Presentation to Panel	January 2017 TBC
HEALTH/LEISURE			
Community Grants	Interim Report from Task & Finish Group	Report to Panel	November 2016 Colin Read
Progress of the Health & Wellbeing Board Action Plan	To review the progress of the current action plan	Report to Panel	January 2017 Jamie Burton
Dibden Golf Centre – Mytime Active	Task & Finish Group to undertake review of Mytime Active contract	Report to Panel	January 2017 Colin Read

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