

**CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS
17th June, 2013**

Present:- Councillor McNeely (in the Chair); Councillors Goult and Astbury (Policy Advisors).

J7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

J8. PETITION - SHAFTESBURY HOUSE

It was reported that a petition had been received, containing 54 signatures, regarding the Council's decision to terminate waste collection from residents' flats. The petitioners stated that many of the residents were elderly and could not carry bags downstairs and felt it raised major health and safety issues.

Resolved:- (1) That the petition be received.

(2) That investigations take place into the issues raised and report submitted thereon in due course.

J9. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2013/14

Resolved:- (1) That the attendance of the Council on other Bodies be as follows:-

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| Rotherham Licence Watch Steering Group | Councillor Wootton (Chair of Licensing Board) |
| Rotherham Rent Bond Guarantee Scheme | Councillor McNeely 1 rep. from Improving Places Select Commission |
| Rush House Management Committee | 1 rep. from Improving Places Select Commission |
| Social Concerns Committee Churches Together | 1 rep. from Improving Places Select Commission |
| South Yorkshire Trading Standards Committee | Councillors McNeely and Wyatt |

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| Environmental Protection UK Yorkshire and Humberside Division | 4 reps. from Improving Places Select Commission Councillor Wyatt |
| Women's Refuge | 1 rep. from Improving Places Select Commission |
| Sheffield City Region Housing and Regeneration Board | Councillor McNeely |
| Yorkshire and Humberside Pollution and Advisory Council | Councillor Astbury 2 reps. from Improving Places Select Commission |

(2) That the Improving Places Select Commission be requested to nominate representation to those indicated above.

J10. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN 2012/13

Consideration was given to a report presented by Mark Scarrott, Finance Manager, which presented the unaudited outturn position on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the financial period 2012/13.

The report set out the outturn position, an overall surplus (transfer to Working Balance) of £6.801M, an increase on the budgeted sum which was in the main as a result of prudent operational and financial management achieving a series of savings whilst maximising collectable income.

Contained in the report was a summary of the key income and expenditure variances from the approved budget illustrating:-

Housing Repairs

- Underspend of £2.212M on Repairs.
- The final number of minor voids completed in year was 1,506 compared to a budget provision of 1,600
- Slippage on painting, plastering and batched repairs
- Overspend on responsive repairs budget
- Bad weather contingency/contractual risks – budget not required

Supervision and Management

- Overall underspend of £2.080M
- Comprehensive review of Service Level Agreements
- Review of procurement costs
- Support cost savings
- Savings on planned maintenance and gas/electric charges within District Heating Schemes

- Review of staffing structure
- Council-wide moratorium on non-essential spend

Negative Housing Subsidy

- Final audited 2011/12 claim resulted in the Authority paying less HRA subsidy back to Central Government than anticipated

Cost of Capital

- Overspend of £315,000 due to interest rate fluctuations during the year

Impairment of Fixed Assets (non-dwellings)

- Under self-financing the costs of impairment/revaluation of non-dwellings was a new charge to the HRA

The report also set out in detail the year end Housing Revenue Account Operating Statement for 2012/13.

Further information was provided on the main reasons for the variations against the various budget lines which made up the total expenditure.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the unaudited Housing Revenue Account outturn for 2012/13 be noted.

J11. NEIGHBOURHOODS GENERAL FUND OUTTURN 2012/13

Consideration was given to a report presented by Mark Scarrott, Finance Manager, which provided details on the Revenue Outturn position for Neighbourhoods Services accounted for in the General Fund for 2012-13.

The final 2012/13 budget for the service after in-year virements was £2.458M. The 2012/13 outturn position against budget was a net underspend of £338,000 or 13.75%) and represented an increase in the underspend of £157k previously reported, largely due to the further impact of the Council wide moratorium on non-essential spend and controlled vacancy management.

This approach had been necessary as part of a range of measures designed to ensure that the Council was able to achieve a balanced budget. It was not anticipated that this position would be replicable in future years.

Two requests to carry forward unspent balances were to be included in the Council's consolidated outturn report to Cabinet (3rd July, 2013) as follows:-

- Members' Community Leadership Fund £21,248.
- Dispersed Units (now treated as a Trading Account) £62,074.

The report set out in detail the summary outturn position for the Service and further information and clarification provided.

Reference was made and detailed appendices which provided the analysis of the key areas of underspend.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the unaudited 2012/13 revenue outturn contents be noted.

J12. AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods submitted a report on further work required in the Aids and Adaptations Service to improve the customer journey and reduce the waiting time it took for a customer to know if they had been approved for a non-urgent major adaptation.

Authorisation was also requested for additional Housing Revenue Account funding to cover the shortfall for public major adaptations.

To improve, the Service was going to completely change the way that major adaptation referrals were allocated, approved and issued to contractors by:-

- Abolishing the backlog system. The referral would be allocated from receipt and processed up to approval. Once approved it would be the responsibility of the Team Co-ordinator to issue to the contractor enabling the Service to monitor and issue major adaptations in date order
- Whilst waiting for their adaptation to be approved/carried out, customers would receive a contact every 6 weeks notifying them of current waiting time. They would have a contact name/number
- Work underway on improving the monitoring of work from the IT system to enable monitoring of workload, work flow and implementation of a check list to assist the electronic storage of documents
- Performance Management Framework implemented

Extra financial resources were required to enable orders to be processed quicker, reduce waiting times for those customers in the backlog whilst continuing to process the current year's orders. £297,716 was required to cover public adaptations which could be met from the Housing Revenue Account; £145,709 was required for private adaptations which could be met from the Right to Buy Receipts carried forward from 2012/13.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposals contained within the report and action plan submitted to reduce the backlog of non-urgent major adaptations to zero (currently 231), with an average reduction in waiting time from an

application to be processed from 6 months currently to 3 months, by 31st December, 2013, be approved.

(2) That additional Housing Revenue Account funding of £297,715 for public major adaptations and £145,709 Right to Buy receipts funding for private major adaptations be approved.

(3) That a further report be submitted at the end of quarter 2.

J13. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2012-13 INDICATIVE OUTTURN

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods which represented the indicative outturn position for the 2012/13 Capital Programme.

As at the end of 2012/13, the final indicative spend on the HIP was £21.890M compared to a budget provision of £22.777M, an underspend of £887,000 (-3.90% variance).

The report submitted provided details of savings and slippage on the individual schemes of work with the overall programme and highlighted the fact that the resources not drawn down in 2012/13 would be carried forward into next year.

Further information was provided on:-

Total Capital Works to Properties
Fair Access to All
Regeneration/Neighbourhood Renewal – Private and Public Sector
Other Public Sector

Resources not drawn down in 2012/13 due to the savings identified would be carried forward into subsequent years.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the indicative 2012/13 outturn position be noted.

J14. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: - That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended 2006 – information relates to finance and business affairs).

J15. TENDER REPORT - UPGRADING INSULATION WORKS, RAWMARSH

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods reported receipt of a tender for the upgrading works to the external envelope of 84 existing Laings Easiform type properties at Rawmarsh.

The work was part of the Three Year Housing Investment Programme for 2012/13 to 2014/15 (Minute No. 6 of Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods 28th May, 2012, refers).

Resolved:- (1) That the tender submitted by Hall Construction Group, dated 22nd April, 2013, in the sum of £731,897.08, be approved.

(2) That it be ascertained if there were any Right to Buy properties within the properties concerned and, if so, the householders be offered the opportunity to have the work carried out at their own expense.