

CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS
15th July, 2013

Present:- Councillor McNeely (in the Chair); Councillors Astbury and Goulty.

J20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this meeting.

J21. NEIGHBOURHOODS GENERAL FUND BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2013/14

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Finance Manager concerning the budget monitoring and financial forecast for the Neighbourhoods General Fund within the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate to 31st March, 2014, based on actual income and expenditure for the period ending 31st May, 2013. The forecast for the financial year 2013/14 is an overall overspend of £47,000, against an approved net revenue budget of £2.345M. Members were informed that management actions are being developed with the aim of containing the budget pressures within the approved cash limited budget by the end of this financial year.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the latest financial projection against budget for 2013/14, for the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate, as now reported, be noted.

J22. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2013/14

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Finance Manager concerning the budget monitoring and the forecast outturn position for the 2013/14 Housing Revenue Account based upon actual income and expenditure to 31st May, 2013.

Members noted that the overall forecast was that the Housing Revenue Account would outturn on budget with a transfer from working balances (reserves) of £2.604M which was a minimal increase of £5,000 above the approved budget.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the latest financial projection against budget for the Housing Revenue Account for 2013/14 be noted.

J23. REVIEW OF LOCAL LETTING POLICY ON ST JOHNS GREEN, KIMBERWORTH PARK

Further to Minute No. 44 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods held on 26th November, 2012, consideration was given to a report presented by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services stating that Local Letting Policies (LLPs) were first implemented in Rotherham in December 2008 and have been reviewed annually.

The submitted report requested approval to amend the current LLP applicable to fifteen residential properties at St. John's Green, Kimberworth Park, to include an age restriction criteria. The St John's Green area LLP was currently based upon management and employment criteria. However, prevailing issues with anti-social behaviour in this Safer Neighbourhood Team PACT area, coupled with tenancy management issues, had prompted an urgent review of the LLP to strengthen its effectiveness. This was part of a wider approach to tackling crime and anti-social behaviour-related issues in the area and creating a more sustainable locality.

The intention of this approach was also to address the issues within the area which were having a negative impact upon the number of applicants seeking to move into the area. In view of this, approval was sought to amend this specific LLP as a matter of urgency, outside the normal annual LLP review cycle. The proposed amendment to the LLP had the support of Safer Neighbourhood Team partners and Ward Members.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the amendment to the St John's Green, Kimberworth Park, Local Lettings Policy, to include age related criteria for letting to applicants aged 40 years and over, be approved.

(3) That the details contained in Section 7.3 of the submitted report, relating to the Council's reserved right not to offer a property and the approach to be adopted with regard to lettings at St. John's Green, Kimberworth Park, be noted.

J24. EXTERNAL STOCK CONDITION SURVEY OF HRA DWELLINGS

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services concerning the need to commission a 10% external stock condition survey of Housing Revenue Account-funded properties to:-

- (i) inform the 2014/15 thirty years' Housing Revenue Account Business Plan refresh and the subsequent budget;
- (ii) provide meaningful data for input into the new Keystone Asset Management System;

- (iii) inform the development of the Housing Investment Strategy; and
- (iv) aid planning of works packages and reduce risk around cost due to inadequate and inaccurate information.

The submitted report contained options and costs for the delivery of this work, including the appropriate timescales, capacity and skills required. The basis of the report had been developed with the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services' Finance Team and the Strategic Asset Management team.

During discussion, Members referred to the level costs detailed in the submitted report, as well as the need for staff training to be arranged, enabling them to achieve RICS accreditation.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the requisite funding be allocated for the external stock condition survey, as described in the report now submitted, from the Housing Revenue Account reserve, as identified by the Director of Finance.

(3) That, due to the nature of the requirements and the timescales within which this survey and data were required, external resources be engaged for delivery of the survey.