

**CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS
4th November, 2013**

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

J44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor McNeely declared a prejudicial interest in Minute No. 45 (Shaftesbury House) as she was a Ward Councillor for the area.

J45. PETITION - PARKING AT SHAFESBURY HOUSE

It was reported that a petition had been received, containing 45 signatures, regarding a parking permit scheme at Shaftesbury House. Now residents realised the full implications of the scheme they were no longer in favour of its introduction.

It was noted that the Cabinet Member, in the capacity of Ward Councillor, was to meet with the Area Housing Officer and Parking Services Manager to discuss the situation.

Resolved:- That the petition be noted.

J46. NEIGHBOURHOODS GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013-14

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods in relation to 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 September, 2013.

The latest forecast showed an overall underspend of £104,000 against an approved net revenue budget of £2.463M as follows:-

Safer Neighbourhoods (+£14k)

- Staffing cost pressures due to lower than expected staff turnover within Community Protection
- Savings through vacancy management but pressure on income due to reduced Environmental Protection Act applications
- Statutory health and safety work on landfill sites

Business Regulation (-£36k)

- Pressures on staffing costs within Health and Safety, Food and Drugs and Animal Health budgets
- Offset by additional income from Dignity contract and savings within Trading Standards due to vacant posts

Housing and Communities (-£31k)

- Forecast underspend on both Area Assemblies and Supplies and Services as a result of the moratorium on non-essential spend
- Partially reduced by a small overspend on Anti-Social Behaviour due to lower than expected staff turnover
- Underspend also within Community Leadership Fund

Strategic Housing and Investment Service (+£6k)

- Small shortfall on staffing budget

Housing Options (-£49k)

- Overall underspend on the Dispersed Units Trading Account
- Small savings on Transport and Supplies and Services within the Private Sector Adaptations Service
- Projected overspend on the Key Choices Property management Service as a result of lower than anticipated income

Central (-£8k)

- Small underspend due to savings on Supplies and Services

To date there had been no spend on Agency or Consultancy within Neighbourhoods' General Fund budgets.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the latest financial projection against budget for 2013/14 noted.

J47. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING 2013-14

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods on the Housing Revenue Account which was forecasting an outturn on budget with a transfer to working balances (HRA reserves) of £1.912M, a reduction of £6879,000 against the approved budget.

Appendix A of the report provided the Budget Operating Statement for 2013/14 showing the various income and expenditure budget lines which made up the net cost of delivering the Service. The latest forecast net cost of Service was £6.302M, together with Revenue contribution to Capital costs and interest received, would result in an overall deficit of £1.912k to be transferred from Working Balances.

Expenditure

Based upon expenditure and commitments to date, total expenditure was forecast to outturn at £72.858M compared to a budget provision of £73.090M, a decrease in spend of £232K. The main variations were:-

Contributions to Housing Repairs

- Repairs and Maintenance – currently forecasting to budget at £17.996M. The Empty Homes budget was difficult to forecast and

had been set at an estimated 1,500 minor voids a year. At the end of Quarter 2 there had been 123 more completions than budgeted due to an increase in the number of evictions and the impact of the Welfare Reform as more tenants requested a transfer to smaller properties

- There was an overall forecast overspend on cyclical works mainly around fixed wire testing and gas servicing together with an increase in responsive repairs
- Offset by forecast underspends within Planned Works budget

Supervision and Management

- Forecast to outturn at £20.033M, overall overspend of £32k due to lower than expected staff turnover and slippage on implementing the review of structures across a number of teams. There had also been a transfer to the Furnished Homes reserve due to additional income as more clients used the Scheme

Income

- Total forecast income collectable was £79.358M, an increase of £455k above budget of £78,903M
- Dwelling rental income was projected to over-recover by £85k after allowing for 2% loss of income
- Non-dwelling rents were also forecast to slightly over-recover against budget by £6k due to additional income from garage sites
- Income from charges for services and facilities were forecasting an outturn of £3.883M, an over-recovery of £281k mainly due to additional income on Furnished Homes as a result of an increase in the number of clients. However, there was a forecast under-recovery of income from clients using Sheltered Neighbourhood Centres services as tenants opted out of the laundry charge and more than the anticipated level of voids on District Heating Schemes resulting in a slight under-recovery of income
- Other fees and charges were forecasting an over-recovery of income of £82k related to additional unbudgeted income in respect of the sale of tenants contents insurance, recovery of court costs and income from utility companies for the use of solar panels

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- Void turnaround times and the condition of properties
- Lettings Policy

Resolved:- That the latest financial projection against budget for 2013/14 be noted.

J48. 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 2 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual).

J49. INTRODUCTORY TENANCY REVIEW PANEL

It was noted that an Introductory Tenancy Review Panel had been held on 20th September and 21st October (reconvened), 2013, comprising Councillors Tweed (in the Chair), Dodson and Ellis to review a decision to terminate an Introductory Tenancy.

The decision made by the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer to serve a Notice of Proceedings of Possession on 15th August, 2013 had been confirmed by the Panel.

Resolved:- That the Panel's decision be noted.

(Exempt under Paragraph 2 of the Act - information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)