

**CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS
2nd February, 2015**

Present:- Councillor Godfrey (in the Chair); Councillors N. Hamilton and Wallis.

J101. MR. JOHN BRAYSHAW, PRINCIPAL OFFICER, HOUSING, ASSET MANAGEMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

The Director for Housing, Asset Management and Neighbourhood Services, informed the Cabinet Member about the sad death of Mr. John Brayshaw, Principal Officer, who had recently passed away whilst in service.

John had worked for the Council and had made a positive and lasting contribution to the organisation. He would be missed by all.

J102. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were made.

J103. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12TH JANUARY, 2015

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods held on 12th January, 2015, were considered.

Resolved: - That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record.

J104. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF AREA ASSEMBLY CHAIRS HELD ON 19TH JANUARY, 2015

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Area Assembly Chairs held on 19th January, 2015, were noted.

J105. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2014/15 UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report presented by the Director for Housing, Asset Management and Neighbourhood Services (Environment and Development Services Directorate), that provided an update on the Housing Investment Programme, 2014/2015, to the end of December, 2014. The report provided budget monitoring updates on each of the headings within the overall programme, the original budget, the forecast and the variance.

To December, 2014, the budget was reporting a decrease in spend of £34,898,825, against the original 2014/2015 budget of £35,004,000.

Large variations where spend was exceeding budget by a large amount related to the Refurbishment, Empty Homes, Lady Oak Flats Environmental Improvements and Non-traditional Investments.

Discussion followed and the following questions were raised: -

- The Local Authority's policy of installing walk-in showers in empty bungalows. Following contact from a member of the public, the Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods asked whether there would be a programme of installations throughout the Council's housing stock? - The Director referred to advice taken from Occupational Therapy, the need to retain public choice – many tenants would opt to retain a bath, for example – and the likely costs involved;
- Private Sector adaptations – a review was ongoing;
- HCA new builds.

Resolved: - That the report be received and its content noted.

J106. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2014/2015

Consideration was given to the report presented by the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Finance Manager that presented a forecast outturn position for the 2014/2015 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) based on actual income and expenditure to end of December, 2014.

Overall, it was forecast that the HRA would outturn on budget with a transfer to the working balance (reserves) of £0.693million, a reduction of £2.133m against the approved budget. The net cost of the Service was a surplus of £9.136 million before interest and a contribution to Capital.

The submitted report outlined the considerations taken into account when monitoring the budget, including the Revenue Contribution to Capital costs, interest received, debt management costs and cost of capital charges.

Only Debt Management Costs were forecast to be slight higher than budgeted.

Resolved: - That the report be accepted and the latest financial projected outturn based on forecasts to end of December, 2014, be noted.

J107. NEIGHBOURHOODS GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2014/2015

Consideration was given to the report presented by the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Finance Manager that presented a forecast outturn position for the 2014/2015 General Fund Revenue based on actual income and expenditure to end of December, 2014.

The forecast for the financial year was an overall underspend of £761,000 against an approved net revenue budget of £1.513million.

The submitted report outlined the new budget available for each Service Area, the forecast outturn, the variance from the net budget and the percentage variation.

The net budget had increased by £846,000 since the previous report due to the restructure that had incorporated the Community Cohesion Service Area. Housing and Community Services had been renamed Housing and Estate Services.

The Strategic Housing and Investment Service was the only Service Area projecting a budget pressure of £64,000. The over-spend related to anticipated write-offs, staffing budgets, outstanding debts and a shortfall of projected income.

Resolved: - That the report be received and the latest financial projection to the end of December, 2014, against the budget for 2014/2015 be noted.

J108. MEMBERS COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FUND - FLEXIBILITY TO CARRY FORWARD UNDER-SPEND

Consideration was given to the report presented by the Director for Housing, Asset Management and Neighbourhood Services, that outlined the current position relating to expenditure of the Community Leadership Fund in 2014/2015.

The submitted report outlined the purpose of the Community Leadership Fund. The balances for each Elected Member as at 27th January, 2015, were included in the report.

Elected Members had the option to carry-forward funding an allowance of up to £1,000 per year. At the end of the 2013/2014 financial year 80% of Members opted to carry-forward monies, the majority between £200-300. At the end of the 2013/2014 financial year, any under-spends lost from Elected Members would be recovered into a One Town Once Community small grants panel that organisations could submit a bid towards.

The Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods requested that Elected Members with current balances of above £1,000 be written to urging them to spend their allocation before the end of the financial year.

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

(2) That a maximum carry-forward of £1,000 per Elected Member into the 2015/2016 financial year be approved.

(3) That Elected Members with a balance of greater than £1,000 be written to explaining the arrangements.

J109. HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORT - QUARTER 3 2014/2015

Consideration was given to the report presented by the Director for Housing, Asset Management and Neighbourhood Services that provided a performance indicator report for Quarter 3 in relation to Housing and Neighbourhoods.

The performance indicators were organised by each Corporate Plan Priority and were assessed and given a RAG rating.

Thirteen of the fifteen performance measures were on track. The two failing measures related to the number of households living in temporary accommodation and rent collection and tenant arrears. Commentary was provided in relation to each Red rated performance: -

- **Measure Ref No. 11 (NAS 77) - Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit**

The outturn for December 2014 was higher than the control target and was equivalent to around £570,000.

Arrears recovery had been significantly affected due to the database system being off-line for around 5 consecutive weeks so that only basic arrears recovery actions could be undertaken during that time.

The roll-out of Universal Credit was also likely to negatively affect this outturn.

The submitted report outlined the actions that had been put in place to improve performance.

- **Measure Ref No. 12 (NAS 82) – Number of households living in temporary accommodation**

There had been an increase in the number of households living in temporary accommodation since Quarter 1. However, numbers in Rotherham were still low in comparison nationally.

Households leaving Home Office accommodation continued to be the largest cohort.

Over 500 households had been prevented from becoming homeless since April.

Resolved: - That the report be received and its content in relation to performance monitoring to the end of Quarter 3, 2014/2015, be noted.

J110. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND THE 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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in those paragraphs, indicated below, of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

J111. REVIEW OF GRANT ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUPPORTED TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Further to Minute No. J83 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods held on 1st December, 2014, the report now presented by the Director of Housing, Asset Management and Neighbourhood Services, outlined the options available relating to the current grant arrangement with the South Yorkshire Housing Association who provided supported accommodation to people who would otherwise be homeless.

Three options were presented for the future operation of the Service.

Resolved: - (1) That the current grant arrangement for 28 properties currently leased to South Yorkshire Housing Association (supported by Rush House and Target Housing) be ended.

(2) Renew the 28 leases by charging market rent to South Yorkshire Housing Association.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – Information Containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information).

J112. OBJECTIVE ONLINE SOFTWARE SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION PORTAL)

Consideration was given to the report presented by the Senior Research and Spatial Analysis Officer (Environment and Development Services Directorate) that outlined the tendering process that had been undertaken in relation to the software that the Council used for the preparation, publishing, on-line consultation and examination of the Local Plan. The Council used Objective Online for this provision.

Investigation of the marketplace had led the Council's IT Service and Procurement Team to conclude that the current supplier, Objective Online, was the only provider that had the features and ability to meet the Council's statutory duty. All staff were fully trained, it posed no risks and was the market leader. Objective Online would provide continuity for both the Council and the public users of the system.

Resolved: - That the contract for support and maintenance of the Objective Online software be exempt from the provisions of Standing Order 47.6.2 (requirement to invite at least 2 oral or written quotations for contracts with a value of between £5,000 and £20,000) and the contract be awarded to Objective Corporation UK Ltd.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – Information Containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information).

J113. STAGE 3 COMPLAINT PANEL

The outcome of the Stage Three Complaints Panel held on 23rd January, 2015, and comprised of Councillors Buckley (in the Chair), Ellis and Whysall was noted.

(Exempt under Paragraph 2 of the Act – information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual).

J114. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved: - That the next meeting take place on Monday 2nd March, 2015, to start at 10.00 a.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.