

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive of Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room One, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Monday 2nd April 2012 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Councillor E. Watts – Chair

Members:-

Councillors K. Bowman, D. Kelly, D. McGregor, B.R. Murray-Carr and A.F. Tomlinson.

Officers:-

W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer), K. Hopkinson (Director of Development), B. Mason (Director of Corporate Resources), J. Fieldsend (Senior Principal Solicitor), P. Campbell (Head of Housing) (to minute no. 1039), P. Brown (Chief Executive's and Partnership Manager) (to minute no. 1033), S. Chambers (Communications Officer) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

Also in attendance was Mark Axler (Maon Ltd) Consultant for the Royal British Legion (to minute no. 1033).

1027. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor A.M. Syrett and P. Hackett (Director of Health and Well Being) and S. Tomlinson (Director of Neighbourhoods).

1028. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

1029. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

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1030. MINUTES – 5TH MARCH 2012

Moved by Councillor D. Kelly, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor

RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on 5th March 2012 be agreed as a true record.

1031. RECORD OF DECISION NOTICES FROM THE JOINT BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13TH MARCH 2012

Moved by Councillor A. F. Tomlinson, Councillor E. Watts

RESOLVED that the decision notices from the Joint Board meeting held on 13th March 2012 be noted.

1032. ROYAL BRITISH LEGION ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

Mark Axler (Consultant), presented the report on behalf of the Royal British Legion to seek Executive approval for Bolsover District Council to support the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

The pledge to support the Covenant would provide the Authority with the opportunity to access funding for projects that would be of benefit to serving members and ex-members of the armed forces and their families, and also to the wider community.

Members were advised of a number of projects that had been undertaken in other authorities, including an initiative to bring derelict properties back into use.

Mr. Axler responded to Members' questions and confirmed that the total funding of £30 million would be allocated over a period of 4 years.

Thanks were extended to Mr. Axler and the Partnership Team.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor E. Watts

RESOLVED that (1) the report be received;

(2) Members agree to support the Armed Forces Community Covenant for the Bolsover District Council area;

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(3) Members agree for the Chief Executive's and Partnership Manager to pursue options with neighbouring authorities in respect of the Pledge and the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme on behalf of the Authority.

REASON FOR DECISION: **To gain approval for support to an Armed Forces Community Covenant for Bolsover District Council area.**

(Chief Executive's and Partnership Manager)

The Chief Executive's and Partnership Manager and Mark Axler left the meeting.

1033. RECOMMENDED ITEM FROM SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PATCH MANAGEMENT POLICIES, UNTIDY LAND AND BUILDINGS (UPDATED) POLICY

The Head of Housing presented the updated Untidy Land and Buildings policy to seek Members' approval. The policy had been previously considered by the Sustainable Scrutiny Committee.

Members raised concerns that the Authority did not have a prescribed standard to which gardens of Council properties should be kept and added that the Council's current subjective approach to the definition of an untidy garden was inadequate.

Officers advised that the current Council tenancy agreements included an expectation of the reasonable upkeep of gardens, which was looked at on a case by case basis. Responses were also provided in respect of the practical, legal and cost implications of introducing a more prescriptive standard and the enforcement powers available. The Council's powers in respect of privately owned gardens were also discussed.

Members requested that the issue of untidy gardens be referred to the Senior Management Team for a broader discussion of the legal and general issues and a report outlining recommendations, legal and practical issues be provided to Executive. At the suggestion of the Chief Executive Officer, it was agreed that Cabinet would also consider the issue and refer comments to the Patch Management Group.

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Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr.
RESOLVED that (1) approval of the policy be deferred;

(2) Senior Management Team provide a report to Executive on the issue of untidy gardens to include recommendations, options and implications.

(3) Cabinet consider the issue of untidy gardens and refer comments to the Patch Management Group.

REASON FOR DECISION: **To enable further discussion of the policy in respect of untidy gardens.**

(SAMT/Cabinet)

1034. RECOMMENDED ITEM FROM SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PATCH MANAGEMENT POLICIES, PUBLIC OPEN SPACES POLICY

The Head of Housing presented the report to seek Executive approval of the Public Open Spaces Policy. This had had been previously considered by the Sustainable Scrutiny Committee.

The policy was intended to provide quality green spaces and to enable communities to be more involved in their management and development. The policy related to open space that was freely accessible and in public ownership or management.

Questions were raised with regards to the consultation process undertaken.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the policy be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION: **To formally adopt a Policy for the provision, enhancement and protection of Public Open Spaces.**

(Assistant Director Leisure)

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1035. RECOMMENDED ITEM FROM SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration requested that the item be deferred to allow Members sufficient time to consider the strategy in detail.

Moved by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr **RESOLVED** that the item be deferred.

REASON FOR THE DECISION: To allow Members sufficient time to consider the Homelessness Strategy in detail.

1036. WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER 3 UPDATE

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration presented the report to provide an update to Members on the Working Neighbourhoods Fund for the 3rd quarter of 2011.

There had been little change to unemployment figures since the last report. Members' attention was drawn to the progress on the various projects including the apprenticeship programme.

Members were advised that all monies received through WNF had now been allocated and no further funding was available.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor D. Kelly **RESOLVED** that the report be received.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure that WNF is targeted to best effect.

1037. BUDGET UPDATE

The Director of Corporate Resources presented the report to update Members on the current budget position and progress in implementing the range of savings in respect of the General Fund agreed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Members were advised that the purchase of the Council's housing stock had been successfully completed and details of the relevant loan interest rates were provided in the appendix to the report. It was added that significant savings had

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been achieved as a result of the settlement, which would be reflected in the updated HRA Business Plan.

A further detailed report would be provided to a future meeting.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: **To update Members on the current budget position.**

1038. HOUSING QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Head of Housing drew Members' attention to the report which had been previously circulated. The report provided updates in respect of tenant arrears, implementation of mobile working, Choice Based Letting and repairs. A further report in respect of the first quarter of 2012 would be provided to the next meeting.

Questions were raised with regard to the new Choice Based Letting system and the criteria for allocation of properties. The Head of Housing confirmed the points and banding system used in the allocation process, which had been previously approved.

Members requested that once the Choice Based Lettings system had been established for a period of six months, that the Head of Housing provide a trend analysis of properties allocated, to include details of migration between the different areas within the district.

Members were asked to consider approval of the Bolsover Homes Standard which was appended to the report. This was intended to improve upon the Decent Homes Standard and include wider environmental issues and communal areas, as well as the interior quality of the property.

The Head of Housing drew Members' attention to the report which detailed the actions taken to increase the likelihood of the Council winning Supporting People contracts, which included warden and lifeline services.

Moved by Councillor K. Bowman, seconded by Councillor D. Kelly
RESOLVED that (1) the report is noted;

(2) the Bolsover Standard be adopted as the replacement for the Decent Homes Standard;

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(3) working with other districts to maximise the opportunities provided by Derbyshire Accommodation Support Team tendering for warden services be supported.

REASON FOR DECISION: To adopt a Bolsover Housing Standard.

(Head of Housing)

The Head of Housing left the meeting.

1039. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

1040. PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS WITH CO-OPERATIVE BANK FOR PROVISION OF BANKING SERVICES FOR A FURTHER 5 YEAR PERIOD FROM APRIL 2012. EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 3

The Director of Corporate Resources presented the report to seek Members' approval to enter into a 5 year contract with the Co-operative Bank for the Council's banking services.

Members were advised that previous tender exercises had attracted little or no interest from financial institutions other than the Co-operative Bank and it had therefore been considered more time and cost efficient to seek to extend the current arrangements for a further 5 year period. The terms on offer had been benchmarked against a recent tender exercise and against what was being charged to other local authorities. This work supported the view that the terms on offer represented good value.

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Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor
RESOLVED that the Council enters into a 5 year contract with the Co-operative Bank for the provision of banking services outlined in the report.

REASON FOR DECISION: **In order to ensure that the Council continues to receive the banking services that are necessary for its continued operation as an organisation.**

(Director of Corporate Resources)

The meeting concluded at 1215 hours.