

**CABINET
7TH MARCH 2024**

PRESENT: The Leader (Councillor Miah)
The Deputy Leader (Councillor Hamilton)
Councillors Blackshaw, A. Gray, Jadeja, Jones
and Tillotson

Councillor Needham

Chief Executive
Director Finance, Governance and Contracts
Head of Legal and Elections
Director Commercial and Economic Development
Director Housing and Wellbeing
Head of Transformation, Strategy and
Performance
Head of Landlord Services
Head of Strategic Housing
Transformation and Improvement Manager
Strategic Housing Manager
Democratic Services Officer (LS)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Ashcroft

The Leader stated that this meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. He also advised that, under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

76. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS, AND OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

77. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made.

78. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

79. QUESTIONS UNDER CABINET PROCEDURE 10.7

No questions had been submitted.

80. CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN 2024-25

Considered, a report of the Chief Executive: Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-25 (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes). An agenda supplement had been published setting out 4 additional KPIs that had not been included in the report (copy filed with these minutes).

Councillor Needham, Vice-chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes). The Commission was thanked for its scrutiny of the matter.

Further to the Commission's scrutiny, the Leader referred to matters he would wish to see considered in a future delivery plan: (i) economy and growth work outside of Loughborough and (ii) development of markets.

RESOLVED

1. that the Corporate Delivery Plan for 2024-25, appended to the report and including the 4 additional KPIs referred to above, be approved;
2. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to make minor amendments to the Corporate Delivery Plan;
3. that monitoring of the Oflog (Office for Local Government) datasets continue.

Reasons

1. To identify the Council's key activities and performance indicators for 2024-25 that support the objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy (2024-2028).
2. To allow minor corrections and amendments to be made in a timely manner prior to publication and throughout the 2024-25 Corporate Delivery Plan.
3. To ensure compliance and visibility of Oflog data and analysis about performance of local government to support improvement.

81. SUPPORT FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR

Considered, a report of the Director Housing and Wellbeing: Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Needham, Vice-chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes). The Commission was thanked for its scrutiny of the matter.

A minor typographical error was highlighted in report recommendation 6, corrected in the Cabinet's decision below.

RESOLVED

1. that the budget for the Community Grants scheme be increased by £75,000 for 2024/2025;
2. that the Member Grants scheme be closed, and that for 2024/2025 £13,000 revenue and £13,000 capital budget elements be added to the Community Grants and Facilities Grants schemes respectively;
3. that the number of Community Grants rounds be increased from two to three per year;
4. that up to £30,000 be ring fenced from the Community Grants pot in 2024/2025 for grants up to a maximum of £750 and that these be fast tracked to community groups, with delegated authority given to the Director of Housing and Wellbeing to refine the final terms of grants and issue them following a recommendation from the Grants Panel. Grants over £750 will continue to be approved by Cabinet;
5. that the grants criteria be refined to include explicit reference to projects that support communities with the rising cost of living and the delivery of the Council's Climate Change Strategy, and to set out the arrangements for grants that are under £750;
6. that the Citizens Advice Bureau be funded to the value of £25,000 for 2024/2025 to provide debt advice to residents of the borough;
7. that the Director of Housing and Wellbeing in consultation with the Lead Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods be given delegated authority to make minor amendments to grants criteria.

Reasons

1. To put more money into our Community Grants scheme this year to support and grow our voluntary and community sectors.
2. To streamline the number of grants pots.
3. To provide greater opportunity to the voluntary and community sector to access the funds, maximising potential grants spend and the benefit to communities.
4. To enable groups to access smaller sums of money quickly following a positive decision by the grants panel.
5. To reflect the current context and the position around smaller grants.
6. To support residents of the borough with the cost of living.
7. To enable minor changes to be made.

82. HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

Considered, a report of the Director Housing and Wellbeing: Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Needham, Vice-chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes). The Commission was thanked for its scrutiny of the matter.

RESOLVED

1. that the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy at Appendix A to the report be approved;
2. that delegated authority is given to the Head of Landlord Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Public and Private Sector Housing to make minor amendments to the Policy.

Reasons

1. To set out the Council's policy on the delivery of repairs and maintenance services.
2. To enable minor amendments to be made.

83. SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Considered, a report of the Director Housing and Wellbeing: Sheltered Accommodation Strategy Framework (item 9 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Needham, Vice-chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes). The Commission was thanked for its scrutiny of the matter.

RESOLVED

1. that the Sheltered Accommodation Strategy Framework at Appendix 1 to the report be approved;
2. that delegated authority be given to the Director of Housing and Wellbeing to make minor amendments to the Sheltered Accommodation Strategy Framework at Appendix 1 to the report in consultation with the Executive Member for Public and Private Sector Housing;
3. that budget provisions of £47,300 be made available for the creation of a project officer, £200,000 for specialist external support, and £200,000 for costs associated with decommissioning Block A of Fielding Court;

4. that with reference to resolution 3 (above), any necessary procurement exercises be approved;
5. that Block A of Fielding Court be decommissioned pending options appraisal, and that steps be taken to prevent tenants from being financially disadvantaged because of losing their home;
6. that Block B be retained as age-designated accommodation whilst options are considered with alarm and warden support, albeit without the communal facilities at Block A, which lacks heat and hot water;
7. that a range of options for the future of Fielding Court be explored, and that a recommended option be returned to Cabinet in 2024/25 for consideration;
8. that delegated authority be given to the Director of Housing and Wellbeing, and the Head of Strategic Housing in consultation with the Executive Member for Public and Private Housing to reduce the age at which sheltered accommodation may be accessed to 55, particularly at schemes subject to an interim investment strategy, rather than identified as a priority for intervention, with any necessary amends made to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy to enable this;
9. that delegated authority be given to the Director of Housing and Wellbeing, and the Head of Strategic Housing in consultation with the Executive Member for Public Housing to reduce the age at which non sheltered, general needs 60+ bungalow accommodation may be accessed to 55, with any necessary amends made to the Council's Allocations Policy to enable this.

Reasons

1. To set out a strategy framework around the improvement of sheltered accommodation.
2. To enable minor amendments to be made in response to internal and external changes in context which have a bearing on the strategy.
3. To provide both in house and expert external capacity to progress the project, and to provide a budget for costs arising from decommissioning.
4. To support delivery of resolution 3 (above).
5. To limit capital expenditure on a scheme which has a high level of empty properties, many of which are not self-contained and do not meet the needs or aspirations of older people.
6. Properties in B Block are self-contained and are currently meeting a housing need.
7. To determine the future of Fielding Court.

8 To support the letting of sheltered accommodation, maximising rental income.

9. To support the letting of bungalows, maximising rental income.

84. HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Considered, a report of the Director Housing and Wellbeing: Housing Capital Programme (item 10 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Needham, Vice-chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes). The Commission was thanked for its scrutiny of the matter.

RESOLVED that the proposed housing capital programme budget for 2024-2025 amounting to £15,780,100 detailed at Appendix 1 to the report be approved and the Capital Plan be amended to reflect this, and that the revenue budget also be increased by £1,500,000 to repair flood damaged properties.

Reason

To undertake major works at both flood damaged and void properties, and improve the Council's housing stock, in line with the Charnwood and Decent Homes Standards.

85. GARAGE AND PARKING SITE STRATEGY

Considered, a report of the Director Housing and Wellbeing: Garage and Parking Site Strategy 2024-2029 (item 11 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

In respect of the Strategy document, officers would check whether Hawcliffe Road (Mountsorrel) was in fact Hawthorn Road and correct if necessary.

RESOLVED

1. that the Garage and Parking Site Strategy 2024-2029 at Appendix 1 to the report be approved;
2. that delegated authority be given to the Director of Housing and Wellbeing to make minor amendments to the Garage and Parking Site Strategy 2024-2029 at Appendix 1 to the report in consultation with the Executive Member for Public and Private Sector Housing.

Reasons

1. To set out a strategy around the future management of Garage and Parking Sites.
2. To enable minor amendments to be made in response to internal and external changes in context which have a bearing on the strategy.

86. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER FOR 2024/25

Considered, a report of the Head of Transformation, Strategy and Performance: Strategic Risk Register for 2024/25 (item 12 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED

1. that the draft Strategic Risk Register for 2024/25 as set out in the Appendix to the report be adopted, and that the Audit Committee monitor progress against those risks on the register by receiving quarterly monitoring reports;
2. that authority is delegated to the Chief Executive to make amendments to the Strategic Risk Register where required, in consultation with the relevant risk owner and Lead Member.

Reasons

1. To ensure that the most significant risks to the Council achieving its objectives are identified and actively managed.
2. To ensure that the Strategic Risk Register is kept up to date and relevant.

NOTES:

1. The following officers listed as present attended this meeting virtually: Director Commercial and Economic Development, Transformation and Improvement Manager, Strategic Housing Manager.
2. The decisions in these minutes not in the form of recommendations to Council will come into effect at noon on Friday, 15th March 2024 unless called in under Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 11.7. Decisions in the form of recommendations to Council are not subject to call in.
3. No reference may be made to these minutes at the next available Ordinary Council meeting unless notice to that effect is given to the Head of Democracy by five members of the Council by noon on Friday, 15th March 2024.
4. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Cabinet.