

**HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**  
**5 JULY 2016**

**Present:** Councillor James (Chair);  
Councillors David Absolom, Debs Absolom, Davies, Dennis, Kelly  
Edwards, Gittings, Grashoff, McGonigle, O'Connell, Steele and Terry.

**Apologies:** Councillors McDonald, Tickner and Rose Williams.

**1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of 16 March 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**2. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES**

The Minutes of the following meetings were submitted:

- Community Safety Partnership - 13 January 2016 and 13 April 2016.

**Resolved - That the Minutes be received.**

**3. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS**

A Question on the following matter was submitted, and answered by the Lead Councillor:

Questioner	Subject
Councillor McGonigle	Dog Warden

(The full text of the question and reply was made available on the Reading Borough Council website.)

**4. LOVE CLEAN READING 2**

Sam Shean, Streetcare Services Manager, gave a presentation the Love Clean Reading 2 programme. 'LCR2' is the second Love Clean Reading programme where several Reading Borough Council teams were brought together to deep clean streets, alleyways and towpaths around Reading that were hard to tackle due to parked cars or other access issues. Residents were invited to take part in four community events as part of this initiative. The second Love Clean Reading programme started in November 2015, just after the original scheme won a national Clean Britain Award, and was completed in April 2015.

**Resolved - That Sam Shean be thanked for his presentation.**

**5. SOCIAL HOUSING SOLAR PROJECT**

Reubena Ovuorie, Principal Property Development Officer, gave a presentation on the social housing solar project, which saw Solar Panels installed on social housing stock across the Borough. The presentation covered the project expectations and

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achievements, the installation process, tenant feedback, solar performance, income generation and the on-going risks. Reubena reported that solar panels had been installed on 457 Council houses, producing enough power for around 280 homes.

**Resolved - That Reubena Ovuorie be thanked for her presentation.**

**6. READING YEAR OF CULTURE 2016**

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report that provided an update on Reading's Year of Culture 2016 as it was approximately half-way through the year. The report gave a summary of the background to the Year of Culture, the activity to date and the planned activity through to the end of the calendar year. The report also emphasised that the Year of Culture was not an end in itself but an initial stage in a sustained programme to raise Reading's profile and reputation and to deliver the aspiration of the Culture and Heritage Strategy.

The report also referenced the potential legacy of the Year of Culture, the strong support from Arts Council England (ACE) for strategic ambition and some key activities and work programmes to help make further progress.

The report stated that the concept for the Year of Culture was to umbrella the diverse and extensive range of cultural activity and events already taking place and supplement these with 12 monthly 'Pillar' activities and themes. An outline of the 'Pillars' and a programme of activities was attached to the report at Appendix 1. An interim evaluation, which was submitted to Arts Council England as a condition of the grant funding, was attached to the report at Appendix 2. The 48 grants awarded to local organisations to directly support delivery were listed and summarised in Appendix 3. A list of current sponsors of the Year of Culture were attached to the report at Appendix 4. The July to September What's On Summer Guide was attached to the report at Appendix 5.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Hacker addressed the Committee.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the significant progress made in developing and delivering the Year of Culture 2016 to date, as set out in section 4.1 of the report, be noted;**
- (2) That the proposed programme for the remainder of the Year of Culture as outlined in Appendix I, be noted and welcomed;**
- (3) That the proposals and work streams to provide a legacy from the Year of Culture as set out in section 4.2 of the report, be welcomed and endorsed.**

**7. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2016-2021**

Further to Minute 13 of the meeting held on 18 November 2015, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report which presented the final Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021, which was attached to the report at Appendix

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1 and the Delivery Plan, which was attached to the report at Appendix 2. The report stated that the Homelessness Strategy established the Council's priorities in order to prevent homelessness and to ensure that appropriate accommodation and support was available for people who were or may become homeless.

The report stated that the final stage of consultation had run from 27 January to 23 March 2016. The report included the results of the consultation and details of the revisions made to the final draft of the strategy document. The consultation questions were attached to the report at Appendix 3 and a summary of consultation responses was attached to the report at Appendix 4.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the findings of the final Homelessness Strategy consultation be noted;**
- (2) That the final Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021 and Delivery Plan be approved.**

**8. HOUSING ANNUAL REPORT**

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report, which set out the work, achievements and performance of the Housing Service over the last financial year and key areas of work for the next 12 months.

The report stated that the Housing Service broadly consisted of Housing Needs, Tenant Services, Sheltered Housing and Housing Property Services (repairs and maintenance). The report set out the key challenges which the service had faced over the past year, mainly around the increase in homelessness and welfare reform and how the service had responded to these challenges.

The report also set out the key achievements of the service in 2015-16, which was a year of high demand on Housing Services with unprecedented change. The report also provided information on the Debt Advice Service which helped to keep rent arrears to a minimum. The report set out the performance of the Housing Service across a number of key performance indicators, which showed that the service had performed well and had improved performance in all six key areas of service. How well the service performed was assessed not only on performance indicators but also the feedback received from tenants. A tenant satisfaction survey had been carried out in 2015 by an independent company and satisfaction levels had been up from the previous year. There had also been a survey of all tenants who lived in blocks of flats and who received a cleaning service and the results had shown that satisfaction levels had gone down since the previous survey in 2009 so an action plan had been put in place.

The report set out the key strands of work that would be delivered by the service in 2016/17 and the areas of performance the service would focus on. The report also gave a profile on the planned programme of works to Council homes and the day to day repair services that would be carried out during 2016/17.

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**Resolved - That the achievements, performance and planned work programme for the Housing Service be noted.**

**9. COUNCIL HOUSING TENANCY AGREEMENT**

Further to Minute 25 of the meeting held on 18 March 2015, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report setting out the results of the consultation with tenants that took place during summer 2015 in relation to the introduction of a new Tenancy Agreement. The report also set out the changes proposed to the draft Agreement as a result of tenants and officers feedback.

The report stated that the Tenancy Agreement was subject to a formal and prescriptive consultation process with tenants. The proposed scope and timeframe for further communication with tenants and the introduction of the new Tenancy Agreement was set out in the report.

The results of the consultation with tenants was attached to the report at Appendix A. The Equality Impact Assessment that had been completed was attached to the report at Appendix B. The proposed final Tenancy Agreement was attached to the report at Appendix C. The main changes to the proposed new Tenancy Agreement were highlighted in Appendix D.

The report set out the results of the consultation. Of the 1417 completed surveys forms that had been returned, 93% of tenants found the new Agreement layout easy to follow, 96% said it was easy to understand, 92% agreed it did not contain unreasonable clauses and 91% said they had not experienced problems not covered by the conditions in the Agreement.

The report stated that following approval the next stage would be to issue a formal Notice of Variation which would be served on all tenants. The Notice would detail any changes that had been made to the Tenancy Agreement and would include a date (no less than four weeks following the serving of the Notice) when the new Tenancy Agreement would become effective. The Notices of Variation were likely to be served during summer 2016.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the results of the consultation on the proposed new Tenancy Agreement be noted;**
- (2) That the further minor changes to the proposed new Tenancy Agreement and other recommendations identified as a result of the consultation (as set out in Section 4 of the report) be approved;**
- (3) That the serving of a Housing Act 1985 Section 103 Variation Notice on tenants formally introducing the new Tenancy Agreement be approved.**

**10. RE3 WASTE STRATEGY**

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report which informed the Committee that the re3 Joint Waste Disposal Board had adopted a new

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waste strategy which was intended as a practical response to the two main waste disposal challenges facing the partnership in 2016 and beyond. These were the need to reduce costs and to achieve the 50% recycling target set by the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 (transposing from the revised EU Waste Framework Directive (2008)) by 2020.

The report stated that the re3 strategy shared the broad aims of the Waste Minimisation Strategy 2015-2020 adopted by the Council in 2015 and set targets for the partner Councils to achieve a 50% recycling rate by 2020. The full strategy was appended to the report. The strategy had four main themes, which were to reduce the net cost of waste, recycle more than 50% by 2020, planning and capacity and supportive systems and communication.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the adoption of the re3 Joint Waste Disposal Board Strategy be approved;**
- (2) That Councillors and officers continue to work closely with re3 Joint Waste Disposal Board and the other re3 council to achieve the aims of the strategy.**

## **11. WASTE OPERATIONS SERVICE STANDARDS**

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report setting out the current pressures on the waste collection service and made recommendations for operational service changes and the adoption of a Waste Operations Service Standard which would make the service more efficient, reduce costs, reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill and improve recycling rates. The service review was one of the high priority actions of the Waste Minimisation Strategy 2015-2020 action plan.

The proposed Waste Operations Service Standards document was attached to the report at Appendix A and the Waste Operations Service Standards Summary was attached to the report at Appendix B. The Equality Impact Assessment that had been completed was attached to the report at Appendix C.

The report set out the main pressures on the waste operations service and it was stated that in order to address the pressures a service review had been conducted and it was concluded that the amount of landfill waste currently being collected must be reduced and the recyclable material in grey bins diverted to the red recycling bins. In order to achieve this some of the current collection practices should be changed and a new Waste Operations Service Standard should be adopted which clearly set out what the Council would collect and the responsibilities of residents.

The report set out the current service that was provided and the main operational changes that were being proposed. The main changes included a closed bin lid policy, no side waste, a one bin policy, the removal of unauthorised bins, rationalisation of the current collection round structure and the introduction of Bank Holiday collections.

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At the invitation of the Chair, Karen Rowland from the Baker Street Area Neighbourhood Association addressed the Committee.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the results of the review of section 1K (service redesign) of the Waste Minimisation Strategy Action Plan 2016/17 be noted;**
- (2) That the Waste Operations Service Standards documents, as attached to the report at Appendix A and B, be adopted;**
- (3) That the existing waste collection rounds be re-configured with the first change being made in October 2016 and with further changes being made as required as of new properties coming on line;**
- (4) That Bank Holiday working be introduced from April 2017 subject to the necessary staff consultations being carried out;**
- (5) That the Committee be updated on the progress of the changes at the November 2016 and March 2017 meetings.**

**12. CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF THE FIRST STOP BUS SERVICE**

The Head of Customer Services submitted a report which provided details of the procurement process to be undertaken in order to put in place a contract to deliver the First Stop Bus Service and sought delegated authority to award the contract with the most economically advantageous tenderer in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The current interim contract with the Mustard Tree Foundation would expire on 8 January 2017 and a full procurement was required to comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

The report stated the service had been operational since December 2013 and since then almost 1000 people had been treated on the bus, 83% of those would have required an ambulance to be called or would have gone to A&E and required treatment. The primary objective of the service was to make sure people enjoyed their night out in Reading and it helped to reduce incidents of crime and disorder and admissions to Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments. The bus was staffed by volunteers with the medical treatment carried out by South Central Ambulance Service practitioners.

The report stated that the service also delivered additional functions during the day and was used as an educational resource for schools, youth groups and community groups to offer a mobile health, advice and outreach service to residents. This had included delivering alcohol awareness sessions to Reading school children as part of PHSE lessons and providing free HIV testing outside the railway station.

**Resolved - That delegated authority be given to the Head of Customer Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Neighbourhoods and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to enter into a contract with the successful tenderer for the provision of the First Stop Bus Service for a period of three years subject to funding being secured.**

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**13. COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2016-2019**

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report setting out the Community Safety Plan 2016-2019 for adoption. The report stated that once adopted the Community Safety Plan would run until the end of March 2019. The plan identified three overarching priorities: violent crime, exploitative crime; and vulnerable communities. The Community Safety Plan 2016-2019 was attached to the report at Appendix I.

The report set out the performance against previous priorities in the 2013-2016 plan and the changes in crime focus during this time.

The report explained that Reading's Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was required to carry out a strategic assessment of crime for its area. A different approach than had previously been taken, that reflected the changing nature of crime, had been used in the strategic assessment. The priorities had been identified by an assessment against Threat, Harm and Risk and were as follows:

- Violent Crime (night time economy)
- Violent Crime (Domestic Abuse and sexual violence)
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Adult Exploitation (sex-working, human trafficking and cuckooing)
- Vulnerable Communities (Prevent, hate crime and counter terrorism)

The report set out how the CSP structure would deliver the priorities, including who the lead agency was and provided information on the integrated offender management and the drug and alcohol delivery group.

**Resolved - That the Community Safety Plan 2016-2019 be adopted.**

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and closed at 8.10pm).