

**HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
17 JULY 2013**

Present: Councillors Hacker (Chair);
Councillors Ballsdon, Benson, Cumpsty, Davies, K Edwards,
Gittings, Rynn, Singh, Whitham and Williams;

Apologies: Councillor Terry.

1. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES

The Minutes of the following meetings were submitted:

- Community Safety Partnership - 13 March 2013.

Resolved - That the Minutes be received.

2. LOVE CLEAN READING

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report on the Love Clean Reading app, which had undergone a six month trial for reporting issues such as graffiti, fly-tipping, refuse and abandoned vehicles. During the trial only Streetcare related issues could be reported and there had been 127 registered users who had made over 500 reports. The top three issues reported were fly tipping or rubbish on the road, graffiti (non offensive) and dog fouling. Further information on the trial and an explanation of the app and how it worked was attached to the report at Appendix 1. The report explained that there was an option to increase the number of reporting categories to include other Council services such as Highways, Drainage, Parks, Building Cleaning and Housing.

Kevin Holyer, Head of Environment and Consumer Services and Chris Camfield, Street Environment Manager, gave a presentation on what the Streetcare team were responsible for, the advantages of using the Love Clean Reading app, how to report an issue using the app and showed examples of issues that had been reported through the app and how they had been dealt with during the trial period.

Resolved -

- (1) That the results of the six month trial be noted;
- (2) That the 'Love Clean Reading App' continue to be used and the number of reporting categories be increased to include other appropriate Council services such as Highways, Drainage, Parks, Building Cleaning and Housing and the app be promoted via the Council website.

3. TACT (TENANT AND COUNCIL TOGETHER)

The Director of Education, Social Services and Housing submitted a report providing background to the development of Reading's Tenant Scrutiny Panel, TACT (Tenant and Council Together). The report explained that in 2011 the Housing Service had begun working with a steering group of tenants, which had formed TACT, and along with a Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) representative (who had been employed as an independent mentor for the tenants) had been tasked with

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establishing and setting up scrutiny arrangements for Reading Borough Council tenants. The report stated that TACT had undertaken two scrutiny reviews into the appearance of estates and anti-social behaviour, which had resulted in over 50 recommendations all of which had been accepted by Reading Borough Council's Housing Management Team and TACT was currently considering the service area/provision for the third scrutiny review.

Audette Campbell and Veronica Kloppe, tenant representatives of TACT, gave a presentation to the Committee which provided a short history of TACT, how they had both become involved in the tenant scrutiny panel and the work TACT had so far achieved.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the work of TACT and its tenant members be commended.**

4. OUTREACH SERVICE FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS TENDER

The Director of Education, Social Services and Housing submitted a report on the re-tender of the outreach Service for rough sleepers to seek authorisation to enter into a new contract following the conclusion of the procurement process. The report stated that the purpose of the outreach service for rough sleepers was to reduce the number of people sleeping rough in Reading. The service provided support to rough sleepers and motivation to engage with offers of help, including drug and alcohol treatment, healthcare and accommodation.

The report explained that the current provider of the service was St Mungo Community Housing Association, which had delivered the outreach service for rough sleepers in Reading since January 2008. The option for a final contract extension had been exercised in January 2013 for 12 months and the contract was due to expire on 31 December 2013. It was proposed that the new contract for this service be awarded in September 2013 on the completion of the tender evaluation process, subject to the outcome being set out in the Decision Book. The new contract would commence on 1 January 2014 and expire on 31 December 2016, with an option to extend up to a maximum of three years from 1 January 2017, in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. This was a critical service during the winter months, when the provider coordinated the provision of emergency shelter during any periods of severe weather so it was proposed that a detailed implementation plan would be agreed so that there was no disruption to the service.

Resolved - That the Director of Education, Social Services and Housing, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Housing and opposition groups housing spokespersons, be authorised to award the contract for the provision of an Outreach Service for Rough Sleepers in Reading for a period of three years commencing on 1 January 2014 and expiring on the 31 December 2016, with an option to extend up to a maximum of three years from 1 January 2017, to the successful tenderer in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

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5. DECENT NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND

The Director of Education, Social Services and Housing submitted a report on the Decent Neighbourhood Fund (DNF) which had been established by the Housing Service and funded from the Housing Revenue Account (the rental income received from tenants). The report also set out the scope of the funding and informed the Committee on what estate improvements had been achieved to date.

The report stated that in order to invest more money to improve neighbourhoods the Housing Service set up the DNF in 2009/2010 with the aim of improving local neighbourhood estate areas and it was a condition that the money spent must be shown to benefit Council housing estates and tenants. The Joint Consultative Committee (JCC), a tenant policy group, were involved in agreeing the prioritisation of areas/neighbourhoods and the types of projects the fund (£490,000) could be spent on. It had been agreed with the JCC that around 70% of the DNF should be targeted at existing Thriving Neighbourhood Areas, particularly Whitley, East Reading (Orts Road) and Southcote and the remaining 30% was to be spread throughout other estate areas across the Borough.

The report set out the range of different projects which had been funded from the 2012/2013 budget and the priorities which had been set for 2013/2014. The 2013/2014 priorities had been based on the outcomes from the tenant satisfaction survey results 2011 and 2012, Thriving Neighbourhood Action Plans, Tenant Scrutiny Inspection reports, Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) priorities, Health and Safety issues and corporate priorities of the Council. The report also included a list of potential commitments for 2013/2014 which had been submitted last year when funding had no longer been available.

Resolved - That the report be noted and the approach to tenant and community engagement in setting local priorities for investment be endorsed.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and closed at 8.00pm).