

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 12 JUNE 2017

Present: Councillor Lovelock (Chair)

Councillors Duveen, Eden, Ennis, Gavin, Hacker, Hopper, Hoskin, Jones, Page, Skeats, Stevens, Terry and White.

2. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved -

That pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of item 3 below as it was likely that there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to that Act.

3. BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY - RELOCATION

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on a proposal to grant a lease to Berkshire Family History Society of part of the 2nd Floor, Reading Central Library. The report also sought approval to waive 50% of the back rent in relation to BFHS current occupation of part of Yeomanry House.

The proposed terms of the lease agreement were attached to the report at Appendix C and the area of the library to be leased was shown on a plan attached to the report at Appendix D.

Resolved -

- (1) That Berkshire Family History Society be granted a lease of part of the 2nd Floor of Reading Central Library, as shown on the plan attached to the report at Appendix D, on the terms outlined at Appendix C to the report;
- (2) That 50% of the back-rent on West Wing, Yeomanry House be waived, subject to Berkshire Family History Society vacating the West Wing which they currently occupied under a Tenancy at Will since expiry of their lease in May 2013.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 3).

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 10 April 2017 and 24 May 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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5. DRAFT OUTTURN POSITION 2016/17

The Director of Finance submitted a report setting out the draft outturn position for the 2016-17 accounts for the Council, showing budget variances since the report to Council on 23 February 2016 (Minute 46 refers). The following documents were attached to the report:

Appendix A - S106 Receipts to be applied 2016/17

Appendix B - Final Accounts Process

Appendix C - General Debtor Arrears by Service

The report included a table showing the projected outturn position, with a comparison to the budget approved by Council in February 2016, and to the projected outturn position reported to Policy Committee in March 2017 (based on monitoring to the end of January 2017). The report included a commentary that summarised the budgetary position and variances for each of the directorates.

The report also set out information on capital expenditure, and the committee was asked to approve the allocation of s106 receipts and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to various capital programme schemes, details of which were set out in a schedule attached to the report at Appendix A.

The report also noted that financial regulations required Committee approval for write offs above £20,000, and set out details of four irrecoverable Business Rates write offs for approval.

Resolved -

- (1) That the projected outturn position for 2016/17 be noted;
- (2) That the use of the S106 Receipts as set out in Appendix A for part financing the capital programme and the allocation of £908k (general) CIL funding be approved;
- (3) That the write off of four irrecoverable debt over £20,000 be approved.

6. SUPPORTED LIVING RENT AND TRANSFER TO HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

The Interim Director of Adult Care and Health Services submitted a report on a proposal to increase rents in 11 Adult Social Care Supported Living properties, and to transfer six one-bedroom flats from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account.

The report explained that it was proposed to increase rents in 11 Adult Social Care Supported Living shared properties (equating to 33 tenancies), in line with similar Supported Living provision. These rents were currently well below what was

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expected to be paid for these types of supported living properties, which was typically between £120 and £130 per week, and it was therefore proposed that the rents for the shared houses without an en-suite be increased to £120 per week, and for those with en-suite to £125 per week.

The report explained that, with one exception, the proposed change would not have any impact on the tenants' personal finances, as they were receiving Housing Benefit which would continue to cover the full cost of their rent. Although the proposed rents were above the local housing allowance for the standard shared room rate, there was an exemption that allowed people to claim up to the 1 bedroom rate if the Severe Disability Premium (SDP) was included in their Housing Benefit. This type of accommodation was used to place individuals with needs that would meet the criteria for SDP, and this would ensure that current and future tenants would receive the maximum Housing Benefit to cover the increased rent. For the one tenant who was not currently eligible for Housing Benefit potential transitional arrangements to manage the increase in rent would be discussed.

The report explained that it was also proposed that six one-bedroom flats, which were also used by Adult Social Care to provide supported living, be appropriated to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The properties were let on secure tenancies, and housing legislation dictated that local authority-owned properties on these arrangements should be accounted for in the HRA. Rent levels would remain the same as a result of the transfer, and the asset would be transferred from the General Fund to the HRA in a way that was cost neutral to the General Fund.

A review of a sink fund which was used to cover planned and unplanned maintenance on these properties had shown that it was consistently underspent and carried forward an annual surplus. It was therefore proposed that £40,000 of this fund be taken as a saving for the next three years, which could be achieved without detriment to the properties.

Resolved -

- (1) That the proposal to increase the rents in 11 Supported Living properties so that they were in line with other similar Supported Living provision be agreed;
- (2) That the transfer of 6 x 1 bedroom flats from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account, and the associated financial realignment between the two accounts, be approved;
- (3) That £40,000 of the existing £160,000 'sink fund' be used as a saving for the next three years.

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7. CONTRACT AWARD - MEASURED TERM CONTRACTS FOR ELECTRICAL TESTING, ELECTRICAL REPAIRS & REWIRES

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking authority to award 'measured term' contracts for the provision of electrical testing and electrical repairs & rewiring, relating to the repair and maintenance of the Council's Housing Stock.

Resolved -

That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Housing, the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal & Democratic Services, be authorised to award a measured term contract for Electrical Testing and a measured term contract for Electrical Repairs and Rewiring, both for a period of three years with an option to extend for two further consecutive periods each of one year.

8. CONTRACT AWARD - CORPORATE MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL TERM CONTRACTS

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking authority to award contracts for the delivery of mechanical and electrical service contracts to corporate buildings and schools.

Resolved -

That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal & Democratic Services, be authorised to award contracts to contractors providing the best bids for the delivery of mechanical and electrical service contracts to corporate buildings and schools, for an initial period of five years, with an option to extend for two further consecutive years in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

9. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Acting Chief Executive submitted a report asking the Committee to make appointments or nominations to outside bodies for the Municipal Year 2017/18, or longer where required. A schedule of outside body appointments showing the Group Leaders' recommendations had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Resolved -

- (1) That the following be nominated or appointed (as indicated) to serve as the Council's representatives on the organisations listed below, for the Municipal Year 2017/18, or longer where indicated:

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<u>OUTSIDE BODY</u>	APPT OR NOM	REPRESENTATIVE	TERM OF OFFICE	EXPIRY
Age UK Berkshire	A	Cllr Khan	Annual	6.2018
Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE)	N	Cllrs Gittings & Terry	Annual	6.2018
AWE Aldermaston - Local Liaison Committee	A	Cllrs Stanford-Beale & Livingston	Annual	6.2018
Berkshire Community Foundation	N	Cllr Ayub	3 years	6.2020
Berkshire Historic Environment Forum	A	Cllr Hacker	Annual	6.2018
Berkshire Maestros	A	Cllr Livingston	Annual	6.2018
Berkshire Pension Fund Panel	A	Cllr Dennis	Annual	6.2018
Caversham Consolidated Charities	N	Cllr Davies	Annual	6.2018
Caversham Park Village Association	A	Cllr Robinson	Annual	6.2018
Citizens' Advice Bureau Trustee Board	A	Cllrs Duveen, Khan & Robinson	Annual	6.2018
Conservation Area Advisory Committee	A	Cllrs Rodda and Stevens	Annual	6.2018
Earley Charity	N	Mr D Sutton and Ms D Jenkins	4 years	6.2021
Girl's Trust for Educational Excellence and Enterprise	A	Cllr McElligott	Annual	6.2018
Hexham Community Association Management Committee	A	Cllr Gavin	Annual	6.2018
Kenavon Drive Management Company	N	To be confirmed	Annual	6.2018
Kennet and Avon Canal Trust	A	Cllr Gittings	Annual	6.2018
Kennet Day Nursery Association	A	Cllr McElligott	Annual	6.2018
Launchpad Reading	N	Cllr James	Annual	6.2018
Local Government Information Unit Management Committee	A	Cllr Rodda Deputy - Cllr McKenna	Annual	6.2018
Mapledurham Playing Fields Management Committee	A	Cllr Stevens & Cllr Ballsdon (Cllr Hopper appointed until 6.2018)	3 years	6.2020
Pakistani Community Association	A	Cllr Jones	Annual	6.2018
Readibus Board of Directors	A	Cllrs Duveen, Hopper, Khan, Tickner, R Williams	Annual	6.2018
Reading College Business Advisory Board	A	Cllr Pearce	Annual	6.2018

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<u>OUTSIDE BODY</u>	APPT OR NOM	REPRESENTATIVE	TERM OF OFFICE	EXPIRY
Reading Community Welfare Rights Unit Management Committee	A	Cllrs Ayub, Brock & Stanford-Beale	Annual	6.2018
Reading Deaf Centre	A	Cllr James	Annual	6.2018
Reading In Bloom Committee	A	Cllr Gavin	Annual	6.2018
Reading Voluntary Action	A	Cllr Rodda	Annual	6.2018
Riverside Day Nursery	A	Cllr Page	Annual	6.2018
Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust - Governor	A	Cllr Tickner	Annual	6.2018
South East Employers	A	Cllrs Lovelock and Page (substitutes - Cllr Livingston)	Annual	6.2018
South Reading Educational Trust	N	Cllr McKenna	Annual	6.2018
Standing Committee On Archives	N	Cllr Livingston and the Head of Customer Services	Annual	6.2018
University of Reading Court	A	The Mayor	Annual	6.2018

- (2) That the appointments or nominations be made on an "or nominee" basis where the organisation in question was willing to accept this arrangement.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and closed at 6.50pm).