

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 12 September 2017

Present:

Councillor Edwards (Chair)
Councillors Bialyk, Brimble, Denham, Gottschalk, Leadbetter, Morse, Packham and Sutton

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Director (BA), Director (DB), Director (JY), Interim Director Public Realm, Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support, Service Lead Housing Assets and Democratic Services Manager (Committees)

77

MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 13 June and 11 July 2017 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

78

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made.

79

FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT POLICY (HOUSING)

The Director (BA) presented the report recommending a new Fire Safety Management Policy in respect of the Council's housing stock and requesting whether escape routes should be managed under a 'managed' or 'sterile' approach. Members were advised that, following recommendations of the Health and Safety Executive, the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority and Local Government Authority, officers were recommending a 'sterile/clear and clean' policy. This would be carefully phased in through facilitation, implementation, and enforcement. It was important for the policy to be fully explained to tenants and the issue of additional storage addressed.

The Portfolio Holder for City Transformation, Energy and Transport emphasised the need to ensure that there was engagement with the tenants with support from the Fire Service.

Members supported the implementation of a 'sterile/clear and clean' policy to ensure tenants safety with the need for consultation and education on its introduction. It would also be important that tenants recognised that 'escape routes' were not communal areas and should not be obscured.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

- (1) a new Fire Safety Management Policy be adopted meaning that designated escape routes and alternative routes which could be used for escape should be maintained free from all obstacles in order to secure tenant safety and the Council's compliance with statutory duties;

- (2) approach to implementing the policy be phased over time to include awareness raising, consultation on storage requirements and fire safety education; and
- (3) the additional funding required to implement the adopted option for the management of the Council's Housing Stocks, costs to be met from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as set out in the report, be approved.

80

HONORARY ALDERMAN

The report of the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support was submitted setting out a proposal to offer the position of Honorary Alderman of the City to Mrs Stella Brock in recognition of her outstanding service to the Council over her 16 years of office on the Council, including her time as Lord Mayor in 2011.

Members supported the offer of the position of Honorary Alderman to Mrs Stella Brock.

RECOMMENDED to Council that, in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor be requested to convene an Extraordinary meeting of the Council, on the rising of the Ordinary meeting of the Council on 17 October 2017, to consider granting the position of Honorary Alderman of the City to Mrs Stella Brock.

81

DELEGATED DECISION - TOPSHAM LOCK

The Interim Director for Public Realm updated Members on the delegated decision in regards to the recent inspection of the temporary piling solution to shore up the disused Topsham Lock. The inspection had indicated that the potential for failure was high. The advice was to commission a satisfactory scheme in the very near future to prevent a failure. A delegated decision had been signed to request an initial £100,000 for further inspection and remedial works to begin. These inspections would enable officers to better understand the scale of the problem and present to Members a clearer picture in terms of potential options to resolve the situation.

The Director (DB) advised Members of the current position with regards to a possible solution to shore up the lock. A further report would be brought to Members when more details of the works and costs involved were known.

RESOLVED that the delegated decision be noted.

82

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act.

REINSTATEMENT OF ECC HOUSING NEEDS SYSTEM LEAD POST

The report of the Director (BA) was submitted asking Members to support the reinstatement of the System Lead Housing post as full time permanent post from its current 0.6FTE.

Members were advised that the post was currently vacant and covered by a working arrangement with Teignbridge District Council in a secondment arrangement. The Council had received notice from Teignbridge that the arrangement would be coming to an end as of 14 October. The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018 would bring additional duties to the Council and would significantly contribute to the workload of the service including at Leadership level.

The Portfolio Holder for People supported the proposed way forward.

Members thanked the System Lead Housing for all her work in taking the homelessness service forward and wished her all the best for her future.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the:-

- (1) System Lead Housing post be reinstated, as full time permanent; and
- (2) the required additional funding of £22,580 be allocated to the Housing Needs service to fund this post, this amount having previously been removed from the budget as a saving.

RE-ORGANISATION TO INCORPORATE THE RE-BALANCING OF SKILL GAPS TO MEET SERVICE DEMANDS WITHIN PUBLIC REALM

The report of the Interim Director of Public Realm was submitted providing a business case for changes needed to rebalance the skill gaps and resource capacity to meet service demands within Public Realm. Provided Members approved the draft proposals, a consultation with staff and union representatives would take place in accordance with the Management of Organisational Change Policy.

The proposals would be cost neutral and ensure that the service was fit for purpose.

In response to Members' questions, the Interim Director of Public Realm clarified the position with regards to the training of staff effected by the proposals.

Members supported the way forward.

RESOLVED that the business case for rebalancing of the skills gap and resource capacity in Public Realm as set out in the report be approved for consultation in accordance with the Management of Organisational Change Policy.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.02 pm)

Chair

The decisions indicated will normally come into force 5 working days after publication of the Statement of Decisions unless called in by a Scrutiny Committee. Where the matter in question is urgent, the decision will come into force immediately. Decisions regarding the policy framework or corporate objectives or otherwise outside the remit of the Executive will be considered by Council on 17 October 2017.