

HOUSING & HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2017 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Lowe (Chairman)

Cllr. Parkin (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Mrs. Bosley, Dr. Canet, Dyball, Eyre, Gaywood, Halford, Horwood, Parkin, Pearsall and Scott

An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Parson

Cllrs. Firth, Fleming, Mrs. Hunter, Layland, McGregor, Piper and Purves were also present.

38. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

39. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Mrs. Bosley declared a non pecuniary interest in that she was a Council appointment to the Sencio Board.

40. Actions from Previous Meetings

The actions of the previous meeting were noted.

41. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder's update was noted.

42. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

43. Sevenoaks Leisure Centre Application for a loan by Sencio Community Leisure

The Chief Officer Communities and Business introduced the report and the Chief Finance Officer summarised the financial considerations. Members considered the report which outlined Sencio's proposals for works to Sevenoaks Leisure Centre to improve the Centre and take advantage of unmet latent demand in the town. Members were asked to recommend that Cabinet agree a 10 year loan of £600,000 for Sencio at an interest rate of 6% per annum.

The Committee received two presentations, one from Sencio and one from Createability, and Members had the opportunity to ask questions, particularly on

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the potential disruption to customers and predicted achievement of membership targets.

It was noted that the proposed terms would keep the Council protected, and the loan would see improvements for Sencio's business and Sevenoaks residents.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that Sencio be granted a loan of £600,000 over ten years at an interest rate of 6% per annum under the terms set out below

'That the agreed works will be recorded by way of a Licence for Alterations. The Licence will set out the terms for the works, and it is recommended that these will include:

- That the improvements will be made to the Council's satisfaction;
- That the works be carried out in accordance with any statutory requirements, the cost of which need to be met by Sencio prior to any work commencing;
- Sencio will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of and repairs to the works covered by the loan;
- At the end of the current lease in 2029, the Council will not be liable to pay Sencio for the improvements made.
- In the event that Sencio defaults on its loan repayment for the works, the Council will look to declare Sencio insolvent and thereby in breach of the lease and, subject to the Court's relief, terminate the same. This will be actioned if Sencio makes one loan repayment in excess of 30 days late or three loan repayments in excess of one day late.'

CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

With the Committee's agreement, the Chairman brought forward consideration of agenda items 8 and 9 (Minutes 44 and 45).

44. Statement of principles for determining the amount of a penalty charge

The Housing Standards Team Leader presented a report which sought adoption of the proposed statement of principles associated with enforcing The Smoke and

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Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/1693). He tabled a flow chart to aid understanding of the process.

Members discussed the importance of this and felt that the penalty charge could be initially tougher than suggested.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the statement of principles and associated penalties charges associated with the regulations, be approved, and Cabinet asked to consider raising the initial penalty charge to a higher figure.

45. To note minutes of the Health Liaison Board

The Chairman of the Health Liaison Board presented the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2017 highlighting some of the discussion. The minutes were noted.

46. Housing needs study

The Housing Policy Manager tabled data for additional information and introduced Michael Bullock, Managing Director of ARC, from whom Members received a presentation on the key findings of the housing needs study. His key message was that the figures would help identify imbalances and provide a better range of evidence for what the Council was trying to achieve when developments came forward. The report would be complete within the next two to three weeks.

Resolved: That the report and related housing needs evidence as set out in the consultant's presentation, be noted.

47. Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS) - Housing Provision

In accordance with Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman had agreed to accept the report as an urgent matter to provide the Committee an opportunity to consider the report before a decision was made at Cabinet on 9 March 2017. Members were reminded that they were welcome to attend Cabinet where a decision would be taken.

The Housing and Health Manager presented the report which set out information about a vacant six bedroom social housing property and sought approval to work with West Kent Housing Association to make the property available for a Syrian refugee family, if a suitable family could be identified, as part of the Kent Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS). Suitability would be based on whether the property location, adaptations and other required support services were available to meet their needs. The Council had previously not been in a position to consider housing a refugee family due to the lack of available and suitable housing.

It was noted that any potential family would be security vetted by the Home Office. The Council would have access to local authority funding, provided by the Home Office, for support services, with additional funding available for education

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and any required health and medical care costs. Extra funding may be available in exceptional cases towards updating the property, additional adaptations and to cover immediate property void costs to enable it to remain empty until a suitable family was allocated to the home. There was no financial commitment for the Council.

Some Members raised concerns on suitability of the village for someone with a disability with regards to infrastructure and location; and how much and what type of support would be available particularly whether there would be access to a car. The Housing & Health Manager advised that support would be provided for the family to learn to use local transport and infrastructure and there would be nothing preventing them learning to drive. One of the top priorities would be to register them with a dentist and doctors surgery. The feedback received from other placements within the County was not highlighting any of these issues to be a particular problem.

It was noted that local residents and the Parish Council were in support. The Chairman used her discretion and allowed an interested resident of Farningham who along with friends wished to offer support, and a representative of Sevenoaks Welcome Refugees campaign group to address the committee.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) the Council must have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups. The decisions recommended through the paper directly impacted on end users. The impact had been analysed and did not vary between groups of people. The decisions recommended through the paper would assist vulnerable families.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

48. Work Plan

The work plan was noted, subject to the addition of a report on the Kent & Medway Health and Social Care Sustainability and Transformation Plan.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.42 PM

CHAIRMAN