

CABINET

TUESDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2022

Present: Councillor M Radulovic MBE, Chair

Councillors: S J Carr
B C Carr
R D MacRae
G Marshall
H E Skinner
E Williamson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S A Bagshaw, T Hallam and J W McGrath

61 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Radulovic MBE declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in agenda item 6.2 as he supported Eastwood and District Darts and Dominoes League. Minute number 65.2 refers. Councillor R D MacRae declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in agenda item 6.1 as he was an elected Member Town Councillor at Stapleford Town Council, Minute number 65.1 refers.

62 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on October 4 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

63 SCRUTINY REVIEWS

Cabinet noted the Scrutiny Work Programme provided by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

64 SCRUTINY REVIEW-TELEPHONE ANSWERING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

The Portfolio Holder for Resources and Personnel Policy received the review from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Telephone Answering and Customer Services. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group reviewed the topic with the purpose to ensure the following outcomes were reached that the calls were answered within an agreed amount of time and the functionality of online Customer skills were agreed. Members agreed that the report was very good quality and the conclusions reflected the concerns that had affected Customer satisfaction in the past. The recommendations that had been received would support the service delivery in achieving the outcomes required.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. Staffing contingency arrangements be considered for the Contact Centre during peak times in order for residents' calls to be answered, in addition to the use of market supplements to address staffing issues.**
- 2. Key Performance Indicators be introduced in relation to departmental call answering data to monitor performance and provide feedback.**
- 3. The answerphone greeting should be standardised across the Authority and be conducted by the Individual Officer. For all Officers to follow a set process of answering calls across the Authority. Officers should only use answerphone messages if they are away for no more than 24 hours and messages should be replied to the following working day. If Officers are to be away for longer the call would enter a hunt group to be answered by a colleague. This should be included in the Customer Services' Strategy.**
- 4. The phone message that reminds customers of the possibility of resolving issues by visiting the Council's website to be reviewed, the length of the message reduced and repetition of the message reduced.**

Reason

This review was in accordance with the Council's corporate values of continuous improvement and delivering value for money.

65 RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL POLICY

65.1 GRANT AID REQUESTS FROM PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS

Members considered the requests for grant assistance in accordance with the protocol for the consideration of grant aid to parish and town Councils. Stapleford Town Council had requested that the Council committed to provide the necessary contributing third party payment in order for the application to the FCC Communities Foundation to proceed. The amount that was requested was £6,450. Payment of this amount to the Foundation would only be made in the event of Stapleford Town Council being successful in their application to the Foundation. A further request was from Kimberley Town Council for £1,948 towards the full cost of traffic management and security stewarding at its forthcoming Remembrance Sunday Parade.

Discussions ensued with the agreed amount that was requested for Stapleford Town Council, on voting the Chair used their casting vote in favour of supporting the amount requested. The request for Kimberley Town Council was agreed. It was further agreed that the protocol needs to be reviewed for Grant Aid requests for Parish and Town Councils going forward.

RESOLVED that the grants requests be approved accordingly:

- 1. Stapleford Town Council £6,450**
- 2. Kimberley Town Council £1,958**

Reason

The Council was empowered to make grants to voluntary organisations by virtue of Section 48 Local Government Act 1985 (as well as other legislation). Having an approved process in accordance with legislation and the Councils Grant Aid Policy would ensure the Councils compliance with its legal duties. The grant aid requests were in accordance with the current Corporate Plan aims for supporting people to live well and provide a safe place for everyone.

65.2 GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, CHARITABLE BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN SPORTS, THE ARTS AND DISABILITY MATTERS 2022/23

Cabinet considered requests for grant aid in accordance with the provisions of the Grant Aid Policy. Broxtowe Women's project had requested £8,000 and this was wholly covered within the provision for anticipated annual recurring grants. There had been a further request for an in principle decision regarding future rental costs of up to £3,000. However, this would not result in an immediate award and was not included within the figures outlined in the report. A grant request from Eastwood and District Darts and Dominoes League of £500 to provide trophies and other prizes to encourage people to enter competitions held by the league. This was the first time the league had requested grant aid. Members debated the grants separately and would look at options to support the Broxtowe Women's Project over premises. The Grant request for £8,000 was agreed. Councillor M Radulovic MBE left the room and did not partake in the vote for the consideration of the Eastwood and District Darts and Dominoes League. Councillor S J Carr took the chair for the item. Members agreed for the grant request of £500.

RESOLVED that the grant aid requests be approved accordingly.

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| 1. | Broxtowe Women's Project | £ 8,000 |
| 2. | Eastwood Darts and Dominoes League | £ 500 |

Reason

Consideration for not awarding the grant may have a negative impact for the users and individuals relying on the service. The Council is empowered to make grants to voluntary organisations by virtue of Section 48 Local Government Act 1985 (as well as other Legislation). Having an approved process in accordance with legislation and the Council's Grant Aid Policy would ensure the Council's compliance with its legal duties

65.3 REPORT ON RIPA (REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000) POLICY

Cabinet was updated with the revised RIPA policy. No substantive changes had been proposed. It was a requirement to update Members on an annual basis to ensure it remained fit for purpose. The policy required Members to consider the use of the RIPA powers on an annual basis to ensure it was being used in accordance with the Council's policy. Members noted that there had been no use of RIPA powers since 2015. This was because these powers were only used by the Council in relation to the

investigations into benefit fraud and the function was transferred to the Department of Works and Pensions in 2015.

RESOLVED that the updated RIPA Policy be approved

Reason

If the Council did not adopt a revised RIPA Policy and there is no common reference point, there was a risk that covert surveillance was inconsistently applied across different service areas. This might increase the risk of legal challenge and reduce the fairness and effectiveness of the Council's approach to covert surveillance. The adoption of a policy was considered to be best working practice and would assist the Council to demonstrate that it had regard to the relevant legislation and Codes of Practice.

65.4 EFFICIENCY EAST MIDLANDS COMMUNITY DONATION

Members considered the options as to how to allocate a community donation received from Efficiency East Midlands in 2022/23. As a non-profit organisation, Efficiency East Midlands chose to distribute all of its operating surplus to the membership in the form of a community donation. These donations are split proportionally between the membership based upon the expenditure through the framework. The stipulation from Efficiency East Midlands was that the donation was spent on a project that benefitted a community and was not something budgets would usually cover. The total donation to the Council was £6,489 this was donations from 2021/22 and 2022/23. No donation was received in 2020/21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Members suggested to support and finance the Warm Homes Project. Enquires would need to be made to see if that was an appropriate use of the donation. It was further suggested to set up a fund of £2,500 with £250 per organisation to offer refreshments. It was agreed to enter negotiations with Efficiency East Midlands and establish £2,500 initially.

RESOLVED that £2,500 be distributed between ten organisations that are beneficial to the community.

Reason

In accordance with the Corporate priorities Broxtowe Borough Council aims to support people to live well by promoting active and healthy lifestyles in every area of Broxtowe. To be accountable for all activities and actions and to ensure that the Council conforms to all financial regulations.

66 HOUSING

66.1 ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Cabinet was updated with the proposed amendments to the Allocations Policy. The policy outlined the methods by which the Council managed the Housing Register. It confirmed who was eligible to join the list, how applications were assessed and prioritised how properties were allocated.

Members discussed the disparity between needs in Stapleford and Beeston and with the rest of the Borough on the waiting list. This showed a need for a local lets policy and was the primary reason for changing the policy. An explanation was provided to Members around Personal Independence Payment and suitability of Independent Living.

RESOLVED that the updated Allocations Policy be approved.

Reason

Legislation required a local housing authority to adopt an allocations scheme, and, except in defined circumstances, to allocate property only in accordance with the scheme. When framing the scheme, the Council must have regard to statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State and to its own homelessness and tenancy strategies. This will assist with the Council's corporate priority of Housing and the aim of providing a good quality home for everyone.

66.2 HOME RELEASE SCHEME

Cabinet considered the new Council property downsizing incentive scheme. The Home Release Scheme was about offering tenants financial support in addition to Officer support to assist with some of the practical arrangements with moving home. The Council offers Secure lifetime tenancies to its tenants. During the course of the tenancy circumstances change that could affect living in the accommodation and its size. The Council had a high demand for larger properties based on its waiting list currently. It was acknowledged that not all tenants would want to move but by providing support and incentive this offer may open an opportunity to discuss circumstances. Currently 90 households were under occupying family homes and five four bedroomed homes were under occupied. The policy was about making better use and the management of stock and not about forcing tenants to move out of their properties.

RESOLVED that the Home Release Scheme be approved with a new annual budget of £20,000 being established as part of the budget setting process for the Housing Revenue Account in 2023/24

Reason

The Council must ensure that it was satisfied that the Homes Release Scheme payment was justified and met the Council's obligations to ensure best value. This downsizing incentive scheme would enable the Council to realign its limited housing stock to meet key housing needs and would assist the Council in discharging its statutory housing functions and its duties and obligations to specific groups such as disabled persons and those persons with high priority needs. The Scheme was permitted by virtue of Section 137 of the Local Government act 1972 which allowed the Council to incur expenditure in the interests of their local area and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. It would, in addition assist with the Council's corporate priority of Housing and the aim of providing a good quality home for everyone.

67 LEISURE AND HEALTH

67.1 PROPOSAL FOR THE PROVISION OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2022

Members considered the proposal regarding the provision of Christmas lighting for Christmas 2022. It was suggested a simplified provision for Christmas lights and associated festivities that reflected the festive season, whilst recognising the rising energy costs and cost of living. It was proposed for this year and the following two years that Broxtowe Borough Council would provide the sum of £10,000 for Eastwood, Kimberley, Stapleford and Beeston. Within this amount, the Council would supply and install a Christmas tree and the budget remaining of the £10,000 would be for the respective Town Councils to use to provide lights for the tree and other festivities as they wished to arrange. Eastwood and Kimberley Town Council had agreed to pursue this proposal. However, Stapleford Town Council had chosen not to pursue it this year. Therefore, Broxtowe Borough Council would provide the tree and lighting in Beeston and Stapleford and in addition provide the arrangements and associated festivities. It was further confirmed that the Christmas trees had been ordered and there was a three -year plan allocated to this.

RESOLVED that the proposal be approved, including a total contribution of £10,000 each to Eastwood and Kimberley Town Councils towards their Christmas tree, festive lights and the associated light switch on festivities.

Reason

To meet the Council's aims and priorities to invest in our towns and our people and provide business growth. To support healthy options to get out and about and enjoy the good quality environment and support local town centres and businesses.

68 CCITY PROJECT

Members were updated with details of the C-City project. The C-Cities congress took place in May 2022 in Gutersloh for four days with delegates from culture, politics, administration and civil society of the C-City twin towns. To make the project successful participation would be required from individuals to lead on some of the projects these included music, theatre, art, crafts and dance. A committee would be required to coordinate the overall programme. The Council would be required to manage the C-Cities project, manage a cultural directory for the Broxtowe community, support a cultural communities' committee, support a community Group leading on individual community c-city projects, bid for resources from relevant budgets, and development communications. Members discussed the opportunity to take part in a cultural exchange across Europe and recognise that the Council may have to allocate funds to ensure successful projects alongside representatives from the community to apply for funding. The project would be a catalyst for a whole generation.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The creation of terms and reference for the establishment of a Cultural Communities Committee be approved.**

2. Cabinet give authority to seek funds on behalf of Broxtowe Borough Council and support funding applications on behalf of the third sector to support the C-Cities project form relevant funding bodies.

Reason

The C-Cities project supports the key priorities and objectives of the Council including business growth, investing in towns and our people, promoting active and healthy lifestyles in every area of Broxtowe and working in partnership with voluntary groups, schools, businesses and individuals to reduce anti-social behaviour and engage the community together.

69 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet considered the Work Programme, including potential key decisions that would help to achieve the Council's key priorities and associated documents.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme, including key decisions, be approved.

Reason

The items included in the Work Programme will help to achieve the Council's key priorities and associated objectives.