

**HOUSING AND HEALTH SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MINUTES**16 March 2005
5.30pm – 6.55pm

PRESENT: Councillors James (Chair), Armstrong, Blencowe, Downham, Herbert, J Smith, Stebbings.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Smart (Executive Councillor for Housing and Health); Non-voting, co-opted members Dr D Gregson Cambridge NHS PCT) Mrs K Harris, Mrs Vine-Lott (Cambridge Tenant Federation representatives).

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**05/HH/12 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings on 19 January 2005 were confirmed as a correct record.

05/HH/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Adey and Kightley, Mr B Haywood, and Mr Hugh Gault.

05/HH/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Stebbings declared a personal interest as a Council Tenant in item 05/HH/16.

05/HH/15 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

Councillor Herbert took the opportunity, with the consent of the Chair, to raise the issue of the proposed restructuring of committees under the new decision making structure for the Council. He said that his group felt that there had been inadequate discussion or consultation on the changes affecting the Housing And Health Scrutiny Committee and the Housing Management Board and the separation of housing related issues over two different committees. It was felt that this would mean a loss of focus on and hinder integrated scrutiny of the council's housing function.

The Chair suggested that Councillor Herbert take the opportunity to make these comments at the Decision Making Working Party on 4 April.

05/HH/16 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT: REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS, CARRY FORWARDS AND SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES FOR 2004/05 (See also Record of Decision 050316/h&h/01)

The Committee considered the report by the officers on the Housing Revenue Account which looked at the latest position against revenue and capital budgets for the financial year, 2004/05, for the housing Revenue Account (HRA). It highlighted any anticipated significant variances and presented requests for approval to carry forward certain budget underspends to 2005/06, subject to final outturn.

In response to a question from Cllr Herbert, the Director of Community Services said that a report on the identification of potential sites for affordable housing would be made to committee subsequently.

The Committee agreed the recommendation for the Executive Councillor by 4 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

05/HH/17 **GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS, CARRY FORWARDS AND SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES FOR 2004/05** *(See also Record of Decision 050316/h&h/02)*

This report looked at the latest position against revenue and capital budgets for the financial year, 2004/05, for the services reporting to this Scrutiny Committee. It highlighted any anticipated significant variances and presented requests for approval to carry forward certain budget underspends to 2005/06, subject to final outturn.

The Committee agreed the recommendation for the Executive Councillor by 4 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

05/HH/18 **FOOD SERVICE PLAN** *(See also Record of Decision 050316/h&h/03)*

The officer's report reminded members that since 1 April 2000, food authorities had been subject to scrutiny by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). In September 2000, the FSA had published an Agreement, which laid down its expectations of local authorities in respect of their food safety functions. One of the requirements in the Agreement was that authorities should produce a Food Service Plan in accordance with its guidance on content and format. It was intended that the general management plan produced by the Environmental Services Division would continue to provide an overview of the whole service and be made available for Members, and that a separate Food Service Plan would be produced to meet the FSA requirements. The FSA require the Plan receive Member approval.

The Committee agreed the recommendation for the Executive Councillor by 7 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

05/HH/19 **HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE PLAN** *(See also Record of Decision 050316/h&h/04)*

The officer's report reminded members that in September 2001, the Health and Safety Commission (HSC), in its guidance to local authorities under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HASWA), introduced a requirement that they should produce a dedicated Health and Safety Service Plan and that the Plan is reported for approval to the appropriate member forum.

The Committee agreed the recommendation for the Executive Councillor by 7 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

05/HH/20 **PROPOSED RE-STRUCTURING OF SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICES**
(See also Record of Decision 050316/h&h/05)

The report proposed the merger of the sheltered housing services at Ditchburn Place and Stanton House and the CareCall service into one comprehensive service to deliver care and support services to sheltered housing tenants and community alarms customers.

It was further proposed that discussion take place with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to explore the possibility of the Domiciliary Care services based at Ditchburn Place & Stanton House being developed over time, and to look at potentially providing care services to residents of all of Cambridge City Council's sheltered housing schemes.

The Committee agreed the recommendation for the Executive Councillor by 7 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

05/HH/21 **10 YEAR ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL'S SHELTERED HOUSING STOCK (2005 to 2015)** *(See also Record of Decision 050316/h&h/06)*

The report sought approval for work to be undertaken to plan and develop a sustained 10-year capital investment programme for the sheltered housing stock that was managed and owned by Cambridge City Council. The programme would aim to modernise and improve the internal fabric of each sheltered housing scheme that had been identified as requiring improvements to its general layout and design.

Labour group members suggested that the strategy should incorporate a wider remit by looking at sites other than those proposed. The Executive Councillor agreed with the suggestion.

The Committee agreed the recommendation for the Executive Councillor by 7 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

05/HH/22 **MODERNISATION OF THE MANSEL COURT SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEME** *(See also Record of Decision 050316/h&h/07)*

The report proposed the use of the £2Million capital receipt from the sale of the Whitlocks sheltered housing scheme for use in the modernisation of a sheltered housing scheme. Following on from this it was proposed that the next sheltered scheme to undergo modernisation should be Mansel Court, and that a feasibility study be undertaken to provide a scheme and estimate of the costs of modernising the scheme to Lifetime Homes standards.

Labour group members expressed concern about what they saw as ring fencing a particular project, even if it was identifiable as a priority, before developing the strategy.

The Committee agreed recommendation 1 for the Executive Councillor by 4 votes to 3.
The Committee agreed recommendation 2 for the Executive Councillor by 4 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

05/HH/23 **WRITE OFF OF FORMER TENANT ARREARS** (See also Record of Decision 050119/h&h/08)

The report set out details of one case of former tenant arrears together with a summary of the action taken to try to recover the debt. Relevant ward Councillors would be consulted where tenancies arrears accrued prior to the publication of reports.

The Committee agreed the recommendations for the Executive Councillor by 7 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

05/HH/24 **DECISIONS BY EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR (HOUSING AND HEALTH)**

Members noted Decisions by the Executive Councillor for Housing and Health which were are reported to Committee in accordance with the Constitution:

- a Emergency Environmental Analytical Support For Council Housing Properties
- b Emergency Environmental Cleaning Contract For Council Housing Properties
- c Outsourcing Homelessness Review

MR PAUL MCCAY

Members noted that this was the last meeting which Mr Paul McCay would be attending and wished him success in his new post and thanked him for his work on behalf of the Council.

The meeting ended at 6.50pm

CHAIR