

MINUTES

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

8 DECEMBER 2015

Present:

Members:

Councillors: S Adshead
Banks
Mrs Bassadone
Conway
P Hearn
Mahmood (Chairman)
Timmis
W Wyatt-Lowe
Griffiths

Co-Optee

Councillors: Alan Horn
John Howard

Officers:	Natasha Brathwaite	Interim Group Manager - Strategic Housing
	Elliott Brooks	Assistant Director - Housing
	Mark Gaynor	Corporate Director - Housing & Regeneration
	Julia Hedger	Group Manager - Strategic Housing
	Julie Still	Group Manager - Resident Services
	Chris Troy	Group Manager - Regulatory Services
	Fiona Williamson	Group Manager - Property & Place

Also Attendance: Kayley Johnston – Member Support Officer

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

55 **MINUTES**

The meeting began at: 8:20pm after the Joint Budget Presentation presented by James Dean.

The minutes of the Housing and Community OSC meeting on 11 November 2015 were agreed by members and signed by the Chair.

56 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Cllr Mclean, Cllr Link and Cllr Imarni.

57 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was no declaration of interest.

58 **CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN**

None

59 **JOINT BUDGET OSC BUDGET 2015-16**

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe referred to page 5 you quote a large sum has this had any risk implications, has a risk assessment been done, and page 6 the provision is there a reason why it's done a year in advance.

J Still said it's not really counted 16/17 but 17/18 there is provision expected at this time – Relates to the reduction in funding for the Tour of Britain event which has been removed for 16/17 but there is an expectation that Dacorum will host a stage in 17/18 and the budget will be reinstated.

M Gaynor added to that saying there is assurance for the ability to change this.

Cllr Mahmood referred to page 5 and the consumption Fund Services, it appears in every appendix.

R Baker said it's a general day to day analysis.

Cllr Bassadone referred to page 6 and asked if the 1% rent reductions and the proposed increase in rent for those tenants earning in excess of £30k were linked

E Brooks said that the two policies were not directly linked and that it is possible some tenants could see a 1% decrease followed by a significant increase. E Brooks also confirmed that the move to 'target rent' for those tenants not already there is likely to end

Cllr Mahmood questioned page 6 cost of moves.

M Gaynor said it will kick in in 16/17 they do not relate pacifically to the HRA.

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe referred to page 9, do we get money from the Police Election. All officers confirmed that this was correct.

Cllr Mahmood made comments on page 10.

N Brathwaite said that the B&B spend figures may change because there has been an increase on the need for B&B's.

Cllr Mahmood referred to page 13, increased garage rent.

M Gaynor said they are not restricted on rent increases. They are not 100% sure what the rent increases will be.

Cllr Griffiths added to that by saying it's a bit deceptive being under Andy Vincent's heading as its actually a Finance and Resources general fund, housing just administer it.

Cllr Mahmood put forward a question to C Troy regarding page 20 the H&S 100% increase.

C Troy confirmed that a second person had been put in place and the increase was also due to training costs.

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe asked if the figures could be in percentages.
R Baker confirmed there are details on all of these on the report.

Cllr Mahmood refereed to page 24 there was a saving of 68% why did Julia have an increase.

J Hedger said it's to do with the homelessness prevention grant, the last few years they have got grants from different organisations. The monies been sitting in another pot waiting for us to decide how to use it, it's now being brought into the 16/17 budget. This is linked to Cabinet decision received in October to draw down funds.

E Brooks added to that an explained that Strategic Housing had a fix term post, and a growth bid had been submitted to make this a permanent member of staff. Growth bid was included in the draft budget papers.

Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe asked if he needs to be worried about the Adventure Playground facilities/services.

J Still said no it has nothing to do with the service and that the reduction was due to less work being required on the buildings (major work during 15/16) and there is nothing to worry about there is no reduction in service.

Cllr Griffith referred to page 25 the original CCTV budget was 184 thousand than expenditure and the forecast is 156 thousand and the draft is 120 thousand which is quite a substantial drop?

J Still said there is an increase in the work load being delivered by the service and the subsequent recharges and income.

Cllr Griffith said basically we are covering more areas and J Still agreed. Cllr Griffith was happy and said this is a positive story.

Cllr Wyatt-Lowe said apart from the TV screen in the Town Centre how are we going to make more of an income.

M Gaynor said we are getting more business from the TV screen and selling more Licenses for Marketing within the Town Centre.

A Horn referred to page 35 there has been an increase in tenant service charge.

Referred to in the summary because of new sheltered scheme, does the funding not stop?

A Vincent said it ended April 2015, Evelyn Sharpe and places like that have funding because of the service provided.

Cllr Bassadone referred to page 39, how much does it roughly cost per section for verge hardening.

J Still said it depends on the construction needed but it's around £2,000 per plot. If the figure goes too high then it's not viable, there are areas on the list that will not meet the criteria due to high costs.

Cllr Mahmood referred to 191 page 39 The Elms Hostel, can this be explained.

N Brathwaite said it's the overspend from the Elms due to amendments of the build and to provide furnishing. J Hedger confirmed that this money had come from S106.

Cllr Mahmood asked about the home improvement grant and the affordable housing grants on page 41 is that money we are not going to spend or should have spent.

R Baker said it's going to come from a different source of fund.

Cllr Mahmood referred to page 45, Hyde Barn is that the last spend
M Gaynor said yes they hope it's the case.

Action: None

Outcome: The report was noted.

60 **APPENDIX A - WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme was agreed by Members and E Brooks will look at other reports that need to come to the Committee. It is possible that the New Build Update will come to the Committee in January 2016.

The Meeting ended at 9.13 pm