

HEALTH & HOUSING POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting - 25 September 2014

Present: Mrs Woolveridge (Chairman)
Dr A Dhillon, Mr Pepler and Mrs Simmonds

Apologies for absence: Dr Matthews and Dr. Pope

11. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Policy Advisory Group held on 24 June 2014 were received.

12. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

The PAG received outside body reports from:

- Cllr Pepler on the meetings of the Buckinghamshire Health Trust on 28 May 2014 and 30 July 2014
- Cllr Woolveridge on the meeting of L&Q West Neighbourhood Committee on 3 September 2014
- Cllr Matthews on the meeting of the Bucks Health and adult Care Select Committee held on 16 September 2014

The Portfolio Holder also referred to the meeting she had held today with Councillors Matthews and Hazell and the Head of Housing and Health Communities to discuss issues concerning Wexham Park Hospital which was due to be taken over by Frimley Hospital Trust on 1 October 2014. As a result of the meeting a number of action points had been agreed including a request to be made to the Chairman and Chief Executive of the new Trust to present their vision for hospital services in South Bucks.

13. SCRAP METAL DEALERS ACT 2013

Following the report submitted to the Licensing Committee on 28 August 2014 setting out the implications of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013, the PAG considered a further report explaining the changes that were required in the light of subsequent advice received from the Home Office that the functions under the Act, including the setting of fees, were Cabinet functions and not functions of the Council which could be delegated to the Licensing Committee.

Having considered the comments of the PAG which supported the proposals in the report, the Portfolio Holder has **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that

1. the new powers and responsibilities contained within the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 be noted.
2. the terms of reference of Cabinet be amended to include

reference to exercising any function relating to the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 Act as amended.

3. the fee policy attached at Appendix 2 to the report be adopted until such time as the fees are reviewed and to delegate any future reviews of the Fees Policy and Fees to the Head of Healthy Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Health & Housing and Resources and the Chairman of the Licensing Committee.
4. the scheme of officer delegation regarding Executive Functions be amended to give authority to the Head of Healthy Communities to exercise the functions, responsibilities and enforcement powers under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013, as amended.
5. all decisions taken to date by Officers as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be ratified.
6. Council be recommended to note the Delegation to the Head of Healthy Communities and to agree that the Constitution be amended as appropriate.

14. **MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE CURRENT PRIVATE SECTOR RENEWAL STRATEGY**

The Council is the lead authority for the delivery of the £2,574,991 Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Green Deal Communities Grant across 14 local authorities and the PAG considered a report setting out the proposal to amend the Private Sector Renewal Strategy to enable targeted household to access the grant. The report also set out a proposal to transfer £40k from the Home Renovation Grant Capital Programme to the Flexible Home Loan Scheme to deliver a ring fenced equity loan in South Bucks.

Having considered the comments of the PAG, which supported the proposals, the Portfolio Holder **AGREED to RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that:

1. the wording of the Private Sector Renewal Strategy as detailed in Appendix 1a be amended to enable the Green Deal Communities grant to be offered in South Bucks.
2. the wording of the Private Sector Renewal Strategy as detailed in Appendix 1b, be amended to operate a ring fenced equity release scheme in the District.
3. £40,000 be transferred from the 2014/15 Home Renovation Grants Capital allocation to Flexible Home Loan Ltd to operate the equity release scheme.

15. **DECC COMMUNITIES FUND UPDATE SBDC**

The PAG received a report which advised Members on the progress of the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Green Deal Communities Grant which had been awarded to the Council.

The Council is the lead authority for the delivery of the £2,574,991 DECC Grant across the 14 local authorities as detailed in appendix 1. Following competitive tendering, the Council has appointed National Energy Foundation (NEF) as the Project Manager to deliver the grant scheme across the 14 authorities.

With regards to project timescales, the report advised that the project start date was delayed due to the need to tender for the appointment of Project Manager. However, it was still anticipated that the target number of 924 properties would be improved within the overall timescale of the project.

The PAG noted Section 5 of the report which set out South Buck's target areas, including a detailed map of the streets in Burnham which would be targeted as part of Phase 1.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

16. HOUSING COMMUTED SUMS UPDATE

The PAG received a report which provided an update on commuted sums, including the position of commuted sums (financial contributions) which have been paid to the Council in lieu of affordable housing on-site and the number of affordable homes provided by accepting commuted sums in lieu of on-site development.

With regards to future expenditure, it was noted that £1,022,649.13 of uncommitted commuted sum income was available still to spend and that a further £196,610.00 was due to be received. The PAG noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the PAG reviewing progress and setting out proposals on how the uncommitted funds should be allocated.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

17. HEALTH PROFILES 2014

Following publication by Public Health England of Updated Health Profile for all District Councils, the PAG received a report summarising the findings and highlighting areas of concern for the District which included early deaths from cancer, obesity in adults and numbers killed or seriously injured on the roads.

The PAG particularly noted paragraph 6.4 of the report which indicated that the numbers killed or seriously injured on roads in the District were significantly higher than the England and regional averages.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

18. HOUSING SERVICES UPDATE

The PAG received a report providing an update on Housing Services. Following a question the PAG received an assurance that the future of Slough Foyer and the District's nomination rights would be kept under review.

The Portfolio Holder wished to thank the Head of Housing and his team for the work in implementing the housing shared service with CDC and for organising the Chiltern and South Bucks Landlord Forum held on 24 September

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

19. **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The PAG received a report providing an update on Environmental Health.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

20. **WOODLAND BURIAL EXTENSION**

The PAG received a report which updated Members on the progress on the extension of the woodland burial section at Parkside Cemetery.

Planning permission for the extension was declined due to a strong objection from the Environment Agency (EA) that the use of the land for burials might pose an unacceptable risk to groundwater. The onus was now on the Council to demonstrate that burials on the new land will not affect the water supply and the PAG was made aware of the intention to create boreholes to determine the composition of the ground and to analyse samples at a cost of £3k which could be met from existing budgets.

A further report would be submitted to a future meeting setting out the Environment Agency's exact requirements and the costs of meeting these requirements which the PAG noted could be significant.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

21. **EXEMPT INFORMATION**

Members noted that the following item contained exempt information which was not available to the press and public for the reason given under the minute heading.

22. **WAIVER OF REQUIREMENT TO REPAY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT**

(Schedule 12A part 1 paras 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A because of information relating to (a) any individual (b) the financial or business affairs of any person including the authority holding that information

The PAG considered a report setting out a request for the repayment of a Disabled Facility Grant in respect of a property in Burnham to be waived following the sale of the adapted property.

Whilst considering the matter the PAG:

- Noted that the request for a waiver of the repayment of grant was not the full amount awarded in 2009, but only the eligible amount of £3059;
- Whilst noting that the recipient is moving to alternative accommodation required for care, felt that the repayment of the grant would not cause financial hardship when receiving residential care;
- Noted that since the award of grant in 2009, property prices had risen, enabling the eligible amount of £3059 to be repaid through the increase in equity in the property; and

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- Whilst recognising that the repayment amount of £3059 is small in terms of the overall DFG budget, also recognised that the resources available for DFG's are limited and that the repayment would contribute towards a grant to another eligible resident

Having considered the comments of the PAG, which was not in favour of granting a waiver, the Portfolio Holder **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to the Cabinet that the request for a waiver be refused.

The meeting terminated at 7.15 pm