

**COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

16 January 2014  
1.30 am - 4.38 pm

**Present:** Councillors Kerr (Chair), Blackhurst (Vice-Chair), Johnson, Kightley, Moghadas, Price and Tucker

**Executive Councillor for Housing:** Councillor Smart

**Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing:** Councillor Brown

**Tenant and Leaseholders Representatives:** Diane Best, Kay Harris and Diana Minns

**Officers Present:**

Director of Customer and Community Services: Liz Bisset

Principal Accountant (Services): Chris Humphris

Head of Arts and Recreation: Debbie Kaye

Head of City Homes: Robert Hollingsworth

Head of Community Development: Trevor Woollams

Head of Strategic Housing: Alan Carter

Business Manager/Principal Accountant: Julia Hovells

Housing Advice Service Manager: David Greening

Sport and Recreation Manager: Ian Ross

Environmental Health Manager – Commercial: Yvonne O'Donnell

Head of Community Development: Trevor Woollams

Arts and Events Manager: Elaine Midgley

Committee Manager: Toni Birkin

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**

**14/1/CS Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**14/2/CS Declarations of Interest**

Item Number	Name	Interest
14/08/CS	Cllr Bird	Personal: Tenant of Cambridge Housing Society
14/15/CS	Cllr Bird	Personal and Prejudicial:

		Associated with a group that receives a grant. Withdrew from the discussion and did not vote on this item.
14/15/CS	Cllr Johnson	Personal and Prejudicial: City Council representative on the Board of East Barnwell Community Centre. Withdrew from the discussion and did not vote on this item.
14/15/CS	Cllr Blackhurst	Personal: Member of Trumpington Residents Association

### **14/3/CS Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2013 were approved and signed as a correct record.

### **14/4/CS Public Questions (See information below)**

There were no public questions.

### **14/5/CS Decisions Taken by Executive Councillor**

#### **5a Buy Back Dwelling Sold under Right to Buy**

The decision was noted and officers presented an update. The property in question had been sold on the open market before the re-purchase could be completed.

### **14/6/CS Housing Portfolio Revenue and Capital Budgets 2013/14 (Revised), 2014/15 (Estimate) and 2015/16 (Forecast)**

#### **Matter for Decision:**

The report detailed the budget proposals which relate to this portfolio that are included in the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2014/15 to be considered at Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee on 20 January 2014.

The Executive Councillor was asked to approve the proposals as shown in the appendices of the officer's report.

**Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved to:

**Review of Charges:**

- i. Approve the proposed charges for this portfolio's services and facilities, as shown in Appendix A to the officer's report.

**Capital:**

- ii. Approve, where relevant, project appraisals (shown in Appendix D of the Officer's report).
- iii. Seek approval from the Executive to carry forward resources from 2013/14, (detailed in Appendix C of the Officer's report), to fund re-phased capital spending.

**Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Business Manager/Principal Accountant regarding the Housing Portfolio Revenue and Capital Budgets.

The Committee resolved by 4 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

**14/7/CS Housing Revenue Account Budget Setting Report****Matter for Decision:**

As part of the 2014/15 budget process, the range of assumptions on which the HRA Business Plan and Mid-Year Financial Review were based upon, were reviewed in light of the latest information available, culminating in the preparation of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

The HRA Budget-Setting Report provided an overview of the review of the key assumptions. It set out the key parameters for the detailed recommendations

and final budget proposals, and was the basis for the finalisation of the 2013/14 revised and 2014/15 budgets.

The resulting recommendations referred to the strategy are outlined in the HRA Budget Setting Report.

### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved to recommend to Council:

#### **Treasury Management**

- i. Approve the revised approach to treasury management, setting-aside a proportion of the surpluses generated over the life of the Business Plan to allow for potential debt redemption, but re-investing up to 75% of the surplus generated in the acquisition or development of new affordable housing, as outlined in Section 7 of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

#### **Housing Capital**

- ii. Approve the capital bids, shown in Appendix H of the HRA Budget Setting Report, to include resource to implement the Cambridge Public Sector Network across housing offices, to purchase an additional module for the Housing Management Information System, to undertake emergency water mains replacement at Kingsway and to carry out remedial works to a specific HRA dwelling and the surrounding block.
- iii. Approve the re-phasing of £15,000 of resource between 2014/15 and 2013/14 to complete communal floor covering works to an entire block whilst the relevant equipment is on site.
- iv. Approve the re-phasing of funding for UPVC window replacements of £500,000 from 2014/15 and £850,000 from 2015/16 into later years in the Housing Capital Investment Plan, recognising that it was too early to move to a full investment standard.
- v. Approve the re-phasing of £250,000 from 2014/15 to 2015/16 in respect of the communal areas uplift, recognising that the full programme of works had not yet been finalised.
- vi. Approve the gross funding of £16,210,000 for the development of the affordable housing project at Clay Farm, in line with the scheme specific report being presented to Community Services in January 2014, which assumes 75% affordable rented and 25% shared ownership housing.
- vii. Approve the funding of £2,875,000 for the provisional purchase of 13 market housing units on the garage re-development sites (or other units of existing market housing), recognising this as an appropriate use of retained right to buy receipts.

- viii. Approve the earmarking of the required level of additional funding for new build investment in 2016/17 and 2017/18 to ensure that the anticipated level of future retained right to buy receipts can be appropriately utilised.
- ix. Approve the revised Housing Capital Investment Plan as shown in Appendix M of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- x. Approve a provisional addition to the Housing Capital Allowance of £30,591,000 in respect of anticipated qualifying expenditure in 2014/15.

**Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Business Manager/Principal Accountant regarding Housing Revenue Account Budget Setting Report.

The Director of Customer and Community Services, reminded the Committee of the procedural process for considering the Labour Group Amendment.

In response to questions from the Committee, officers confirmed the following:

- i. Technological improvements were taken into account when considering the boiler replacement strategy.
- ii. The major voids budget bid was higher than normal as the intention was to address long standing problems with a dwelling that was in poor repair and presented access problem. Value for money would be considered as part of the project appraisal.
- iii. The set aside sum for the repayment of debt was considered viable but was reviewed regularly.

Councillor Price proposed the Labour Group Amendment and outlined the proposal as per the report.

Diane Best raised concerns that the proposal could have unforeseen consequences for leaseholders. She was concerned that the shift from Decent Homes work to communal areas would add to leaseholder costs. The Business Manager/Principal Accountant confirmed that this would be the case if additional fencing was considered for specific areas. Cost of under £250 per unit would be incorporated into the annual services charge. Higher spends would be subject to the normal consultation process.

The following comments were made in relation to the proposed increase in the budget for fence repairs:

- iv. Some Councillors reported that this was the number one complaint from tenants whilst other Councillors had not been made aware of any problems.
- v. The competing needs of various elements within the budget were debated.
- vi. Some members suggested that poor fencing resulted in neighbour disputes, problems with animals and reduced quality of life.
- vii. There was no clear estimate on the level of unmet fencing need as this would be dependant what level of provision was deemed appropriate.

The Committee considered the affordability of the proposals and the impact on long term debt. Councillor Price stated that the proposals were affordable and that the current situation put the long term need for more housing ahead of the needs of existing tenants. The Executive Councillor expressed concern that any increased spend in one area would result in a corresponding decrease in another.

On a show of hands the vote for the Labour Group Amendment was tied at 4 votes to 4 and lost on the Chair's casting vote.

The Committee resolved by 4 votes to 0 to endorse the substantive recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

**14/8/CS Housing General Fund Grants to Voluntary Organisations 2014-16**

**Matter for Decision:**

To consider the review of the grants that were awarded by Community Services Scrutiny Committee from the Housing General Fund for 2012-14 in the context of the corporate policy and to consider recommendations to continue to grant fund the organisations during 2014/15 and 2015/16.

**Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved:

- i. To agree, subject to the budget setting process and formal adoption by Council of the 2014/15 and 2015/16 budgets, the funding to the voluntary sector organisations as detailed in the Officer's report
- ii. To note, the proposed Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Homelessness Prevention Grant budget allocation for 2014-15

**Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Housing Advice Service Manager regarding the Housing General Fund Grants to Voluntary Organisations 2014-16. He updated the Committee on recent reductions in the Homelessness Prevention Grant received from DCLG.

The Committee expressed concerns about the impact of inclement weather on rough sleepers and the status of the Severe Weather Emergency Provision budget. The Executive Councillor confirmed that, although the budget was no longer ring fenced, a decision had been made to maintain it. In addition, the Officer confirmed that there was some flexibility regarding the weather event triggers and additional spending.

The Committee resolved by 4 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

**14/9/CS Council New Build - Estate Management Strategy**

**Matter for Decision:**

This report outlined the options available to the Council to manage the estates on schemes where new build Affordable Housing (AH) was being delivered on Council land together with market housing. The report used the developments at Latimer Close and the Quad development at Clay Farm as examples.

### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved:

- i. To approve, that in principle, the Council's first choice will be to manage the entire estate on schemes where new Council Housing is being provided together with market housing on any sites the Council owns.
- ii. To approve that delegated authority be given to the Director of Customer and Community Services following consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing, Chair and Spokes to agree the estate management structure on individual schemes where new Council Housing is being provided together with market housing.

### **Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

- i. To employ a management company to manage the entire scheme under a joint venture with the developer. In this case the developer would be required to retain a long term interest in the scheme.
- ii. For the Council to manage the AH together with any adjacent estate whilst a management company manages the market housing dwellings.

### **Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Strategic Housing regarding Estate Management of Council New Build sites. The Committee welcomed the report and supported the proposals.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

### **Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.



**14/10/CS Shared Ownership Review****Matter for Decision:**

A review of the Council's shared ownership service had been carried out to assess whether shared ownership should continue to be part of the Council's core business within the context of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) self-financing, and if so whether it should also be offered on the Council's new developments.

The report recommended that the service be continued, with some improvements, and that shared ownership be offered on new affordable housing developments to cross-subsidise the building of rented units and to help create balanced communities.

**Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved:

- i. That the Council continues to provide a shared ownership scheme.
- ii. That officers are granted delegated authority to develop a business case for each property which comes up for resale, and to assess – according to a set of agreed criteria - whether to:
  - a) Buy back and sell a share to another applicant, or
  - b) Buy back to use as rented stock, or
  - c) Buy back and sell the whole property on the open market, or
  - d) Advise the seller to sell their share on the open market.
- iii. That the criteria to take into account in the decision on what to do with an individual property under paragraph ii above should be as follows:
  - a) The costs to the Council of each of the options, the funding available, and the potential impact on the Business Plan;
  - b) Whether there is an identified alternative need for that property to be used for rent which should take priority over re-selling as shared ownership. Eg: a property which is disabled adapted or particularly suitable to be adapted to meet the needs of an identified housing applicant; one which would suit the needs of

a leaseholder needing to move as part of the Council's Affordable Housing development programme; etc.

- c) Rental and shared ownership demand for that particular type or size of property;
  - d) The condition of the property;
  - e) Whether the property is in a specific location that could free up land or access to land, or otherwise facilitate affordable housing development;
  - f) The anticipated capital receipt (subject to pooling requirements);
  - g) Housing market conditions at the time, including mortgage availability;
  - h) Any planning restrictions which may apply (eg s106 restrictions around disposal on the open market);
  - i) Any other factors which need to be taken into account to ensure that the best use is made of the property, and where value for money can be clearly demonstrated.
- iv. That shared ownership homes are provided on Council's new developments where appropriate – eg at Clay Farm and on other new Affordable Housing Development Programme sites – to cross-subsidise rental build and help create balanced communities, in line with the requirements of Council's Local Plan and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document. On sites under the Council's Affordable Housing Development programme where the tenure mix has already been agreed, properties already planned to be provided for rent will not be provided as shared ownership.
- v. That the current policy which seeks to ensure that housing is made available at a price which could be afforded by a household with '1 average earner (for 1 bedroom accommodation) or 1.5 average earners for larger properties, using standard income multiples be removed.
- vi. That the policy at paragraph v. above be replaced with one which states that the Council seeks to ensure that an alternative form of housing is available as an option to those who would not normally be eligible for social housing, but who are unable to afford to purchase on the open market.
- vii. That new eligibility criteria are introduced for applying for shared ownership housing as follows:

- a) Applicants must have a gross household income of up to £60,000 (subject to any future change in the national income requirement for intermediate tenure housing);
  - b) Applicants must be first time buyers, other than in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances may include: in relationship breakdown where children are involved; where an owner-occupier needs significant disabled adaptations which cannot be provided in their own home and they cannot afford to purchase a more suitable home; or existing shared owners who have medical needs which require them to move to a more suitable property.
- viii. That new criteria be introduced to decide the priority between more than one applicant for a particular property. Criteria should be ranked in the following order:
- a) Applicants who have the resources to go ahead with a purchase;
  - b) Applicants who live or work within the City;
  - c) Level of need, assessed in line with the Council's Lettings policy in place at the time;
  - d) Date of registration on the Help to Buy register.
- ix. That applicants should not be able to purchase if they owe any housing-related debt to the Council where reasonable steps have not been taken to repay it.
- x. That applicants should not be able to purchase if they have a history of unacceptable behaviour which would make them ineligible to be accepted onto the Home-Link register.
- xi. That staircasing be promoted where it makes business sense to do so (subject to pooling requirements).
- xii. That if buying a property back to sell it on, consideration is given to restarting the lease at 99/125 years if not doing so may make it difficult for the purchaser to re-mortgage at a later date.
- xiii. To agree the option of using individual HRA rented properties for shared ownership in appropriate circumstances.
- xiv. That if a rented property is converted to shared ownership, an appropriate alternative shared ownership property is converted to rent as soon as is

- reasonably practicable, to ensure that the number of rented properties is not reduced as a result.
- xv. That leases are reviewed for new leaseholders in conjunction with drafting of leases for newly developed shared ownership properties.
  - xvi. That the marketing of shared ownership properties be improved.
  - xvii. That information provided to leaseholders about their and the Council's rights and responsibilities be improved.
  - xviii. That equity share is not pursued at this stage, as an alternative option to shared ownership (as capital outlay is high, and returns are much longer term and rely on values continuing to rise), other than for leaseholders on redevelopment sites.
  - xix. That the revised scheme be reviewed in around three years' time to establish the impact of changes, and assess whether further changes are required in light of any further development in national thinking.

**Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Housing Strategy Manager regarding the Shared Ownership Review.

The report was welcomed and the Committee agreed that shared ownership was important and added to the mix of residents on any given site. However, some concern was expressed regarding the provision of shared ownership properties reducing or diluting the provision of social housing for rent – particularly on the Councils redevelopment sites. The Committee discussed adding additional wording to the recommendation to make the commitment to social rented properties explicit.

The Director of Customer & Community Services and the Head of Strategic Housing were concerned that this needed to be worded carefully to ensure it did not cause problems at a later date. Each scheme was judged on its merits for smaller sites, an inflexible approach would be counter-productive. The Director of Customer and Community Services suggested that the Executive

Councillor, Chair and Spokes propose some wording to be added to item (iv) of the recommendations to address the concerns of the Committee. Additional wording to be agreed with officers.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations subject to the above revisions.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

### **Post Meeting Notes**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014 the Chair, Executive Councillor and Spokes agreed that the following wording be added to recommendation (iv).

*On sites under the Council's Affordable Housing Development programme where the tenure mix has already been agreed, properties already planned to be provided for rent will not be provided as shared ownership.*

### **14/11/CS Scheme Specific Approval - Quads (Council Land At Clay Farm).**

#### **Matter for Decision:**

The report presented the final scheme submitted for planning approval on the Quad development at Clay Farm; the cost of the Affordable Housing (AH) and how it could be funded.

The report highlighted the options available for funding the AH scheme through Homes and Communities Agency grant, the opportunity to invest capital receipts from the Right to Buy (RTB) programme and borrowing.

In addition to the funding of this AH scheme, shared ownership is introduced as a tenure within the AH to create a mixed and balanced community.

#### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved:

- i. To note the scheme submitted for the planning application.
- ii. To note the cost of the AH and approve the total budget for the scheme.
- iii. To approve that Shared Ownership will comprise no more than 25% of the AH delivered on the Quad development.
- iv. To approve that delegated authority be given to the Director of Customer and Community Services following consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing, Chair and Spokes to agree the final funding structure for the delivery of the Affordable Housing on the Quad development, once there is more certainty regarding anticipated future Right to Buy receipts and the availability of HCA grant funding to the Council.

**Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Strategic Housing regarding the Scheme Specific Approval for the Quads (Council Land at Clay Farm).

The Committee expressed support for the quality of the design of the scheme. The Committee agreed that intermediate housing to be delivered as shared ownership, was an important part of the tenure mix of the scheme.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

**14/12/CS Unlawful Eviction and Harassment Policy****Matter for Decision:**

The law provides residential occupiers with the right to live undisturbed in their homes and protects them in cases of unlawful eviction and harassment. Sometimes, a landlord or someone acting on behalf of the landlord, for example the landlord's agent may interfere with the occupier's peaceful occupation of the property. Unlawful eviction and harassment are criminal offences for which the person responsible can be prosecuted by the Council. In addition someone who is being unlawfully evicted and/or harassed can claim damages (compensation) through the civil courts but must undertake this legal action themselves.

The Council encourages best practice within the city's private rented sector and will support residential occupiers who are at risk of unlawful eviction or subjected to harassment

This policy allows the Council to take a structured approach in dealing with unlawful eviction and harassment cases that are reported.

### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved:

- i. To adopt the Unlawful Eviction and Harassment Policy attached in Appendix 1 of the report.
- ii. To delegate to Head of Refuse and Environment authorisation to deal with Unlawful Eviction and Harassment as outlined in paragraph 3.10 of the officer's report.

### **Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Health Manager regarding the Unlawful Eviction and Harassment Policy.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. The policy was welcomed but only addressed part of the problem.
- ii. Legal action taken by some landlords were also undesirable.
- iii. Tenancy sustainment work was welcomed.

- iv. The Committee express support for the planned publicity for the policy.
- v. The absence of an EqIA was questioned and the Officer confirmed that this was in hand.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

### **Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

### **Notice of Key Decision Not Included on the Forward Plan**

The Chair ruled that the following key decision be considered despite not being included on the Forward Plan published on 1 December 2013. It was impractical to defer the decision to allow for its inclusion in the next Forward Plan.

### **14/13/CS Supporting People Community Budgeting Model for Older People in the City**

#### **Matter for Decision**

The City Council had been invited to work in partnership with the County Council to deliver a district wide support service to all older people in Cambridge.

As the new co-operation agreement had changed to a tenure neutral support service, consideration of the proposals by members of Community Services Scrutiny Committee was needed, prior to any decision by the Executive Councillor for Housing.

#### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing**

The Executive Councillor resolved:

- i. To authorise the Director of Customer & Community Services, subject to both financial and operational viability, to enter into a co-operation agreement with the County Council to deliver support services for older people across the district.

#### **Reason for the Decision**



As set out in the Officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Manager Temp Housing and Housing Support regarding the Supporting People Community Budgeting Model for older People in the City.

The Committee welcomed the proposals.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

### **Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

### **14/14/CS Community Wellbeing Portfolio Revenue and Capital Budgets 2013/14 (Revised), 2014/15 (Estimate) and 2015/16 (Forecast)**

#### **Matter for Decision:**

The Officer's report detailed the budget proposals which relate to this portfolio that are included in the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2014/15 to be considered at Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee on 20 January 2014.

#### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved to:

#### **Review of Charges:**

- i. Approve the proposed charges for this portfolio's services and facilities, as shown in Appendix A of the Officer's report.

#### **Capital:**

- ii. Seek approval from the Executive to carry forward resources from 2013/14, as detailed in Appendix C of the Officer's, to fund re-phased capital spending

#### **Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Principal Accountant regarding the Community Wellbeing Portfolio Revenue and Capital Budgets Proposals 2013/14 to 2017/18.

Some members expressed disappointment at the level of cuts being proposed for the Children and Young People's Participation Service. The Executive Councillor stated that the savings were necessary and were not a reflection on the quality of the work of the team. She also stated that even after the savings, the provision was still generous when compared to other authorities.

Concerns were raised about increased charges proposed for the Village Centre in Cherry Hinton and questioned how the rates had been arrived at. Officers explained that rises were inflation driven and were then rounded up or down to what was considered reasonable.

The Committee questioned the withdrawal of the S106 funding element of the Splashpacks scheme. The Sport and Recreation Manager confirmed that this had gone out for tenders but none of the tenders met the requirements of the S106 regulations. Therefore this element of the proposal had been withdrawn and the allocated funding had been returned to the Area Committee budgets for re-allocation.

The Executive Councillor reminded the Committee that many of the services in the portfolio should be viewed as commercial and therefore, it was reasonable to expect users of those services to cover the costs.

The Committee resolved by 4 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

**14/15/CS Community & Arts and Recreation Development Funding to Voluntary and Not-for-profit Organisations 2014-15**

**Matter for Decision:**

This report made recommendations for 2014-15 Community Development and Arts and Recreation Development funding to voluntary and not-for-profit organisations and sought approval for an efficient and consistent approach across the authority for the approval of grant awards.

**Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved:

- i. To agree the recommendations for Community Development and Arts and Recreation Development grants to voluntary and not-for-profit organisations in 2014-15 as set out in the Appendices to the Officer's report, subject to confirmation of the Council's 2014-15 budget in February 2014 and, in some cases, to the provision of further information from applicants.
- ii. To approve the increase in delegated powers relating to the approval of community and arts and recreation development grant awards as follows:
  - a. Awards up to and including £5,000 to be approved by officers
  - b. Awards from £5,001 - £10,000 to be approved by the Executive Councillor inviting comments from the Chair and Spokes of the relevant scrutiny committee
  - c. Awards above £10,000 to be approved by the Executive Councillor following consideration by the relevant scrutiny committee

**Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Operations and Resources Manager regarding the 2014-15 Community and Arts and Recreation Development Funding to Voluntary and No-for-Profit Organisations.

The Committee asked for clarity on discretionary rate relief and how this linked to the use of the building. The Officer explained that this was not dependant on

the building being available for community use as this might not be appropriate for some services that were in receipt of grants.

The Committee resolved by 4 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

**14/16/CS Review of Voluntary Sector Grants**

**Matter for Decision:**

The report followed the Director of Customer and Community Service's report to this committee in October 2013 on the future of discretionary services. It provided the scope for the review of community development and arts and recreation development grants which, if approved, would be carried out in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Compact.

**Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved that:

- i. Officers would carry out a review of the community development and arts and recreation development grants as set out in section 7 of the Officer's report.
- ii. Officers would report back to this committee in June/July 2014 with recommendations about new grants priorities and options for future budgets.

**Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Community Development regarding the Review of voluntary Sector Grants.

Concerns were raised that some groups might find the consultation process confusion and that the option offered did not cover all eventualities. The Head of Community Development stated that some groups might be able to offer a better fit with the new priorities and might gain from the process. He suggested that the public needed to respond to the proposals in general while groups needed to respond to the likely impact on their service individually. They would be helped to do this via the planned workshops. He further stated that the key message was that groups should focus on the priorities and outcomes rather than the amount of grant.

Councillor Johnson requested that the following wording be added to the table in 5.6 of the Officer's report: *To improve the health and wellbeing of participants and to address inequality*. Councillor Brown stated that this was the main priority of the report and that additional working to the report was not necessary. Councillor Brown agreed to discuss this further with Councillor Johnson outside the meeting and to agree additional wording to be added to the consultation document if necessary.

Councillor Blackhurst proposed an amendment to the report with an additional paragraph being added to section 5 of the report, Proposed Priorities and Outcomes, as follows:

New 6.4 (existing 6.4 becomes 6.5, and so on)

*The City Council recognises the crucial role played by legal advice services, such as the Citizens' Advice Bureau, at a time when many people are facing potential hardship and the benefits system is under pressure. It is proposed that future grant allocation is done on the basis that legal advice services are a key priority for funding, and consultees will be invited to comment and this priority.*

The amendment was agreed *nem con*.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

**14/17/CS Clay Farm Multi Use Centre - Management Proposal**

**Matter for Decision:**

The City Council is developing a new multi-use community facility, with partners, at Clay Farm. It is due to open in 2015.

The report recommended that, subject to finalising appropriate legal agreements and agreeing appropriate financial arrangements with partners, the City Council and County Council should set up a management company to run the new centre.

**Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing:**

The Executive Councillor resolved that:

- i. The decision to complete appropriate legal agreements and set up a management company, with the County Council, to run the planned Clay Farm Multi-use Centre was delegated to the Director of Customer and Community Services, subject to:
  - a) Agreement of lease arrangements and financial contributions with partners.
  - b) Prior consultation with the Head of Finance, Head of Legal Services, Executive Councillor and Spokes for Community Well-being and Chair of Community Services Scrutiny Committee.

**Reason for the Decision:**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

The idea of a management company evolved from a stakeholder event including residents and to consider shared operational needs in November 2012. The main message from this event was that stakeholders wanted the centre to be seen as a unified facility and not just a collection of different services.

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Community Development regarding the Clay Farm Multi Use Centre Management Proposal.

Members queried the composition of the planned management structure and were satisfied that proposals would ensure a robust Board with a range of

experience. The Director of Customer and Community Services confirmed that the City Council would maintain a controlling interest in the Board.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)**

Not applicable.

The meeting ended at 4.38 pm

**CHAIR**