

**Minutes of the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee
1 February 2022**

Present:

Councillor S.A. Dunn (Chairman)
Councillor S.M. Doran (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

C. Bateson

S. Buttar

O. Rybinski

Apologies: Councillors C.L. Barratt, R.O. Barratt and J. Vinson

In Attendance: Councillors R.D. Dunn and M. Beecher

Councillor V Siva attended the meeting via Microsoft Teams

59022 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

59122 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

59222 Questions from members of the Public

There were none.

59322 Ward Issues

There were none.

59422 Capital Bids 2022/23 (part of annual budget process)

The Committee **resolved** that the four bids as presented should be rated green (to commence in 2022/23) for recommendation to the Corporate and Resources Committee.

59522 Revenue Growth and Savings Bids 2022/23 (part of annual budget process)

The Committee noted the proposed revenue growth and savings bids.

The Committee were advised that the two items originally highlighted as savings totalling £19,500 had been withdrawn and replaced with three other possible areas to make savings as follows:-

1. £57,000 – Benwell Community Centre
2. £50,000 - Shorthold tenancy scheme
3. £50,000 - Grants budget

The Committee **resolved** to:

- 1 change one item from Green (to commence in 2022/23) to Amber (could be deferred to 2023/24) on the Revenue Growth paper and;
2. to note and agree that the revised savings be recommended to the Corporate and Resources Committee for consideration if required to balance the overall Budget.

59622 Committee Review of Fees and Charges for Service Areas 2022/23 (part of annual budget process)

The Committee reviewed the proposed fees and charges for the Committee's areas of responsibility for 2022/23.

The Committee agreed that charges for vulnerable clients should be protected from any inflation uplift.

The Committee **resolved** to agree the Fees and Charges as proposed for recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

59722 Refugee Schemes Policy

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Lead, Housing that sought approval of the adoption of the Refugee Policy (Option 2 of the Report). This policy seeks to require the Committee to consider all refugee schemes proposed by Central Government and assess their merits.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Option 1: To reject the policy

The Council will not adopt the Policy, but still have the freedom to consider future refugee schemes at the time that they are published by the government. The Council will just not have a policy that requires to consider all schemes as they are offered.

Option 3: To adopt an altered version of the proposed Policy

To propose changes to the proposed Policy, consequently adopting a revised version of the Policy.

Reason for Decision:

To require the Committee to consider all refugee schemes proposed by the Government and assess this merits.

The Committee **resolved** to approve the adoption of the Refugee Policy.

59822 Annual Council Community Grants Report

The Committee considered a report from the Deputy Head Community Wellbeing that sought:

1. Approval of the grants awards for 2022/23,
2. The Committee to note all other support Spelthorne Borough Council provides to the voluntary/charity sector and;
3. Consideration of the proposal that unallocated Councillors' Better Neighbourhood Grant monies for 2022/23 be transferred to the Grants Panel for allocation.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None

Resolved:

1. Approve the grants awards for 2022/23,
4. To note all other support Spelthorne Borough Council provides to the voluntary/charity sector and;
2. To transfer the unallocated Councillors' Better Neighbourhood Grant monies for 2022/23 to the Grants Panel for allocation.

Reason for Decision:

To ensure that grants can be awarded to existing organisations to continue to provide support, assistance and other essential services for Borough residents and to enable new organisations to begin to provide services that are needed.

Transferring unallocated Councillors' Better Neighbourhood Grants will allow this funding to be assigned to local organisations.

59922 Forward Plan

The Committee **resolved** to note the Forward Plan for the business of the Committee. The Principal Solicitor asked that a standing item be put on future agendas to receive updates on the Community Wellbeing Recovery Plan.

60022 Urgent business

The Deputy Group Head Community and Wellbeing provided the Committee with an update of the Community Wellbeing Recovery Plan.

The Committee **resolved** to note the briefing document.

The Chair advised the Committee that the Committee System Working Group were currently considering the proposed Calendar of Meetings for 2022/23 and the frequency of individual committee meetings. The Committee agreed that the current frequency of the Community Wellbeing & Housing Committee's meetings were adequate for the business of the Committee. They also agreed that they would be happy to receive a periodic briefing pack that could replace 'information only' reports on the agenda.