

**Minutes of the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee
28 March 2023**

Present:

Councillor M.M. Attewell (Chairman)
Councillor O. Rybinski (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

C. Bateson	N.J. Gething	S.J Whitmore
J. Button	H. Harvey	
S.A. Dunn	R.W. Sider BEM	

Apologies: Councillors C.L. Barratt and J. Vinson

In Attendance: Councillor Beecher

13/23 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

14/23 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

15/23 Questions from members of the Public

There were none.

16/23 Ward Issues

There were none.

17/23 Review of Tenancy Strategy

The Committee considered a report from the Housing Strategy and Policy Manager which sought approval to adopt the proposed amendments to the Tenancy Strategy.

The Tenancy Strategy was reviewed and approved in March 2022 by this Committee. Following approval, members had requested the removal of all references to Knowle Green Estates (KGE). The current report had been revised to reflect this. The Committee were advised that when KGE became a registered provider (RP), this strategy would apply to KGE again.

The Committee suggested it should be made clear in the report that parts of KGE would remain outside RP status. The Committee also queried the likely timescale of KGE receiving RP status and were advised this would take up to 18 months.

The Committee **resolved** to adopt the proposed amendments to the Tenancy Strategy.

18/23 Six Days A Week Community Centre Offer

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Lead for Independent Living which sought approval of the continued arrangement to open one Community Centre in the borough for six days a week.

During the winter, warm spaces had been available for residents by opening the Fordbridge and Greeno Community Centres on alternate Saturdays. This provision had also supported those who experienced social isolation. The Committee were asked to endorse the continuation of the six days a week Winter Warmer approach and then review this in six months. The additional cost profile would be around £42,015, with some appetite to fund this through the Council's cost of living fund and the Northwest Surrey Alliance Prevention Fund.

The Committee asked whether Staines Community Centre would be included in this provision. The Committee were informed that there was not sufficient staff availability at this centre on Saturdays. An offer would be extended subject to the successful trial period for the current centres.

The Committee queried the effects of Spelride not operating on Saturdays on numbers attending Community Centres at the weekend. The continuation of this project for six months would help establish transport needs.

The Committee **resolved** to agree option two and approve the three recommendations set out in the report.

19/23 Lawn Tennis Association

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Lead for Leisure and Community Development which sought the potential to apply for capital funding from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA). The report outlined three options which included applying for funding from the LTA and keeping all tennis courts free of charge; applying for funding and introducing a fee

structure for some members of the community; and declining the funding from the LTA, instead financing tennis court refurbishment from the Council's maintenance budget.

The Committee debated all three options set out in the report. Some members were not in favour of introducing fees. Other members felt that a booking system would restrict those who wanted to arrive to courts spontaneously and voiced that the courts were already well attended. The Committee also raised concern that the booking system would be hard to monitor.

The Committee queried whether the Council had any plans for refurbishment outside the LTA funding. The Committee were informed that while there were no immediate plans for refurbishment, tennis courts would be refurbished when necessary and would be dependent on approval of growth and capital bids.

The Committee voted on all three options and **resolved** to decline the opportunity to apply for funding from the LTA and finance the tennis court refurbishments from the Council's ongoing repair and maintenance budget.

20/23 Verbal Update on Deferred Items from the Grants Panel

The Committee received an update on the deferred items from the Grants Panel and were asked to agree the grants awards 2023/24 for decisions deferred by the Committee on 17 January 2023.

The Strategic Lead for Leisure and Community Development provided an update on the five organisations whose grants had been deferred. This included a further application from the Bagster Social Club which was not within the original report. A summary was provided, with information which set out new recommendations for funding. If approved the Grants Award balance would reduce to £24,331.

The Committee discussed the important work delivered by the Bagster Social Club and raised concern about the request for refurbishment of their kitchen. It was noted that officers at the Council should have raised this refurbishment before the lease was due to end.

The Committee **resolved** to agree the grants awards 2023/24 for decisions deferred by the Committee on 17 January 2023.

21/23 Forward Plan

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the Community and Wellbeing Housing Committee.

The Committee requested the following items be added to the forward plan:

- 1) Greeno Community Centre Alterations

- 2) A briefing on the impact of potential legislation related to The Housing Act

The Committee **resolved** to note the forward plan subject to the addition of the agreed items.

22/23 Exclusion of Public and Press (Exempt Business)

It was proposed by Councillor Gething, seconded by Councillor Rybinski and **resolved** that the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following items, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) because it was likely to disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because, disclosure to the public would prejudice the financial position of the authority in being able to undertake even-handed negotiations and finalising acceptable contract terms.

23/23 Verbal Update on The Local Authority Housing Fund

The Committee received a verbal update on the Local Authority Housing Fund from the Housing Strategy and Policy Manager.

The Committee **resolved** to note the update on the Local Authority Housing Fund.

24/23 Verbal update on Longford Village Temporary Accommodation

This item was not discussed as there was no update give.