

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date: 20 April 2009

Venue: East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

Time: 7.30 pm

Present: Councillors:-

Robin Underwood (Chairman)
Wendy Brackenbury (Vice-Chairman)
Andy Mercer (Leader of the Council)

David Brackenbury
Pauline Bradberry JP
Albert Campbell
Lisa Costello
Roger Glithero JP

Philip Hardcastle
Glenn Harwood MBE
Sylvia Hughes
Richard Lewis
Steven North

PART A ITEMS

463. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2009 were approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to deleting the date "2006" in two places on the second page of Appendix 1, and substituting "2009".

464. APOLOGIES

Councillors Anna Sauntson and John Richardson MBE, and Barbara Ding sent their apologies.

465. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

466. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.3

There were no questions.

467. HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY

Members received an update on the operation of the Housing Allocation Policy following the changes made under minute 255 (10 December 2007). Details of the reasons for refusals of accommodation in 2008, compared with 2007, were noted by the Committee. Although the number of refusals had increased, the number of bids

placed had also increased. Nene Valley Homechoice staff – who were responsible for allocating social housing – were trying to reduce the number of refusals by addressing the reasons over which they had some control.

Members asked a number of questions and made comments. In particular, it was noted that it was not possible, at this stage, to provide information on the total number of bids placed through Choice Based Lettings; the proportion of applicants who had been allocated properties after refusing accommodation; and the effect on the workload. A new computer system was being installed which could enable such information to be accessed, and Members asked that six-monthly or annual reports be made available to them in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the current Housing Allocation Policy be continued and the reasons for refusals be noted.

468. APPLICATIONS TO THE VILLAGE & COMMUNITY HALLS GRANT SCHEME

The Committee considered the following applications for grant:-

Organisation	Amount applied for £
Lutton Village Hall Trust	21,000
The Addingtons Memorial Hall Trust	25,000
Queen Victoria Hall Trust (Oundle)	100,000
Stanwick Village Hall Trust	100,000

The combined total (£246,000) was well in excess of the current budget provision of £80,000 and Members considered three options for addressing the situation. The imposition of a ‘ceiling limit’ on future applications was favoured; it would ensure that more projects would benefit from the Grant Scheme.

The Committee believed that the Village and Community Halls Grant Scheme had been introduced primarily to assist parishes rather than towns, which generally had a choice of community meetings venues. For this reason, it considered that it would not be appropriate to support the application from the Queen Victoria Hall Trust (Oundle).

RESOLVED:

(1) That the grant criteria be amended to include a ‘ceiling limit’ of £25,000 for future applications.

(2) That grants be given as follows:-

	£
Lutton Village Hall Trust	up to 21,000
The Addingtons Memorial Hall Trust	up to 25,000
Stanwick Village Hall Trust	25,000

(3) That no grant be given to the Queen Victoria Hall Trust (Oundle).

469. WASTE AND RECYCLING WORKING PARTY

The minutes of the meeting of the Working Party, held on 19 March 2009, were received, and the recommendation contained in minute 6.6 considered.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendation in minute 6.6 be amended to read as follows:-

That the Working Party act as the Project Board for all the required processes relating to the renewal of the Waste Management Contract and that the Terms of Reference of the Working Party be reconsidered at the June 2009 meeting of the Committee.

470. CULTURAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (CCP) –UPDATE REPORT

Further to minute 364 (23 February 2009), the Chief Executive reported on progress since the Committee considered the financial position of CCP:-

- Discussions had been undertaken with CCP
- Due diligence work had started on 17 April
- Payment of £250,000 to CCP had been authorised in late March and a request had been made for a cash flow forecast
- CCP had thanked the Council for its continued support and approved financial measures incorporating cost reductions and a pay freeze for all staff
- The Chief Executive would complete his review of CCP by the next meeting of the Committee on 15 June 2009 and had in mind inviting CCP to make a presentation to the Committee.
- It was recognised that the Council would need to have more frequent reports from CCP so that the situation could be monitored more effectively.

The Chief Executive answered questions and Members made comments and suggestions. The report was noted.

471. THANKS TO COMMITTEE

The Chairman thanked Members for their support over the last year.

Chairman