

22 September 2006

Council

4.00pm on Wednesday, 27 September 2006

Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Members will be aware that items 7, 8 and 15 on the Council agenda refer to a number of recommendations referred from the Council's Cabinet and Standards Committee, which are to be considered by Council on 27 September 2006.

Following meetings of the Cabinet and Standards Committee, Council is requested to consider the recommendations as set out below:

Part 1

Item 7 – Recommendations referred from Cabinet held on 21 September 2006

(i) Future Strategy for the Council's Housing Stock

“That Council on 27 September 2006 be recommended:-

- (a) That subject to a satisfactory conclusion of a tripartite Agreement between the Harvest Housing Group on behalf of Your Chase Homes, the Department for Communities and Local Government, and the Council, on matters which impact on the General fund including preserved Right to Buy receipts, VAT shelter and the reimbursement of the Council's pre-ballot costs, (up to and including a ballot), the Council continue to pursue a strategy of stock transfer within the Governments current financial regime.
- (b) That the Council's application to the Department for Communities and Local Government for a place on the 2006 Housing Transfer Programme is confirmed.
- (c) That the Council progress pre-ballot activities, (up to and including a ballot) subject to a place being obtained on the 2006 Housing Transfer Programme and a level of gap funding which is acceptable to the Council.
- (d) That a stock transfer proposal which provides details of the proposed transfer of the Council's housing stock to Your Chase Homes as part of the Harvest Housing Group, be formulated for consultation with tenants.
- (e) That following consultation with tenants, the Council's transfer proposals be subject to further ballot of tenants organised by the Electoral Reform Society.

- (f) That the initial timetable for the proposed transfer of the Council's housing stock to Your Chase Homes, as attached as Annex 4 to the report is agreed.
- (g) That subject to the deletion of paragraph 3.1(b) the decision-making framework for the stock transfer process attached as Annex 5 to the report is agreed.
- (h) That a Housing Transfer Committee of eight Members is established in accordance with the terms of reference attached as Annex 6 to the report and that:-
 - (i) The Council appoints members to serve on the Committee in accordance with the political balance of the Council.
 - (ii) The Chase Tenants and Residents Federation be requested to nominate eight Cannock Chase Council tenants to act as advisers to the Committee.
- (i) That a Shadow Board for Your Chase Homes is established which includes five Council nominees and that Council appoints nominees to serve on the Shadow Board in accordance with the political balance of the Council.
- (j) That supplementary estimates for the transfer process to cover the pre-ballot period up to and including a ballot are granted as follows:-
 - (i) General Fund £92,000
 - (ii) Housing Revenue Account £68,000
- (k) That the cost of the time of the Deputy Chief Executive and other senior officers spent working on the stock transfer project be met from the time cost savings in respect of other agreed budgets.
- (l) That the informal consultation programme is led on behalf of Your Chase Homes by the Harvest Housing Group and that the cost of activities undertaken by the Harvest Housing Group, including "a door knocking exercise" are met by the Harvest Housing Group.
- (m) That the communications and consultation strategy be amended to reflect the revised stock transfer budgets detailed in recommendation (j) and the activities to be on behalf of Your Chase Homes by the Harvest Housing Group as part of the informal consultation programme, and that a revised strategy be considered by the Housing Transfer Committee.
- (n) That stock transfer be supported during and as part of the Council's consultation programme with tenants.

- (o) That the Communications Protocol attached as Annex 8 to the report is agreed.
- (p) That all tenants are informed of the Council's decision to pursue a continued strategy of stock transfer through the next edition of the Hometalk magazine, and that the text is agreed by the Deputy Chief Executive following consultation with the Leader for Social Inclusion and Housing.

(Note: The Council is currently continuing negotiations with Harvest Housing, on behalf of Your Chase Homes, and the Department for Communities and Local Government as referred to in recommendation (i)(a) above. Following the outcome of these negotiations, further information will be circulated at the Council meeting).

(ii) Community Strategy 2006-07 and 2007-10

"That Council on 27 September 2006 endorses the first full draft Local Area Agreement for Staffordshire, whilst accepting that further work needs to be done to determine the priorities, targets and outcomes for Cannock Chase".

Item 8 – Recommendations referred from Standards Committee held on 19 September 2006

(i) Code of Conduct for Employees

"That Council be recommended to approve the Code of Conduct for employees and that it form part of the Council's Constitution".

At the meeting of the Standards Committee the following additional recommendations were referred to Council for consideration:

(ii) Appointment of Additional Independent Member

"That Council be recommended to increase the number of Independent Members on the Parish Councils Standards Sub-Committee to five thereby creating two vacancies on the Sub-Committee".

(iii) Updates from the Monitoring Officer

"That Council be recommended, in the absence of a Chairman of either the Standards Committee or Parish Councils Standards Sub-Committee, to nominate a Member of the Standards Committee to attend the conference in place of the Chairman".

Part 2

Item 15 - Recommendations referred from Cabinet held on 21 September 2006

(Note: At the meeting of the Cabinet, this recommendation was considered under Part 1 of the agenda and Council will also consider this item under Part 1).

(i) Rugeley Swimming Pool

- (A) That Council be recommended to approve a supplementary estimate of £560,000 to meet the increased costs for the Rugeley Swimming Pool Capital Scheme and borrowing limits for 2007-08 and future years are increased accordingly.
- (B) That subject to (A) above, Council approves:
- (i) The exemption of the construction contract for the new Rugeley Swimming Pool from having to comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules 14, 17 and 21.
 - (ii) That a 'two stage' tendering process is followed as detailed in item 3 of the report.
- (C) That subject to (A) and (B) above, Council be recommended to approve the project and grant grants permission to spend".