

Executive – 17 October 2007

Present: Councillor Wedderkopp (Vice Chairman – in the Chair).
Councillors Brooks, Coles, Horsley, R Lees, Mullins, Prior-Sankey and Mrs Smith.

Officers: Penny James (Chief Executive), Shirlene Adam (Strategic Director) Brendan Cleere (Strategic Director), Paul Carter (Financial Services Manager), Simon Haskell (Housing Accountant) John Williams (Chief Housing Officer), Phil Webb (Housing Manager – Property Services) and Greg Dyke (Democratic Services Manager)

Also Present: Councillors Bowrah, Cavill, Critchard and Williams.

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm).

103. Apologies

Councillor Henley.

104. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 31 July and 3 October 2007, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and were signed.

105. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Brooks and Prior-Sankey declared personal interests in the Task and Finish Review as members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Horsley declared a personal interest in the Capital Programme Update as Chair of the Taunton Association for the Homeless.

106. Task and Finish Review – A Review into Provision of Facilities for Young People

Councillor Meikle, as Chair of this Review submitted its report. It was explained that it was never intended to find answers to all the problems and issues relating to provision of facilities for young people, what young people of different age groups want, and how to fund even the easiest and most obvious solutions. What the review did, was have a sensible yet spirited discussion on some of the issues relating to the community, agencies who provided services for young people and young people themselves.

The review made seven recommendations, some of which had a significant financial cost attached to them. Others would require some ongoing support.

In making the following recommendations, the review group believed that they had identified and addressed some concerns, and that if the recommendations were adopted, positive, measurable results would follow:

Recommendation 1:

Communities and groups that carry out LAT functions but who are not formal LATs, should be supported. To this end, a list of all non-LAT groups that provide LAT services should be compiled. Ward Councillors, Taunton Deane Borough Council and Somerset County Council, and its partners can then identify gaps in provision that need to be filled.

Recommendation 2:

That as soon as possible, a full time LAT coordinator be appointed to specifically serve the Taunton Deane area. This post should be community-focused and the post holder be actively engaged in helping set up new LATs, and supporting those that already exist. The salary level would have to be properly determined and budget made available, however it is expected that for a full-time post something in the range of £20,000 to £25,000 might be necessary.

Recommendation 3:

Where appropriate and affordable, increased outdoor and expeditionary activities should be made available, in order to develop and strengthen networks between young people in most need of them. This should be directly linked to the support and engagement strategies of Taunton Deane Borough Council and the County Council.

Recommendation 4:

To promote better political and organizational co-ordination within and between the County Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council, each authority should appoint a "Member Champion" for youth issues.

Recommendation 5:

A permanent liaison body should be set up to act as an informal forum for ideas, experiences, and new thinking.

- It should meet twice or three times per year
- All areas of youth "provision" should be represented, from statutory service providers to community groups
- It should discuss common goals and feed back on successes and failures
- It should be a discussion forum and liaison group, not a steering group
- It should not be allocated any budget
- This body should be jointly serviced by the County Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council, and jointly chaired by the Member Champion identified in recommendation 4

Recommendation 6:

County and Deane Councillors should be kept informed of the progress of the Wellington restorative justice scheme, and if successful, consideration be given to replicating the scheme with young offenders. The Scrutiny committees of the County and Deane should also monitor the pilot project.

Recommendation 7:

The Scrutiny committees of the County and Deane councils should monitor the effectiveness of mobile outreach.

Having considered the recommendations the Executive were broadly supportive of the conclusions reached by the review group. It was felt however that any subsequent action would be dependent upon budget constraints.

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Task and Finish Review Group be noted and further considered as part of the Council's budget setting process.

107. Young Enterprise Primary Programme in Taunton Deane

Reported that in October 2006 proposals to deliver a Young Enterprise Primary Programme in Schools across the Borough had been agreed. This Programme was organised and delivered by Young Enterprise (South West), and was specifically aimed at primary school pupils.

It had also been agreed to fund this programme at £5000 for each of the years 06/07, 07/08, and 08/09 from the allocation of Local Authority Business Growth Initiative (LABGI) grant .

This scheme was an initiative to work with local primary school pupils to increase their understanding of the world of work / business and enterprise culture. The Young Enterprise Primary programme was delivered with the help of volunteers from the business community which helped build further links between Education and Business. It was noted, however, that it had proved difficult to recruit sufficient volunteer advisors during the first year of the programme. It was suggested that councillors and appropriate senior officers might be invited to fulfil this role. Young Enterprise had delivered well against its targets and promises for the year, details of which were submitted.

The second year of the Programme (2007/08) sought to enrol 24 schools on the scheme. Young Enterprise felt that they could achieve this target. In the third year the Programme would be delivered to 28 schools in the Deane.

Each School contributed to the costs of the Programme in its own premises, and individual school's financial contribution rose in subsequent years if they continued with the Programme. This additional income was used by Young Enterprise to help finance more schools joining the scheme.

Feedback from Schools and Advisors had been very positive, with all schools participating in the first year programme wishing to continue and signing up to continue with Programme in the current (new) school year.

In 2006/07 school year the cost of the Programme had been £5,000. This was financed from LABGI funds received from Government.

Proposals to continue and extend the Programme to a wider group of schools in the Deane during 2007/08 could be accommodated within the contract agreed with Young Enterprise at a cost of £5,000. This had been allocated from the 2007/08 LABGI award.

RESOLVED that;

- a) the success of the first year of the Young Enterprise Programme in Taunton Deane be noted;
- b) a contribution of £5,000 be made in the 2007/08 financial year to enable the Programme to be delivered to a wider range of schools across the Deane

108. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to Clause 7 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

109. Capital Programme Update

Submitted report, previously circulated, which gave details of the resources available for both the General Fund (GF) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) It also gave details of schemes which the Executive considered adding into the programme and provided background on the additional General Fund schemes which were being proposed in preparation for the 2008/09 budget round.

It was noted that additional receipts from sale of housing assets included £411k in respect of the sale of land at Poplar Road and other housing assets. It was felt that these resources should be earmarked to fund future affordable housing schemes. This meant that these receipts would not be subject to the usual 50% pooling rules. The Council was then able to retain and use all of the £411k capital receipt.

In June 2005 approval was given for the relocation of the Nursery. Consequently land at Highfields was recently purchased to enable this to proceed. The scheme had now reached such a stage that tenders had been received. This scheme should now be included within the capital programme.

The level of uncommitted housing capital resources was now in excess of £1.2m. Consideration was given to some additions to the Housing Capital Programme.

The table below detailed the proposed new schemes. Changes to the Capital Programme such as these were classed as Supplementary Estimates and therefore required Full Council approval.

Scheme	Scheme Cost £000
Works Deane DLO Depot to support housing restructure	60
Renovation Works at Sneddon Grove	140
Works at Roland Close	15
Reinstatement of the Cash Incentive Scheme at a reduced rate (for 2007/08 only)	60
Additional Funding required for Integrated Housing Management System	63
Choice-Based Lettings Scheme System	160
Extension of Homelessness Hostel at Taunton Association for the Homeless (see para 5.3 below)	250
Total	748

RESOLVED that Council be recommended that the above listed schemes be included within the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes:

- a) General Fund – Plant Nursery relocation of £427k
- b) Housing Revenue Account:
 - To earmark the capital receipts from the sale of Poplar Road and other Housing land for affordable housing purposes
 - To approve additional capital schemes totalling £748k as detailed in the table set out above.

(The meeting ended at 7.40p.m.)