

# Selby District Council



## Minutes

### Executive

Venue:	Committee Room, Civic Centre, Selby
Date:	Thursday 4 January 2018
Time:	4pm
Present:	Councillors M Crane (Chair), J Mackman, C Lunn, C Metcalfe and R Musgrave
Officers present:	Janet Waggott, Chief Executive, Dave Caulfield, Director of Economic Regeneration and Place, Julie Slatter, Director for Corporate Services and Commissioning, Karen Iveson, Chief Finance Officer (s151), Gillian Marshall, Solicitor to the Council, June Rothwell, Head of Operational Services (for minute items 66 to 68), Sarah Thompson, Housing and Environmental Health Service Manager (for minute items 66 to 68), Chris Kwasniewski, Housing and Regeneration Manager (for minute item 69) and Palbinder Mann, Democratic Services Manager.
Public:	1
Press:	2

NOTE: Only minute numbers 65 to 69 are subject to call-in arrangements. The deadline for call-in is 5pm on Wednesday 17 January 2018. Decisions not called in may be implemented from Thursday 18 January 2018.

**63. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**63. MINUTES**

The Executive considered the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2017.

**RESOLVED:**

**To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2017 for signing by the Chair.**

**64. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mackman declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 – Housing Development Programme 2017-2020 as he was Chairman of the Selby and District Housing Trust.

**65. HOUSING RENTS 2018/19**

Councillor Lunn, Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources presented the report that outlined proposals for Housing Revenue Account rent levels in accordance with the Government's current policy on rent setting.

The Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources explained that the Government's current policy in rent setting had required providers to reduce rents by 1% per year for four years from April 2016 and this was the third year where rents would be decreasing.

**RESOLVED:**

**To approve the proposed 1% rent decrease for 2018/19.**

**REASON FOR THE DECISION**

*To allow rent levels to be set in advance of the coming financial year within the constraints of Government rent setting policy.*

**66. LEASE OF LAND AT BURN AIRFIELD**

Councillor Lunn, Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources presented the report that outlined the current position regarding 47.25 acres at Burn Airfield, Selby, currently occupied for agricultural use and the proposal to manage this going forward in line with the Council's proposals for this site.

The Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources explained that the former leaseholder had passed away and subsequently the lease had not been renewed. It was proposed to enter into a Farm Business Tenancy with the son of the previous tenant and explained that the new lease took into account the lease to Burn Gliding Club which had an expiry date shortly before in 2026.

It was noted that there was a typographical error in the report under paragraph 2.2 where it should have referred to 2027 rather than 2020.

The Executive were concerned that there was no landlords break clause similar to the one that had been added in the lease to Burn Gliding Club. The Head of Operational Services explained that the Council had employed agents to negotiate on its behalf and this was presented as the best deal which could be negotiated but that the Council did not have to accept it.

Following further discussion, it was suggested that the decision be deferred for further negotiation around the issue regarding break clause however it was noted that the decision could not be deferred for a lengthy period of time. Given the issues being discussed the item would return to a future executive as a private item to allow a full discussion on the commercial negotiations.

**RESOLVED:**

**To defer a decision on the lease pending further negotiation.**

**REASON FOR THE DECISION**

*To ensure that the lease agreement contains the best solution for the Council with the appropriate flexibility.*

**67. EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

Councillor Musgrave, Lead Executive Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture presented the report that set out the Council's proposed Empty Homes Strategy and Action Plan to bring more properties back into use.

The Lead Executive Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture explained that there were 409 properties across the district that had been empty for six months or longer and of those, 145 had been empty for two years or longer. The Executive were informed that should the recommendations be improved, the Council would have a strategy and action plan in place to bring back empty properties back into use.

Discussion took place on how success would be measured and how updates on progress of the work would be reported. The Service Manager, Housing and Environmental Health explained that the action plan including creating performance targets and these would be reported alongside the quarterly performance reports which were considered by the Executive.

It was noted that the Government were considering increasing the premium council tax charge for properties that had been empty for two or more years to 200%.

A query was raised regarding the process for compulsory purchase orders. The Solicitor to the Council explained that the process depended on what powers were being used however there was a strict procedure outlined in legislation that needed to be followed.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To adopt the North Yorkshire Empty Property Strategy**
- ii) To approve the local Selby District Action Plan**
- iii) To approve the method for assessing and prioritising empty properties**
- iv) To delegate the authority to purchase properties to the Director for Corporate Services and Commissioning in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Lead Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture (subject to meeting the assessment criteria and financial appraisal)**
- v) To approve the submission of the bid for HCA funding to deliver the Action Plan.**

**REASON FOR THE DECISION**

*Reducing the number of privately owned empty homes is a corporate priority of the council. The council believes that the North Yorkshire Empty Property Strategy, supported by a local Action Plan is the best way to bring Selby district's empty homes back into habitable use.*

*The Council is working with the North Yorkshire Housing Board to provide an overarching vision for the sub-region. The North*

*Yorkshire Empty Property Strategy aims to reduce the number of long-term empty homes through a co-ordinated approach.*

*The local Action Plan lays out how we will target empty homes across the district, and how we will encourage, support or enforce owners to bring Empty Homes back into use.*

## **68. PRIVATE SECTOR ASSISTANCE POLICY**

Councillor Musgrave, Lead Executive Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture presented the report that introduced a new private sector assistance policy for consideration before consultation.

The Lead Executive Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture explained that the current policy was adopted in 2013 and therefore a new policy was required. It was noted that the policy was proposed to come back before the Executive in March following consultation for a decision.

### **RESOLVED:**

**To approve the draft Private Sector Assistance Policy for consultation with a view for the Policy to return in March 2018 for final adoption.**

### **REASON FOR THE DECISION**

*It is recommended that the draft Private Sector Assistance Policy (Appendix 1) is approved to allow the Council to provide discretionary private sector assistance. Amendments introduced through the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 allow housing authorities the flexibility to provide discretionary assistance but they must publish a policy and exercise their power in accordance with their policy.*

## **69. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2017-2020**

Councillor Musgrave, Lead Executive Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture presented the report that asked the Executive to approve a revised Housing Development Programme that sought to provide 207 affordable homes by 31 March 2020.

The Lead Executive Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture explained that the programme was the second phase of homes delivery with the end date of the programme being March 2020.

The Lead Executive Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture proposed an additional recommendation to those in the

report to support the release of land to self-builders and custom builders.

In response to a query concerning outcomes, the Lead Executive Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture explained that the programme would speed up the process for delivery and allow greater flexibility. It was also noted that the programme resulted in a £22m investment in the district.

It was felt that there needed to be discussions on the details of the programme between the Council and the Selby District Housing Trust. It was also stated that there needed to be a view from the Trust on its ambition in delivering the programme.

It was proposed and seconded to agree the recommendations in the report alongside the additional recommendation outlined by the Lead Executive Member for Housing, Leisure, Health and Culture.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) To approve the revised Housing Development Programme as set out in the report;**
- ii) To note the additional budget and funding requirements and approve their inclusion in the draft budget proposals to be considered by the Executive in February;**
- iii) That the Council's Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Finance and Resources, be granted delegated authority to approve loan funding, and the terms and conditions of the loan agreement, from Selby District Council to the Selby District Housing Trust to enable the acquisition of Section 106 properties on the following basis:**
  - a. That the approved investment is within the budget parameters of the approved Housing Development Programme; and**
  - b. That the acquisition is subject to a viable business case having due regard to an interest rate which provides for an appropriate margin over the Council's cost of capital and a term of no more than 40 years.**

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- iv) **To approve an investment of £251,000 from the Council's Programme for Growth to fund the establishment of a feasibility budget and the recruitment of a new fixed term post to support the revised Housing Development Programme.**
  
- v) **To add that the Council would also consider promoting self-build/custom build opportunities to interested parties on sites in its ownership as part of the Asset Management Strategy on sites which are surplus to Council requirements and/or unsuitable for the direct delivery envisaged in the report. This would be considered when the detailed business cases are considered for each site.**

#### **REASON FOR THE DECISION**

*To approve the Housing Development Programme 2017-20 in order to deliver 207 affordable homes in Selby District for Selby District Council and the Selby District Housing Trust through a variety of delivery mechanisms.*

*In relation to the additional resolution on self-build/custom build opportunities, this type of development could provide a capital receipt for the Council, could help to cross-subsidise delivery of affordable housing, and will help diversify the housing market in the District.*

The meeting closed 4.46pm.