

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday, 14 May 2013

Present

Councillors Burns (Convener), Cardownie (Vice-Convener), Booth (substituting for Councillor Chapman), Burgess, Child, Nick Cook, Day (substituting for Councillor Ricky Henderson), Edie, Godzik, Hinds, Lewis, Rose, Ross and Whyte (substituting for Councillor Mowat).

1. Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee of 16 April 2013 as a correct record.

2. Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan May to July 2013

The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan for May to July 2013 was presented.

Decision

To note the Key Decisions Forward Plan for May to July 2013.

(Reference – report by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted)

3. Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Business Bulletin 14 May 2013

The Corporate Policy and Strategy Business Bulletin for 14 May 2013 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – report by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted.)

4. 2012 Employee Survey Update

The Committee had agreed an update on the analysis and actions undertaken since October 2012 to address the development areas identified through the Employee Survey findings.

Details were provided on a number of related actions which included the development of a new Organisational Development strategy and the delivery of Council wide manager engagement events.

Decision

- 1) To note the actions taken to date in responding to the findings of the 2012 Employee Survey.
- 2) To agree to receive a further update on progress in September 2013, to include an update on the outcome of the Investors in People and Healthy Working Lives assessments currently taking place.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee 26 February 2013 (item7); report by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted.)

5. Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) Policy

Details were provided on a Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) Policy which had been drafted in response to the Welfare Reform Act 2012. The policy incorporated the Department for Work and Pensions DHP good practice guidance and its key aims were to prevent hardship and to protect families and vulnerable people by sustaining tenancies and prevent homelessness.

Motion

To approve the Discretionary Housing Payments Policy as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Corporate Governance with the amendment that bullet point 6 of Paragraph 4 – “When DHP will be Paid”, (Where a household is affected by the benefits cap and in mainstream accommodation) be relocated to Paragraph 5 – “When DHP may be Paid”

- moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Day

Amendment

- 1) To approve the Discretionary Housing Payments Policy as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Corporate Governance.
- 2) To note that Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) provided short term emergency funding to tenants receiving Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit.

3) To note that as reported on 4 December 2012, Councils may choose to match funding allocated by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) by a factor of up to 1.5 times.

4) To note that the report 7.4 to this committee on 22 January 2013 on Welfare Reform stated at 2.17;

“Work is underway to identify matched funding of an estimated £2,020,948 for 2013-14 from existing budgets. The resulting DHP fund of £3.368m would provide significant support to the most vulnerable tenants, including those who will be affected from 1 April 2013 by the new under-occupancy rules for social sector tenants and the benefits cap.”

5) To recognise that the Coalition budget set in February 2013 did not include any matched funding for DHP whereas the Green Group budget included £1m for DHP matched funding.

6) To note that the current report therefore stated at para 2.2;

“it has not been possible to provide “matched funding” in the Council’s 2013/14 budget and therefore the Council will operate within the DWP allocation stated above increase.”

7) To call for funding to be found to top up the DHP Fund in order to increase the likelihood of being able to provide significant support to the most vulnerable tenants.

- moved by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Booth

Voting

The voting was as follows;

For the motion	-	12 votes
For the amendment	-	2 votes

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Burns.

(Reference – report by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted.)