

Time commenced – 6.00pm  
Time finished – 7.35pm

**COMMUNITY REGENERATION COMMISSION**  
**25 JANUARY 2005**

Present: Councillor Bayliss (in the Chair)  
Councillors Blanksby, Chera, Higginbottom, Lowe, Richards and Webb

**53/04 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hickson and Samra.

**54/04 Late Items Introduced by the Chair**

There were no late items.

**55/04 Declarations of Interest**

With regard to items of business relating to Housing Rents, Councillors Richards and Chera declared personal interest as Councillor Richards was a Derby Homes tenant and Councillor Chera had a cousin who was a Derby Homes tenant. Councillors Bayliss, Webb and Lowe declared personal interests, as they were Council appointed board members of Derby Homes.

**56/04 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the amendment of minute number 44/04 to read 'Councillor Chera also declared a personal interest in the same item as his cousin was a Derby Homes tenant'.

**Items for Discussion**

**57/04 Community Grants Budget**

A report of the Director of Policy was considered which recommended the approval of the allocation of Community Grants Budget – CGB – grants to voluntary sector organisations for 2005/6 and the allocation of the remaining CGB budget from 2004/05 of £6,240 to support the development of the Derby Compact.

Emma Bates, Community Development and Voluntary Sector Support Manager, commented that, as a result of better publicity, there had been ten new grant applications and that there were more applications for grant assistance than funds available.

Councillor Bayliss asked if increased funding had been requested by any of the applicant bodies.

It was reported that additional funds had not been sought because the grants budget was in the second year of a three year programme.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## **58/04                      Derby City Compact Consultation on Draft Funding Code**

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Policy on the Derby City Compact Draft Funding Code, as part of a joint Council and voluntary sector consultation process.

It was reported that the Forum had completed its work on a draft Funding Code which set out the responsibilities of both the Council and the voluntary sector to improve current practice.

The Consultation deadline on the draft document was 26 January 2005 with a re-draft scheduled for February 2005.

Councillor Bayliss pointed out that some organisations are less well organised than the Council and asked if voluntary sector organisations realised that they had an obligation to report back efficiently, in order to receive continued funding.

Emma Bates responded that discussions had taken place with voluntary sector organisations about strengthening reporting and monitoring procedures.

Councillor Webb asked whether the Voluntary Sector was aware of the limits within budgets and that not all applicants would receive funding.

It was responded that it was understood that nothing in the Code altered the amount of the grant budgets.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## **59/04                      Revenue Budget 2005/06 to 2007/08**

The Commission considered a report from the Director of Corporate Services detailing the Council's 2005/06 – 2007/08. Draft Revenue Budget. The Commission were asked to consider those aspects of the Council's draft 2005/06 – 2007/08 Revenue Budget that fell within its remit.

Sue Glithero, Director of Policy, provided Commission members with a overhead of the 'Policy Directorate Budget' and commented that there was now confidence that the Council would continue to be eligible for the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, although

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there was uncertainty about how the fund would be allocated between local authorities.

Comment was made about the difficulty of applying the Simalto consultation technique to budget building: 300 consultees' views had been gathered, and they had been chosen by criteria such as ward location, age and gender.

Councillor Bayliss commented that he would like the Commission to recommend to Cabinet a spending of a further £100,000 on burglary reduction and appointing of two additional Area Panel Managers at a cost of £70..

Don McLure, Assistant Director – Revenues and Benefits commented on the continued improvements within Revenues and Benefits and responded that investment in Call Centres and business processes could divert savings to front line services.

Discussion took place about the issue of replacing software in 2006/07. Don McLure reported that Revenues and Benefits computer software is to go through a tendering process and this will impact on budgetary provision across all revenues and benefits services during this three year period.

## **Resolved**

1. **To note the report.**
2. **To recommend that, in addition to the £100k extra proposed for the Community Safety Partnership, partly to maintain the current burglary reduction scheme, a further £100k be provided from the Public Priorities fund, or elsewhere, to expand the number of houses receiving target hardening measures from 110 homes a month to 190 a month.**
3. **To recommend that £70k should be provided from the Public Priorities fund, or elsewhere, to unfreeze and fill the two vacant Area Panel Managers posts.**

## **60/04 Derby Homes' Performance Monitoring – Quarters 1 and 2 2004/05**

The Commission re-considered a report of the Director of Policy detailing Derby Homes' 2004/05 first and second quarter performance, first submitted to the 9 December meeting of the Commission.

Concern was expressed that the time it took to relet a property was still outside the target deadline, although it was accepted that the trend was slightly improving.

Generally, the upward trend was welcomed. Four key areas were discussed:

- Repair work – Phil Davies, Chief Executive of Derby Homes, cited computer logging problems as a difficulty for Derby Homes. Non-urgent orders here adversely affecting repair statistics. It was anticipated that the introduction of an enquiry centre and better staff training would help to resolve this problem.
- Re-let targets – It was reported that the current 33/34 day relet time was decreasing slowly towards the 31 day target.
- Derby Homes Local Indicators 32 and 34 – It was accepted that data needed to be available by Quarter 3 and Derby Homes would work with Mark Hilary to that end.
- Homes Pride Progress – It was reported that the Homes Pride Programme was on track to deliver its targets. Tenant satisfaction with work carried out was being assessed and would be available for subsequent reports.

Discussion took place about satisfaction levels, how complaints were dealt with and co-ordination between contractors. Phil Davies explained that contractors have customer care offices on site and that complaints are directed to teams within Derby Homes. Co-ordination between contractors can prove difficult because of the diverse type of work that takes place.

Councillor Richards commented on the problems of bringing Britannia Court up to a Decent Homes standard.

Phil Davies responded that there were particular problems with Britannia Court and that costs had escalated with this project. Different options for the way forward were being considered with emphasis being placed on value for money.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 61/04                      Draft Housing Capital Programme 2005/6 to 2007/8

The Commission considered a joint report from the Director of Policy and Director of Finance dealing with the proposed uses of allocations that are specific to housing, based on 2005/06 main allocations confirmed at the point of the report's preparation. The Council's overall draft capital programme would be considered by Scrutiny Management Commission on 31 January 2005, including the proposed uses of corporate funding.

Councillor Bayliss commented that there was a lack of affordable rental property in the city and asked if then Council was lobbying for Derby Homes to be allowed to build new rental property.

Phil Davies responded that new ways, for example, using gardens and corner plots for new houses, were being considered to provide social housing for around £60,000.

Discussion took place about affordable housing being considered as part of the Council's planning policy. Sue Glithero commented that the new draft planning guidance clearly discourages social housing ghettos and segregation.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 62/04                    Housing Revenue Account Budget

The Commission received a report of the Director of Finance and Director of Policy on the proposed HRA budget for 2005/06 that was to be considered by Cabinet on 8 February 2005.

David Enticott, Head of Technical Finance, distributed a handout 'Housing Revenue Account – Key Issues' to Commission Members. The Housing Revenue Account was used to give an annual focus within an overall 30 year perspective.

The HRA should make surpluses in the short term; however, by 2011 the budget would likely worsen by around £2m a year owing to the Government's decision to limit additional ALMO interest payments to 2009/2010. During the discussion, reference was made to the importance of fencing and white light in minimising crime on estates.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 63/04                    Housing Rents

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Finance and Director of Policy asking for its views on the proposed rent increase for 2005/06.

The Housing Revenue Account would be required to achieve convergence with Registered Social Landlords, RSL's, by 2011/12. In order to achieve this, rent increases above inflation would normally be necessary over the next few years.

Cabinet had agreed in July 2004 to vary the rent policy of the Council to make sure that the balance of increases for 2004/05 and 2005/06 were more even than a strict interpretation of policy would imply.

It was anticipated that the Government would issue a further consultation paper recommending that larger houses incur greater rent increases than smaller properties, and that rents overall increased still faster than currently planned. If that happened, funding would be generated that could be used to support spending on an 'Estate sustainability' fund.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 64/04                    Performance Eye

Discussion took place about the 'traffic light' system used to monitor the performance of the sub elements.

**Resolved to further discuss about the red and amber light ratings at the next meeting.**

**65/04      Call-in**

There were no call-ins.

**66/04      Matters referred by Council Cabinet**

There were no matters referred by Council Cabinet.

**67/04      Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission**

There were no responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission.

**68/04      Council Cabinet Forward Plan**

The Commission were asked to consider the following key decisions in the Forward Plan at the most appropriate time.

Reference	Item
205/03	Sale of Land, Leytonstone Drive, Mackworth
53/04	Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy submitted for approval
67/04	Private Sector Housing Area Renewal Programme

MINUTES END