

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON MONDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2016  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING  
AT 7.00 - 10.04 PM**

**Members Present:** Y Knight (Chairman), G Shiell (Vice-Chairman), R Baldwin, A Beales, K Chana, L Girling, S Heap, L Hughes, S Murray, A Mitchell, H Whitbread and W Marshall (Tenants and Leaseholders Federation)

**Other members present:** R Brookes, J Lea and S Stavrou

**Apologies for Absence:** R Gadsby, S Jones and B Rolfe

**Officers Present** A Hall (Director of Communities), R Wilson (Assistant Director (Housing Operations)), D Pegler (Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)) and A Hendry (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

**37. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (MINUTE ITEM 39 - 23.7.02)**

There were no substitutions made for the meeting.

**38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5, review of Epping Forest Careline Services, due to his mother being a user of this service. He considered that his interest was not prejudicial and he would stay for the consideration of the item.

**39. TERMS OF REFERENCE/WORK PROGRAMME**

**(a) Terms of Reference**

The Select Committee's Terms of Reference were noted.

**(b) Work Programme**

The Select Committee's Work Programme was noted.

**40. REVIEW OF EPPING FOREST CARELINE ALARM MONITORING SERVICE**

The Assistant Director Housing Operations, Mr Wilson, introduced the report setting out options for the future of the Council's Careline Monitoring Centre, based at Parsonage Court, Loughton. The service was introduced in June 1984 and offers a twenty-four hour, 365 days per year, emergency alarm monitoring service to older and disabled people living within the District. The Service was also offered to other vulnerable groups including victims of domestic violence and younger people with disabilities. There were currently 2,572 properties (representing around 3,500 people) in the District linked to the centre in this way.

Around 1,380 of the connections were private sector dwellings, which were connected via a dispersed alarm, which has an associated neck worn radio trigger. A

range of various sensors were offered such as on line smoke alarms, fall and flood detectors. The user paid an annual rental to the Council for the service; in 2015/2016 the Council received a total income of around £185,000, inclusive of associated sensors. The Council worked in partnership with Essex County Council which funds the first 12 weeks rental for the user.

The charges made by the Council were very competitive compared to other authorities in Essex.

Careline has a Disaster Recovery Plan which is an essential back up system. In the event of the systems being faulty at the Careline Monitoring Centre, all calls could be diverted and handled at the equipment manufacturer's own control centre in Yorkshire until the service was restored, where clients' information is securely stored and was regularly updated should this alternative system be needed.

It was noted that as the Careline Monitoring Centre had expanded in terms of the number of private sector connections and the advances in technology, the management and operational aspects of the service had become more complex. In addition, there have been difficulties in recruiting staff due to the nature of the work and the salary level. This had led to additional pressures on existing staff that have had to cover, not only vacant posts, but also annual leave and sickness absences. Also, all new staff completes an 8 week training programme prior to commencing full duties, which adds to the burden of covering shifts.

In 2011 the Careline Monitoring Service became Telecare Services Association (TSA) accredited. TSA was a nationally recognised standards body for the delivery of technology enabled care and support services in the UK. The Council's Careline Service has to date met all of the Audit requirements.

Importantly, the TSA have recently brought to the attention of the Council and authorities nationally the British Standard (BS8591), extracts of which currently states:

*"There should be a minimum of two operators in an ARC [control centre] at all times, capable of carrying out all operational procedures, at least one of whom should be at their workstation at all times".*

TSA have also confirmed that the above standard was under review and should be brought in line with the European Standard. Although 2 Operators on duty at all times was expected to be desired, this would result in Centres who do not have 2 Operators on duty at all times being required to put contingency measures in place should more than one emergency call be received at any one time.

Although the Council was complimented on its service at the last Audit, it was explained that authorities who did not comply with the Standard would not pass any TSA annual Audits when the Standard had been reviewed.

Although the service currently provided an excellent and reliable service to residents, due to the reasons above it was considered important that this review was undertaken to ensure the future resilience of the service. There appeared to be the following four options for the future delivery of the Careline service:

**Option one** – that the Careline Monitoring Service continues to be provided by the Council under the current arrangements;

**Option two** – the Council provides an enhanced Careline Monitoring service;

**Option three** – monitor the service through another provider 24/7; and

**Option four** – monitoring the service through another service provider overnight.

**Option one** – *that the Careline Monitoring Service continues to be provided by the Council under the current arrangements* - the Council was making a small surplus on the service by around £13,122 per annum. But it was not meeting the British Standard and was at a high risk should any call not be dealt with correctly by any Careline Operator where a user's well-being was put at risk and a challenge was brought against the Council. There were also the difficulties of recruiting and retaining Careline staff, maintaining cover for staff absences and the inability to expand the service. However, the Committee noted that the Service was currently a reliable and excellent service but it was important that this Review was undertaken to ensure its future resilience. Due to these disadvantages it was felt that the Council could no longer continue to provide the service under the current arrangements and that option one should not be recommended to the Cabinet.

Councillor Murray noted the difficulties in recruiting staff and asked when was the last time that the salary levels had been reviewed. Mr Wilson said that it was about 12 to 18 months ago when they had increased the pay grade from a grade 3 to a grade 4. Councillor Murray thought this was a low salary when compared to other jobs; Mr Wilson explained that it had been through the job evaluation panel. Other problems with recruiting to these posts was that people did not realise just how complicated this job was until during their training.

Councillor Brookes asked what the scale 4 span was and on average how long did the staff stay. She was told that it was between £18 to £19k pa. (full time). Plus there was night allowance and overtime. The current staff were very long serving and dedicated to the work, but this may not be the case in the future. Councillor Brookes noted that as we were currently making a small profit on this scheme, could we not just pay more? Councillor H Whitbread asked if they worked with the local schools and colleges to recruit staff and did they offer part time working and/or apprenticeships. Mr Wilson said that they had not tried the schools and colleges as yet, it was a possibility; they also offered the posts as part time jobs, but it was difficult to recruit to; although there was a career path.

Councillor Murray noted that the British Standard is for two officers on at all times, would this change. Mr Wilson replied that this was unlikely to change and may well be compounded further under the European Standard. Although not a statutory requirement, it is good practice that we would be expected to comply with. Councillor Murray continued that if it was more about good practice it would not leave the Council in a good position on appeal, would it be something we could insure against. Mr Wilson replied we could insure ourselves against not meeting good practice.

The Chairman said if we must have two people on at one time would we also need someone on standby. Mr Wilson reiterated that they were looking to rule out Option 1 and having only one person on duty. If someone called in sick they would have to phone around other officers to arrange cover. The Chairman asked how long it took to train the new staff. Mr Wilson said about 8 weeks, it varied from person to person. After the 8 weeks they had to prove that they could do the job and would be tested by the Housing Manager, Older People Services. When they start the job they are, initially on duty during the day when there were other staff there to offer advice.

Councillor Baldwin asked if jobs would be lost. Mr Wilson reminded the meeting that they were presently only considering not continuing as they were. Councillor Baldwin then asked if they could meet the British Standard and still retain option 1. Mr Wilson

replied that they could not do both. Councillor Baldwin asked if two calls were received at once could one of them be rerouted. He was told that would be a high risk option.

Councillor Mitchell said that they worked unusual hours and at the weekends. Was there a lot of sick leave? She was told that officers had a very good attendance record.

Councillor Murray asked if they could have an option 1½. Could we keep option 1 and use technology to reroute a second call. Mr Wilson replied that they would have to have someone paid, off site, to take that second call. They would then need to relay to us the information on what had happened. This would be the same as having two staff on duty and also there would be two members of staff working separately and alone.

Councillor Beales said that it was difficult to rule this option out completely without first assessing the other options. Mr Wilson replied that options 2, 3 and 4 could be made to work, but option 1 could not.

Councillor Stavrou commented that officers had given this a lot of consideration and consulted UNISON and staff members. Neither wanted to have option 1, as it was untenable.

The Chairman then asked that members decided on option 1 before they went on to discuss options 2, 3 & 4. A vote was taken and the majority were not in favour of supporting Option 1.

**AGREED:** that Option one not be supported and recommended by this Committee.

**Option two** - *the Council provides an enhanced Careline Monitoring service* – Mr Wilson explained Option 2, that an enhanced service would include employing 5 extra members of staff in order to meet with the British Standard. There would not be sufficient work for the five additional officers which would cost the Council a further £166,300 pa. and would result in a further 58% increase in charges to users. Also, as recruitment, retention and cover difficulties would double officers were not recommending this option.

Councillor Murray said that he was keen on this option and asked if we could get the extra money from the HRA. Mr Hall said that it would be difficult as the HRA was a large account but we have been asked to reduce council rents by 1% for 4 years. This would result in a reduced amount of investment in Council stock and make it difficult if the HRA were to bear all the costs. We could also pass this extra cost on to users. Councillor Murray said that if we were to pass on the costs to users (we were the third lowest in Essex) we could raise it by a considerable degree. What room was there to increase this cost. And what was the possibility of providing this service to other providers and charging for it. Mr Wilson answered that we could raise the charge to private users to £177pa. This would not make us the highest charger and was “doable” but may make us anti competitive. There were other companies that offered this service nationally. But the reason why we were here was due to the operational difficulties and not about the charges or potential savings. Mr Hall added that the costings in this report were based on current levels of ECC Housing related support funding. We have been told that ECC may cease all funding for Careline Services across the County at a loss of around £81k pa.

Mr Wilson said that they had, over the years, looked at expanding and taking over other call-centres. It was an extremely complex area of work in terms of meeting contracts and conditions etc. and we would need extra staff to meet the expectations and a dedicated, full time Control Care Manager. We concluded that it was too much for us, as a District Council.

Mr Marshall, Chairman of the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation said that tenants would oppose any increase in charges.

This Option was not recommended by the Committee.

**Option three** - *monitor the service through another provider 24/7* – under this option, the Careline alarm monitoring service would be outsourced to an external provider, in order to offer basic monitoring services to the Council's 2,572 properties currently linked into Careline on a 24-hour basis; following soft market testing, it was expected that a third party alarm monitoring service provider would charge approximately £80,000 pa. subject to any competitive tendering exercise.

Outsourcing the monitoring service would resolve the difficulties with staff recruitment and retention, removing the need for an in-house service to meet the British Standard and there would be no need to have a disaster recovery plan which would result in an annual saving of £5,750.

From an officer's point of view this was never about making savings it was about the future resilience of the service. But there were savings to be made under this option which could be used elsewhere.

There would however, be some difficulties in providing our Careline Service during the time it would take to procure a new provider. We may need to re-programme all existing equipment. There was also the risk that the new provider would not be as good as our service. However, Mr Wilson had spoken to one of the existing providers and noted that they monitored 250,000 connections and had eight controllers on at night for example to provide this specialist service.

Councillor Heap commented that if we chose one, we could not go back. Mr Wilson replied that the service would be governed by our contract specifications. There would be 'get out' clauses. He was not saying that there would be no risks but it would be covered by the specification. Councillor Heap added that it would still have been taken from the Council's control and just moved to another service provider.

Mr Marshall commented that there were already five other local authorities using an out sourced provider in Essex so they would have had this experience. Mr Wilson agreed saying that he had visited Harlow Council who had out sourced their service and they said "it was the best thing we ever did".

Councillor H Whitbread asked how private companies compared with our service. It was explained that there were many competent companies who provided monitoring services. Mr Wilson clarified that although the monitoring service would be outsourced under this option we would not be closing the Careline Service, this would continue but the calls would be answered elsewhere. We would retain the part of the service that would do the day to day work, as our everyday service was second to none.

Councillor Baldwin commented that it made sense to do this. Who were the external providers for this service and were they reliable? Mr Wilson replied that all this came about when officers became aware of the British Standard in February this year. Another trigger was the recruitment and retention problems. Officers are aware of providers who had been providing this service for a long time and were reliable. Any potential suppliers will have to go through our procurement process and meet the required standards.

Councillor Baldwin then asked about job retention for the Careline staff. He was told management were in discussions with them and with Human Resources.

Councillor Lea commented that a lot of call centres were based abroad, which may result in language problems. She would like us to retain the good service that we have at present. Mr Wilson said that the users must be able to engage with the call centre we used. Also, not all our users spoke English or sometimes they did not speak at all when activating the system. We had the processes to deal with such calls and such procedures will be included in the specifications.

Councillor Girling asked that, under option 3, if we out sourced the service would our staff be TUPE'd over. Mr Wilson said that he was not a TUPE expert. If it was agreed to outsource then we would have a meeting with the staff and a TUPE expert.

Councillor Knight asked if we outsourced this service and were subsequently unhappy with the new providers, how easy would it be to find a new provider and move to them. Mr Marshall said that generally notice to terminate the contract would have to be given which would give the Council time to find a new provider. Mr Wilson said that members were right to consider this risk in such circumstances officers would speak to other providers to replace any substandard provider. We would have very tight specifications for the contract which would allow us to switch providers if necessary. We would focus on quality of service when selecting a new provider.

Councillor Stavrou said that we were here today not because our Careline had failed; she had visited our centre and was very impressed with our service. But, we have to look at the progress made by private care services providers. It was hard to recommend that we do this as we have such good Careline operators. Also the HRA was not the cash cow it once was, although money was not the driver for this report. We had to make sure that we have long term stability in our Careline service.

This Option was recommended to the Committee.

**Option four - monitoring the service through another service provider overnight -** Under this Option, the Careline alarm monitoring service would be outsourced to an external provider but only at night between the hours of 8:00 pm to 8:00 am. Existing Careline Operators (5.5 FTE) would monitor the service during the day with 2 on duty. This would meet with the British Standard without the need to employ further staff.

However, if the Council were to outsource the service overnight it would result in an increased cost to the Council of around £50,778. Therefore in order for the service to break even it would be necessary to increase charges to users by around 20%. There was also the case that we would have to re-programme our equipment to make it compatible with the system the overnight provider used. And the Council would still have its problems with recruitment and retention of Careline staff.

Mr Marshall noted that operators now worked 3 shifts of 8 hours, would this reduce to 2 shifts? Mr Wilson said that it would, they would have to change the work rota and the existing officers would be paid less as they would lose their night allowance.

This would also be a missed opportunity to undertake a restructure of Older Peoples Services and an inability to free up office accommodation. Also all existing alarm equipment may need to be re-programmed; the service contract and disaster recovery arrangements would remain the same; there may be insufficient work to ensure that both operators would be fully utilised during daytime hours. The Council would also have to make alternative arrangements to cover associated monitoring services. They would also still have to tender services; would still need a specification; still have their recruitment and retention problems and cover difficulties; and current staff would still lose their night allowances. Due to these disadvantages this option was not recommended by the Committee.

**Risk Management** – Mr Wilson then went on to cover the risks involved. If the Careline Service was put out to tender there was a risk that during the transitional period the Careline operators may find alternative employment. As the Council retained its duty to monitor alarms for the older and vulnerable people in the District during any transition, the following two steps would be taken:

- 1) Management Board have agreed that if the Cabinet agree that the Careline Alarm Monitoring Service be outsourced, then Careline operators would be made an ex-gratia retention payment subject to certain conditions, of 20% (pro rata) of their annual salary (as recommended by UNISON) in order to retain staff until the service was handed over to the new provider.
- 2) Officers were seeking a quotation from Tunstall Telecom Ltd for monitoring calls at night during the transition period, should it necessary to switch over at any time due to staff shortages.

Since writing the report the current PNC5 system went down and officers had to switch to the disaster recovery service. The service engineer who came out to repair the equipment said that it was getting old and would need upgrading very soon (within months). So this would have to be done regardless of what option was chosen. Officers have had discussions with the supplier Tunstall Telecom about the cost of upgrading to a PNC7 system. This will now be purchased under emergency budget procedures at a cost of £44k, guaranteed for a year so there would a saving on service charges in the first year. It was also noted that the voice recording system need not be replaced straight away and so this would also save some money.

The Committee agreed to a recommendation that budget provision was made of £70k in 2017/18 and £70k in 2018/19 in order to fund the transitional arrangements. If it was agreed to outsource 24/7, the payback period would be around 9 months.

Councillor Knight asked if the new PNC7 system would last until the transfer had taken place. Mr Wilson clarified that the equipment itself would last many years. Councillor Knight asked if it could be sold on and we could regain some of our costs. She was told that this could be considered at the time.

Councillor Knight said that she had noted the £215k savings mentioned in the report but had learned today that the ECC contribution of £81k was to be withdrawn. Had this been included in the proposed savings? Mr Wilson said that no, it had not been taken into account.

**Consultation undertaken** – Mr Wilson went through the outcome of the various consultations undertaken on the report both with the Careline operators and with Unison and the officers response to their concerns.

Careline Operators:

It was noted that the Careline operators had favoured option two but were mindful of the cost implications for this option. They had accepted that option one could not be considered as an option and the service could not continue under the current arrangements.

They did not agree with Option three because of the perceived implications for job losses and the adverse effect this change would have for all service users. In addition alternative arrangements would need to be made for tasks currently undertaken by the Careline team.

Careline staff wanted Option four to be presented in more detail in the report as they thought it had not been given enough thought. As a result the report had been amended as they had requested. They requested that this option be given serious consideration as it would mean that jobs would not be under threat.

The Careline team were proud of the service they provided and believed it was a credit to EFDC and believed that an outsourced service would have detrimental effect in terms of quality and response times.

UNISON:

Unison having fully considered options 1 to 4 discarded Option one which they felt was clearly untenable and Option two which was clearly too expensive.

On considering Option three they were unsure about its value to the Council as they thought, amongst other concerns, that there were no costings for the removal of the current equipment, the Council would lose a degree of autonomy over the service, the scheme managers would lose the support of the staff and the service, redundancy costs will need to be built into the tenders and the Council would need to deal with the problems associated with keeping the service running through to the start of the transfer to an external provider.

Option four appeared to be in the best interests of both the Council and the employees and they asked that it be explored further. Reasons being that the Council would retain a high degree of autonomy over the service and the cost of providing it, they would also retain the in-house support and expertise for Scheme managers, the Council would save a considerable sum in terms of potential redundancy costs, and would probably eliminate recruitment and retention problems by removing the need for a night shift.

Tenants and Leaseholders Federation:

The Chairman of the Federation reported that they agreed with the officer's recommendation for Option Three that the Careline Monitoring Service be outsourced to an external provider.

They would also like to commend the exceptional work that Careline staff has put in over the years.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Communities Select Committee recommends Option Three to the Cabinet, that the Council's Careline Monitoring Service be outsourced to an external provider through a competitive tendering exercise; and



(2) That further reports are submitted on:

- (a) A restructure of Housing Older Peoples Services following the Careline Service being outsourced; and
- (b) Future charges to users based on the cost of the outsourced service.

#### **41. HRA FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 - SIX MONTH REVIEW**

The Director of Communities, Mr A Hall, introduced the six monthly review of the HRA Financial Plan for 2016/17, part of the HRA Business Plan. The Cabinet had asked the Communities Select Committee to review the HRA Financial Plan twice each year. In addition, senior Housing and Finance officers also reviewed the Plan in July and January each year.

SDS Consultancy had acted as the Council's HRA Business Planning Consultants for many years and had undertaken its six month review of the current HRA Financial Plan to take account of the Council's current financial position and national and local policies and their six monthly report was attached as an appendix to the report.

The Select Committee was asked to consider this report and comment on or raise any concerns it found.

The review took account of the changes to the key assumptions and investment requirements since the February 2016 review and the annual Financial Plan. It was noted that there was currently a lot of uncertainty on the government requirements on the sale of higher value voids.

As a base principle, all income and expenditure forecasts would increase by the assumed RPI which was assumed at 2.5% throughout except where otherwise indicated. Also, in line with the Government's latest social rent policy, existing tenants would see their rent reduce by 1% each year over a four year period. This commenced in April 2016.

It was noted that the first half of 2016/17 had seen an increase in the number of Right to Buy sales. Some 23 properties had been sold already, compared to 11 for the same period last year and 16 the year before. Therefore the Right to Buy sales projection for 2016/17 had been increased to 40, from the budgeted 20, which would result in lower rental income.

Following the self-financing settlement in March 2012 loans were taken out with the Public Works Loans Board by this Council. Given that the vast majority of the loan value was fixed, officers were certain of most of the interest that would be charged to the HRA.

When self financing was introduced in March 2012, it was estimated that the Council could afford to provide an annual provision of £0.770 million for service enhancements throughout the life of the Financial Plan. Since 2012 approximately £0.2 million of improvements and service enhancements have been subsumed into the management budgets of the HRA for ongoing services.

New build acquisition expenditure had decreased from £52.569 million to £50.270 million for Phases 1 to 6 from 2015/16 onwards.

The Council also held a Self-Financing Reserve with the intention of building up balances within it, sufficient to repay the loans identified. Due to the increased levels of capital expenditure for the next few years against the backdrop of reduced revenue, SDS Consultancy had considered two options of either continuing to keep the Reserve in order to repay the loan due in Year 7 or utilise the balance in order to fund the Capital Programme over the first four years. The second option would result in an inability to repay the first loan. Members were asked if they thought it beneficial to defer the initial loan as it would be the subject of a planned review of the HRA early next year.

The Council had also received certain grants and receipts from Section 106 agreements to fund the new build programme. These had been fully accounted for in the first two years of the Plan totalling £1.744 million. There were still about £4.8 million of agreed levels of S106 financial contributions due to the Council. As and when these S106 contributions were received, it would reduce the amount of funding required from the existing Capital Programme by an equivalent amount. However, it was noted that if a development does not go ahead, or the level of S106 financial contribution was subsequently re-negotiated, this total amount would reduce accordingly.

Since the reinvigoration of the Government's Right to Buy policy, the Council has sold in excess of 155 additional properties due to the increase of discounts available. The gross receipts were then separated into different categories for their treatment, guided by policy.

W Marshall asked about the relationship between the Government's Pay to Stay policy and the sale of Council properties as he was concerned that more people would be encouraged to buy the property as a result of Pay to Stay. What were the figures in the report based on? A Hall replied that no account had been taken of the Pay to Stay policy when estimating Right to Buy sales. However, he went on to explain that, that day the Housing Minister had announced that the Government would be dropping the compulsory requirement for Pay to Stay.

Councillor Heap noted that the first loan had a variable interest base. How variable was this? Mr Hall confirmed that the interest rate could vary and explained that the loan was issued by the Public Works Loan Board, and that SDS Consultancy had made assumptions on future interest rates. Councillor Heap queried that if we deferred repayments, could we actually pay 4% interest? Mr Hall said that this was just an indicative interest rate of what could happen in the future. There was no need to make a decision at present. The other loans were fixed so we knew what to plan for.

Councillor Baldwin asked if the House Building Programme was only for high value properties. He was told that the sale of high value voids was to fund the payment of the required levy to the CLG; however, it was noted that the Minister had suggested that local authorities may be allowed to retain some of the levy, provided they used it to fund Council house building. It was noted that there was no Central Government subsidy for house building.

Councillor Stavrou said that she did not think that the Right to Buy applications would decrease in the coming years as a lot of people would see this as the only way to get on the housing ladder. She thought that the assumptions used in the report were on the optimistic side and that we now needed to wait and see what the Chancellors Autumn Statement had for Local Government but, in the meantime, this report was

the best forecast of what could happen. As for restructuring the loan this may change depending on what came out of the Autumn Statement.

Mr Hall agreed, as we did not know what was to come.

It was also noted that the Cabinet had recently implemented a temporary moratorium on the House-building Programme and that the Cabinet had already agreed to pass over some '141 Receipts' to the government. Councillor Stavrou added that the right to buy also reduced our rental income. It was a vicious circle. Mr Marshall added that with less housing available to rent there would be an increase in the housing waiting list.

**RESOLVED:**

That the six month review of the HRA Financial plan 2016/17 from SDS Consultancy be noted.

**42. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN (2016/17) - 6 MONTH PROGRESS REPORT**

The Director of Communities introduced the Six Month Progress Report on the Key Action Plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This section of the HRA Business Plan is the Key Action Plan which sets out the proposed actions the Council would be taking, primarily, over the year. It was good practice that the progress made with the stated actions was monitored by this Select Committee during the year.

The Committee went through the Key Action Plan's actions listed in the report and noted their progress or outcomes. They had no specific issues that they wanted to raise or comment on.

**RESOLVED:**

That the six month progress report for the Key Action Plan contained within the HRA Business Plan 2016/17 was considered and noted.

**43. COMMUNITIES - KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) - QUARTER 2**

The Director of Communities, Mr Hall, introduced the report on the Quarter 2 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) within the Select Committee's area of responsibility.

The KPIs provide an opportunity for the Council to focus attention on how specific areas for improvement will be addressed, and how opportunities will be exploited and better outcomes delivered.

A range of 37 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2016/17 was adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee in March 2016. The aims of the KPIs were to direct improvement effort towards services and the national priorities and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental context of the district, that are the focus of the key objectives.

The overall position for all 37 KPIs at the end of the Q2 was as follows:

- (a) 28 (76%) indicators achieved target;
- (b) 9 (24%) indicators did not achieve target, although

- (c) 2 (22%) of these indicators performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator.
- (d) 31 (84%) of indicators are currently anticipated to achieve year-end target and a further 4 (11%) were uncertain whether they would achieve year-end target.

10 of the Key Performance Indicators fell within the Communities Select Committee's areas of responsibility. The overall position with regard to the achievement of target performance at Q2 for these 10 indicators was as follows:

- (a) 8 (80%) indicators achieved target;
- (b) 2 (20%) indicators did not achieve target, and
- (c) 0 (0%) of these KPI's performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator
- (d) 9 (90%) of indicators were currently anticipated to achieve year-end target, and a further 1 (10%) was uncertain whether it would achieve year-end target.

The Committee then went through the various relevant indicators and commented as necessary.

**COM002** – *on average, how many days did it take us to re-let a Council Property* – officers were hopeful that it would achieve its target by the end of the year.

**COM006** – *how many of the key building components required to achieve the Modern Homes Standard were renewed* – officers were hopeful that that the target would be achieved within the next two quarters.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Select Committee reviewed and noted the Quarter 2 performance of the relevant Key Performance Indicators for 2016/17.

**44. CORPORATE PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN 2016/17 - QUARTER 2 PROGRESS REPORT**

The Director of Communities introduced the Quarter 2 Progress Report on the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2016/17. The Corporate Plan is the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out its priorities over the five year period from 2015/16 to 2019/20. The plan is supported by Key Objectives which provided a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for the five years.

The Key Objectives were delivered by an Annual Action Plan, with each year building upon the progress against the achievement of the Key Objectives for previous years. The Annual Action Plans contain a range of actions designed to achieve specific outcomes and as working documents were subject to change and development to ensure the actions remain relevant and appropriate, and to identify opportunities to secure further progress or improvement.

There were 49 actions in total, for which progress updates for Q2 were as follows:

- 29 (59%) of these actions have been 'Achieved' or are 'On Target'
- 14 (28%) of these actions are 'Under Control'
- 2 (4%) are 'Behind Schedule'

- 4 (8%) are 'Pending'

16 actions fell within the areas of responsibility of the Communities Select Committee. At the end of Q2:

- 6 (38%) of these actions have been 'Achieved' or are 'On-Target'
- 7 (44%) of these actions are 'Under Control'
- 3 (19%) of these actions are 'Pending'
- 0 (0%) of these actions are 'Behind Schedule'

Mr Marshall of the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation commented that it was sad to see that the relocation of the Housing Repairs Service from the Epping Depot to alternative suitable premises had been postponed yet again. Mr Hall said that the move was now not only dependent on the signing of the St John's Road contract, but also the outcome of the Strategic Accommodation Review. He further explained that, in the meantime, the possibility of a temporary depot move was being evaluated.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee notes the Quarter Two progress of the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2016/17 in relation to its area of responsibility.

**45. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee thought that a short report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be given on outcome of the Careline Alarm Monitoring Report and on the monitoring of the finances of the Housing Revenue Account.

**46. FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee noted the dates for their future meetings.