

Community and Wellbeing Policy Development Advisory Group
29 OCTOBER 2018

Present: Councillors: Tricia Youtan (Chairman), Andrew Baldwin, David Coldwell, Nigel Jupp, Paul Marshall, Mike Morgan, Kate Rowbottom and Jim Sanson

Apologies: Councillors: Alan Britten, Karen Burgess and David Skipp

Also Present: Lynn Lambert

6 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the meeting held 16th July 2018 were received.

7 **TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION - INCREASE IN RENT CHARGES**

The Head of Housing Services presented a paper on proposed rent increases for Council owned temporary accommodation.

The increased rates would be implemented from April 2019.

Members noted that the majority of tenants living in the Council's temporary accommodation were in receipt of full or partial housing benefit and therefore their housing benefit support would be increased accordingly. Members were concerned about the number of households who covered their own rental obligation. Officers advised that they may be entitled to assistance and they would be closely monitored.

Tenants had been given notice of the increases and were given an opportunity to respond.

The Group noted the report.

8 **HOMELESS REDUCTION ACT 2017 - UPDATE**

The Homeless Prevention Manager provided an update for the Advisory Group since the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act.

The Council's responsibilities had increased substantially with the introduction of the Act. There was still a responsibility for the homeless to work with the Council.

Officers had carefully prepared to encompass the new responsibilities.

The Group was pleased to note that since the introduction of the Act, intentional homeless decisions had reduced by 40%.

Officers were looking into alternative income streams if West Sussex County Council were to withdraw housing related support.

Members questioned how Horsham related to other local districts and boroughs in terms of the percentage of homeless compared to the number of households in the District. The officers would look into this.

The focus for Horsham was on preventing homelessness.

The Chairman congratulated the Homeless Prevention Officer and the team on their good work and the Group noted the update.

9 **HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION - LICENSING REFORM**

The Head of Environmental Health and Licensing presented a paper on the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Reform.

Members noted that the Council had received six HMO applications to date.

The Advisory Group noted the paper.

10 **VOLUNTARY SECTOR SUPPORT - PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

The Head of Community and Culture provided a performance update since Horsham District Council took Voluntary Sector Support (VSS) in-house.

Figures for quarter one and two were provided.

The officer explained that it had been a very encouraging start.

Members noted that there was a VSS newsletter which was very helpful in detailing the grants that were available for the voluntary sector.

Members noted that the funding obtained was external.

Members noted the performance update.

11 **WELLBEING SERVICE - CASE STUDY AND STATISTICS**

The Head of Community and Culture provided the Group with a case study from the Prevention and Wellbeing Service along with the figures for quarter one.

This was an externally funded programme which delivered a number of health interventions. The Group noted that the service was doing well and had received a lot of positive feedback from users.

Members were encouraged to book themselves in for a health MOT which was a service offered across the District.

The Group noted the information provided.

12 **STRATEGIC GRANTS - GRANTS AND FUNDING OFFICER**

The Grants and Funding Officer presented the Strategic Grant Applications for 2019/20. Members noted that all the applicants were the same as last year.

Details of each application was presented in the agenda and these had also been sent to the Members of the Advisory Group some weeks prior to the meeting.

The Grants and Funding Officer had suggested funding at the same level as agreed last year. One application had been deferred until the officer was satisfied of the details on how the applicant would be working with West Sussex County Council going forward, the Group was asked to approve the deferral of the grant until the information was received.

Members questioned the publicity of the availability of these strategic grants and whether this was the reason for the lack of new applicants. The officer explained that the information was freely available on the Council's website and interested organisations were given all the relevant information and a chance to apply.

Members discussed concerns surrounding the future of the Horsham Y Centre and noted that the purpose of this funding was to support the day to day activities of the Y Centre.

It was suggested that parish councils be encouraged to sign up to the Voluntary Sector Support Newsletter which detailed the availability of the strategic grants, which they could pass on to interested organisations in their parishes. The Group supported this suggestion.

The Group approved the applications.

[Link to details of Strategic grant awards for 2019/20](#)

13 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO**

The Forward Plan extract was noted.

The meeting closed at 6.50 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN