
Cabinet

Report of the meeting held on 21st November 2013

Matter for Decision

28. SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEME AT LANGLEY COURT AND LANGLEY CLOSE, ST IVES

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (reproduced as an Appendix), the Cabinet has received a petition concerning the potential closure of the Sheltered Housing Scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close, St Ives together with a Motion by Councillor K J Churchill on the matter. Both items had been referred to the Cabinet by Council at their meeting held on 13th November 2013.

In discussing the items, the Cabinet had the benefit of the views expressed by local Ward Members whom, along with the Executive Leader, had met with residents of Langley Court to discuss their concerns over proposals by Luminus to demolish the building in order to build an extra-care facility. Mention was made of the need for extra care facilities in the town and the measures being offered by Luminus to support those affected. It was now Members' understanding that existing residents will be rehoused locally whilst the rebuild takes place and given the opportunity to return to the new facility if they wished to.

The Cabinet has concurred with Ward Councillors that improvements could have been made in the way the scheme was communicated by Luminus to residents. Executive Councillors were concerned that residents had been left confused and anxious about their future. However, having examined the overall scheme the Cabinet felt that the new facility will provide additional care provision for the District including specialist accommodation. Furthermore, evidence suggested that the majority of Langley Court residents had now indicated their willingness to move. On the basis that their recommendation will not prejudice the formal determination of the planning application for the development should one be forthcoming and in referring to the request for a loan from Luminus to finance the scheme (Item No.32 below refers), the Cabinet

RECOMMEND

- (a) that paragraph (a) of the Motion be noted;**

- (b) that, having regard to the advice of Councillors representing St Ives and to evidence which suggests that the majority of Langley Court residents have clearly indicated their willingness to move, it be concluded that it is in the best interests of the residents to ensure that necessary steps are taken, at the earliest possible opportunity to resettle them; and
- (c) that, following investigation, it be confirmed that Langley Court is the most appropriate site for the extra care home.

Matters for Information

29. FINANCIAL MONITORING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14

The Cabinet has been acquainted with variations in the capital programme in the current year and has considered cost variations and timing changes for 2014/15.

30. FINANCIAL MONITORING REVENUE BUDGET 2013/14

The Cabinet has noted the expected revenue budget variations already identified in the current year. Executive Councillors were advised that the expected outturn for revenue expenditure was now £21.8m which represented a slight reduction to that previously forecast.

**31. TECHNICAL REFORM OF COUNCIL TAX –
LOCALLY DEFINED DISCOUNTS**

The Cabinet has reviewed the use of discretionary powers under the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations to award 100% discount up to a maximum of twelve months for properties which are uninhabitable and requiring/undergoing structural alteration or major repair. Executive Councillors were advised that during 2013/14, the Local Taxation Section had received more than 60 applications and granted £112k of discount using this policy. It was reported that the level of administration involved with verifying applications and dealing with complaints or disputes had been far higher than expected. Having recognised the need to encourage owners to re-occupy properties and in order to achieve both income generation and administration efficiencies, the Cabinet has agreed that this discount be reduced to 0% with effect from 1st April 2014.

32. LOAN TO LUMINUS

(The following item was considered as a confidential item under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.)

The Cabinet has approved terms for a loan to Luminus of up to £5.5m over 30 years to fund a new extra care scheme at Langley Court, St Ives. The Assistant Director, Finance and Resources has been authorised to make the loan following consultation with the Executive Councillor for Resources, who will have the right to require agreement of the final details by Cabinet if he feels it is necessary to do so.

In expressing their support for the scheme, the Cabinet has stressed that:

- ◆ no residents should be asked to leave until planning permission for the scheme is granted;
- ◆ provision be made to allow any resident that wishes to return to do so after the new build is finished;
- ◆ every possible effort be made to ensure that any resident that wishes to return is temporarily housed in St Ives; and
- ◆ efforts be made to enhance the working relationship between the Luminus Board and District Council appointed Members.

J D Ablewhite
Chairman

**THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES
(EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS) (MEETINGS AND
ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012**

Paragraph 19 of Part 5 of the above Regulations, requires the Executive Leader to submit a report to the Council containing details of each executive decision taken where the making of the decision was agreed as urgent and adequate notice had not been given, as required. As it is reasonable to report these decisions on an annual basis, I can confirm that the following reports were not included in the Notice of Executive Decisions due to timing constraints, but were considered by the Cabinet, during the period 1st November 2012 to 31st October 2013, following the agreement of the Chairman of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

- Award of Grants to Voluntary Organisations
- St Neots Railway Station Footbridge
- Charging for Second Green Bin
- Settlement of Outstanding Legal Proceedings Relating to a Staffing Matter
- Loan to Huntingdonshire Regional College
- Joint Materials Recycling Facility Procurement: Invitation to Tender
- Street Naming and Numbering: Implementation of Charges
- A14 Improvements: Highways Agency.

The outcome of the Cabinet's deliberations on these items has been previously reported to Council.