

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Cabinet

Meeting held 12 September 2012

PRESENT: Councillors Harry Harpham (Deputy Chair), Isobel Bowler, Leigh Bramall, Mazher Iqbal, Mary Lea, Bryan Lodge and Jack Scott

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Julie Dore and Jackie Drayton.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd August 2012 were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Number 66 Bus Route/Bin Collection – Angram Bank

5.2 Mr Barry Bellamy asked why his questions asked at the last Cabinet meeting held on 22nd August 2012 in respect of proposed changes to the Number 66 Bus Route had not been answered. The response provided by Roy Mitchell of the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTPE) he believed had been wholly inadequate.

5.3 He further commented that a response to his questions from Councillor Leigh Bramall (Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development (including Transport)) had told him what he already knew. A request for a private meeting with Councillor Bramall had not yet been responded to.

5.4 Mr Bellamy believed that, as a 2000 signature petition had been submitted by the residents of High Green in respect of changes to the No. 66 route, residents deserved a fair hearing and this was not the case thus far.

5.5 Mr Bellamy asked a further question regarding bin collections on Angram Bank. He commented that for the last two weeks and as of 12.30pm on the

day of this meeting the bins had not be collected on Angram Bank. He therefore asked whether they would be collected on their due date in the future or if the date would be changed and would this be communicated to local residents?

5.6 In response Councillor Leigh Bramall apologised that no response had been given to a request for a private meeting. This had been because he had been on holiday but he would follow this up now he had returned. Following the last Cabinet meeting he had spoken to the Integrated Transport Authority in attempt to resolve the issue. The issue in relation to access to educational opportunities in Rotherham he believed had now been resolved. He understood that, as a result of the changes, the High Green Action Group were concerned about students having access to Hillsborough College. However, he believed that the changes would result in students only having to walk a few minutes further and would not be a significant hardship.

5.7 In response to the question about the bin collection on Angram Bank, Councillor Jack Scott (Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste and Streetscene) reported that local Ward Members had contacted him to inform him of the problems. Following his investigations he had established that one of the collection wagons had broken down on the due date of collection which had caused the problem. He believed that the problems had now been resolved and requested that Mr Bellamy contact him if this wasn't the case.

5.8 Community Heating Metering Project – Tendering Process

Mr Nigel Slack referred to the report on the Community Heating Metering Project, on the agenda for the meeting, and commented that the report seemed to suggest that the decision to outsource the project had already been taken. As the foundations for the project had been underway for around six years, this had allowed a significant amount of time to examine the possibility of looking at an in house solution. He therefore asked whether the decision to outsource the project had been taken, or whether there was still the possibility of decision to keep the project in house? He also asked which companies had been identified to undertake the project and whether they would be making a profit on the fuel costs?

5.9 In response, Councillor Harry Harpham (Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods) reported that such a decision had not yet been taken. As was usual with similar tendering processes he expected between 6-8 companies would tender for the project if a decision was taken to outsource. He also confirmed that any company who undertook the project would not make a profit on the billing of fuel.

5.10 Community Heating Metering Project - Consultation

5.11 Mick Watts asked, in reference to the Community Heating Metering Project, when meaningful consultation would take place with tenants to ensure a fair

and reasonable outcome. He further referred to the consultation on target rents for re-let properties and commented that he was surprised that in the current tough economic times Members were consulting on such a proposal which he believed would negatively impact on some tenants.

- 5.12 In conclusion, Mr Watts highlighted the underspend on the capital programme and commented that Members needed to reach a decision on how to spend that money soon or risk the Government attempting to claw back the money.
- 5.13 Councillor Harry Harpham acknowledged that it would be advantageous to have extra money in the Housing Revenue Account. However, it was important to gain an understanding on tenants' views on proposals for target rents for re-let properties. Initial conversations that he had had with tenants had been mixed. At the present time tenants could be paying different levels of rents for houses with the same amount of bedrooms depending on a number of factors. If the tenant response was that they did not approve of the idea then that would be dropped. Cabinet were trying to involve tenants more in the decision making process and higher levels of consultation would be a way of achieving that.

6. ITEMS CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY

- 6.1 The Deputy Chief Executive reported that there had been no items of business called in for scrutiny arising from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 22nd August 2012.
- 6.2 The Cabinet noted the information reported.

7. RETIREMENT OF STAFF

- 7.1 **RESOLVED:** That this Cabinet :-

(a) places on record its appreciation of the valuable services rendered to the City Council by the following staff in the Portfolios below:-

Name	Post	Years' Service
<u>Children, Young People and Families</u>		
John David Else	14-19 Programme Manager	40
<u>Place</u>		
Angela Prime	Assistant Head, Business Services	28

8. COMMUNITY HEATING METERING PROJECT

8.1 RESOLVED: that Cabinet:-

- 8.2 (1) approves the approach set out in this report to install individual property heat metering and implement associated billing arrangements at the Council's community heating sites and set the Community Heating charges; and
- 8.3 (2) delegates to the Director of Housing, Enterprise and Regeneration and the Director of Commissioning, Communities authority to put in place detailed arrangements to implement the matters approved in (1) above as follows:-
- 8.4 (a) the Director of Housing, Enterprise and Regeneration is authorised to finalise procurement processes and evaluate tenders on such terms as he considers appropriate;
- 8.5 (b) the Director of Commissioning, Communities is authorised to conduct a consultation programme, set the Community Heating charges (in accordance with the arrangement set out in the HRA Business Plan and the budget setting process for 2013/14) and make proposals to leaseholders and freeholders affected by the changes on such terms as he considers appropriate;
- 8.6 (c) the Director of Housing, Enterprise and Regeneration and the Director of Commissioning, Communities are each individually authorised generally to take such further steps within the scope of their own service areas as they consider appropriate to progress the Community Heating Heat Metering Project, or to safeguard the Council's interests in relation to it;

Provided that:-

- 8.7 (i) the Director of Housing, Enterprise and Regeneration and the Director of Commissioning, Communities must, where appropriate, exercise this delegated authority in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste and Streetscene, and each other; and
- 8.8 (ii) further Cabinet approval must be obtained prior to the letting of any contract or contracts for the installation heat metering, controls and payment equipment, and any associated billing and communication services connected with these.

8.9 Reasons for the Decision

- 8.9.1 Installing heat meters will enable households served by community heating to have the same facility to control their heating costs and comfort levels as

households with individual boilers. This will also support the wider Council strategy to modernise community energy provision, reduce environmental impacts and fuel poverty, and is recommended as a fairer way to control heating costs.

- 8.9.2 Officers working on this modernisation programme are recommending a full roll out of the next generation of heat metering and billing arrangements. Initially a pilot ahead of a full roll-out had been considered however, the procurement of a larger contract was assessed as representing better value for money.

8.10 **Alternatives Considered And Rejected**

8.10.1 **Option 1 'Do Nothing other than modernise existing metered sites':**

An alternative approach to maintain the current heat metered sites was also considered. This would have the advantage of keeping an arrangement that households are currently used to, and it would have reduced the capital costs required for metering as only the older metered sites would have required investment. Feedback from tenant meetings was strongly in support of metering to help households reduce bills so this option would not provide households with an opportunity to do this or for the associated reductions in carbon emissions to be achieved.

8.10.2 **Option 2 'Introduce heat meters, but with an initial pilot':**

This approach was initially thought to be a strong option as it would allow for equipment to be tested, and for the effects on bills to be assessed before a wider roll out. The assessment of this option however, was that we would gain better competitive interest from the market for a full roll out. The scale of the programme would achieve better unit prices, and the cost of the billing and communication equipment would be spread over a larger number of installations. In addition, it was felt that the pilot process would have extended the programme too long, when feedback was generally in support of metering. The recommended approach for a full roll out is similar to that adopted in other cities which have switched to full heat metering. It will however, be possible to allow for a review period within the install programme to adjust any details, and in particular to ensure communications with affected households is effective in minimising any negative impacts from these changes.

9. **REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2012-13 (MONTH 3)**

9.1 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- 9.2 (a) Notes the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the 2012/13 budget position.
- 9.3 (b) Approves the carry-forward requests as detailed in paragraph 10 within the Children Young People and Families section.

- 9.4 (c) In relation to the Capital Programme:
- (i) the proposed additions to the capital programme listed in Appendix 1, including the procurement strategies and delegations of authority to the Director of Commercial Services or Delegated Officer, as appropriate, to award the necessary contracts following stage approval by Capital Programme Group;
 - (ii) the proposed variations in Appendix 1; and note
 - (iii) that there were no variations approved by Directors under their delegated authority;
 - (iv) the Emergency Approvals in Appendix 1.
 - (v) the latest position on the Capital Programme

9.5 **Reasons for the Decision**

- 9.5.1 To formally record changes to the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme and gain Member approval for changes in line with Financial Regulations and to reset the capital programme in line with latest information.

9.6 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 9.6.1 A number of alternative courses of action are considered as part of the process undertaken by Officers before decisions are recommended to Members. The recommendations made to Members represent what Officers believe to be the best options available to the Council, in line with Council priorities, given the constraints on funding and the use to which funding is put within the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme.