**Mansfield District Council**

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Communities and Services) Minutes**

**Date: Tuesday 15 March 2022 Time: 6:00 PM Place: Council Chamber**

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| **Present:** | **Councillor Barry Answer, Councillor Debra Barlow, Councillor Bill Drewett, Councillor Ann Norman, Councillor John Smart, Councillor Sue Swinscoe, Councillor Sidney Walker, Councillor Stuart Wallace** |
| **In Attendance:** | Jill Finnesey, Phil Lord, Elaine Quince, Councillor June Stendall, Councillor Philip Shields (part) |

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|  | **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** |
|  | There were no apologies. |
| **22/05** | **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** |
|  | There were no Declarations of Interest. |
| **22/06** | **ADVANCE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC** |
|  | There were no questions from members of the public. |
| **22/07** | **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** |
|  | The Minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by Councillor John Smart and seconded by Councillor Ann Norman.  The Minutes were accepted as a true record by the Committee.  RESOLVED:  That the Minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 18 January 2022. |
| **22/08** | **PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UPDATE** |
|  | The Private Sector Housing Manager presented his report to the Committee. The Officer highlighted the support available to the private rented sector which included Disabled Facility Grants. The Committee was advised that to date 31 cases had been completed and that a further 45 cases had been approved out of the budget of £800,000 the current total spend was circa £480,000 and a further 46 cases were being processed.  The Officer informed the Committee that the Private Sector Renewal Strategy provided assistance for improving private sector housing conditions. The Committee was advised of the following assistance that was available which included Decent Home Loans, Warm Homes on Prescription, Handy Persons Scheme (HPAS), External Wall Insulation Grants, Mansfield Child Safety Scheme, Hospital Discharge Fund, Assistive Technology, Nottinghamshire Warm Homes Hub and Green Homes Grants.  Councillor Wallace queried how the Handy Person Scheme, Hospital Discharge Schema and Child Home Safety Fund were being promoted and asked if there was much demand for the Scheme. The Member also asked how the grants were budgeted for.  The Private Sector Manager informed the Committee that the Child Home Safety Equipment Project was promoted through the Family Centres throughout the district also Council Housing Officers and health professionals. The Fund was for those on a low income who may also be considered vulnerable. The Committee was advised that there was not set budget for this. The equipment was kept in stock and more was ordered when required.  The Officer informed the Committee that the Hospital Discharge Scheme was administered by the Assist Team and was based at the Kingsmill Hospital. The Assist Team provide information on the demand for the service. .  The Officer advised that a new project called the Healthy Homes Hub would be in place next year and this would also work with the Hospital Discharge Scheme therefore it would be likely that further funding would be needed for this.  The Handyperson Scheme (HPAS) the Officer advised was provided by Nottinghamshire County Council, this Scheme was reviewed annually which was based on how busy the Scheme was the year before. The Committee was advised that this was a percentage that was levied across the County. The Members were informed that HPAS was a percentage of the BCF allocation. Last year there had been an underspend for HPAS and the Council received a £30,000 refund which then went into the Better Care Fund to provide better facilities .  The Members were advised that this Scheme was promoted by Nottinghamshire County Council on their website, leaflets were also distributed to people in receipt of Disabled Facilities Grants and it was also promoted on the Mansfield District Council website.  The Members were informed that because HPAS was administered by Nottinghamshire County Council, Mansfield District Council did not have the autonomy to advertise it. This was to ensure that the Nottinghamshire County Council had sufficient resources available to respond to any influx of increased numbers following a promotional campaign.  Councillor Norman suggested placing notices in the Library and Doctors Surgeries to sign post people to the HPAS Scheme and other schemes available.  The Officer informed the Members that a review of HPAS would be occurring in the near future and the subject of promotion of the service would be discussed.  Councillor Barlow queried if the Child Home Safety Scheme was available to both private and Council tenants.  The Private Sector Housing Manager confirmed that it was.  The Member asked for the figures be made available to the Committee to illustrate the number of people who had been helped in the last few years. The Member felt that the Scheme not been promoted as well as it could be. The Member asked for contact information related to requests for equipment such as wheelchairs, so that Members would be able to guide residents to the resources they need.  The Member asked if all Council owned properties were insulated to the same standards that were available for private rented tenants.  The Private Sector Housing Manager advised that he was not aware of the status of the Council owned stock however, he would look into this for it to be reported back to the Committee.  The Head of Housing stated that for the Council’s own stock, the Council were working to the same standards. The next report from the Repairs and Asset Manager would contain an update, and information on Decarbonisation Projects. The Members were advised that a Stock Condition Survey had almost been finished.  The Chair asked that the report on the Stock Condition Survey be presented to the Committee.  The Chair asked the Private Sector Housing Manager to send out a list of the Scheme contacts available to all Members. So that Members could direct people to the appropriate support available.  The Private Sector Manager informed the Committee that during 2021-2022 the service had responded to 493 service requests related to various issues the Committee was provided with the detail of the service requests. The Officer informed the Committee that the team had successfully removed 145 Category 1 hazards from privately rented properties and 186 category 2 hazards in 2021/22.  The Committee was informed that during 2021/2022 34 HMO (Multiple Occupation licences had been issued, and that there were a further 6 applications being processed. The total to date was 138 licensed HMO’s in the district.  The Committee was advised that the Private Sector Housing Team had dealt with 7 empty property complaints (properties empty for more than 5 years) and 4 had been brought back into use. A decision had been taken by the Council to commence a Compulsory Purchase Order against a long-term empty property within the district.  The Committee was advised that a successful prosecution had taken place against a private landlord for contraventions in the HMO licensing regulations. The landlord was fined £2500 with costs of £2680.  The Officer informed the Committee that the enforcement team had also issued two Civil Penalties to the same landlord. A penalty of £4700 had been issued on the first property and £12000 for the second HMO.  The Committee was advised that the Council had been successful with a bid for £89,192 for the Rogue Landlord Project to support the enforcement of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES). The funding would be used for two Enforcement Officer to target landlords who were illegally renting out cold and poorly heated houses. The MEES Regulation meant that landlords who rented out a property with an EPC of less than an E rating were liable for prosecution.  The Members were advised that 166 landlords had been contacted and advised that they required improvements as well as a new EPC. The majority had responded positively. Fifty four Compliance Notices instructing landlords to carry out improvements had been issued. Five cases were being considered for financial penalties due to continual non-compliance with the regulations.  The Chair asked what would happen if they did not pay the Penalty.  The Officer advised that they have a chance to appeal, if they do not appeal, they would have to pay within 28 days. If not an invoice would be raised and a charge would go against them and the Council would recover the debt, by putting a charge on that property or taking them to a Magistrates Court. If a charge was put against a property then the Council could look to enforce the sale of the property to recoup the costs.  Councillor Swinscoe queried how long the landlord was given to comply.  The Private Sector Manager advised that the landlord would be given a couple of weeks to do the work. The Enforcement Officer would then return to complete compliance checks, if not completed then a formal Enforcement Notice would be issued against them to carry out the works. The landlord would then be given 28 days to start the work. The Landlord would be in breach of the Notice and a prosecution or Civil Penalty would be issued. Or the Council could complete the works and then charge the landlord for the works completed.  The Member then asked how non-English speaking tenants were advised of their rights.  The Officer advised that there were leaflets available in many different languages.  The Member asked if the Members could have access to the leaflets.  The Officer confirmed that they could.  The report was accepted for noting by the Committee.  Resolved:  That the report be accepted for noting. |
| **22/09** | **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARNERSHIP UPDATE** |
|  | The Community Safety Manager presented the Community Safety Update to the Committee. The Committee was advised that the report informed the Committee about the major work streams that had taken place since the last Committee meeting.  The two areas that the Community Safety Manager advised were the Safer Streets Project which was funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner’s office, and the longer term approaches of dealing with anti-social behaviour in the Mansfield district.  The Committee was informed that the Council had been awarded £432,000 to deliver target hardening works in and around Mansfield. The Committee was reminded that the Safer Street criteria were permitted in prescribed areas (designated as super output areas), and permitted target hardening to three specified areas, burglary, vehicle crime and robbery.  The Committee was informed that the Community Safety Team had to match fund on the delivery of patrols with the Police in those super output areas. The Neighbourhood Wardens and the ASB Team had completed extra patrols in the Mansfield Town Centre and district.  The super output areas had been determined from Police Crime data and by the Home Office and was related to the Town Centre and surrounding area only.  The Officer advised that the project had been highly successful delivering every output that the Home Office had requested to be delivered for the funding.  The Officer was pleased to advise the Committee that an additional £50,000 was provided by the Home Office to enable additional works within the same areas and the same criteria, £15,000 was used for CCTV and the remainder for the Burglary Target Hardening Projects.  The Community Safety Manager informed the Members of the successful outcomes achieved that included, 426 household had been contacted who had been victims of burglary to offer security support, and as a result 72 households in February had been given free security CCTV for their homes.  All vulnerable areas lighting had been assessed by VIA at Nottinghamshire County Council and the Community Safety Team. Following this assessment 50 areas would receive improved or additional lighting. The Committee was also informed that there were now 11 areas that had achieved the Car Park Mark Status which was an accreditation for improving the security of the car park.  The Committee was informed that the number of CCTV cameras to be installed had increased from 6 to 8 added to the area as a consequence of the extra funding.  The Community Safety Manager advised the Committee that the Police had done an amazing job securing additional funding to fund the extra police patrols, as this had added an additional 180 hours police patrolling per month. The Neighbourhood Wardens and ASB Team carried out an additional 57 hours per month to those areas.  The Community Safety Manager provided an update to the Committee on the long term project Antisocial Behaviour. This included looking at the victim, the offenders, and location to investigate what had been happening, why and how this could be prevented in the future. By engaging with the Youth Service, Schools, Housing Teams, and ASB Case Officers and in some cases other authorities to identify the individuals to work with the authority to try to resolve issues.  The Members were advised that money from the PCC had been used to commission extra mentoring work for youths from a company called Switch Up. Switch Up are on board and set up in Mansfield and now mentoring 16 young people.  Although antisocial behaviour had not gone away, the Council had put into place the groundwork needed to try to resolve, defuse and prevent further ASB. New contacts included were Transforming lives based in Mansfield Woodhouse.  The Committee was informed that a Young Persons Case Panel had been established and was held on a monthly basis. This panel included a Social Care Team and cases were discussed to assist in identifying solutions.  The Community Safety Manager informed the Members that although working on a longer term resolution. Where necessary and possible, a quick fix was applied as indicated within the report.  The Committee was updated on the Town Centre Days of Action that were completed by the Community Safety Team and the Police. The Committee was informed what the process was and how it was completed. A list of the outcomes of the Actions Days was highlighted to the Committee that included, 40 cyclists stopped and asked to dismount, a direction to leave notice given to a persistent beggar, a direction to leave breach fixed penalty given to an ASB offender and a community protection notice served.  The Community Safety Manager advised that these days were also very beneficial in establishing continued good community links as it was an opportunity to engage with retailers and others within the Town Centre. The Community Safety Manager would ensure that this engagement would continue to happen.  The Community Safety Manager advised the Committee that Inspector Nick Butler who had been a tremendous support to the Community Safety Team had retired.  The Committee was informed that his replacement was Inspector Kylie Davies Inspector Kylie Davies had already been working with the Community Safety Manager and had attended several meetings. The Members were advised that a joint report with Inspector Kylie Davies would be brought to the Committee.  Members appreciated all of the hard work completed by the Community Safety Team in the Town Centre however, felt that the same level of support needed to be offered to all districts not just the Town Centre particularly in the school holidays.  The Community Safety Manager agreed that the Town Centre did get more patrols but this was because the funding was specific to the Town Centre. However, the Mansfield Districts were still getting the patrols that they would usually receive. The Officer stated that if funding for areas outside the Town Centre became available this would be applied for.  There was a Members discussion concerning issues in their Wards concerning antisocial behaviour. Members felt that some of the issues were related to lack of respect for their elders.  Councillor Wallace queried when the additional 180 hours policing and 56 hrs Community Safety Team match funding for the Target Hardening Project would end.  The Officer advised that it would end mid-March and the match funding would finish then.  The Members were informed that an advert had been placed for a Neighbourhood Warden and an ASB Case Officer and also a post for a 20 hr CCTV Operator.  Councillor Drewett queried what the three pieces of equipment that had been fitted to vehicles was.  The Officer advised that it was a protection device for catalytic converters that had been given out to victims of catalytic converter theft.  Councillor Drewett and Members congratulated the Community Safety Manager and the Community Safety Team for all of their achievements and hard work that had taken place.  The Chair and Committee expressed their thanks and appreciation to Inspector Nick Butler for his hard work and support and attendance at meetings. Members welcomed the opportunity to meet Inspector Kylie Davies.  The report was accepted for noting by the Committee.  Resolved:  That the report be accepted for noting. |

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