

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods
Date	20 November 2017
Present	Councillors Lisle (Chair)

24. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member was asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which he had in the business on the agenda. No additional interests were declared.

25. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2017 be approved and then signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

26. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation scheme.

27. Garden Assistance Scheme Procurement / Budget Saving

The Executive Member considered a report that requested his approval to take part of the budget for the Garden Assistance Scheme as a saving on the Housing Revenue Account which was facilitated by the service being procured as part of the Handyperson Scheme via Adult Social Care commissioning.

The Head of Housing was in attendance to present the report and he highlighted the background to the budget savings. He explained how the original proposed saving of £96k, by ending the Garden Assistance Scheme, would have had a big impact on customers so an alternative way to deliver the service, whilst also delivering a saving of £46k, had been developed. He confirmed that the proposed scheme would be offered to qualifying customers who were over 70 and/or registered

disabled or receiving a disability related benefit and would reduce the number of customers receiving the free service from 365 to 306.

The Executive Member noted that the service would be means tested and that the overall cost also included a provision for a small number of tenants to join the scheme on a discretionary or exceptional basis, which would be reviewed annually. He welcomed the option for customers to purchase the service and he thanked officers for developing a provision that would continue to help those customers who qualified whilst still achieving a significant saving.

Resolved: That option B be approved:

Option B, Procuring a grass and hedge cutting service as part of the wider Handyperson Service to deliver savings of £46,000 whilst providing a similar service for customers on benefits and those allowed on to the scheme on a discretionary basis. Develop other options for customers unable to find other means to manage their gardens in the longer term who don't qualify.

Reason: Consultation suggests that over half of customers receiving this service are not prepared to pay for it and this proposal delivers a similar service for most existing customers at no cost to them.

Cllr Lisle, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.06 pm].