

COMMUNITY POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 11th June, 2015, at Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cr. M.D. Smith (Chairman)
Cr. M.S. Choudhary (Vice-Chairman)

Cr. Sophia Choudhary
Cr. R. Cooper
Cr. Liz Corps

Cr. Jennifer Evans

Cr. S.J. Masterson
Cr. M.J. Roberts
Cr. P.F. Rust

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN –

RESOLVED: That Cr. M.D. Smith be appointed Chairman for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN –

RESOLVED: That Cr. M.S. Choudhary be appointed Vice-Chairman for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

3. MINUTES –

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26th March, 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. STEP BY STEP –

The Panel welcomed Ms. Amanda Dubarry, Chief Executive of Step by Step, and Ms. Samantha Owen, Senior Housing Officer. Ms. Dubarry began the presentation by providing Members with a brief history of how Step by Step was founded and how it had developed over the years. It was explained that a number of youth development projects had been set up in order to help the charity achieve its mission; 'to empower homeless people and those facing adversity to achieve their full potential'.

Members noted that the Step by Step projects and programmes available were designed to use each young person's individual talents and interests as motivation for them to achieve something positive. Step by Step aimed to help the clients gain life and social skills, improve their physical and mental wellbeing, become part of their local community and financially independent and employable. In the last year, Step by Step had helped 239 young people into employment.

The Panel then heard about the range of services provided, for example, the different types of accommodation, training, counselling and family mediation. While Step by Step had grown significantly over the years, it was noted that there was an intention to grow further. The 2011-2016 Growth Strategy had set out plans to triple the bed capacity and double the number of clients. Members heard that the charity was on track to achieve its targets and hoped to have supported 1,500 young people by March 2016. Step by Step had also opened branches across the County, although Rushmoor continued to have the highest number of young people using youth services in the County. Ms. Dubarry informed the Panel that the following five-year strategy would focus on financial sustainability; however, there would also be an intention to continue to work on the growth of the charity.

The Panel was advised that Step by Step had placed 106 young people in supported lodgings and discussed the process for identifying and checking the families providing the supported lodgings. It was confirmed that the charity often advertised around Hampshire, Surrey and West Berkshire with the use of posters and radio advertisements. It was noted that many people who offered supported lodgings had heard about the opportunity through word of mouth.

Step by Step had faced a number of challenges and lost a small number of services that it had previously offered, including, Steps Three and Four accommodation and Tenancy Support. This had resulted in a rise in the number of rough sleepers amongst young people in the Borough. There was also an expected loss of other services in the near future.

Members were informed of the achievements of Step by Step over the previous year and heard that the charity had visited a number of local schools where it had made homelessness, drug and alcohol presentations to 2,670 children. The Panel was then shown a video of a previous Step by Step client telling his story.

Ms. Owen informed the Panel that Rushmoor had been looking into proposals to support Step by Step and was in the process of preparing a report examining the potential for increasing the amount of funding provided to the charity by the Council. This would aim to help Step by Step achieve at least a 'silver' service.

The Panel **NOTED** the presentation and **AGREED** to support the principle of Rushmoor providing financial help to the charity.

5. **APPOINTMENTS TO GROUPS –**

The Panel agreed the following appointments for the 2015/16 Municipal Year:

(1) **Mid-Cycle Meetings –**

RESOLVED: It was agreed that Cr. P.F. Rust would attend the mid-cycle meetings in 2015/16 as a representative of the Labour group,

along with the Chairman (Cr. M.D. Smith) and Vice-Chairman (Cr. M.S. Choudhary).

(2) **Health Issues Standing Group –**

RESOLVED: That the Chairman (Cr. M.D. Smith) and Vice-Chairman (Cr M.S. Choudhary) and Cr. M.J. Roberts be appointed to the Health Issues Standing Group for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

(3) **Housing Strategy Standing Group –**

RESOLVED: That the Chairman (Cr. M.D. Smith) and Crs. D.E. Clifford, Liz Corps, Jennifer Evans and M.J. Roberts be appointed to the Housing Strategy Group for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

(4) **Welfare Reform Task and Finish Group –**

RESOLVED: That the Chairman (Cr. M.D. Smith), Crs. Jennifer Evans, A.M. Ferrier and M.J. Roberts, be appointed to the Welfare Reform Task and Finish Group for the 2015/16 Municipal Year, with attendance by the Cabinet Member for Concessions and Community Support (Cr. A. Jackman) as required.

(5) **Registered Providers of Social Housing Review Group –**

RESOLVED: That the Chairman (Cr. M.D. Smith) and Vice-Chairman (Cr. M.S. Choudhary) and Crs. M.J. Roberts and Jennifer Evans be appointed to the Registered Providers of Social Housing Review Group for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

(6) **First Wessex Housing Group/Rushmoor Borough Council Joint Business Meeting –**

RESOLVED: That the Chairman (Cr. M.D. Smith), Vice-Chairman (Cr. M.S. Choudhary) and Cr. M.J. Roberts and the Cabinet Member for Health and Housing (Cr. Ron Hughes) be appointed to the First Wessex Housing Group/Rushmoor Borough Council Joint Business Meeting for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

6. **WORK PROGRAMME –**

The Panel noted the revised work programme and work schedule.

The Meeting closed at 8.14 p.m.

M.D. Smith
CHAIRMAN