

MINUTES of a meeting of the POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 6 MARCH 2019

Present: Councillor M Specht (Chairman)

Councillors R Ashman, N Clarke, T Eynon, G Houlst, P Purver, V Richichi, A C Saffell, S Sheahan and N Smith

Officers: Mr M Fiander, Mrs A Harper, Mr G Jones, Mr M Murphy, Mr I Nelson, Mr T Shardlow, Walford and Mrs R Wallace

**58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**59. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

**60. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

None.

**61. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019.

It was moved by Councillor M Specht, seconded by Councillor V Richichi and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**62. TENANCY AGREEMENT CHANGES**

The Housing Management Team Manager presented the report to Members.

At the request of Councillor S Sheahan, the Housing Management Team Manager further explained the issues surrounding transferring a sole tenancy into joint names and assured Members that the legal rights of spouses/partners in relation to tenancy succession and the Right To Buy remained, even if they were not joint tenants. The proposal was intended to protect the rights of sole tenants who are sometimes pressurised into agreeing to a joint tenancy by a partner, a relationship breakdown may follow and the partner then completes a Notice to Quit which terminates the whole tenancy.

In response to a question from Councillor T Eynon, the Housing Management Team Manager reported that there was a tenant's handbook for tenants, which contained all the information relating to tenancy obligations in a more readable format. In response to a further question, the Housing Management Team Manager stated that there was not currently a limit on the number of vehicles per household but she did acknowledge that there were problems in some areas and was working on a parking strategy to alleviate it.

In response to a question from Councillor N Clarke, the Housing Management Team Manager stated that the changes at paragraph 8.3 of the agreement regarding harassment were made at the request of the Tenant Groups as part of the consultation.

Chairman's initials

In reference to the consumption of illegal drugs at paragraph 9.1 of the agreement, Councillor N Clarke asked for views on the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes. The Housing Management Team Manager reported that individual circumstances would be reviewed in such cases and the impact on others assessed.

It was moved by Councillor M Specht, seconded by Councillor N Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

Comments made by the Committee be provided to Cabinet when considering the report.

### **63. S106 AGREEMENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO HEALTH - ANNUAL UPDATE**

The Planning Policy Team Manager presented the report and updated Members that following a recent meeting with the CCG Representative it was clear that work towards spending s106 monies was being undertaken in Ashby and Ibstock, the results of which could be seen very soon.

Councillor T Eynon raised concerns regarding the unspent money for Ashby and the fact that the expiry dates were not detailed within the report did not ease these concerns. The Planning Policy Team Manager stated that the CCG were aware of the importance of spending the money and as there were agreements in place, he had no reason to believe that it would not be spent.

In response to a question from Councillor V Richichi, the Planning Policy Team Manager explained that the money was solely for healthcare provision and could not be used for other things in the area.

Councillor S Sheahan referred to evidence from Sweden that community defibrillators had an impact on the levels of heart attack survival rates and asked if the use of S106 money for this had been discussed with the CCG representative following the realisation that the ambulance service was responsible for the provision of the machines. The Planning Policy Team Manager confirmed that he had not yet raised it with the CCG representative but would do so as soon as possible.

In response to a question from Councillor R Ashman, the Planning Policy Team Manager reported that officers were being proactive in collecting the Section 106 money owed and there were a number of triggers in the process to perform checks. He added that often it was the case that developers made the Council aware that a trigger had been met and paid without any chasing from officers.

It was moved by Councillor N Smith, seconded by Councillor R Ashman and

RESOLVED THAT:

The position in terms of Section 106 monies for health be noted.

### **64. NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN 2019-21**

The Business Focus Team Manager presented the report to Members and gave a presentation highlighting the key messages of the plan.

Councillor N Smith commented on the low unemployment levels in the district and felt that officers were doing a fantastic job.

Councillor S Sheahan was happy to see growth in the district, but noted that average wage levels in the district were below those in the County, and the wider East Midlands, and questioned whether more and more lower wage, distribution jobs were a real benefit to local people. He asked what was being done to support the creative industries and to support individuals to gain higher skills. The Business Focus Team Manager reported that there was a range of support programmes in place including start up exercises and these would continue going forward. He added that his team worked with businesses across all areas to assess skill sets required and worked closely with the community to try to get the right skills for the jobs available. The team were also working with employment agencies to utilise government funding available to improve people's skills.

Councillor V Richichi asked what assistance was provided to the small businesses in the district. The Business Focus Team Manager responded that the team worked with small businesses much more regularly than the larger ones by offering support for funding, recruitment and advice. He explained that they engaged with small businesses that were on the cusp of growing as well as those that were at risk of closure to provide support. Councillor V Richichi went on to ask if it was the responsibility of the business to make contact with the team. The Business Focus Team Manager explained that that the team took a proactive approach and made contact with businesses when programmes became available, although businesses could and do contact the team when needed.

Councillor R Ashman found the report encouraging and was glad to see that people were a top priority as upskilling would be important when the Country leaves the EU and vacancies will appear. He also felt it was important avoid being disparaging to the lower skilled jobs as these still need to be filled.

Councillor A C Saffell felt there was a number of inaccuracies as Castle Donington did not benefit from the inadequate 'bypass' due to the lack of traffic relief and the infrastructure was inadequate considering the amount of growth in the area. He also felt that Formula E should be mentioned as it generated lots of income and that Norton did not have the credit it deserved.

Councillor T Eynon felt that the gap between the numbers of commuters working in the district and local residents should be addressed and a plan of support be established for residents to access jobs. She believed that the level of qualification was a barrier for residents, as well as transport and a higher number of part-time vacancies rather than full-time.

Councillor P Purver highlighted the reference to digital infrastructure but shared concerns that there were industrial areas that did not have high-speed internet because of the refusal of providers to install. The Business Focus Team Manager reported he was aware of the issue and assured that there were methods to improve the situation. He added that he had engaged with the businesses at Bardon Industrial Estate to make improvements and urged Members to let him know if they were aware of any other areas affected.

Councillor G Hoult referred to the shortage of plumbers some years ago which resulted in many people re-training to fill the gap, she asked who identified these gaps. The Business Focus Team Manager explained that it was a coordinated approach between businesses, the college and job centres.

It was moved by Councillor G Hoult, seconded by Councillor V Richichi and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The working draft of the NWL Economic Growth Plan 2019-21 and associated evidence base be noted.

Chairman's initials

- b) Comments made by the committee be provided to cabinet when considering the report.

## **65. UPDATE ON UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

The Head of Customer Services presented the report to Members.

Councillor T Eynon thanked officers, as it was clear a lot of hard work was being undertaken. She also commented that the number of files coming forward did seem to vary and asked if officers had to recalculate the council tax support each time, as it would be a lengthy process. The Head of Customer Services responded that each time a notification of change was received the CTS claim would have to be reviewed. . However, he was aware that the Partnership colleagues regularly feed back to the DWP and there may be opportunities to streamline the process. He added that being in a partnership meant that resources could be moved around when required.

Following a request from Councillor T Eynon, the Head of Customer Services agreed to provide some further information outside of the meeting on how the changes in respect of the severe disability premium element, would be applied for those that had migrated to UC prior to January 2019

It was moved by Councillor N Smith, seconded by Councillor R Ashman and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The current position of the Universal Credit roll out be noted.
- b) The operational impacts on the Universal Credit roll out be noted.
- c) The activities undertaken by NWLDC to support residents in the transition to universal credit be noted.

## **66. 2018/19 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services presented the report to Members. He apologised for the missing intervention plans regarding leisure and air source heat pumps but informed Members that there had been no significant changes.

Councillor T Eynon commented that the status indicator for the Marlborough Square project was still marked as 'performance on track', which was inaccurate.

Councillor P Purver raised concerns regarding the additional fuel costs for ground maintenance and asked for further information. The Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services agreed to provide the information to all members of the Committee outside of the meeting.

It was moved by Councillor P Purver, seconded by Councillor M Specht and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The report be noted.
- b) Comments made by the Committee be provided to Cabinet when considering the report.

**67. COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2019/2020**

The Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services presented the report to Members.

Councillor T Eynon commented that it would be good to see the Snibston Discovery Park buildings in the list of heritage assets as it held a lot of history and improvement work was being undertaken by Leicestershire County Council. She also pointed out that there was a reference to Marlborough Square improvement works (and events), which had not yet commenced, and the cost was still to be confirmed.

In response to a comment on fly tipping issues from Councillor N Smith when discussing the 'developing a clean and green district' council priority, the Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services stated that there was a high profile fly tipping campaign but agreed this could be promoted more within the plan. Councillor P Purver commented that the Council should be working with all haulage companies operating in the district and not just three.

It was moved by Councillor M Specht, seconded by Councillor P Purver and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The report be noted.
- b) Comments made by the Committee be provided to Cabinet when considering the report.

**68. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

RESOLVED THAT:

The work programme be noted

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40 pm