

MINUTES of a meeting of the COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 5 JUNE 2019

Present: Councillor D Harrison (Chairman)

Councillors K Merrie MBE, T Eynon, J Geary, G Houlst, C A Sewell, M B Wyatt and J Clarke (Substitute for Councillor B Harrison-Rushton)

In Attendance: Councillors J Legrys and S Sheahan

Officers: Mr J Arnold, Trahearn, Mr M Fiander, Mrs R Wallace, Mrs J Summerton and Mrs B Smith

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B Harrison-Rushton.

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor M B Wyatt declared a non-pecuniary interest in any reference to Coalville Town Centre as a business owner.

Councillor C Benfield declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8, Land Options at Coalville, as a member of the Campaigning to open the Ivanhoe Line Committee.

**3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

None.

**4. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Development Group held on 6 March 2019.

It was moved by Councillor D Harrison, seconded by Councillor T Eynon and

RESOLVED THAT:

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

**5. COMMUNITY FOCUS GRANTS - ANNUAL REPORT**

The Community Focus Team Leader presented the report to Members, providing a summary of the grants scheme and highlighting the good work in the community as a result. A number of photographs and a short video was presented to provide an overview of the projects funded through the scheme.

Councillor T Eynon thanked officers for the comprehensive report. She asked if there was any way to include ward councillors in the process, such as, being informed when grants have been awarded and inviting them along to any celebratory events. The Community Focus Team Leader explained that ward councillors were informed when grants had been awarded in the current process but she would also look at other ways to include Members.

In response to a question from Councillor C Benfield, the Community Focus Team Leader explained that the amount allocated in the budget for the grants was driven by the

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accumulation of applications and the amounts that were being awarded; the budget was ultimately agreed by Cabinet. In response to a further question, it was agreed that more detail regarding the administrative costs of issuing the grants would be included in future reports.

Councillor M B Wyatt asked how officers were publicising to Councillors that the grants were available for community groups. The Community Focus Team Leader reported that information was provided at the member induction event, members would be contacted personally and more information would be included regularly in the Weekly Members Bulletin.

Councillor J Clarke expressed disappointment that his local parish had not taken the opportunity to apply for any funding. He asked if anything more could be done to raise awareness for Parish Councils. The Community Focus Support Officer reported that the grant schemes were heavily publicised and officers were regularly out in the community raising awareness, unfortunately, the response from parish councils was still low. Councillor J Clarke asked officers to let ward members have the information so that they could raise it with their parishes.

Councillor K Merrie commented that his parish council had taken advantage of the Green Shoots Grant Scheme and the local children enjoyed planting flowers in the area. He felt that more could be done to publicise what had been achieved with the grants to help encourage others.

Councillor M B Wyatt asked if the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party would be able to apply for funding through the grant schemes as parish councils could. The Chief Executive stated that, as the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party was a sub group of the Cabinet it would be something that would need further investigation as it may not be constitutionally possible.

It was moved by Councillor J Geary, seconded by Councillor J Clarke and

RESOLVED THAT:

The grants awarded supporting community projects and the changes to the regular grants be noted.

## **6. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

Councillor T Eynon felt that once again the Committee were not getting the opportunity to scrutinise matters before they were considered by Cabinet. She felt that everything should be presented to scrutiny before being considered by Cabinet.

The Chief Executive believed in the importance of scrutiny and assured members that more could be scrutinised now that there was two scrutiny committees. However, it would be difficult for the scrutiny committees to scrutinise every report that was considered by Cabinet due to the number of meetings available. She recommended that the committee concentrate on getting a good work programme in place and that some matters be dealt with through other avenues such as member briefings.

Councillor T Eynon requested that the Executive Decision Notice within the agenda include additional information such as which scrutiny committee the report could be considered at and if it was already on a work programme, which meeting it would be considered. She also requested that once a report had been scrutinised then a paragraph of comments be inserted into the subsequent cabinet report so it was clear that the matter had been through the scrutiny process.

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Regarding the 'Gas Supply in Rural Areas' item on the work programme, Councillor J Geary expressed his disappointment that it had been on the agenda for a number of years and a representative from Cadent had still not attended. The Strategic Director of Place explained that Cadent had been invited to many meetings now but with no success. He added that it was difficult to force a company to attend a meeting but would persevere if members requested it. Members agreed for the Strategic Director of Place to continue discussions with Cadent.

## **7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED THAT:

In pursuance of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

## **8. PRESENTATION - LAND OPTIONS AT COALVILLE**

The Strategic Director of Place and the Head of Economic Regeneration gave a presentation to Members.

All comments and recommendations made by the Committee to be presented to Cabinet when considering its report on 10 June.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.23 pm