

MINUTES of a meeting of the COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Remote Meeting using Microsoft Teams on WEDNESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2021

Present: Councillor B Harrison-Rushton (in the Chair)

Councillors C C Benfield, A J Bridgen, J Clarke (Substitute for Councillor D Harrison), T Eynon, J Geary, G Hoults, K Merrie MBE and M B Wyatt

Portfolio Holders: Councillors R D Bayliss, R Blunt, T Gillard and A C Woodman

Officers: Mr J Arnold, Mr J Bright, C Colvin, K Hiller, Mr C Lambert, Mr P Sanders, Mr B Walford, Mr P Wheatley, Mrs R Wallace, Ms L Walker and Miss E Warhurst

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor D Harrison.

The Committee joined the Deputy Chairman in sending their best wishes to Councillor D Harrison who was currently at home recovering from Covid-19.

29. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor T Eynon declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8 – Coalville Regeneration as a volunteer at local radio station Hermitage FM.

Councillor M B Wyatt declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8 – Coalville Regeneration as a Coalville business owner.

30. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

None.

31. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2020.

It was moved by Councillor B Harrison-Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

32. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Strategic Director presented the report to Members.

A discussion was held on the current position of the Scrutiny Cross Party Working Group and the work it was required to undertake before it ceased. It was confirmed that the group would reconvene once this report had been discussed by both Scrutiny Committees to consider comments made. It would also review the recent scrutiny training delivered by the Centre of Governance and Public Scrutiny. It was suggested that the group also consider introducing a pre-meeting prior to each scrutiny committee made up of member

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representatives from each political party and the possibility of an opposition party chair for one of the committees going forward. Members were advised that the allocation of an opposition chair would be a decision of the administration as it was a political matter.

Councillor M B Wyatt moved that an additional recommendation be included to request the Scrutiny Cross Party Working Group to consider further the appointment of an opposition chair for one of the Scrutiny Committees. It was seconded by Councillor J Geary.

Following a point of order, the chairman retracted a statement in relation to voting on the proposed additional recommendation.

The motion was put to the vote and was lost.

The recommendations as set out in the report were moved by Councillor B Harrison-Rushton, seconded by Councillor G Hoult and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

- (1) The action plan of the Scrutiny Cross Party Working Group be noted.
- (2) That the proposed resource solution as set out in paragraph 4.3 be supported.
- (3) That the proposed scrutiny principles as set out in paragraph 5.2 be supported.
- (4) The process for annual reporting as set out in paragraph 6.2 be supported.

33. ESTABLISHMENT OF HOUSING STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Head of Housing presented the report to Members, with the support of Councillor R D Bayliss, Portfolio Holder, who also addressed the Committee.

Members spoke in support of the proposals and were pleased that such an important matter was to be reviewed in more detail. However, concerns were raised in relation to the short time frame suggested to complete the review. Members were informed that there was some flexibility available for the time frame and that this could be discussed further at the first meeting of the Task and Finish Group.

During discussion it was suggested that the scope also include options available to avoid losing newly acquired homes to the Right to Buy Scheme, as well as how influence could be made on developers to ensure that affordable housing requirements were fulfilled in new developments. Members were reminded of the importance for the group to stay focused, however the points raised were valid and could be included in the scope. It was also pointed out that the link to the Local Plan was evident and the group needed to be mindful not to duplicate work already being undertaken elsewhere.

It was moved by Councillor J Clarke, seconded by Councillor T Eynon and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

- (1) A Task and Finish Group be established to consider the affordable housing element of the Housing Strategy.

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- (2) The principles set out in the draft terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group be agreed.
- (3) That the Membership of the Task and Finish Group be extended to include both Scrutiny Committees.
- (4) Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services, in consultation with the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committees, to seek nominations from the group whips to fill the seats on the Task and Finish Group.

34. RECYCLE MORE UPDATE

The Head of Community Services presented the report to Members, with the support of Councillor A Woodman, Portfolio Holder, who also addressed the meeting.

The Waste Services Development Officer and the Recycle More Officer gave a presentation to Members highlighting the current progress and future aspirations of the Recycle More Programme.

Members were pleased with the work achieved so far and spoke positively in relation to the trials for the stackable wheeled container system and food waste. The following comments were made:

- It was suggested that the kerbside collection of textiles be promoted further as the temporary closure of charity shops and recycling points could lead to more fly tipping.
- Regard was given to the promotion of commercial recycling, but it was felt that there should not be a charge as it was discouraging businesses to recycle. It was also suggested that steps be taken to introduce the recycling food waste collection to businesses as well as residential. The Head of Community Services explained that the charge for commercial recycling collections was not for profit but to cover costs and there was currently no intention to offer the service for free.
- Regard was given to the cost involved in recycling paint tins, wood and building waste. A Member asked if it would be possible to consider allowing businesses to deliver waste to a site for free rather than pay for it to be collected. The Head of Community Services reported that the plan going forward was to engage more with businesses and then all options could be considered, he also reminded Members that commercial businesses could still take their recycling waste to refuse sites.
- Comments were made on the current booking system in place for the refuse sites in the district. The Head of Community Services reminded Members that refuse sites were run by Leicestershire County Council and reported that he was aware that the booking system would be reviewed in the Spring.
- Several concerns were raised in relation to the possible reduction in size and collection frequency of the general waste bins in the future. It was recognised that families with young children would find this proposal difficult, especially if they did not have access to the equipment required for reusable nappies. It was also raised that the residents in the district with solid fuel heating would also struggle due to the amount of waste ash created. Members felt that the food waste collection should be fully established before consideration was given to any reduction in the collection of general waste. Members were assured that this was a future decision and one that would not be taken lightly.

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- Officers were congratulated on the very successful campaign working with young people to officially name the refuse vehicles.
- Concerns were raised in relation to the possible introduction of a charge for additional garden waste bins, it was felt that this could lead to more fly tipping.
- In relation to the proposed introduction of an app to provide residents with bin collection information, some Members asked that officers bear in mind that not all residents had access to a smart phone. A Member requested that the bin tag distributed annually at Christmas time regarding collections remain as it was very useful.

It was moved by Councillor B Harrison-Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RSOLVED THAT:

- (1) The progress made with the Recycle More Plan to date be noted.
- (2) Comments made by the Committee be provided to Cabinet when it considers the item at its meeting on 2 March 2021.

35. COALVILLE REGENERATION

The Regeneration Project Manager presented the report to Members, with the support of Councillor R Blunt, Portfolio Holder and Leader of the Council, who also addressed the Committee.

Members were disappointed with the outcome of the unsuccessful bid but appreciated the efforts made to put forward a strong bid application. Strong support was given by Members to continue to push on with the project and were enthusiastic about the possibility of further funding in the future.

A comment was made in relation to the support given to the owners of the Red House in the town as it had a mixed history that had not been too successful. The Regeneration Project Manager confirmed the support as stated in the report and offered to provide further information outside of the meeting if required.

As result of further discussion, a suggestion was made to consider in the near future, approaching the owners of the Bakery to assist in tidying up the building as it was very untidy and could discourage any development in the vicinity.

Councillor R Blunt thanked officers for their support on the project to date and thanked Members across all political parties for being a critical friend.

It was moved by Councillor B Harrison-Rushton, seconded by Councillor J Clarke and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOVLED THAT:

The outcome of the Future High Streets Fund bid for Coalville be noted.

36. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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It was moved by Councillor B Harrison-Rushton, seconded by Councillor G Hoult and by affirmation of the meeting it was

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.

37. THE RECOVERY OF OUR LEISURE CENTRES AND THE PARTNERSHIP CONTRACT WITH EVERYONE ACTIVE

The Head of Community Services presented the report to Members, with the support of Councillor A Woodman, Portfolio Holder, who also addressed the Committee.

It was moved by Councillor B Harrison-Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.37 pm

Chairman's signature