

MINUTES of a meeting of the COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 6 APRIL 2022

Present: Councillor J Hout (Chairman)

Councillors T Eynon, J Geary, M D Hay, J G Simmons and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr J Arnold, Mrs C Hammond, Miss E Warhurst, Ms R Haynes and Mr P Wheatley

**34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors C Benfield, G Hout and R Morris.

**35. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Wyatt declared a registerable interest, as owner of two businesses in the town centre.

**36. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

No questions were received.

**37. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2022.

It was noted that on page 4, Item 29 – Flood Management in North West Leicestershire, a comment had been repeated twice therefore it was clarified that this would be amended for the final minutes.

It was moved by Councillor J Geary, seconded by Councillor Dr T Eynon and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2022 be approved as a correct record.

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

The Chair referred to the Committee's work programme and invited Members to make requests for any additional items.

Members raised concerns that there had been insufficient time to consider Executive Decisions related to the East Midlands Freeport meaningfully, however Officers advised that this had been why the Dev Co and Freeport Cross Party Working Group had been set up to keep members updated given the timescales required for decision making. Normal scrutiny processes would revert once the permanent structures for both Freeport and Development Corporation were established.

Members enquired whether the minutes of the East Midlands DevCo and Freeport Cross Party Working Group had been circulated and officers confirmed that it would be acceptable to circulate these minutes and information provided at the meeting to all Members.

Councillor Dr T Eynon enquired as to when the scoping programme for Scrutiny would be established. Officers advised that the date of the scoping would be set following the meeting of Annual Council.

Chairman's initials

Councillor T Eynon also suggested the possibility of officers producing a report focused on the issue of Fuel Poverty, in light of the recent fuel cost increases and the social deprivation within the district.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Committee's future work programme be noted.

### **39. COALVILLE REGENERATION FRAMEWORK**

The Head of Economic Regeneration presented the report to Members, pointing out the limitations of the document but also drawing attention to the potential amount of spending which could be secured within the district should more residents be encouraged to visit Coalville.

Members thanked officers for a thorough report and enquired which bodies had looked at Coalville and whether these were local. Officers responded that a number of organisations, including the Prince's Regeneration Foundation had been involved and confirmed that the Heritage Society for Coalville had also been invited to provide input.

Members expressed reservations that the promotion of walking and cycling would increase expenditure within the town and stressed the need for better transport links. Officers responded that whilst ideally it would be preferable to have a range of transport choices available, walking and cycling would be a viable choice. Members drew attention to the fact that a station would be something which the authority hoped to deliver in due course.

Officers were asked how this would be communicated to residents. Officers replied that information had been provided on the Council website, through press activity and mainstream media, via community briefings and also by way of Councillors.

Members requested clarification in what way residents had been listened to and were advised that the authority had a dialogue with Councillors and had also engaged with the public in other ways.

Officers were asked to outline the future that they envisaged for Coalville, and responded that a well balanced economy and a place that gave a sense of wellbeing to its residents would be the desired outcome of regeneration works.

It was queried whether additional housing would make the town thrive, however some Members felt that this would bring extra spending power to the area and that residents from new developments in close proximity to the town centre would find it easily accessible on foot.

Members raised the issue that the authority lacks a business improvement district, and suggested that this would give small businesses an opportunity to collaborate and to speak with one voice. It was also noted that electrical vehicle charging points which had been provided were plentiful, however some of these were situated at Snibston park which was closed overnight and therefore the charging points were not accessible during this period. Officers concurred and agreed to add softer facilities such as charging points and include a more detailed element on the Ivanhoe Line to the report.

Members asserted their hopes that by the year 2035, all of the authority's licenced taxis would be electric in order to comply with Zero Carbon objectives.

Members suggested that it would be beneficial to have Cabinet Members present at meetings of Community Scrutiny when items from their portfolio were on the agenda.

A concern was raised regarding the investment which would be channelled into Coalville and it was suggested that the Northern Parishes had yet to see a comparative level of investment. Officers confirmed they would be happy to discuss planned investment into the Northern Parishes with Councillors in an alternative forum.

Officers reported to the meeting, work which had been carried out in conjunction with Coalville C.A.N and reiterated that the report showed various projects which would put the heart back into Coalville.

At 7.20pm, as Members wished to discuss the confidential appendix, 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.

A short discussion was had on the details within the confidential appendix.

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

Comments and observations on the draft regeneration framework to inform the final version which will be recommended to Cabinet at a future meeting be provided by Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.42 pm

Chairman's initials