

**Extract from minutes of Corporate Scrutiny Committee 4 September 2019**

MINUTES of a meeting of the CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER 2019

Present: Councillor R Boam (Chairman)

Councillors J Hoult, E G C Allman, A J Bridgen and D Bigby (Substitute for Councillor R Johnson)

Officers: Mrs B Smith, Mrs T Bingham, Mr M Fiander, Mr C Lambert, Mrs M Long, Mr M Murphy and Mr P Sanders

**7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Johnson, V Richichi, S Sheahan and N Smith.

**12. CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Members considered a report presented by Chris Lambert, Head of Housing and Property Services on the Corporate Asset Management Strategy.

Members were advised that the strategy exists to provide a framework to enable the Council to own and manage its land and property assets and was closely linked to a number of other key strategies as set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report. Reference was made to a number of key points within the report.

The Chairman invited questions and comments.

Councillor Bigby welcomed references to improvements to Moira Furnace, health and safety and carbon footprint. He stated that it appeared to him that the emphasis of the report was to maximise profitability from the Council assets yet it was not clear to him which assets the council intended to maximise its profitability from. His concern was again, whether the Council was placing its emphasis on profit over the needs of the community, for example those assets being utilised for useful purposes within the community both now and in the future. He would not like to see the Council selling off its valuable assets to address any financial needs of the Council where these assets are for the good of the community; for example land which could be used for affordable housing. He therefore thought it would be helpful if there was some clarification in what constituted a commercial asset.

In response to these comments, the Head of Housing and Property Services referred to paragraph 1.4 of the report which listed the different categories of assets but understood the point that Councillor Bigby was making and advised that each individual asset would be considered on its own merits. He added that the disposals policy gave the flexibility to allow for transfers of land where appropriate in order to facilitate local housing needs, adding that we also now have the opportunity of developing our own land for council housing which, historically we have never had, and would produce a commercial income as well as addressing a local housing need.

Councillor Bigby sought clarification on the term 'for regeneration purposes' and made reference to the poorest performing asset being Ashby Market Hall and asked what measures were being put in place to address the constraints faced by such assets.

The Head of Housing and Property Services replied that it might be the case that an asset is purchased in order to form part of a wider regeneration scheme and the asset on its own might not necessarily meet the criteria for a commercial purpose. The next part of the review will see us looking at all the constraints placed upon us and agree a programme to enable us to move forward.

The Chairman advised that, in accordance with the recommendation, these comments would be reported to the meeting of Cabinet scheduled in November.

Chairman's initials