

MINUTES of a meeting of the COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 27 APRIL 2022

Present: Councillor D Everitt (Chairman)

Councillors M French, E G C Allman, J Geary, J Legrys, J Windram and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr P Sanders, Mrs A Crouch, Mr J Knight, Mrs W May, Mrs C Hammond and Ms R Haynes

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor A Black who was unable to attend the meeting in person however was able to attend remotely.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Wyatt declared registerable interests in all items should reference be made to Coalville town, as the owner of two town centre businesses.

Councillor J Geary declared registerable interests in all items as a director of the Springboard Centre, founder member of Mantle Community Arts, and supporter of Coalville Town Football Club should any reference to them arise at the meeting.

Councillor J Legrys declared registerable interests in all items as a volunteer at Hermitage FM, should reference be made to Coalville town.

25. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2021.

It was moved by Councillor J Geary, seconded by Councillor M Wyatt and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

26. COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES FINANCE UPDATE

The Deputy S151 Officer presented the report to Members.

Members raised a question with regard to the reduction in planned preventative tree maintenance and officers responded that due to capacity issues within the team, non essential work had been pushed back to 2022/23.

The matter of where savings had been made in concern to a vacant post and also a reduction in overtime payments were raised. Officers advised that due to the pandemic, fewer events were held therefore there had been no immediate need to fill the vacant post or a necessity for overtime to be claimed for the staffing support to those events. Members were informed that the vacant post budget would remain in place until the service review had been completed.

Members queried monies which remained in the One Off Grants budget and were advised that there had been a low uptake so it would become a budget saving.

Chairman's initials

RESOLVED THAT:

The 2021/22 Period 9 Budget monitoring figures and the forecasted outturn be noted.

27. EVENTS UPDATE

The Cultural Services Team Manager presented the report to members and informed the meeting that the current focus was on the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. It was also noted that the council had secured sponsorship from Everyone Active and a grant from Bardon Aggregates to support the projects for the celebrations. Work was currently being done towards Cinema in the Park, Coalville by the Sea and the procurement process for the 2022 Christmas lights.

Members were requested to encourage groups to apply for grants under the Community Grants Scheme.

Members questioned the budget for Christmas 2022 and were advised that the cost of the lights and the Christmas Lights Switch On event had been separated into two budgets and that some of this had been carried over from funding which had not been used due to the pandemic.

Members questioned why Cinema in the Park had been reduced to a 12-day event as opposed to 16 days, as originally planned. Officers advised that it was due to the cost of living rise, therefore the budget that had been allocated would now not cover a 16 day event. It was also noted that the event had an anticipated income. Feedback from members about the pilot of Cinema in the Park had been positive.

Councillor J Geary requested a breakdown of the costings for the event and the importance of remaining within the authority's financial means was reiterated.

Members raised the point that a religious body had been awarded a grant for their foodbank and expressed concern that it was against the policy of awarding grants to religious bodies. Officers assured members that a rigorous process would have been adhered to which the awarding officer would have been aware of, and observed. The meeting was also advised that although the project was run by a religious body, its members would not be sole beneficiaries of the food bank.

Members questioned whether the council had looked into an insurance claim for the Christmas lights which had been vandalised in 2021 and were advised that whilst officers would do so, it was felt that the amount of excess to pay would make an insurance claim untenable.

The possibility of a Steampunk event being held in Coalville was raised by members. Officers advised that this would not be on the schedule of events for the upcoming year and also informed the meeting that this would be something for which the authority would need to pay an external events organiser.

Clarification was sought on why Coalville by the Sea had been taken over by an external company who had charged constituents admission fees. Members were advised by officers that the council had decided against running this event due to Covid restrictions. The external company ran the event at no cost to the authority so it was deemed that they had to apply some charges in order to allow the event to go ahead, and whilst the authority could not guarantee there would be no charge this year, the proposal for free admission would be something which officers would include in the specification to the external company.

Officers commended members for having suggested to community groups that they may be eligible for the Community Grants, however members wished to know what the authority was doing to promote the grants. Officers advised that social media was utilised for that purpose and that details of the grants were available on the council's website. Officers agreed to contact the Communications and Community Focus teams to further promote awareness.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The progress update on 2022/23 Events be noted.
- 2) The update for Christmas lights 2021/22 and 2022/23 be noted,
- 3) The update for 2021/22 and 2022/23 Coalville Special Expenses Community Grant Scheme be noted.

28. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

The Leisure Services Team Manager presented the report to members, updating them on the status of recent projects, and invited questions.

Members queried whether there would be any legal avenue which could be pursued in order to encourage Barratt's to proceed more quickly in relation to the former MUGA site on Lillehammer Drive. Officers advised that the legal section were fully engaged in the process.

Members enquired when the cemetery wall at London Road would be repaired and were advised that the project would hopefully be completed over the coming summer.

In response to a query raised by the Working Party over the ownership of the Oval play area, the Leisure Services Team Manager advised that all play areas fell under the responsibility of the council however, The Oval play area was never transferred to the district council from the developer. Officers noted that members had made a valid point as to how this had not been identified earlier, however it was asserted that they would identify whether there were any more, although it would be unlikely.

Members requested an update on the Claremont Drive play area and were advised that consultation had been delayed but Community Focus would be obtaining residents' feedback which officers would report to members. It was noted that the authority would be in a position to advise how best to progress the project by the summer.

Members reported that they had received positive feedback from the public regarding the trees which had been planted in the Coalville area and expressed hope that it would continue in the Meadow Lane and Blackwood areas. Officers advised that the trees had been planted by the county council and confirmed that they would ask county if there was a possibility that planting could continue to include these areas.

Members requested a grant application be made to Bardon Aggregates in order to better furnish the Cropston Drive play area. The Team Manager for Leisure Services advised that he would confirm which play area on Cropston Drive the replacement of equipment was needed and agreed to include the play area request in a grant application. It was also suggested that a proper consultation with the police, in relation to Sharpley Avenue play area, would be beneficial in order to ascertain the best equipment to install or remove. Officers noted that this would have to be done with consideration to the S106 restrictions around the play area.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The progress update on the 2021/22 and 2022/23 Capital Projects be noted.

29. DRAFT SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2022/23

The Democratic Services Officer presented the report to Members.

It was proposed to suspend the Working Party meeting in April 2023 since it would be a busy period in the run up to elections. Members agreed unanimously that this would be prudent.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The Schedule of Meetings and Work Plan for 2022/23 as attached at Appendix 1 of the report be agreed.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.42 pm