

MINUTES of a meeting of the COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2022

Present: Councillor D Everitt (Chairman)

Councillors M B Wyatt, E G C Allman, A J Bridgen, A S Black, J Geary, J Legrys and J Windram

In Attendance: Mr G Hammons (Observer)

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

9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor M French.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Wyatt declared a registerable interest in all items, as an owner of two businesses in Coalville.

11. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2022.

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

RESOLVED THAT

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2022 be confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

12. COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES FINANCE UPDATE

The Finance Team Manager presented the report, updating members on the budget but confirming that they would not yet be in a position to finalise the outturn for 2021/22.

Members thanked officers for a thorough explanation of the budget and reaffirmed their understanding that there would need to be cuts made in the coming year.

It was queried exactly what the Coalville Special Expenses Committee would be required to pay for and additionally what benefit residents of the special expenses area would receive from this expenditure. Officers responded that this information would be prepared in time for the following meeting.

A member suggested that fireworks should be cut from this year's planned events in order to save money, which was reportedly a strategy that other authorities had adopted. It was also suggested that the events budget be reduced and other expenditure, such as that used for parks and memorials be further scrutinised in a bid to cut costs.

It was further suggested by members that large events, such as the King's Coronation, be combined with the authority's regular annual events, for example Party in the Park, in order to continue to deliver a memorable event on these occasions but also to combine costs incurred.

Councillor E Allman extended an invitation to other party members to attend the finance sub-group meetings and confirmed that their input would be welcomed.

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It was moved by Councillor J Geary, seconded by Councillor E Allman and

RESOLVED THAT

1. The 2021/22 Draft Outturn figures and Coalville Special Expense balances as at 31 March 2022 be noted.
2. The 2022/23 Quarter 1 budget monitoring figures and forecasted outturn for 2022/23 be noted.
3. The 2023/24 budget process be noted.

13. EVENTS UPDATE

The Cultural Services Team Manager presented the report

Members were updated on the 2022/23 Christmas lights and it was confirmed that a contract had been procured to store, remove and test the lights. It was also noted that two Christmas trees had been ordered this year.

Members were informed that the 26 November 2022 would be the date on which the Christmas in Coalville event is scheduled to take place. It was hoped that Belvoir Shopping Centre, Marlborough Square and Needham's Walk car park would be the venues for these events, although final confirmation had not yet been received. Events would include a festive trail and also the shop windows competition, which had been very successful in preceding years.

Officers informed the meeting that the Cinema in the Park event had been incredibly successful, with expenditure less than anticipated and had also attracted more than the expected income. The feedback for this event was overwhelmingly positive and members thanked and congratulated officers for the success of it.

Officers drew member's attention to the financial requirements, as budget costs for the Coalville Christmas Decoration Programme had increased by £6,000 for the upcoming year. Members questioned whether this would be for the upcoming year alone or if it would also be seen in other, proceeding years. Officers advised that this would be a regular yearly increase and was due to overall price increases and the fact that some stock may fail and require replacement, among other factors.

It was noted that the Coronation of King Charles III on the 6 May would have some impact on costs and members were advised to consider this when considering the 2023/24 budget.

Members queried whether the real trees in Memorial Square and Marlborough Square are covered by the Christmas lights contract. Officers confirmed that the lights on the trees are covered by the contract and the trees are procured from an additional provider (a tree specialist).

A member enquired whether it would be possible to utilise the clock tower area for Christmas Events and also voiced their support for the suggestion that fireworks should be dropped from the programme of events, stating concerns around costs, the impact on wildlife and on local residents.

A member queried how much of the budget could be saved by opting to not use fireworks and were advised that the cheapest quotation for fireworks had been £1,650 for a 4 to 5 minute display with music and a snow canon.

Members suggested that instead of a fireworks display, a laser lights show and stage flares be used on stage at the opening event, officers advised that this could be

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problematic as there would be too many restrictions around safety and proximity to audience, and that it would be unlikely that a laser show would be possible this year.

Officers sought to clarify whether members wished to retain the fireworks or would prefer that this be dropped from the programme. Councillor J Legrys formally proposed that the authority did not use fireworks on this occasion. Councillor J Geary seconded this proposal and therefore a motion was carried, with 6 against and 1 for, to remove the fireworks. It was requested that a Cabinet decision be obtained in support of this motion at the upcoming meeting on 8 November.

A member recommended that should laser shows be adopted in favour of fireworks in future years, the authority would need to contact East Midlands Airport to ensure that this would not interfere with flight paths.

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT

1. The progress update on 2022/2023 events and budget allocation be noted,
2. The update for Christmas lights 2022/2023 and the requirement to allocate a further £6,000 to ensure the delivery of the Coalville Christmas Decoration Programme be noted.
3. A Cabinet decision be obtained in support of the motion not to use fireworks at this year's events.

14. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

The Leisure Services Team Manager presented the report to members providing an update on the progress of current projects.

It was confirmed that Coalville in Bloom had now been delivered for this year and that the budget next year would be £5,000 as opposed to the £7,500 which had been available this year. Officers agreed with member suggestions that them seeking external funding in order to attempt to bridge some of this shortfall would be an excellent idea.

An update was received on the Thringstone Bowls Pavilion and it was noted that the cost of the repairs to the roof would be £8,500 which had been a budget saving, coming in at less than the anticipated cost.

It was confirmed that play equipment would be replaced at Claremont Drive, Cropston Drive and Sharpley Avenue play areas as all are well used sites. It was noted that the play area at St Faith's was less well used and that the wooden play equipment had deteriorated more quickly than had been anticipated. Therefore replacements for the wooden equipment had been budgeted for with works expected to take place in 2025/26. However it was noted that consultation would be undertaken with regards to possible other uses for this area. A member enquired whether it would be preferable to grass over the St Faith's play area, as this is not well used, which would offer a financial saving and officers confirmed that this would be an option.

A member asked if officers would be applying to the Bardon Aggregate Fund in order to help cover the costs of improving Cropston Drive play area. It was agreed that this would be a potential source of income and that officers would look into this possibility.

Members were assured that the wall at London Road cemetery would continue to be monitored and did not at the current time pose any danger, however that options were

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being considered for a potential replacement. Members were also assured that the intention would be to retain the trees on the condition that they would not cause damage. It was noted that a report regarding the trees would be produced and brought to the next meeting of the Coalville Special Expenses committee.

Officers also informed members that grant schemes would be looked at in order to offer help in the current cost of living crisis.

With regard to proposed 5 year plans for the district's sports pavilions, in particular the Scotlands Sports Pavilion, a member enquired whether proposals for a new zero carbon building would be put forward or if elements would just be replaced as and when necessary. Officers responded that a number of pavilions are in need of repair and that although the budget is restrictive, it would need to be considered whether the council are looking to fix things which may be degenerating or if it would be preferable to invest in new buildings with longer lives.

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

RESOLVED THAT

1. The progress update on the 2022/23 Capital Projects be noted.
2. The budget allocated to the replacement of play equipment at St Faith's Play area be brought forward from 2025/26 to 2022/23 be recommended to Cabinet.

15. FUTURE WORK PLAN

The Democratic Services Officer presented the report, and it was agreed that the Capital Projects update be removed from the December 2022 meeting. It was noted that the Christmas Events update would be included in the December 2022 meeting and that the London Road cemetery would be discussed further.

A member suggested a meeting with the Police Chief be arranged and it was agreed that an ideal time for this would be in the hour immediately prior to the December 2022 meeting. Officers agreed that they would attempt to facilitate this.

It was moved by Councillor John Legrys, seconded by Councillor A Black and

RESOLVED THAT

The Future Work Plan be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.40 pm

Chairman's signature