

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Monday, 5th October 2009 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

A.F. Tomlinson – Chair

Councillors, J.E. Bennett, A. J. Hodkin, D. Kelly, D. McGregor, B.R. Murray-Carr

Officers:-

W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer), S.E.A. Sternberg (Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer), S. Tomlinson (Director of Neighbourhoods), J. Brooks (Director of Resources), J. Sherwood (Environmental Health Residential Manager), L. Khella (Consultant Programme Manager), P. Coogan (Housing Innovation Officer)(for Minute Number 346 only)), and A. Bluff (Democratic Services Officer).

342. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors E. Watts, K. Bowman and A. Syrett.

343. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

344. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Minute No.	Councillor	Level of Interest
352	Councillor A.F. Tomlinson	Personal and Prejudicial

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345. MINUTES – 7TH SEPTEMBER 2009

Councillor Murray-Carr queried if a formal response had now been received from Old Bolsover Town Council with regard to maintenance of the Sherwood Street play area. The Chair and the Chief Executive Officer replied that in the absence of the Leader they were both unaware of a response being received.

Moved by Councillor D. Kelly, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on 7th September 2009 be approved as a true record.

346. RENT ARREARS

In the absence of the Head of Housing, and to enable the Housing Innovation Officer to gather up to date information, it was agreed to defer the rent arrears item until later in the meeting.

347. WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND (WNF) MONITORING REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer introduced the first quarterly monitoring report for the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF). The second quarterly monitoring report for the period July to September 2009, would be presented to Executive on 30th November 2009, and quarterly thereafter.

A number of WNF projects had been taking place; most notably was the Raising Aspirations project which had been awarded to Connexions Derbyshire in April this year following a competitive tendering process.

The Chief Executive Officer referred to the Apprenticeship Programme which had been presented to Council on 12th August 2009, (minute number 258 refers); Members were advised that further funding had now been awarded for this initiative through the Future Jobs Fund. An Apprenticeship Coordinator had been appointed and it was hoped to appoint an Apprenticeship Officer in the near future.

Members' attention was drawn to the main report which gave details of a current significant project; The Employer Engagement initiative. This initiative was responding to the needs of local unemployed people by co-ordinating and brokering relevant training. The proposed hosting / management arrangements would involve Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce (DNCC) and accordingly Members approval was sought to suspend contract standing orders 4.8.3, 4.8.4, 4.8.5 and 4.8.6 to enable this initiative to go forward.

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The Consultant Programme Manager gave a further update on the Apprenticeship Programme.

The programme had been awarded £1.2 million of Working Neighbourhoods Fund and a further £390,000 had been secured through the Future Jobs Fund.

Five internal apprenticeship places had been secured for January 2010; Four would be within Leisure and one in Human Resources. This was for the 16 to 18 year old age group.

Twenty places had also been secured within other public sector organisations for the 18 to 24 year old category. These were at Chesterfield Royal Hospital, Derbyshire PCT and Derbyshire County Council.

The Chief Executive Officer added that these public sector organisations had also agreed to put in funding.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor J.E. Bennett.

RESOLVED that Contract Standing Orders 4.8.3, 4.8.4, 4.8.5 and 4.8.6 be suspended for the reasons given above in relation to Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce.

(Chief Executive's and Partnership Manager)

Reason for decision: To ensure that WNF is targeted to best effect and where needed and to ensure that the tendering process does not unjustifiably distort the result.

348. ARREARS – IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS OVER £1000

The Director of Resources presented the report to seek Members approval to write off outstanding debts, including costs, amounting to £6,743.62 in respect of persons unable to trace / bankrupt or companies in liquidation.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Bennett, the Director of Resources agreed that future reports would include the type of business in relation to the write off.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor D. Kelly

RESOLVED that the irrecoverable items including costs amounting to £6,743.62 be written off with the proviso that should any of the debts become collectable the amounts be re-debited.

(Director of Resources)

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Reason for decision: In order that the outstanding debts can be written off.

349. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor J.E. Bennett

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

350. ARREARS – IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS OVER £1000 EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

The Director of Resources presented the report to seek Members approval to write off outstanding debts, including costs, amounting to £6,732.06 in respect of accounts where the ratepayer had ceased to trade.

Councillor McGregor queried the ownership of the Station Hotel in Creswell. The Director of Resources said he would investigate and let Councillor McGregor know.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr

RESOLVED that the irrecoverable items including costs amounting to £6,732.06 be written off with the proviso that should any of the debts become collectable the amounts be re-debited.

(Director of Resources)

Reason for decision: In order that the outstanding debts can be written off.

346. RENT ARREARS CONTINUED

The Housing Innovation Officer circulated information on area based targets in respect of housing rent arrears and also former tenants rent arrears.

Although there were always fluctuations in the amount of rent arrears, the total figure still stood at just over £629,000. The Housing Enforcement Manager and

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the Tenancy Management Officers were working hard to get the figure decreased.

In a recent court case, the Council had been granted an eviction order where the tenant owed over £10,000 in rent arrears; that amount had now been deducted from the total arrears figure.

An advertisement had been placed for a 'Former Tenant Rent Administrator' to assist in the collection of former tenant rent arrears.

The Director of Neighbourhoods advised the meeting that further to discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Housing Management and the Chief Executive Officer, it was now felt appropriate to change to quarterly reporting for rent arrears. The report would be circulated with the agenda and include more detail to enable Members to deal with the current rent arrears situation.

The Deputy Leader added that this had also been discussed at an Efficiency meeting where it was agreed that quarterly reporting would gather more information and give more detail to Members of the reasons for arrears.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B. R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that 1) the report be noted,

2) the standard monthly agenda item for rent arrears be changed to a standard quarterly item; and the quarterly reports to give Members more detail of the general reasons for rent arrears to enable Members to consider the rent arrears, voids and former tenants arrears situation.

(Head of Housing / Head of Democratic Services)

Reason for decision: To keep Members updated on the present position of housing rent arrears.

351. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Moved by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor D. Kelly
RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

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Councillor A.F. Tomlinson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item and left the meeting.

Moved by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor J.E. Bennett
RESOLVED that Councillor D. Kelly be elected chair of the meeting for the remaining item.

Councillor D. Kelly in the Chair

352. GROUP REPAIR SCHEME – WHALEY THORNS EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 3

The Environmental Health Residential Manager presented the report to seek Members approval to award the 2009/10 Group Repair contract at Whaley Thorns to Groundwork Creswell. Accordingly, contract standing Orders 4.8.3, 4.8.4, 4.8.5 and 4.8.6 would need suspending to allow the Head of Regeneration to negotiate the contract.

Members asked questions.

Moved by Councillor J.E. Bennett, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor
RESOLVED that 1) the Head of Regeneration be authorised to negotiate the Group Repair contract with Groundwork Creswell for Whaley Thorns for 2009/10,

2) Contract Standing Orders 4.8.3, 4.8.4, 4.8.5 and 4.8.6, be suspended to allow the Head of Regeneration to negotiate the contract.

(Environmental Health Residential Manager)

Reason for decision: Awarding the contract to Groundwork Creswell will allow the Authority to continue to work with one of our main partners in regeneration and deliver jobs and training opportunities

The meeting concluded at 1030 hours.