

GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Wednesday 21st September 2016 at 1000 hours in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne

Item No.		Page No.(s)
	PART 1 – OPEN ITEMS	
1.	To receive apologies for absence, if any.	
2.	To note any urgent items of business which the Chairman has consented to being considered under the provisions of Section 100(B) 4 (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
3.	Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of: a) any business on the agenda b) any urgent additional items to be considered c) any matters arising out of those items and, if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	
4.	To approve the minutes of a meeting held on 27 th July 2016.	3 to 7
5.	To approve the minutes of a special meeting held on 23 rd August 2016.	8 to 12
6.	Progress against the targets/actions set out within the Growth Strategy – highlighting achievements to date.	13 to 40
7.	Regeneration Plans – progress, next steps, timescales.	Verbal Update
8.	Growth Scrutiny Work Plan.	41 to 43

GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday 27th July 2016 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor S.W. Fritchley in the Chair

Councillors T. Alexander, A. Anderson, P. Barnes, G. Buxton, M. Dixey, S. Statter, B. Watson and J. Wilson

Also in attendance was Councillor A.M. Syrett (Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth)

Officers:-

D. Swaine (Chief Executive Officer), J. Foley (Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement) (until Minute No. 00214), G. Galloway (Assistant Director – Property and Estates), A. Westray-Chapman (Assistant Director – Economic Growth) (until Minute No. 00215), K. Drury (Information Engagement & Performance Manager) (until Minute No. 00214), K. Apps (Housing Strategy and Growth Manager) (until Minute No. 00215), S. Chambers (Communications, Media and Design Officer), C. Millington (Scrutiny Officer) and A. Brownsword (Senior Governance Officer)

00210. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J.A. Clifton

00211. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

00212. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

00213. MINUTES – 29TH JUNE 2016

Moved by Councillor A. Anderson and seconded by Councillor J. Wilson

RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 29th June 2016 be approved as a true and correct record.

00214. CORPORATE PLAN TARGETS PERFORMANCE UPDATE – APRIL TO JUNE 2016 (Q1 – 2016/17)

The Information Engagement & Performance Manager presented the report which gave details of the performance outturn for those targets which sit under 'Unlocking our Growth Potential' aim as of 30th June 2016. The information was correct as of 14th July 2016. Most of the targets were on track.

G 03 – Optimise business growth (as measured by gross NNDR) by 2.5m by March 2019

A question was asked regarding the value of appeals and the Information Engagement & Performance Manager noted that the level of appeal was unknown at this stage.

G 10 – Enable the development of at least 1,000 new residential properties within the District by March 2019

Final completion figures would be available in Quarter 2.

G 12 – Achieve an increase of £850,000 in additional New Homes Bonus from the Government by March 2019

An update would be available in Quarter 2.

G 13 – Work with partners to deliver an average of 20 units of affordable homes each year.

It was noted that the new build Council properties would count towards this target.

The Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement circulated a document which provided Members with an update on how the new Performance Indicators for Growth would be presented. Baseline data was being collated to provide a growth strategy update and the data would be presented at six monthly intervals.

GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members felt that more information was necessary and the Chief Executive Officer noted that this was first time the indicators had been discussed and more information would be added as the Performance Indicators evolved over time. The information needed to be meaningful and for a purpose e.g. House prices could give an indication on how effective development had been at regenerating an area.

The Assistant Director – Economic Growth noted that more detailed information regarding house prices in the District could be provided separately.

The Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement noted that the document would be finalised with Cabinet to establish the baseline data for 2015/16 and brought back to Growth Scrutiny Committee with half year figures for 2016/17.

Moved by Councillor S.W. Fritchley and seconded by Councillor J. Wilson
RESOLVED that (1) progress against the Corporate Plan 2015-2019 targets be noted,

(2) the format of the new Growth Performance Indicators be approved and brought back to Growth Scrutiny Committee on a bi-annual basis.

(Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement/
Scrutiny Officer/Senior Governance Officer)

The Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement and the Information Engagement & Performance Manager left the meeting.

00215. EMPTY PROPERTY SCHEME UPDATE

The Assistant Director – Economic Growth introduced the new Housing Strategy and Growth Manager who gave an update on the Empty Property Scheme. A list of nine privately owned properties that had been brought back into use was circulated to Members and it was noted that the post of Empty Property Officer was currently being advertised.

Action Housing who were the Council's preferred partner had been provided with five more addresses and they had £18,000 per property to spend. There were also links to the apprenticeship programme and homeless charities.

Local residents referred properties to the Council, but the reporting routes needed to be better advertised, it was hoped to provide a text number which could be responded to quickly.

GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members asked how closely other departments were worked with and the Housing Strategy and Growth Manager noted that joint visits were undertaken with Environmental Health as properties which could not be referred to Action Housing would then be subject to enforcement approach. The new Empty Property Officer would be the co-ordinator and contact for local residents.

Moved by Councillor S.W. Fritchley and seconded by Councillor J. Wilson
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The Assistant Director – Economic Growth and the Housing Strategy and Growth Manager left the meeting.

00216. DEMONSTRATION OF THE NEW BUSINESS WEB PAGES

The Communications, Media and Design Officer noted that unfortunately the new system could not be demonstrated due to a server issue. The Committee was informed that the template had been tweaked and reduced down. A back to top button had been added and images from around the District were being added.

Local plan data was being used and GIS information was being uploaded so that if a site was clicked on, it would inform the user who owned the site and give contact details. GIS information would be embedded into the system so that when GIS was updated, the site would be updated.

It was hoped that the site would go live next week.

Moved by Councillor S.W. Fritchley and seconded by Councillor J. Wilson
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

00217. WORK PLAN

The Growth Scrutiny Committee Work Plan was circulated for Members' information. It was suggested that the Committee consider looking at items such as regeneration plan update, provision of Traveller Sites within the District, the impact of the new HS2 route, the Business Rates arrears process or the Business Rate Retention Consultation.

It was noted that the consultation had been launched by the Government on 7th July 2016 and the deadline for responses was early September. It was suggested that a Special meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee be held to discuss the details of the consultation.

GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Moved by Councillor S.W. Fritchley and seconded by Councillor J. Wilson

RESOLVED that (1) the work plan be noted,

(2) a special meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee be arranged for the 23rd August 2016 to discuss the 100 % Business Rate Retention Consultation.

(Scrutiny Officer/Senior Governance Officer)

The meeting concluded at 1110 hours.

SPECIAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a special meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Tuesday 23rd August 2016 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor S.W. Fritchley in the Chair

Councillors G. Buxton, S. Statter and J.Wilson

Officers:-

B. Mason (Executive Director – Operations), D. Clarke (Assistant Director – Finance and Revenues & Benefits), C. Millington (Scrutiny Officer) and A. Brownsword (Senior Governance Officer)

222. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T. Alexander, J.A. Clifton, M. Dixey and B. Watson

223. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

224. TO DISCUSS THE GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON BUSINESS RATE RETENTION

The Chair opened the meeting by commenting that this was an important Consultation Paper and that the Council needed to consider ways to ensure that all members were given the opportunity to input into the process.

The Executive Director – Operations gave a presentation which outlined the main points of the consultation document and covered:

- Business Rate Retention
- Incentivising Economic Growth
- Managing Risk
- Fiscal Neutrality/Public Sector Reform
- Incentivising Growth

SPECIAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- Promoting Growth Locally

The Executive Director – Operations noted that the prospect of 100% NNDR Business Rate retention was bringing shire and districts together as they were concerned that national funding could shift towards London and the Unitary authorities. .

The Chair noted that under the proposals, the Government would retain control of strategic matters e.g. setting the multiplier. A discussion took place regarding where the balance between incentive and need would rest in the new system. The Executive Director – Operations noted that the current system had provided Bolsover District Council with relatively good financial outcomes compared to others in the sector. .

While Bolsover District Council had invested in promoting economic growth, it only had a limited financial capacity. Accordingly partnership work and external funding were key factors in securing economic growth. There was a need to manage the risk of NNDR localisation as the Government currently provided a ‘safety net’ to offset any losses due to any large business contributors relocating or going bankrupt. The Assistant Director – Finance and Revenues & Benefits noted that the option of a Derbyshire wide pool was worth exploring. It had the advantage of operating within a distinct geographical area where we had a good understanding of the economic position.

The Chair noted that the national system had worked well for the last 25 years. The new proposals shifted liability and responsibility to local authorities and potentially puts them against each other in incentivising growth.

It was noted that the reform must be fiscally neutral and a discussion was held about what services local government should seek to assume responsibility for under the new arrangements. One risk identified was that the new services would go to the unitary or the upper tier authorities. While this might secure economies of scale there was a danger that Councils became too large with less accountability. There were some clear advantages around delivering services locally.

The Chair noted that the public did not want to see bigger local authorities. There was a conflict between representation of the people and economies of scale. The Executive Director – Operations noted that the consultation was Members opportunity to get involved in the debate and look to see where functions could fit.

The Committee then considered the questions raised in the Consultation Paper. It was noted that this was made more difficult by the absence of any details about what the options. In a number of cases the Committee took the view that the issues were largely technical, or that insufficient detail had been given to provide a constructive

SPECIAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

response. There were, however, a number of areas in which the Committee provided views which would inform the Consultation response, detailed below.

Question 1: Which of these identified grants/responsibilities do you think are the best candidates to be funded from retained business rates?

It was noted that there were many unknowns and many of the proposals could see costs increasing as a result of demand growing due to the demographic of the area (eg ageing population). At this stage the Committee had no definite views.

Question 2: Are there other grants / responsibilities that you consider should be devolved instead of or alongside those identified above?

It was noted that there may be opportunities to look at current arrangements with the DWP. The District Council already has a strong customer interface arising from its work with Housing and Council Tax benefits which could form the basis of wider service delivery either with DWP, or with other partners.

Question 3: Do you have any views on the range of associated budgets that could be pooled at the Combined Authority level?

The Committee were in favour of looking to move to continuing the principle of operating a Derbyshire wide NNDR pool in the new system. .

Question 5: Do you agree that we should continue with the new burdens doctrine post- 2020?

It was accepted that this should continue.

Question 6: Do you agree that we should fix reset periods for the system?

A discussion was held around a a five years period as the most appropriate option as this would reduce the level of adjustment necessary. There were, however, concerns that this may reduce much of the benefit of economic growth after a limited 'reward' period'.

Question 7: What is the right balance in the system between rewarding growth and redistributing to meet changing need?

The Committee considered the issue and noted the conflict between the desire to retain the benefits of growth, whilst recognising that an equitable system had to recognise and address needs. The Committee expressed the view that any new system needed to reflect the 'needs' of individual authorities and their representatives.

SPECIAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Question 9: Is the current system of tariffs and top-ups the right one for redistribution between local authorities?

It was felt that currently this worked well and there was no need to change.

Question 10: Should we continue to adjust retained incomes for individual local authorities to cancel out the effect of future revaluations?

It was felt that a full re-evaluation should take place every five years, but that adjustment should take place on a continual phased basis.

Question 11: Should Mayoral Combined Authority areas have the opportunity to be given additional powers and incentives, as set out above?

Members did not think that additional powers and incentives should be given to the Mayoral Combined Authorities.

Question 12: What has your experience been of the tier splits under the current 50% rates retention scheme? What changes would you want to see under 100% rates retention system?

The current system worked well although on the basis that 100% of growth is retained Members could see the potential advantages of County Council's receiving a higher share, provided this helped secure better economic growth

Question 13: Do you consider that fire funding should be removed from the business rates retention scheme and what might be the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?

Fire Authorities should continue to operate on a similar basis to the current scheme.

Question 14: What are your views on how we could further incentivise growth under a 100% retention scheme? Are there additional incentives for growth that we should consider?

Members noted that Local Government had always promoted growth and in that sense incentives in the system were not necessary, although appropriate resources were. It was also noted that the relationship between District Councils and Parish Councils needed to be considered in order to optimise growth.

SPECIAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Question 18: What would help your local authority better manage risks associated with successful business rates appeals?

The Committee took the view that the Government needed to deliver on its commitment to simplifying and making the current system less prone to fluctuation.

Question 19: Would pooling risk, including a pool-area safety net, be attractive to local authorities?

The Committee saw some benefits in managing risk locally but considered it important that any arrangements agreed were robust and secured many of the benefits arising from a national system.

Question 20: What level of income protection should a system aim to provide? Should this be nationally set, or defined at area levels?

A floor should be set below which income did not fall. Provided this was reasonable it was not crucial whether it was set nationally or locally.

What are your views on increasing the multiplier after a reduction?

Question 24: Do you have views on the above issues or on any other aspects of the power to reduce the multiplier?

The multiplier should be nationally set to provide a level playing field for all authorities.

The Chair thanked Members for their input and the meeting concluded at 1212 hours.

Growth Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme – 2016-17

Date of Meeting	Items	Lead Officer	Notes
<p>25th May 2016, 10.00 am</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 4 – Performance Monitoring • Asset Backed Joint Venture Company • Joint Venture/Housing • Scrutiny reviews 2016/17 – selection and scoping exercise. 	<p>Jane Foley, Assistant Director of Customer Service and Improvement</p> <p>Grant Galloway, Assistant Director, Property and Estates</p> <p>Grant Galloway, Assistant Director, Property and Estates and Peter Campbell, Assistant Director of Community Safety and Housing.</p> <p>Claire Millington, Scrutiny Officer.</p>	
<p>29th June 2016, 2.00 pm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Update • Growth Performance Indicators 	<p>Dan Swaine, Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Dan Swaine, Chief Executive Officer</p>	

27th July 2016, 10.00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 1 – Performance Monitoring • Empty Properties Scheme Update • Demonstration of the new Business web pages 	<p>Allison Westray-Chapman, Assistant Director – Economic Growth</p> <p>Scott Chambers – Communications, Marketing and Design Manager.</p>	
21st September 2016, 10.00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Strategy – progress update against the actions/targets within the Strategy • Town Centre Regeneration Plans. 	<p>Allison Westray-Chapman, Assistant Director – Economic Growth.</p> <p>Allison Westray-Chapman, Assistant Director – Economic Growth.</p>	
19th October 2016, 10.00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Update 	<p>Dan Swaine, Chief Executive Officer</p>	
16th November 2016, 10.00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 2 – Performance Monitoring • Growth Performance Indicators 		
14th December 2016, 10.00 am			
18th January 2017, 10.00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Update 	<p>Dan Swaine, Chief Executive Officer</p>	

15th February 2017, 10.00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 3 – Performance Monitoring 		
15th March 2017, 10.00 am			
19th April 2017, 2.00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Update 	Dan Swaine, Chief Executive Officer	
17th May 2017, 10.00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 4 – Performance Monitoring 		

Growth Scrutiny Committee Membership –

Councillors: - T. Alexander, A. Anderson, P. Barnes, J. Clifton, G. Buxton, M. Dixey, S. Fritchley, S. Statter, B. Watson & J Wilson