

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 19th October 2016 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor J. Wilson in the Chair

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

Officers:-

D. Swaine (Chief Executive Officer), C. Millington (Scrutiny Officer) and A. Bluff (Governance Officer).

0382. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor M. Dixey.

0383. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

0384. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

0385. MINUTES – 21ST SEPTEMBER 2016

Moved by Councillor A. Anderson and seconded by Councillor B. Watson

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 21st September 2016 be approved as a correct record.

0386. LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Committee considered the List of Key Decisions and Items to be considered in Private document.

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In relation to the write-off of irrecoverable items over £2,500 a concern was raised that not enough detail was provided to Members as to the reasons why large amounts of debt were being written off and also what the debt related to. The Council's policy and process for the recovery of debt was also queried.

The Chief Executive Officer agreed that Members should be provided with more detail of why debts were being written off and that this had also been raised at a recent Executive meeting, i.e., the historic accumulation of a debt and also what it related to. The Chief Executive Officer suggested that the Executive Director - Operations attend a future meeting of Scrutiny to explain how the recovery process worked and that this could also be a piece of work for the Committee to carry out a review on.

Moved and seconded

RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and Items to be considered in Private document be noted.

0387. QUARTERLY GROWTH UPDATE – CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Chief Executive Officer circulated information to the meeting which provided Members with an update on growth in the District.

Broadband/Digital Derbyshire Project; Four options would be considered for a decision on which option to pursue at the next meeting of the Shirebrook Business Forum;

- 1) wireless link from the Tangent;
- 2) cabinet upgrade of the existing cabinet on the business park;
- 3) new cabinet in closer proximity to the affected business units;
- 4) leased line and wireless connections between the affected businesses.

The Council's preferred option was 4) - a leased line and wireless connections between the affected businesses as this was the most reliable and most cost effective as well as the quickest solution to meet their needs. The Chief Executive Officer would pursue this option with BT and mobile providers.

Option 1 was restrictive due to tenant demands on the internet supply at the Tangent. State Aid implications were currently being investigated regarding options 2 and 3 and due to the expense, businesses were likely to request the Council to financially contribute which could mean it wasn't a possible option to pursue.

With regard to Pleasley Vale, the Chief Executive Officer would be discussing this with the Assistant Director – Property and Estates.

Joint Venture Company; At its first Board meeting on Monday 3rd October, Dragonfly Development Ltd (DDL) considered the viability of three sites in the District. A report regarding this would be considered at Executive on 31st October.

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A Member queried if any of the potential houses to be built would incorporate disabled adaptations. The Chief Executive Officer replied that he would follow this up with the Assistant Director – Property and Estates.

Sherwood Lodge/Morrisons; Sherwood Lodge remained vacant and there had been ongoing issues with security – there had also been a small fire on the ground floor of the building. The Chief Executive Officer had written a joint letter to the CEO and Chairman of Morrisons regarding security concerns and also to request clarity on the future development of the site. Morrisons response had been to arrange 24 hour security for the site from 4th October and to ensure all boards to windows and doors/accesses were refitted. Security would be kept on site until a remote monitoring system had been installed in the building. Morrisons had also advised they would be presenting a recommendation to their Board for demolition of Sherwood Lodge. Members would be updated as further information was received from Morrisons.

With regard to Morrisons proposed scheme for the site, Derbyshire County Council had highlighted problems with access and that this had not been properly assessed in relation to transport impact. The Chief Executive Officer would chase up DCC's response on the legal position. He also added that the Council had advised Morrisons of the relevant Local Enterprise Partnerships for any available funding to help get proposals for the site off the ground.

Devolution; Sheffield City Region had undertaken some consultation to which the Council had responded by way of a four page letter. A meeting of the combined authorities would take place in Sheffield for a summary of the consultation. The Council had challenged how the concept was put together with a letter being sent to the Secretary of State. Derbyshire County Council had presented a legal challenge regarding the legality of the consultation and this had impacted on the Secretary of State's timescale to respond.

Coalite; With the Council's support, Bolsover Land Ltd had submitted a bid for approximately £6m to the D2N2, Local Growth Fund 2 which had been approved. A business case had also been submitted for final approval at the D2N2 Infrastructure Board on 27th October 2016. If approved, Marcol could be on site to start the appropriate decontamination and clean-up by November 2016. D2N2 had released a newsletter which had included the former Coalite site on 17th October. The Chief Executive Officer noted that a lot of work had been put into this and officers had done a fantastic job.

HS2 route proposals & potential impact on Coalite; HS2 Ltd had issued a new route proposal in July 2016 that moved the high-speed line 40 miles to the east. These new proposals ran through the Coalite site on the residential land part (NEDDC side). Given the potential impact of this, high-level meetings were currently being arranged with HS2 Ltd, due to the level of uncertainty which was not helpful to the councils or local people. Marcol were also due to meet with Sir David Higgins to discuss on 31st October 2016.

0388. GROWTH SCRUTINY WORK PLAN 2016/17

Members considered the Committee's 2016/17 Work Plan.

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Members agreed that the Executive Director - Operations be requested to attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide initial information on the Council's process of debt management in relation to national non domestic rates, including best practice and comparison to other local authorities.

The Scrutiny Officer reported that she had recently attended a seminar at Melton Mowbray where the topic had been on the subject of 'commercialism'. The Scrutiny Officer would bring further information on examples of commercialism and scrutiny work carried out by others to a future meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting concluded at 1115 hours.