

## **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 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 1000 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Members:- Councillors T. Alexander, A. Anderson, P. Barnes, G. Buxton, J. Clifton and B. Watson.

Officers:- C. Millington (Scrutiny Officer), K. Drury (Information Engagement & Performance Manager) and A. Bluff (Governance Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting was Councillors M.J. Dooley, Deputy Leader (to Minute No. 0688) and S. Fritchley, Portfolio Holder for Commercial Development and Efficiencies (from Minute No. 0686).

Councillor J. Wilson in the Chair

### **0682. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors S. Statter and M. Dixey and S. Coleman, Senior Economic Development Officer.

### **0683. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

### **0684. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

### **0685. MINUTES – 18<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2017**

Moved by Councillor A. Anderson and seconded by Councillor T. Alexander  
**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of a Growth Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017 be approved as a correct record.

Councillor S. Fritchley entered the meeting at this point.

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### 0686. 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.

A query was raised regarding 'Mobile Telephony' and who had chosen the contractor. The Chair agreed to follow this up with the relevant officer and provide feedback to the next meeting.

With regard to the Medium Term Financial Plan, a concern was raised that long term staff were leaving the Authority and their vacant posts were being filled by staff on a lower scale. Councillor Fritchley advised the meeting that he had spoken to the Leader with regard to this and the reasons for staff leaving the Authority would be looked at.

Moved by Councillor A. Anderson and seconded by Councillor T. Alexander  
**RESOLVED** that the List of Key Decisions and Items to be considered in Private document be noted.

### 0687. CORPORATE PLAN TARGETS PERFORMANCE UPDATE – QUARTER 3; OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2016

Committee considered a report which provided an update to Members on performance outturn targets in relation to Growth for the third quarter as at 31st December 2016.

#### **G 01 - Through the use of Key Account Management develop a relationship with a minimum of 50 local businesses by March 2019.**

This target was reported as being on track.

47 Businesses engaged to date. Support provided for major employment site redevelopment M1 Junction 28 to Thorngrove Land & Property Ltd. Advisory support provided for the Bolsover Local Growth Fund to submit EOIs. BLGF companies, Prospect BodyShop and Creative Five.

#### **G 03 - Optimise business growth (as measured by gross NNDR) by £2.5m by March 2019**

This target was reported as being on track.

2016/17 Estimate of NNDR income for 31/3/17 at the end of December is £26,327,400 per NNDR1 form submitted.

#### **G 05 - Through the Bolsover North East Derbyshire LEADER Approach collectively support the creation of 65 sustainable jobs in the combined programme area by December 2020**

This target was reported as being on track.

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There were currently 7 live outline applications in the process; 1 from the BDC area. Two projects from the NEDDC area had been approved totalling £83,581. As only 1 of the 22 eligible Bolsover enquiries received to date was currently proceeding to full application, focus was being given to improve the retention rate (complexity of the application process, lack of match funding and planning restrictions were the key issues noted by withdrawn/non-progressed bids).

It was confirmed in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement (23/11/2016), that Brexit would have no immediate impact on the LEADER programme, meaning that the promotion of the fund could resume and successful projects could be contracted. The programme would be relaunched in early 2017 and targeted marketing to continue through the LEADER Team and partners, with various presentations/briefings made within the quarter including to NFU meetings, EDU Business

Networks and internal team meetings (e.g. Env Health and EDU), the two LEPs and the Chamber of Commerce. Flyers to circulate with 2017/18 NNDR letters were currently being developed.

A Member requested further information on what efforts were being made to improve the retention rate of project applications.

### **G 06 - Undertake statutory public consultation on the Local Plan (Strategic Policies and Site Allocations) in line with the adopted Local Development Scheme timetable by July 2017.**

This target was reported as being on track.

Public consultation had taken place on the Draft Plan in Nov/Dec 2016. The Service remained on target for consultation on the Publication Version of the Local Plan by July 2017.

### **G 07 - Submit Local Plan (Strategic Policies and Site Allocations) for examination by the Planning Inspectorate by November 2017.**

This target was reported as being on track.

Public consultation had taken place on the Draft Plan in Nov/Dec 2016. The Service remained on target to submit the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate by July 2017.

### **G 08 - Process all major planning applications 10% better than the minimum for special measures per annum.**

This target was reported as being on track.

100% of all major applications determined within the deadline or agreed extension of time. This was a particularly strong performance taking into account 8 major applications were determined over the quarter and there were still some capacity issues within the team. (Target 2016/17: 60%, National Target 50%).

A Member queried the capacity issues in the Planning team. The Scrutiny Officer replied that she would follow this up and report back to the next meeting.

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### **G 09 - Deliver a minimum of 100 new Council properties by March 2019**

This target was reported as being on track.

Work had started at Fir Close Shirebrook; Derwent Drive, Tibshelf and Hilltop Avenue Shirebrook - work would commence this financial year. Future sites were being considered. The Blackwell Hotel site was due for completion this financial year.

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

This target was reported as being on track.

326 gross completions for 2015/16 were reported in the last quarter - the next annual total would not be reported until after the end of the financial year 2016/17. If this average was continued the 1,000 properties target would be met and most likely surpassed. Planning Policy had estimated that the 5 year supply would be achieved based on the number of planning applications and likely completions by 2020.

### **G 11 - Through a programme of targeted refurbishment bring 15 empty private sector properties back into use per annum.**

This target was flagged with an alert.

An Empty Property Officer was now in place and was aware of the empty properties list that had been sent to Action Housing. These properties were being surveyed and would then be classed as to which ones Action Housing could put an intervention in place.

A baseline was being created for empty properties in Bolsover and an action plan would then be put in place to tackle these properties.

### **G 12 - Achieve an increase of £850,000 in additional New Homes Bonus (NHB) from the Government by March 2019.**

This target was reported as being on track.

£257,091.80 was the additional NHB being received in 2016/17.

Further to Member's queries, the Information Engagement & Performance Manager noted that the figure provided in the report was for the quarter 3 period only and the four quarter figures together would produce the year end figure for the target. The Customer Service and Performance team would also produce a Growth Summary Report at the year end.

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

This target was reported as being on track.

7 units of affordable housing were completed at Rogers Avenue, Creswell under the B@home scheme and a further 14 were under construction at the Blackwell Hotel, Blackwell and Fir Close, Shirebrook. With regard to private sites, the Interim Planning

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Policy, which waived the affordable housing requirement in return for an early start on site, had had an effect on the number of affordable housing units coming through s106 sites.

Committee thanked the Information Engagement & Performance Manager for the report.

Councillors Dooley and Fritchley and the Information Engagement & Performance Manager left the meeting.

### **0688. MARKETING AND HOW THE AUTHORITY ATTRACTS BUSINESSES – BRIEFING FROM SONIA COLEMAN, SENIOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER**

As the Senior Economic Development Officer had been unable to attend the meeting, Members agreed that the agenda item; 'Marketing and how the Authority attracts businesses', be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

Moved by Councillor G. Buxton and seconded by Councillor P. Barnes  
**RESOLVED** that the 'Marketing and how the Authority attracts businesses' item be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

(Scrutiny Officer)

### **0689. GROWTH SCRUTINY WORK PLAN 2016-17**

Committee considered their Work Plan 2016-17.

In response to a query regarding a demonstration of the new Business web pages to Members, the Scrutiny Officer informed the meeting that the Chief Executive Officer was following this up on behalf of the Committee.

A discussion took place with regard to empty properties in the District.

Corporate Plan Target G11 had been flagged as an 'alert' and may not achieve its intended outcome by the target date; Members requested that the Scrutiny Officer raise a query with the Empty Properties Officer regarding the £18k provided to Action Housing by the Authority, which was to be spent on bringing empty private sector properties back into use and provide the feedback to the Committee.

It was further noted that although Corporate Plan Target G09 was reported as being on track, the number of properties currently delivered was not included in the report; Members requested that this information also be followed up and feedback provided to the Committee.

The Chair raised concern with regard to the number of void Council properties in the District; the Scrutiny Officer advised Members that the Corporate Plan Target for void properties was under the remit of the Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee and the target had been reported as being on track. The Scrutiny Officer

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would request the Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee to look into the matter and report back to Growth Scrutiny.

Members agreed that empty Council properties were a loss of income to the Authority and not good for the Growth agenda; Members requested the figure for the gross revenue loss to the Council due to empty properties.

Members raised that more beneficial data was needed for Corporate Plan Targets as “on-track” had no realistic meaning and this should be looked at for the next Corporate Plan. The Scrutiny Officer replied that she would speak to the relevant Portfolio Holder and provide feedback to the next meeting.

Members also requested an update on the recruitment of a Director of Growth and the wider management review to be included within the next Growth Update.

Moved by Councillor A. Anderson and seconded by Councillor Gwyneth Buxton

**RESOLVED** that the Work Plan be updated.

(Scrutiny Officer)

The meeting concluded at 1040 hours.