

## **FINANCE AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 10:00 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Members:-

Councillor David Bennett in the Chair

Councillors Sally Renshaw (Vice-Chair), Rowan Clarke, Justin Gilbody and Janet Tait.

Officers:- Jim Fieldsend (Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer), Kath Drury (Information, Engagement and Performance Manager), Jessica Clayton (Leaders Executive and Partnership Strategy Manager), Cheryl Staples (Programme and Projects Officer), Thomas Dunne-Wragg (Scrutiny Officer).

Also in attendance was Councillor Tom Munro (Portfolio Holder for Growth).

### **FCO34-24/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **FCO35-24/25 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business to be considered.

### **FCO36-24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **FCO37-24/25 MINUTES**

Moved by Councillor Gilbody and seconded by Councillor Renshaw

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of a meeting of the Finance and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 be approved as a true and correct record.

### **FCO38-24/25 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.

**RESOLVED** that the List of Key Decisions and Items to be considered in the private be noted.

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### **FCO39-24/25 CORPORATE AMBITIONS PERFORMANCE UPDATE - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2024 (Q3 - 2024/25)**

Committee considered a report in relation to the quarterly Performance updates from Quarter 3 (October-December 2024) delivered by the Information, Engagement and Performance Manager.

The performance updates for Quarter 3 (Q3) showed strong progress, with 91% of Council Plan targets on track and 72% of performance indicators meeting their targets. However, some areas faced challenges: one environmental target was behind, and a housing target was slightly delayed, with one housing target not on track. Dragonfly Development Limited (DDL) also contributed to the Council Plan's success. The report highlighted overall positive performance but noted areas needing attention, with further details provided in the appendices.

Appendix 1 detailed the performance of the Council's targets for Customers during Q3. Most targets were on track, including customer satisfaction surveys, website performance, stakeholder partnerships, the Equality Plan, and employee engagement. Participation in physical activities and the health intervention programme also exceeded targets. However, there were a few exceptions: the response rate for the real-time satisfaction survey remained behind target at 75% however it was noted that this was still a good level to attain, and several Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to arrears collection (such as sundry debts, Council Tax, and non-domestic rates) had not met targets, partly due to new assessments and delayed payments. Despite these exceptions, overall progress remained positive.

Appendix 2 outlined the progress of Council Plan targets for Environment during Q3, focusing on quality of life, environmental challenges, and biodiversity. Key targets such as updating the Carbon Reduction Plan, increasing recycling rates, and introducing separate food waste collection were all on track. Several initiatives, like vehicle procurement for recycling services and the establishment of a Green Skills Hub, were progressing well. However, the target to carry out 155 proactive littering and dog fouling patrols fell short, with only 17 patrols completed out of the planned 39 due to staff absences. Additionally, a target for proactive community patrols for litter and dog fouling also showed a negative outturn, with fewer patrols carried out than planned. Similarly, fly-tipping clearance within 24 hours was below target, primarily due to limited resources during the December holiday period. Despite these exceptions, most targets were still progressing towards their goals.

Appendix 3 detailed that Council successfully advanced its targets for Economy during Q3, including the development of a Business Growth Strategy, which aligned with regional initiatives. The Bolsover Place Programme had made strides in promoting tourism and local assets, while efforts to foster growth in the creative sector through networks and a Creative Hub had gained momentum. Post-16 educational provisions were supported, and investment in business estates, such as industrial units and Pleasley Vale regeneration had moved forward with secured funding. The crematorium construction had also progressed towards its 2025 goal, and procurement rules had been updated to include social value policies.

Appendix 4 highlighted progress that the Council had made towards its targets for Housing during Q3. The Housing Strategy had been adopted, although it was slightly

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behind schedule. The target to deliver 200 new homes by March 2028 was not on track, with only 45 homes under development, and further sites being explored. Tenant satisfaction remained strong, exceeding national averages, and compliance with social housing standards was being actively pursued through tenant engagement initiatives. A housing stock condition survey was underway and expected to be completed by April 2025. The district was on track to meet its annual target for new homes, and efforts to understand local affordable housing needs and improve the quality and supply of affordable housing were ongoing. Additional measures, such as supporting the private rented sector and tackling homelessness, were also progressing as planned. Key performance indicators reflected strong outcomes in rent collection, homelessness prevention, and response times to complaints, although current tenant arrears were above target but steadily improving. The Information, Engagement and Performance Manager gave a comparison between rent arrears cases in Q3 2023/24 and Q3 2024/25 which showed that the interventions were making a difference. During Q3 2023/24 there were 988 tenants recommended for contact under RentSense the system used to manage arrears. By the end of Q3, 912 of these were still tenants. Of these, 32% (291) were out of debt and 73% (669) had seen their arrears balance reduced.

The Chair invited the Portfolio Holder for Growth to comment on the progress of targets for housing, following recent research he had undertaken on Q3 performance. The Portfolio Holder noted that the site at Crossroad, Danesbrook Drive, was being tested for viability but was deemed unviable for a Bolsover District Council housing project. Instead, the land would be put on the market and was expected to generate at least £40k as a revenue stream. Additionally, regarding the demolition of garages on Springfield Close in Clowne, the Portfolio Holder acknowledged that negotiations for the potential purchase may be initiated at a later stage.

The Chair asked whether the Council could communicate with local residents regarding the sale of land for properties. The Portfolio Holder for Growth responded that it was the responsibility of local members to inform the residents.

The Portfolio Holder then provided updates on various housing developments: Mill Lane, Bolsover, was expected to move forward with up to 38 properties (ranging from 1-4 bedrooms) in the near future. Rude Lane, a greenfield site, could potentially accommodate up to 40 properties, though there was some uncertainty over whether the Council owned the access; this would be double-checked by Bolsover District Council property personnel. High Street, Tibshelf, was a potential development site, which may come onto the market for housing. A developer might take on the project, but a decision could take up to a year, depending on Derbyshire County Council. Briar Close in Shirebrook had three large plots owned by Homes England, which were being marketed for the best value. The site had potential for up to four Bolsover Homes, though investigations were still ongoing due to the steep and difficult design challenges. Finally, a potential site at Park Lane, Pinxton, was under investigation and could support up to 10 properties.

The Portfolio Holder added that the new Leader of the Council was attending visits with the Managing Director of DDL to gather new information. Once this information was shared with the Executive, the Portfolio Holder would provide feedback to Scrutiny.

The Monitoring Officer added that regarding Rude Lane, the Council did not have full access to the site. Therefore, there would need to be a deal further down the line if the decision was made to proceed with that route.

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A Committee Member highlighted that the site where three houses could be offered was key to meeting biodiversity net gain targets, and it was important to point this out. The Portfolio Holder for Growth confirmed that he would investigate and report back.

The Information, Engagement and Performance Manager advised members of an amendment to page 42, under Housing Target 05. It was noted that the figure should read 27 rather than 7. This made the target an exception. This was due to two properties being retained for safe and warm works at Valley View, Hillstown. During this period the two properties were let, and this had impacted on the void's timescale.

Appendix 5 outlined DDL's KPIs for Q1 to Q3 of 2024/25. The majority of KPIs, including domestic compliance with fire safety, asbestos, and lift regulations, as well as capital spend on projects such as heating, kitchen contracts, and roof replacement, were on or above target. The domestic clearance of blocked drains also met the target. However, there were performance issues in facilities management, particularly with response times for urgent, non-urgent, and regular maintenance requests, which were below target due to a change of contractor. The average time to complete minor void works exceeded the target, although major void works were completed within the target timeframe. Both gas and solid fuel servicing programmes were on or above target, and the revenue spend was in line with the quarterly budget targets. The performance issues regarding response times were addressed through regular performance meetings.

A Committee Member commented that DDL were aware of the exceptions and were making efforts to get back on track.

Moved by Councillor Justin Gilbody and seconded by Councillor Janet Tait  
**RESOLVED** that the Council Plan Targets Performance Update report for Quarter 3 be noted.

### **FCO40-24/25      WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

Committee considered their work programme 2024/25 presented by the Scrutiny Officer.

Moved by Councillor Justin Gilbody and seconded by Councillor Sally Renshaw  
**RESOLVED** that the work programme 2024/25 be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10:31 hours.