

## **LOCAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 10:00 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Members:-

Councillor Sally Renshaw in the Chair

Councillors Will Fletcher, Duncan Haywood, Jeanne Raspin and Jen Wilson.

Officers:- Jim Fieldsend (Strategic Director of Legal, Governance and Monitoring Officer), Sarah Kay (Interim Strategic Director of Economic Growth), Ian Barber (Strategic Director of Property, Construction and Assets), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Caroline Daghsh (Senior Economic Development Officer), Heather Gunn (Tourism and Place Manager), Coby Bunyan (Scrutiny Officer) and Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer).

### **LOC28-25/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Justin Gilbody and Tom Kirkham.

### **LOC29-25/26 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

### **LOC30-25/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

### **LOC31-25/26 MINUTES**

Moved by Councillor Jeanne Raspin and seconded by Councillor Duncan Haywood  
**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of a Local Growth Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026 be approved as a true and correct record.

### **LOC32-25/26 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE**

Members considered the updated List of Key Decisions and Items provided at the meeting.

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

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### LOC33-25/26 UKSPF UPDATE

The Senior Economic Development Officer updated the Committee on the business support programmes delivered through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) from April 2025 to March 2026.

In April 2025, it was announced UKSPF funding would be extended – an additional allocation of £803,023 for the period above was received.

The Council's 3 investment priorities were:

- Community and Place;
- Supporting Local Business; and,
- People and Skills.

Over the previous 3 years of all funding received, 4 projects commissioned from the priority areas above were:

- the Hyper Local Business Support – delivered by Clowne Enterprise;
- the Business Detox and Female Business Owners Monthly Training and Networking Events – delivered by Filter Free Business;
- the Creative Women's Network – delivered by PlatformThirty1; and,
- the Net-Zero Innovation Programme.

All 4 of programmes had been extremely successful and had met or exceeded the majority of their outputs and outcomes – the Business Detox had exceeded its target by 1,000%.

However, despite the announcement that the UKSPF allocation expenditure could be extended until the end of September 2026, no further grant funding would be allocated by the UK Government.

Therefore, the business support programmes in place were originally set to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

The Net-Zero Innovation Programme, due to a delay in project commencement, had some underspend. This allowed delivery to extend through to September 2026 (along with its capital grant fund), ensuring grants could be devolved to businesses with more time to deliver interventions.

The Committee was informed that at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026, Executive had taken the decision for the Council to self-fund the continuation of the other 3 programmes with its reserves.

Detailed information on all 4 programmes was provided in the report.

Also detailed in the report was the Net-Zero Innovation Programme, which supported small and medium sized enterprises within the District to reduce their carbon emissions, adopt green technologies, and progress towards the UK Government's Net- Zero targets. This had been recognised nationally by the EDIE Awards, the UK's largest sustainability awards scheme – the Net-Zero Innovation Programme had won Training Initiative of the

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Year 2025.

The Net-Zero Innovation Programme had also led to the Council briefing the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) on the programme – EMCCA's intention was to scale up the programme to the regional level.

Clarity on the naming of the Business Detox events.

A Member noted the Council massively exceeding its targets and congratulated the Business Growth Team on what had evidently been a very successful project.

Members were informed performance data would be provided to the Committee with the same outputs and outcomes for all 3 investment priorities (to scrutinise performance).

In answer to a question, the Senior Economic Development Officer informed event organisers were providing the names of all new businesses in attendance to record performance and outreach.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee note the progress report.

### **LOC34-25/26      UPDATE ON THE BID FOR TOWN OF CULTURE AND CULTURAL STRATEGY**

The Tourism and Place Manager provided a verbal update on the Council's bid for Town of Culture and its Cultural Strategy.

The UK's Town of Culture would have 3 award criteria, each representing a different size of town: small (for a population under 20,000); medium (for a population up to 50,000); and large (for a population under 75,000).

Bolsover Town and the greater District would allow the Council to submit a bid for Town of Culture under the small town designation – if successful the Council could receive £3 million, enabling substantial boosts to its current cultural efforts and its Growth Strategy (2 shortlisted places would receive £250,000).

There was a need for small towns with large ambitions, and the Council believed Bolsover Town (and the greater District) was well placed to be part of the Town of Culture programme.

The Council had laid the groundwork for such an award for the previous 2-3 years with local stakeholders and groups that it worked closely with.

The Council had been working closely with a consultant to develop cultural structures across the District, and a public consultation had revealed residents' and businesses' ambitions for the District.

A priority identified from the consultation was the need for greater opportunities for young people.

It was noted the Council was one of only a few local authorities to retain an arts development officer.

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If shortlisted for Town of Culture, the Council would receive £60,000 to develop a full proposal – it was reiterated that this had already been underway with key stakeholders across the District.

### **LOC35-25/26      DRAGONFLY SHAREHOLDER BOARD UPDATE**

A Member read out a verbal update on the Dragonfly Shareholder Board (the 'Board') on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Devolution.

The Board had continued for the interim to ensure all matters of the Dragonfly Companies being brought in-house had been resolved.

The Dragonfly Companies had been successfully brought in-house on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2026, concluding the Eiffel Tower project.

The Council's consultant on the Eiffel Tower project would attend an informal meeting of the Executive on the lessons learned and provide a debrief.

The Board had met recently but to discuss a confidential staffing matter.

### **LOC36-25/26      AGREEMENT OF WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2025/26**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Work Programme 2025/26 to the Committee, attached at Appendix 1.

Moved by Councillor Jen Wilson and seconded by Councillor Will Fletcher

**RESOLVED** that Members review this report and the Programme attached at Appendix 1 for approval and amendment as required. All Members are advised to contact the Scrutiny Officer should they have any queries regarding future meetings.

The Chair thanked all those in attendance.

The meeting concluded at 10:17 hours.