

LOCAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee of Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday 20th April 2022 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Jen Wilson in the Chair

Councillors Derek Adams, Tracey Cannon and David Dixon.

Officers: Chris Fridlington (Assistant Director of Development and Planning), Jo Wilson (Scrutiny and Elections Officer) and Tom Scott (Governance Officer).

LOC33-21/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Jim Clifton, Councillor Tricia Clough, Councillor Paul Cooper, Victoria Dawson (Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement) and Natalie Etches (Business Growth Manager).

LOC34-21/22 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The Chair had no urgent items of business.

LOC35-21/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

LOC36-21/22 MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Derek Adams and seconded by Councillor Tracey Cannon
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of a Local Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd March 2022 be approved as a true and correct record.

LOC37-21/22 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer presented the list of Key Decisions to Members.

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer advised that 'Disposal of commercial property at Bramley Vale' was the only decision on the Key Decision list published on 14th April 2022.

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

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LOC38-21/22 UPDATE ON BUSINESS GROWTH STRATEGY

The Assistant Director of Development and Planning presented a report on progress against the Action Plan attached to the Council's Business Growth Strategy. He informed Members that the Economic Development team had appointed two new officers.

The Assistant Director of Development and Planning referred to requests at previous meetings for data on businesses for the whole District, and circulated a number of charts with percentages for numbers of employees, businesses, start-ups and closures.

Councillor Derek Adams was concerned that the chart information was taken from 2019 and 2020 and might be out-of-date, particularly since 2020 was when the COVID pandemic began. The Assistant Director of Development and Planning explained that some of the businesses listed would have maintained themselves, so Members could still take guidance from it. He added that Bolsover District did not have many big brands, which had also limited the impact of COVID.

Councillor Tracey Cannon enquired what kind of encouragement could be given to young people at college age. The Assistant Director of Development and Planning explained that there was currently a lot of pressure on household incomes, and Bolsover District did not offer as much to post-16 students as Sheffield or Mansfield, meaning there were additional costs associated with accessing provision.

Councillor Tracey Cannon asked if officers had a plan to encourage businesses to take on apprentices. The Assistant Director of Development and Planning explained that a plan for bursaries to apprentices could be included as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund.

The Assistant Director of Development and Planning explained that more support would be given to start-up businesses beyond their first year. Councillor Derek Adams supported this idea, because he felt there were events in a business' second year that they would not account for.

Councillor David Dixon referred to the Centre of Excellence mentioned in 2.5 of the Action Plan report ("we have recently been notified that we have an opportunity to draw down £500,000 of funding from D2N2 to support the creation of a skills academy in Shirebrook") and asked if this would involve working jointly with a company. The Assistant Director of Development and Planning explained that the funding had come from the D2N2 low carbon growth fund, and the Council would be expected to produce two low carbon units as a result.

The Assistant Director of Development and Planning informed Members that GTEC specialised in electrical and renewal energy training, and the Council was working with private partners to utilise their training. He added that the Council also had a good relationship with Vision West Nottinghamshire College and Chesterfield College.

Councillor David Dixon was concerned that the lack of public transport links in the

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District might have a negative effect on the Shirebrook academy. The Assistant Director of Development and Planning explained that Network Rail were considering improving transport links to Shirebrook train station.

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer explained she would circulate to Members more information on the seven Kick Start placements that had been appointed at the Council.

Councillor David Dixon requested that the Bolsover District business data charts shared with Members be broken down geographically. The Assistant Director of Development and Planning explained that this could be carried out, but it might not be possible to present it before June or July 2022 because of the officer time required.

The Chair enquired what kind of initiatives could attract big businesses. The Assistant Director of Development and Planning explained that there was a lot of potential funding for businesses in green energy, so the Council could encourage them to come to the District by making them eligible for grants.

Councillor David Dixon asked for a progress update on the Clowne Garden Village development. The Assistant Director of Development and Planning explained that at the moment, Derbyshire County Council had expressed concerns about the plan for the Treble Bob roundabout.

RESOLVED that the Business Growth Strategy be noted.

LOC39-21/22 WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

The Scrutiny and Elections Officer presented the Work Programme 2021/22 to the Committee.

Councillor Derek Adams and Councillor David Dixon both felt there should be regular updates included in the Work Programme about Section 106 money and in particular, how much the Council has got and what each Parish receives. The Scrutiny and Elections Officer explained that monitoring of Section 106 money was not relevant to this particular Committee, but she would try and investigate their requests for information.

Councillor Tracey Cannon enquired if there could be an item included in the Work Programme about takeaway restaurant limits. The Scrutiny and Elections Officer explained that there was a specific policy in the Local Plan covering Hot Food Takeaways (Policy WC9) with clearly defined restrictions, which the Planning Policy Manager could explain to them in more detail.

RESOLVED that Members note the Programme attached at Appendix 1.

(Scrutiny and Elections Officer)

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The meeting concluded at 11:10 hours.