

CLIMATE CHANGE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Climate Change & Communities Scrutiny Committee of Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Tuesday 24th May 2022 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Nick Clarke in the Chair

Councillors Anne Clarke (Vice Chair), Evonne Parkin, Dan Salt and David Dixon.

Officers: Ian Barber (Assistant Director of Property Services & Housing Repairs), Wayne Carter (Leisure Service Manager), Chris McKinney (Interim Planning Policy Manager) and Joanne Wilson (Scrutiny & Elections Officer)

CLI01-22/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

CLI02-22/23 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

CLI03-22/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

CLI04-22/23 MINUTES OF MEETING ON 22 MARCH 2022

Moved by Councillor David Dixon and seconded by Councillor Evonne Parkin.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Climate Change & Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 22 March be approved as a correct record.

CLI05-22/23 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.

Moved by Councillor Nick Clarke and seconded by Councillor Anne Clarke.

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

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CLI06-22/23 WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

Committee considered their proposed work programme for 2022/23. Members discussed outstanding pieces of work to be completed in advance of the Elections in May 2023.

Moved by Councillor Evonne Parkin and seconded by Councillor David Dixon

RESOLVED that the Work Programme 2022/23 be approved.

(Scrutiny & Elections Officer)

CLI07-22/23 UPDATE ON COMMUNITY WOODLANDS PROJECT

The Interim Planning Policy Manager provided Members with a detailed update on the development and implementation of the Community Woodlands Project. The Woodland Trust is the main funder with some match funding from the Council. There are 3 core objectives as outlined in the presentation contained within the agenda papers, with the flagship site being on former Creswell Colliery land. Work to date was summarised including further detail on the contracts agreed by the Council to ensure the project is delivered as planned.

Councillor Dixon questioned how new planting was being integrated with larger established trees as he had noticed they seemed to be much smaller.

It was noted that the scheme involves mostly planting 'whips' – young trees approx. 50cm tall – which are then protected by biodegradable supports to ensure they survive beyond a specified level of growth. While this type of tree guard costs more, it is worth the outlay due to the environmental waste benefits in the long-term. As part of integration with existing trees, a vast number of old plastic tree guards have been removed from established trees and Members reviewed photos of the waste generated from previous planting schemes.

Members also questioned what level of engagement there was from Parish Councils. It was noted that Old Bolsover Town Council was one of the first to engage, which had resulted in planting on Langwith Road area. BDC Grounds Maintenance team were involved with this scheme as they are keen to move to include such works as part of mainstream delivery where possible.

A Project Officer has now been appointed to start in June 2022 and further engagement work can then take place. Current interested Parishes include: Whitwell, Langwith, Scarcliffe, Barlborough and Pinxton. Officers are also helping Parishes to apply for their own trees through the variety of schemes available through the Woodland Trust.

Councillor Dixon questioned the possibilities for street planting.

It was explained that DCC apply a cost to developments for specific s.106 charges in relation to tree planting and maintenance. Visibility and highways safety is a factor for consideration which must be complied with, but if a Parish wanted to complete such a project it would be possible for officers to support working with DCC to progress this. It can be quite challenging to get in place but the new Levelling Up legislation has more emphasis on design.

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Councillor A Clarke noted that the scheme on Langwith Road in Bolsover had been well received by residents, both helping with planting and supporting workers on site with drinks. The Interim Planning Policy Manager noted that unfortunately this had not been quite the same with the planting at Fox Green in Creswell where vandalism had taken place.

The Leisure Services Manager noted the volume of planting that had taken place as a result of the 3G pitch development with 1100 trees and shrubs added as a screen to the neighbouring housing.

The Chair thanked the officer for the presentation and progress report and noted that further updates would be welcome once the project officer was in post.

Moved by Councillor Nick Clarke and seconded by Councillor Anne Clarke.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

(Interim Planning Policy Manager)

Councillor Dan Salt left the meeting during Minute No CLI07-22/23.

CLI08-22/23 CARBON REDUCTION PLAN – MONITORING REPORT

The Assistant Director of Property Services & Housing Repairs outlined the eight themes and actions plans from the original plan, acknowledging that a large amount of activity had been delayed due to covid. A revised plan had now been produced to align more closely with the Midland Engine 10point Framework. This allowed the Council to still address the ideas from the original plan, but by aligning to the framework it would give the Council extra leverage when submitting bids. The framework allows better compatibility with funders both regionally and nationally. The framework includes additional themes which represent new and emerging technologies that the Council are keen to explore.

The new Plan is split across three themes of Place; Energy and Enablers. The new Plan has been created in OneNote and is accessible to all officers engaged in delivery so it can be a live document that is easily updated internally. It was hoped however, that the monitoring of the Plan could become more integrated in to wider Council monitoring processes. The Scrutiny & Elections Officer explained that due to work by two Scrutiny Committees that the Council was looking to procure a Social Value evaluation tool which could be a potential option for monitoring the outcomes of key projects.

Discussions took place around the use of old mine workings for energy, fleet, heat pumps and waste disposal.

It was noted that current inflation levels are causing issues with Green Energy tariff prices, so it will be vital the Council assesses the benefits of choosing a green tariff, considering value for money.

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Moved by Councillor Nick Clarke and seconded by Councillor David Dixon.

RESOLVED that the contents of the Executive report and verbal presentation outlining the revised approach to delivery be noted.

(Assistant Director of Property Services & Housing Repairs)

CLI09-22/23 DELIVERY OF LEISURE SERVICES POST-PANDEMIC

The Leisure Services Manager gave Members a presentation outlining impacts of the pandemic on service delivery, current service performance, refurbishment of the gym facilities at the Go Active leisure facility, development of the 3G pitch, the Wellness suite and community delivery.

Key areas of discussion included:

- Gym memberships – Go Active had approximately 1231 single memberships as at 23/5/19 and currently have 1239 single memberships showing a higher number of memberships than previously. This is not currently mirrored in household memberships however with 6230 in 2019 decreasing to 5550 now.
- Gym Refurbishment – BDC worked alongside 10 other authorities to design and build the contract requirements. The council were able to support a local community gym by recycling some of our old equipment.
- Pleasley Vale Outdoor Activity Centre – Additional instructor now in place resulting in additional bookings being secured. There is a marked increase from delivering 452hrs in 2019 to 580hrs now.
- 3G Pitch Development – a £698k investment with a minimum of 20 local teams engaged for booking. Links have been made with Chesterfield FC Academy for both training and matches and it is hoped that an education facility will be established for the Academy in the old Committee Room 2. Additional links with the North Derbyshire Youth League for matches and potential for 2 Clowne based league teams to use the pitch as a base. The pitch enables the Council to offer 4x the space previously available and as yet there are no impacts on sports hall bookings.
- Wellness Hub – this has been a huge success with the suite running at around 90% capacity. A number of users have purchased gym membership as a result. It allows us to offer Cardiac Phase III recovery support on site rather than having to go to hospital via referral.
- Partnership delivery – currently working with the Community Safety Partnership on 'You v Rail' a rail safety project across two sites in Bolsover.
- Communications – it is hoped to develop targeted websites for both Extreme Wheels and Pleasley Vale Outdoor Centre to ensure that service usage is maximised.

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Moved by Councillor Nick Clarke and seconded by Councillor David Dixon.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

(Leisure Services Manager)

CLI10-22/23 REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S POLICY ON FIREWORKS – EXECUTIVE RESPONSE

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer informed Members that Executive had considered their recent review report and approved all recommendations. The Review would now move in to its 12 month monitoring period and the recommendations would be implemented.

Moved by Councillor Anne Clarke and seconded by Councillor Evonne Parkin.

RESOLVED that (1) Executive's response to the Review of the Council's Policy on Fireworks be noted,

(2) the report and its findings be made public in accordance with the Council's Constitution,

(3) progress on the recommendations be monitored with a report to Committee in six and twelve months' time to highlight any exceptions to delivery, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

(Scrutiny & Elections Officer)

The formal part of the meeting concluded at this point and Members then met as a working party to consider their review work.

CLI11-22/23 REVIEW WORK

Members discussed their possible recommendations for their current Review of VCS Grants and agreed additional actions required.

The meeting ended at 12:55.