

CLIMATE CHANGE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee of Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Tuesday 4th July 2023 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Catherine Tite in the Chair

Councillors Rob Hiney-Saunders, Cathy Jeffery, Jeanne Rospin, Emma Stevenson, Ashley Taylor and Carol Wood.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive), Jim Fieldsend (Monitoring Officer), Pam Brown (Service Director of Executive, Customer Services, Communications, Governance and Partnerships), and Joanne Wilson (Scrutiny & Elections Officer).

Also in attendance was Councillor Anne Clarke (Portfolio Holder for Environment).

CLI123/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

CLI223/24 URGENT ITEMS

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer briefed Members on an email received by the Director of Executive, Customer Services, Communications, Governance and Partnerships. Derbyshire County Council (DCC) were consulting partners on the potential to create a Community Forest Proposal. Committee Members were asked if this was something they would like to look at in more detail at a separate meeting.

A Member queried whether any response produced would be circulated to Committee if Members were unable to attend. The Chair confirmed it would be.

A Member queried whether it would be classed as a decision-making meeting and the Scrutiny & Elections Officer confirmed it would not be, and that Members would meet informally to agree comments on the documents circulated.

A Member queried which area of Derbyshire the Forest proposal related to. The Scrutiny & Elections Officer noted that the District featured heavily within the proposed boundary.

A Member queried how the proposal related to the young persons' wood created in the south of the county. The Chair noted that there was no direct reference to it.

Moved by Councillor Catherine Tite and seconded by Councillor Ashley Taylor
RESOLVED that a day and time be agreed in the Informal meeting today.

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CLI323/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

CLI423/24 MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Emma Stevenson **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of a Climate Change & Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 7th March 2023 be approved as a correct record.

CLI523/24 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer advised that there were currently no items listed for consideration. She explained the purpose of the document and how Members would receive notification of items. The Scrutiny & Elections Officer explained the importance of Scrutiny involvement before reports were submitted to Executive and asked that any queries be directed to the listed officer or Portfolio Holder in the first instance. Should Members then feel that a more detailed examination of the proposed decision was required, Members must contact the Monitoring Officer and Scrutiny Officer so that a meeting of the relevant Scrutiny Committee could be held to enable pre-scrutiny of the decision.

Moved by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Emma Stevenson **RESOLVED** that the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private document be noted.

CLI623/24 CLIMATE CHANGE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

Committee considered their work programme for 2023/24. The Chair explained that the document presented was a fluid document which could be added to and amended as required. The programme was considered as part of every meeting to allow Committee Members to adjust to emerging issues throughout the year.

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer noted that she was waiting for confirmation of officer availability in relation to a number of expected reports, as highlighted in yellow in the appendix.

A Member queried how the Work Programme worked and the officer explained that there were a number of reports the Committee received in relation to the Budget & Policy Framework, where it related to the Committee's terms of reference. The Committee had a policy development role and could also challenge service performance. She advised that more specific review work generally took place within informal meetings concluding in a report to Executive with recommendations.

Moved by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Emma Stevenson **RESOLVED** that the Work Programme 2023/24 be approved and noted.

(Scrutiny & Elections Officer)

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CLI723/24

REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO CARBON REDUCTION (EXECUTIVE RESPONSE)

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer explained the background to the review, the evidence considered by the outgoing Committee, and the reasoning for the recommendations. The report had been presented to Executive in March, with all recommendations approved for implementation. The appendix attached gave further detail on expected timescales and delivery.

A Member queried why there was no target date set for recommendation 2. The Chief Executive clarified that there was a two-phase process to the creation of new posts which could take a number of months. Approval was required by Employment & Personal Committee, then the post needed to go through job design, person specification and job evaluation. If growth was required in the budget, approval was then also required from Council.

A Member queried if there was a target date for submission to Committee. The Chief Executive noted that lots of options were being considered alongside the Low Carbon Group, Housing Stock Management Group, Partnerships team, and Leisure Services. The need for an additional post on top of existing arrangements was being assessed.

In relation to recommendation 5, the Monitoring Officer noted that the new post referred to was going to Committee in August 2023 for approval. A Member queried why the post was not being recruited at the same time as the suggested operational officer post. The Chief Executive noted that approval was likely to be required by Council following Committee. A review of the Senior Management structure was currently taking place and a new officer had been assigned as lead for climate change. Discussions were still taking place on operational leads and whether an additional post was required.

In relation to recommendation 7, a Member queried progress with the review. The Chief Executive noted that the Low Carbon Group was supported by the Partnership team but involved council officers/members and external partners. Separate to this Group, Council officers met to deliver Council specific projects related to carbon reduction of the Council estate and operations. With the more recent structural changes and the shift away from operating as the Strategic Alliance the Council was now re-assessing mechanisms for delivering the Council's carbon reduction target. A Member asked that the target date be updated to reflect the situation.

Members requested a copy of the original review report completed and a copy of the 2019 motion to Council to understand the information gathered by the past Committee.

Members referred to a letter received by Committee Members in relation to the Council's approach to climate change and agreed it was important to respond in relation to the Council's position.

Moved by Councillor Carol Wood and seconded by Councillor Cathy Jeffrey
RESOLVED that (1) subject to the agreed amended target dates, Executive's Response to the Review of Council's Approach to Carbon Reduction be noted,

(2) the report and findings be made public, in accordance with Part 4.5.17(4) of the Council's Constitution,

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(3) officers monitor progress on the recommendations and report in six and twelve months' time highlighting exceptions to delivery, in accordance with Part 3.6(1) of the Council's Constitution.

Moved by Councillor Carol Wood and seconded by Councillor Jeanne Raspin

RESOLVED that (4) in reply to the letter received by Committee, a clear factual response stating the Council's position be compiled.

CLI823/24 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL POLICY ON SKY LANTERNS AND HELIUM BALLOONS - POST SCRUTINY MONITORING (INTERIM REPORT)

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer presented the report and outlined the findings of the review and the recommendations made at the time. To date one out of five recommendations had been achieved, 3 were overdue but should hopefully complete within the original twelve-month monitoring period, and one was on track.

A Member questioned what would happen should there be a large release of such items due to an event or local incident. The Chief Executive acknowledged the national campaigns on the matter but confirmed that it was difficult to deal with such incidents at a local level as there were few legislative powers. The Council was able to enforce against activity on its own land and had a role in educating local residents as to the environmental impact of such items. There would however be no enforcement powers that would enable officers to intervene to stop such a release of balloons or lanterns. Where incidents took place on Council land and property there were powers to address the breach of clauses in the tenancy agreement, but this was not possible on public land. Local awareness and education campaigns was the main action the Council could take.

Moved by Councillor Emma Stevenson and seconded by Councillor Jeanne Raspin

RESOLVED that (1) progress against the review recommendations be noted,

(2) the exceptions to delivery and additional action required by the service be acknowledged,

(3) the report and findings be made public, in accordance with Part 4.5.17(4) of the Council's Constitution,

(4) officers continue to implement the recommendations and submit a further report in six months' time highlighting any exceptions to delivery.

The formal part of the meeting concluded at 10:57 hours and the Members then met informally as a working party to discuss potential review work until 11:55.