

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, 3rd September 2024 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Tom Munro in the Chair

Councillors Jen Wilson (from LOC15-24/25), Tom Kirkham, Duncan Haywood and Jeanne Raspin.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Jim Fieldsend (Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer), Jessica Clayton (Programme and Major Projects Manager), Natalie Etches (Head of Business Growth, Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Limited), Thomas Dunne-Wragg (Scrutiny Officer) and Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting were Councillors John Ritchie, Portfolio Holder for Growth, Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources, and Sandra Peake, Portfolio Holder for Housing.

LOC11-24/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Will Fletcher.

LOC12-24/25 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

LOC13-24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made.

LOC14-24/25 MINUTES

It was noted that Minute LOC8-24/25 of the previous meeting, agreed that Members of Executive would be invited to the Committee to provide information on the rationale behind the choices of the Regeneration Fund projects, but this had not been included on the agenda.

The Chief Executive provided a verbal update that the UK National Government had been contacted, adding the Council would likely receive confirmation of the Regeneration Fund after the Autumn Budget in October 2024.

The Portfolio Holder for Growth added the Leader of the Council had written to the Mayor of the East Midlands, the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local

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Government about the Regeneration Fund and its importance to the District. No response had yet been received.

The Chair thanked the Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder for Growth for the update to Committee.

A Member stated that there remained questions on the rationale behind the choices of the Regeneration Fund projects and requested this be discussed at the next meeting.

Further to Minute LOC9-24/25 of the previous meeting, it was noted that the Minutes of the latest Dragonfly Shareholder Board meeting had not been submitted to the Committee. The Monitoring Officer explained that the July 2024 meeting of the Shareholder Board had been informal and involved training from the Council's external Legal Advisor, but the next meeting would be formal, and these Minutes would be shared with Committee.

A question was raised regarding the Leader of the Council's statement at a recent meeting of Executive, that he would resign from the Board of Dragonfly. The Chair and Monitoring Officer explained that the Leader of the Council had reversed this decision and continued to carry out this role.

Moved by Councillor Jeanne Raspin and seconded by Councillor Duncan Haywood
RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Local Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 25th June 2024 be approved as a true and correct record.

LOC15-24/25 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS

The Scrutiny Officer presented the latest List of Key Decisions and Items to be considered in Private.

Five decisions would be made by the Executive on 9th September 2024, another three at a following meeting.

The Chair referred Committee to the granting of an easement along Loxley Lane, Whitwell. The Chair had been concerned on the building programme due to inactivity, but the day previous he had observed the site and work had resumed. The Portfolio Holder for Growth confirmed the granting of an easement would be considered by Executive on 9th September 2024.

A Member asked if the Shirebrook Market Place: REimagined project was affected by the Regeneration Fund not currently being available. The Head of Business Growth explained this had been granted from the original phases of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), and so was unaffected.

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

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LOC16-24/25 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND - MONITORING UPDATE

The Head of Business Growth, Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Limited, presented a report which provided an update on the projects being delivered by the Economic Development Team with funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The intention was for Committee to review the content provided to ensure appropriate progress was being made to deliver the projects successfully and within timescale.

The UK Government had launched the UKSPF 13th April 2022, and the Council had received an allocation of £1,963,993 from October 2022 – March 2025. Five projects being delivered by the Economic Development Team had been allocated £789,212, covering: Tourism and Culture; Business Growth Grants Scheme; Net Zero Hyper Local Innovation programme; Small Business Support Scheme; and Visitor Economy Business Support.

The Growth and Start-up Grant Schemes had closed early due to overwhelming success amounting to nearly £230,000 with 16 applications still in appraisal. Grants ranged from £500 to £10,000, with businesses matching this, ensuring significant levels of investment in the District. There had been 31 start-up applications and further support for them was present through other schemes.

Take-up of the other programmes offered, and an event being delivered, were also reported to Committee. The success of the UKSPF meant the next step was to identify future funding streams and continue this momentum.

The Chair stated the work completed was very impressive. Members agreed the Economic Development Team and their success be congratulated.

A Member asked if the list of the projects successfully funded could be shared with Committee. The Head of Business Growth stated this would have to be researched, as businesses may not have granted permission.

A Member asked if it was possible to internally replace the funding of the Growth and Start-up Grant Schemes to continue take-up. The Portfolio Holder for Resources could not confirm if this was possible, but there had been a not inconsiderable 31 applications.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

LOC17-24/25 PLEASLEY VALE REGENERATION PROGRAMME - UPDATE

The Head of Business Growth, Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Limited, presented the report to update the Committee about the current situation and challenges the Pleasley Vale Regeneration Project faced. Appendix 1 to the report, the proposed scope of works, was tabled at the meeting.

A significant area of the site laid within a functional flood plain, and storm events and heavy rainfall meant the site was prone to flooding. This was evident with Storm Babet in October 2023; the River Meden overflowed, causing damage to property and land. The report listed the extent of the damage and work being undertaken following Storm Babet.

One of the measures taken had been the appointment of Beaumont Rivers, an

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environmental restoration company which specialised in nature recovery and water management techniques. Beaumont Rivers had identified opportunities to mitigate flood risk on site, including reinstating some original drainage networks.

Another measure was the appointment of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT) to produce a Nature Recovery / Blue and Green Infrastructure Masterplan. This would survey and assess the current condition of the site and identify constraints and opportunities for funding and collaboration.

The Head of Business Growth praised the Grounds Maintenance Team for work onsite on the clearance of trees, shrubs and undergrowth, enabling survey work to take place. As a result, a full assessment of the 146-metre dam wall could be achieved (only 20 metres was previously visible).

Works would take place from the Mill buildings to the edge of site. Once a masterplan was completed, a further report would be taken to Council to fund additional survey work and conduct any capital works proposed. The DWT would also explore opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gains, as this was a potential income stream for the Council.

For the Gardener's Lodge, progress was slow but Vision West Notts. College were engaged and teaching students the Council's conservation and retrofitting skills.

A Member had concerns on the sluice gates, which had been open at the time of the flooding in 2023 and had subsequently broken summer 2024. The local Parish Council sought long-term solutions for flood mitigation and was keen to see and be informed of work progressing. The Head of Business Growth agreed a meeting with the Parish Council was needed, and the repair and upkeep of the sluice gates was instrumental for the site's viability.

On a question on the lack of wildlife being mentioned in the report, the Head of Business Growth answered that while resources were focussed on flood mitigation and repairs, nature and the environment was part of every stage of development, including surveys. Details of the DWT were referred to in the report, where the intent was to achieve a success for wildlife at Pleasley Vale.

The Chair asked about the responsibility of the water authorities to mitigate flooding; the River Meden overflowing had played a key factor in 2023. The Strategic Director of Services noted Pleasley Vale was on the boundary of two areas; the District in Derbyshire, and Mansfield in Nottinghamshire. The District's lead flood authority was Derbyshire County Council, but the sluice gates were in Nottinghamshire.

Nottinghamshire County Council was working with Mansfield District Council and private landowners to mitigate flooding, and while Yorkshire Water and Severn Trent were also responsible, the sluice gates in question laid on private land in Nottinghamshire. While these directly impacted Pleasley Vale, it was important to ensure a correct balance of responsibility and Nottinghamshire County Council, as the lead flood authority in Nottinghamshire, was responsible for these sluice gates.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

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LOC18-24/25 SOCIAL VALUE POLICY REVIEW

The Committee considered a report regarding a revised Social Value Policy. The Monitoring Officer explained that on 3rd October 2022, the Executive had approved six recommendations from the Committee. One recommendation had been the adoption of a Social value Policy (the “Policy”). Another was that all procurements over £75,000 would be required to demonstrate social value outcomes as part of the tender, evaluation and delivery processes.

The Procurement and Partnership teams had produced the draft Policy which incorporated the recommendations of the Committee.

The Policy provided a framework for ensuring the Council met its obligations under the Social Value Act 2012. It was also anticipated this would be built upon following the introduction of the Procurement Act 2023 (in force from October 2024; authorities would need to maximize public benefit, with a shift from looking for the “most economically advantage tender” to the “most advantageous tender”).

The Policy would be one that was under constant review, with both Procurement and Partnership playing key roles in its development.

Questions on the figures presented in the supplementary report, and regional variations of the UK, were answered by the Programme and Major Projects Manager and the Monitoring Officer.

On a question of the Policy extending to Dragonfly Development Ltd. (DDL) and the issue of procurement, the Head of Business Growth explained DDL was developing its own Policy.

RESOLVED that the attached Social Value Policy be endorsed and submitted to Executive for approval.

LOC19-24/25 DRAGONFLY DEVELOPMENT LIMITED (DDL) DELIVERY UPDATE

The Committee considered the Dragonfly Development Limited (DDL) delivery update report. The report provided an update regarding both live and pipeline projects, and the Head of Business Growth, Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Limited, was available to answer questions.

A discussion on the financial arrangements of the Roseland Crematorium was held, with a Member reiterating the importance of Committee to consider the Minutes of the Shareholder Board.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

LOC20-24/25 WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

The Committee agreed to consider its Work Programme 2024/25 in the informal scrutiny session.

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Moved by Councillor Tom Munro and seconded by Councillor Tom Kirkham
RESOLVED that the report be noted and discussed in the informal session.

The formal part of the meeting concluded at 10:50 hours and Members then met as a working party to continue their review work. The working party concluded at 11:08 hours.