

BDC DRAGONFLY SHAREHOLDER BOARD MEETING

Minutes of a meeting of the BDC Dragonfly Shareholder Board Meeting of the Bolsover District Council held in the on Tuesday, 21st January 2025 at 14:30 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor John Ritchie in the Chair

Councillors Duncan McGregor and John Ritchie.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive (BDC)), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Jim Fieldsend (Monitoring Officer), Theresa Fletcher (Section 151 Officer and Alison Bluff (Governance), Jessica Clayton (Leaders Executive and Partnership Strategy Manager).

SHBD35-24/25 TO AGREE A NEW OR INTERIM CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

It was agreed that Councillor John Ritchie be the Chair for the meeting.

Councillor John Ritchie in the Chair

SHBD36-24/25 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Sandra Peake.

SHBD37-24/25 TO AGREE MINUTES OF THE 27TH NOVEMBER 2024

A Member referred the Board to SHBD32-24/25.

With regards to the Dragonfly Business Plan, the Chair noted the Independent Review might want to consider the contents of the Plan, particularly the lack of detailed financial information and projections. It was agreed that a request would be submitted for a second version to include more data relating to financial projections for review.

The Chair stated the request should include the Board's intention to share it with the Independent Review.

A Member referred the Board to SHBD31-24/25. The Chair informed the Board that the Delegated Decision had been signed and Local Partnerships would likely soon make contact to arrange an initial meeting with the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer.

The Chief Executive advised that the Delegated Decision would be published.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Shareholder Board meeting held on 27th November 2024 be approved as a true and correct record.

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SHBD38-24/25 FINANCE VERBAL UPDATE INCLUDING THE REPORT TO AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Section 151 Officer provided an update on the recent Audit Committee report regarding the Dragonfly accounts.

A meeting with the Dragonfly accountants had been held and the Council had received the statements with final changes at the end of the previous week.

The Council's statements had to be finalised by 28th February 2025 and these accounts to be audited before then.

The Chair urged that the accountants for Dragonfly had to be aware of the financial/accountancy demands placed upon local authorities and Council owned businesses.

The Independent Review would likely help identify where improvements on Dragonfly's accounting can be made.

SHBD39-24/25 DRAGONFLY QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Chief Executive guided the Board through the provided detailed performance data.

Further inspections would be carried out on the data, but it was noted the Council was now regularly receiving performance data to review.

The Chair noted the Stock Condition Survey was likely diverting time and resources from current work programmes, possibly affecting overall performance. More information could be requested.

The Board considered the Quarter 2 2024/25 data which stated performance was being affected by void properties requiring structural alterations to meet current standards. It had been suggested that a further category could be used to separate this work and provide a more balanced figure.

SHBD40-24/25 DRAGONFLY DEVELOPMENT LTD - PROJECTS UPDATE

The Board considered the projects update.

On a question of Woburn – Blackwell, the Chair noted the options to decant residents.

An update on the Council's proceedings against the original Roseland Crematorium architects would be provided at the next meeting. The Monitoring Officer noted litigation may take a number of years.

The management fees for preconstruction work of sites aborted were discussed. The Chair noted the Independent Review might have a view on how these fees were handled between the Council and companies.

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The Chair informed the cost of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) credit stood at £61,000 and that the Council needed to register its owned land for BNG sites to reduce costs of development.

The Board briefly discussed the external Boarder Hill School development for Bassetlaw District Council.

It was agreed more detailed information on works progress, would be requested for future meetings.

SHBD41-24/25 £15M REGENERATION FUND - VERBAL UPDATE

The Chief Executive provided a brief update to the Board.

The Board was informed of a recent meeting with the Head of Business Growth and the MP for Bolsover to coordinate efforts to receive the Memorandum of Understanding from the Secretary of State for the £15 million Regeneration Fund.

The new Leader of the Council had arranged to discuss the proposed projects with the MP.

An update would be provided once the Memorandum of Understanding was received.

The Monitoring Officer advised that a Legal Officer post was being advertised as part of the process for the completion of legal work of the projects but as yet no applications had been received. In the event of being unable to recruit a Legal Officer the Legal team would struggle due to current workloads and staff shortages. External solicitors may have to be appointed to carry out this work.

It was perceived Local Government Review may be dissuading applicants coming forward.

SHBD42-24/25 INDEPENDENT REVIEW DELEGATED DECISION AND NEXT STEPS

The Chief Executive presented the report to the Board.

The Delegated Decision would be published in due course.

The Local Partnerships – Bolsover Review of Dragonfly was attached at Appendix 1.

Improving transparency and clarifying processes were important.

It was noted the Dragonfly Boards might benefit from the addition of members with external expertise and best practice in relation to this could be discussed with the review team.

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SHBD43-24/25 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

The Section 151 Officer provided a brief update to the Board.

The process of Dragonfly salary budgets was discussed. It was noted that some recent staff uplifts and new posts had not been submitted to the Employment and Personnel Committee or Council to approve. The new salary budget would either need to be uplifted or reviewed. It was reiterated the need for a dedicated financial officer at Dragonfly.

SHBD44-24/25 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE ENGLISH DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER (COUNCIL REPORT) AND CONSIDER POTENTIAL EARLY IMPLICATIONS

The Chief Executive provided an update on the impact of English Devolution White Paper to be considered by Council and the options open to the Council in how to manage wholly owned companies. It was suggested that further guidance be sought on this from other Councils who had already moved wholly owned companies into new authorities as part of the Local Government Reorganisation process.

SHBD45-24/25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

As there were no further business to consider.

The meeting concluded at 15:50 hours.