

**MINUTES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Monday 4 September 2023

Councillor Catherine Pope (Chair)

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|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Councillor Russell Whiting | Councillor Roxanne Ellis |
| Councillor Roy Allan | Councillor Ron McCrossen |
| Councillor David Brocklebank | Councillor Grahame Pope |
| Councillor Lorraine Brown | Councillor Martin Smith |
| Councillor Andrew Dunkin | Councillor Sam Smith |
| Councillor Rachael Ellis | Councillor Michelle Welsh |

Officers in M Hill, B Hopewell and E McGinlay
Attendance:

8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

**9 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE
MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2023**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

10 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

11 PROGRAMME OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER ATTENDANCE

Members welcomed Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy to the meeting to examine her portfolio. Councillor Hollingsworth gave an update to members on some key happenings within her portfolio.

No questions were received from Members in advance of the meeting, so Councillor Hollingsworth delivered an update on these and the various areas of responsibility within her portfolio. She gave the following updates:

- 1) Preparations have begun for the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, which is a collaborative document between Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe Borough Councils. The plan covers the period 2022 to 2038 and

will set out policies to secure sustainable growth. The emerging plan will place great emphasis on green and blue infrastructure and 20-minute neighbourhoods. From November 2023 developers will be required to provide a mandatory 10% net gain in biodiversity for major sites of 10 homes or more. Requirements for smaller sites of 1 to 9 dwellings will commence in 2024 with householder extensions being exempt.

- 2) Gedling Borough Council was selected by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to participate in a design code pathfinder programme and has been awarded funding to create a borough wide design code. In accordance with national planning policies and guidance, including the National Model Design Code, Gedling's Design Code will set rules and design principles specific to the borough that developers and householders will need to follow when designing new residential development within the borough.
- 3) All ground floor units at the AMP have been occupied which is eight months ahead of projections and discussions have been taking place with Framework contractors regarding the first floor. It was noted that this work was expected to commence this financial year and be completed in 2024/25.
- 4) A successful jobs fair was held on 15th August with 370 people attending - this exceeds the 136 who attended the last event. An evaluation report was prepared by the Economic Growth Officer and the next Jobs Fair has been planned for 14th November in the Civic Centre. The Economic Growth Officer has supported several careers events with local schools, including speed networking and mock interviews. An appointment has been arranged with the careers lead at Derrymount Special School to discuss careers support for the next academic year.
- 5) Over a 6-month period, 4 section 215 notices have been served under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These have been properties that were falling into a state of disrepair. It was noted that since April 2023, 74 empty properties have been brought back into use and the empty homes Officer has been working on 334 live cases, with many of them being work in progress.

The Chair asked Members if they had any questions.

Members queried whether the Council would have enforcement options to ensure that developments adhere to their plans to include a 10% biodiversity net gain.

The Head of Development and Place informed members that the biodiversity net gain is a mandatory requirement as part of the planning

application and as such, enforcement is available should developers fall short of the expected requirements within their planning application.

Members asked what mechanisms the Council have in place for identifying empty homes.

Councillor Hollingsworth informed Members that the Empty Homes Officer (EHO) responds to community intelligence and reports received. The Council also implements data sharing agreements with the council tax department, periodically providing a list of all long term (vacant and unfurnished) empty properties in the Borough. The EHO then works through the list making contact with people responsible.

RESOLVED:

The Chair thanked Cllr Hollingsworth for attending the meeting and the information provided.

12 SEWERAGE REVIEW WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS RESPONSE

The Democratic Services Manager introduced a report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, informing members of the response to recommendations of the Sewerage review working group.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

13 ANNUAL REPORT

The Democratic Services Manager introduced a report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, asking members whether they had any comments or recommendations to the annual report.

RESOLVED to:

Note the report and approve its submission to Council.

14 WARM SPACES SUCCESS AND FUTURE OPERATION

The Democratic Services Manager introduced a report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, advising members of the success of the warm spaces programme that was put into place for winter 2022 and to give information about its future operation.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

15 FUNDING BID REVIEW

The Democratic Services Manager introduced a report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, advising members of the different bids that the council have previously applied for and those that are planned to apply for in future.

The report also sought to suggest the committee forms a working group to consider the previous bid submissions and how the council can best formulate them going forward to succeed in received funding.

An amendment was passed, proposing changes to the recommendations by Councillor Welsh which was seconded by Councillor Whiting.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) Note the details of the previous and upcoming bids; and
- 2) Form a working group to complete a more thorough review of funding opportunities and subsequent bids, including consideration of the National Audit officers' current study which is reviewing the following major government funds (Towns fund – 3.2 billion, Levelling Up fund – 4.8 billion, UK Shared Prosperity fund – 2.6 billion) and examining whether the three funds have clear aims and objectives as a part of a joined-up approach, whether the three funds are being distributed in line with their objectives and if they are being spent as planned.

16 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Manager introduced a report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, providing an update on the scrutiny work programme.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

17 ANY OTHER ITEM WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 6.45 pm

Signed by Chair:

Date: