

GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 JUNE 2018

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GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 JUNE 2018

Present:

Councillor J Windle (Chair)
Councillor C Smith(Vice-Chair)
Councillor A Powell Councillor C Tite
“ B Rice

Also Present

Niall Clark – Director of Property Services & Development (Rykneld Homes Ltd) Minute No 60
Sue Veerman – Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Richard Gadsby – Governance Officer

56 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Boyle, C Cupit, S Cornwell and K Tait.

57 Declarations of Interest

Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or other interests, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

There were no interest declared at this meeting.

58 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 5 April 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

59 Remit of the Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager outlined the Terms of Reference of the Scrutiny Committees. It was noted that the purpose of the Scrutiny Committees was to monitor the Council's Performance, to review Policies and Cabinet decisions and also raise issues of concern. It was noted that Scrutiny Committees can call witnesses and gather evidence and that issues could be looked at through single items on the agenda or by conducting a Scrutiny Review.

Issues could also be considered by more than one Scrutiny Committee when they cut across different themes. The processes of conducting a Scrutiny review were outlined including:-

- Choosing a review topic;
- Scoping;
- Evidence gathering;
- Reporting to Cabinet; and
- Monitoring of outcomes

The Committee were advised that regarding the previous review on Growth and Tourism, Cabinet had accepted all the recommendations within the report and the Lead Officer was preparing an Action Plan.

RESOLVED – That the Growth Scrutiny Committee note the Remit of the Committee.

(Members/Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

60 Selection of Scrutiny Review Topic

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised the Committee that five suggestions had been put forward to the Growth Scrutiny Committee as review topics, these topics were as follows:-

Suggestions from SAMT:-

- Investment Strategy;
- Devolution Models;

Suggestion from Bolsover District Council:-

- Banning of Sky Lanterns;

Suggestions from Councillor C Tite:-

- A Greener North East Derbyshire (eg Fracking/Recycling/Tree Preservation);
- Empty Housing Strategy including ALMO Housing Stock and Private Sector Homes;

The Committee discussed the topics suggested. Councillor Smith suggested that the Committee should look at Devolution and Local Enterprise Partnerships to examine whether or not funding streams were being maximised.

Councillor Rice proposed Universal Credit as a scrutiny topic. The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that the Communities Scrutiny Committee was keeping a watching brief on Universal Credit involving regular officer updates. In light of this, Members asked for an update on Universal Credit from the Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Niall Clark joined the meeting at this point.

Niall Clark, Director of Property Services and Development (Rykneld Homes Ltd) attended the meeting to provide some contextual information on Rykneld Homes' strategy for empty properties. The following information was provided to the Committee:-

- Normal processes lead to around 600 homes becoming empty in each year;
- Around 50 properties were held empty before regeneration works begin with some pending decision making;
- There were around 400 properties under private ownership that had been empty long term;

It was noted that there was potential for the Council to buy back long term empty properties and bring them back into use and this was currently being looked at by the Housing Strategy Team in discussions with Rykneld Homes Ltd. It was also noted that a separate scheme to bring empty properties back into use involving an energy provider was also being considered.

The Committee were advised that the Homelessness Reduction Act placed increased responsibility on Councils and the Housing Strategy Team were working with Action Housing. It was noted that whilst demand for housing had decreased, there had been a small spike in demand over the last few weeks and this was partly due to new affordable homes becoming available. However further information would be provided to the Committee.

The Chair thanked Niall Clark for providing the information and attending the Committee.

Niall Clark left the meeting.

The Committee discussed at length each proposed topic and it was felt that there was a need to look at Devolution and the Local Enterprise Partnerships as well as looking into empty properties in more detail. The Overview and Scrutiny Manager outlined the options including updates from Officers, full scale Scrutiny Review or a Spotlight Review. It was noted that a Spotlight Review would involve gathering evidence intensively over a shorter timescale.

RESOLVED – That –

- (1) Officer updates on Devolution/Local Enterprise and Empty Properties be added to the work programme.
- (2) Following officer updates:
 - A Review on Devolution/Local Enterprise Partnerships be considered.
 - A Review on Empty Properties be considered.(Members/Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

61 Draft Work Programme

The Committee considered its draft Work Programme for 2018/19. The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that the Work Programme would be revised in light of the chosen review topics. It was noted that previous review topics would be monitored and the Committee could revisit any past topic if it felt the need to do so.

RESOLVED – That the draft Work Programme 2018/19 be noted.

62 NEDDC Growth Summary Report 2017/18

The Growth Summary Report outlined the progress against the Council's Strategic Priorities for 2017/18.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

63 List of Key Decisions – Issue No 74

The Committee considered Issue No 74 of the List of Key Decisions which set out the major decisions being taken over the next few months.

RESOLVED – That –

- (1) The Committee flagged an interest in the Empty Property Trial (Cabinet 27 June 2018) in light of its potential review topic.
- (2) The List of Key Decisions Issue No 74 be noted.

(Members/Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

64 Additional Urgent Items

There was no urgent business to be discussed at this meeting.

65 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday 19 July 2018 at 1.00 pm.