

## **GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13 APRIL 2017**

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## **GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13 APRIL 2017**

#### **Present:**

	Councillor C Smith .....	(Chair)
	Councillor J Windle .....	(Vice-Chair)
Councillor	S Boyle	Councillor B Rice
"	S Cornwell	" R Smith
"	A Powell	

#### **Also Present**

Grant Galloway – Assistant Director – Property and Estates (Min No 642)  
Steve Lee – Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator (Min No 643)  
Sue Veerman – Overview and Scrutiny Manager  
Sarah Cottam – Senior Governance Officer (Acting)  
Richard Gadsby – Governance Officer

#### **638 Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor C Cupit.

#### **639 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 interests declared at this meeting.

#### **640 Minutes of Last Meeting**

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 16 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **641 Scrutiny Review – A61 Corridor**

The Committee considered the draft Scrutiny Review Report on the A61 Corridor following the Committee's Scrutiny Review. The Committee discussed the A61 Corridor report and the recommendations contained within the report. Minor amendments needed in the report were identified by Members which would be made by the Overview and Scrutiny Manager prior to its submission to Cabinet.

RESOLVED – That the Growth Scrutiny Committee agrees for the Scrutiny Review Report on the A61 Corridor subject to the minor amendments identified to be submitted to Cabinet.

(Members/Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

**642    Action Plan Update – Vacant Land Scrutiny Review**

The Committee considered an update on the Vacant Land Action Plan Scrutiny Review and the Asset Management Strategy Action Plan. Grant Galloway, Assistant Director Property and Estates attended the meeting to update Members and answer any questions.

The Committee were advised that key documents such as the Asset Management Strategy, the Disposal and Acquisition Policy and the Minutes from the Asset Management Group were now more widely publicised.

The Asset Management Database now detailed possible uses for sites, viability, restrictions on assets such as tenants, covenants or contamination issues and any other relevant information that would maximise the asset's worth. It was advised that the views of officers in Planning and Legal were now sought regarding potential developments, risks and restrictions. The Committee were advised that consultations on current schemes were now being undertaken and a wider consultation exercise was presently being worked on to enable Members to be more widely involved in the early decision making process.

With regards to garage sites within the District it was advised that Rykneld Homes undertook a full audit of the Council's garage sites in the spring of 2012. Following that Audit, a number of sites had been cleared to reduce maintenance costs and to reduce risks from structures in poor condition. The Committee were advised that Rykneld Homes were intending to do a refresh of the garage sites audit. An annual programme of reviewing garage sites was in place and regular reports would be provided to the Asset Management Group. Rykneld Homes should be progressing issues on garage sites through the Asset Management Group. It was felt that representatives from Rykneld Homes should be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide an update on the garage sites, which should include the occupancy rates and the use of the sites.

As per the Action Plan the Asset Management Group had recently reviewed its membership and felt it would be beneficial to extend invites to representatives from the Planning Department. Third party advice for architectural surveys, engineering etc may be required for certain sites and this would be brought in where necessary.

Property and Estates were currently working on the Accommodation Strategy and a working group made up of officers and members had been set up to work through any issues. It was advised that the Accommodation Strategy would be submitted to Cabinet on the 10 May for approval. The Committee were also advised that the Disposal and Acquisitions Policy was now complete and would be submitted to Cabinet on 10 May for approval.

The Chair on behalf of the Committee thanked the Assistant Director Property and Estates for attending the meeting.

**RESOLVED – That:-**

- (1) The Committee notes the update on the Action Plan for the Vacant Land Scrutiny Review.
- (2) The representatives from Rykneld Homes be invited to a future meeting of the Committee to provide an update on garage sites including the occupancy and use of the garage sites.
- (3) Subject to the action regarding Rykneld Homes on garage sites, the Committee were satisfied with progress and agreed to sign off the Vacant Land Scrutiny Review Action Plan.

(Assistant Director – Property & Estates/Overview & Scrutiny Manager)

**643 Partnership Team – Activities in Support of Growth**

The Committee considered an update from the Partnership Team on the Activities in Support of Growth. Steve Lee, Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator attended the meeting to update Members and answer any questions.

The Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator outlined the Partnership Team's direct contribution to the Growth Agenda through managing funding programmes which facilitated economic growth and job creation within the District. The Council worked with colleagues on the wider Growth Agenda for example supporting the development of the Local Enterprise Partnership Programmes locally and also generating income for North East Derbyshire District Council. The Partnership Team also worked indirectly towards the Growth agenda, such as with partners to develop healthy sustainable communities and to enable financial inclusion.

On 16 November 2016 the Bolsover-North East Derbyshire (BNED) LEADER Approach was launched with a grant level available of circa £1.4m which could help to support increasing farming productivity, micro and small enterprises and farm diversification, supporting rural tourism, the provision of rural services, support culture and heritage activities and support for increased forestry productivity.

Three North East Derbyshire projects had been approved totalling £108,606.08 the projects were holiday lodges in Ashover, dairy modernisation in Shirland and specialist swimming service with accommodation in Grassmoor. The Committee were advised that 82 eligible enquiries had been received through the LEADER project, but only 19 applications had been received. The programme had been slow recently due to the uncertainty of Brexit during 2015 and 2016. However arising from the Chancellors' Autumn Statement, Brexit had no immediate impact upon the LEADER project.

For areas not covered by the LEADER funding the available option was funding through the North East Derbyshire Business Growth Fund (BGF). Grant levels available through this were £500 to £4,000 and this was until March 2019. The Business Growth Fund covered projects such as:-

- Extending and improving premises;
- Websites and signage;
- Business start up costs;
- Equipment ICT and machinery.

To date five projects had been approved totalling £15,858 and this had created 7.4 full time equivalent jobs. The successful companies included a civil engineer, training provider, an osteopath, fabricator and administrative support business.

The Partnerships Team also made direct contributions to the North Eastern Derbyshire Business Development (NEDBD) Ltd. The Partnerships Team were additional working on site development support, such as the Avenue Re-development Health Plan and discussions were happening in supporting the Local Enterprise Partnership Programme, Local Integration Boards and Ambition Project.

The Council also assisted vulnerable people through the voluntary and community sector and provided an annual grant to the voluntary sector to agree a range of support and assistance to vulnerable members of the Community including financially excluded residents. The Committee were advised of the support given to the Armed Forces Community. This was a growing area of activity due to the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. In addition to a dedicated section on the Council's website, where charitable financial support packages were advertised for disadvantaged veterans and their dependents, discussions were progressing to promote the defence discount service to local business to enable the armed forces community to receive a discount on purchases made. Officers were currently investigating whether this could be used to provide a discount to leisure services.

A leaflet had also been enclosed with the District Council's Council Tax Letters to every household which would promote the support available to this hard to identify/hard to reach group.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator for attending the meeting.

**RESOLVED** – That the Committee noted the update on the activities in support of Growth.

(Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator)

#### **644 Monitoring of Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations**

The Committee considered the recommendations from all the Scrutiny Committees for 2016/2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that this information

was provided for the Committee's information to advise of the work of all the Scrutiny Committees of the Council. The Committee was advised that all recommendations within the scope of this Committee were complete and any comments were welcomed from Members.

**RESOLVED** – That the Committee notes the monitoring of the Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations for 2016/2017.

**645 List of Key Decisions – Issue No 59**

The Committee considered Issue No 59 of the List of Key Decisions which set out the major decisions being taken over the next few months.

**RESOLVED** – That the List of Key Decisions Issue No 59 be noted.

(Governance)

**646 Work Programme**

The Committee considered its Work Programme for 2016/2017 at which was now complete. The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that the first meeting of the 2017/18 Municipal Year a discussion would take place on potential topics for the next Scrutiny Review and it was requested any ideas for topics be forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Manager before the next meeting.

The Chair thanked the Committee for their hard work over the past year.

**RESOLVED** – That the Growth Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for 2016/2017 be noted.

(Members/Overview & Scrutiny Manager)

**647 Additional Urgent Items**

There were no additional urgent items to be considered at this meeting.

**648 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee would take place on Thursday 15 June 2017 at 2.00 pm.