

## **GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 24 JANUARY 2022**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Bentley Strafford-Stephenson (Chair)(in the Chair)

Councillor Nigel Barker  
Councillor John Funnell  
Councillor Philip Wright

Councillor Suzy Cornwell  
Councillor Lee Hartshorne

#### **Also Present:**

G Callingham	Director of Growth
A Kimber	Interim Head of Property and Estates
B Harrison	Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer
D Stanton	Governance Officer
A Bond	Governance Officer

#### **GSC/ Election of Chair**

41/2

1-22 **RESOLVED** – In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, Councillor Strafford Stephenson was elected to Chair the meeting.

#### **GSC/ Apologies for Absence**

42/2

1-22 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors M Roe and A Hutchinson.

#### **GSC/ Declarations of Interest**

43/2

1-22 Members are requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest, 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.

#### **GSC/ Minutes of Last Meeting**

44/2

1-22 **RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 27 September 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **GSC/ Discussion on Assets**

45/2

1-22 The Interim Head of Property Services and Estates updated Committee on progress made on the previous scrutiny review on business centres and industrial units. In total ten Recommendations had been put forward and the officer explained the progress made on each recommendation.

Members heard that the Officer intended to create a dashboard of all the KPIs that the Council could utilise when setting targets.

Committee noted that there was no asset management strategy in place at the present time.

The Officer informed members that legal action against individuals that owed the Council money could not have taken place previously due to the Covid19 pandemic. However, this would not be an issue following March 2022.

Committee discussed small industrial units and what plans were in place to utilise Council owned land to build new units. They heard that this would depend on Council priorities and Capital projects.

Members enquired about the size of business that occupied the Council's business units. The Officer stated that businesses of all size occupied the units and that they were very popular. A 'waiting list' would therefore not be of much use due to how quickly vacant units were rented out.

The Interim Head of Property Services and Estates agreed to attend the May meeting to give a further update on progress made against the action plan.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

**GSC/ Previous Review on Business Centres and Industrial Units**

**46/2**

**1-22**

The Interim Head of Property Services and Estates covered this item with Members during the discussion of the above item.

**GSC/ Discussion on the Implementation of the Growth Strategy**

**47/2**

**1-22**

The Director of Growth delivered a presentation to update Committee on the Growth Strategy.

Members heard that a Growth Strategy had been completed in 2021, as well as a skills and employment strategy and a visitor economy strategy. The progress and implementation of these strategies would now be reviewed.

Committee was updated on the progress of the growth strategy since its implementation and on the work that had taken place on the Visitor Economy.

The Director informed Members that 1201 businesses had been targeted in a skills audit but this had not received the desired level of responses so there would be an effort to increase engagement on this.

Committee received an update on each of the towns and the town centre regeneration. They noted that there would be additional Growth Strategy activity in 2022.

Members discussed the presentation at length and enquired as to the progress with D2N2, the rural economy and the business skills audit.

The Director informed Committee that there would be meeting with the D2N2 Chief Executive and would update Members after this had taken place.

Committee noted that the first step for the rural economy would be to understand its needs. More work would also be done to encourage businesses to engage with the skills audit. The Senior Regeneration Officer informed Members that a current sector analysis of the District had begun.

Members agreed to undertake a spotlight review into the Council's communication with local business. A spotlight review was a short review which was done all in one meeting. A number of local businesses and stakeholders would be invited to take part. The spotlight review would take place at the Committee's next meeting in March.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

**GSC/ Forward Plan of Executive Decisions**

**48/2**

**1-22** RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions be noted.

**GSC/ Work Programme**

**49/2**

**1-22** The Spotlight Review would be added onto the Work Programme.

RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted.

**GSC/ Additional Urgent Items**

**50/2**

**1-22** There were no additional urgent items at this meeting.

**GSC/ Date of Next Meeting**

**51/2**

**1-22** The next meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee will take place on Monday, 14 March 2022 at 1.00 pm.

**GSC/ Venue for Next Meeting**

**52/2**

**1-22** The next meeting will be held in person at the District Council Offices, 2013 Mill Lane, Wingerworth, Chesterfield.