

BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2023

Present:

Councillor Suzy Cornwell (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Stephen Clough (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Christine Gare
Councillor Stephen Reed

Councillor Lee Hartshorne
Councillor Richard Spooner

Also Present:

B Harrison Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer
K Drury Information Engagement & Performance Manager
A Maher Governance Manager
T Scott Governance and Scrutiny Officer

BSC Apologies for Absence

18/2

3-24 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Fletcher and T Lacey.

BSC Declarations of Interest

19/2

3-24 There were no interests declared at this meeting.

BSC Minutes of Last Meeting

20/2

3-24 The Chair wished to clarify that at this meeting, Members would be asked to reflect on what the Committee had been done to help the Council achieve the goal of making the District a 'Great Place to Work'.

The Chair stated that she had become a Member of the Local Plan Review Working Group, and the Committee would be regularly updated with the work of the group. The Committee agreed that a standing agenda item should be added to every future meeting for the Chair to update Members on the work of the Local Plan Review Working Group.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Minutes of the Business Scrutiny Committee held on 18 September 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- (2) That a standing agenda item be added to every future meeting for the Chair to update the Committee on the work of the Local Plan Review Working Group.

BSC **The Performance Management Framework**

21/2

3-24

The Information, Engagement and Performance Manager presented a report with progress on the strategies underpinning the Council Plan objective 'A Great Place to Work' for the period ending 30 September 2023.

Members were updated on progress under the following objective sub-categories in Appendix 1 of the report:

- 1) A community with a diverse range of commutable employment that matches the skills of residents.
- 2) A community with growing, commutable employment opportunities.

Members referred to the '12 UKSPF Shopfront Enhancement Grants awarded to high street businesses' quoted in the Appendix and asked if this amount was positive. The Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer confirmed this was positive, and added that there had been significant activity around the grant.

Members asked whether the planning applications noted in the report related to the private sector, including the 'Redevelopment of Waste Disposal Facility at Doe Lea'. The Information, Engagement and Performance Manager agreed to seek this information from the Assistant Director of Planning.

The Chair felt that the Council Plan objective sub-categories in the Appendix were not specific enough, and should set out explicit figures like 'number of jobs created' and 'number of new businesses'. The Information, Engagement and Performance Manager responded that Performance officers were developing metrics with relevant officers and some of these would be included in future reports. The Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer added that every aspect of what the Council did with businesses would be recorded as part of a new data system in early 2024.

The Information, Engagement and Performance Manager suggested that with these discussions in mind, an annual report on the Council Plan objectives could be presented to the Committee in future so Members did not lose sight of the objectives.

RESOLVED – That progress against the Council Plan "A great place to work" objective was noted.

BSC **Business Sector Analysis**

22/2

3-24

The Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer delivered a presentation to the Committee with an analysis of the North East Derbyshire business base.

The presentation included detailed information on the areas of the analysis and the reasons for the analysis. It also included graphs to display the sector split into number of businesses, employment, enterprises, micro-businesses, business starts and ends and survivability. A map set out the locations of different types of businesses.

Members enquired if the information suggested a lot of people travel outside of the District for their jobs. The Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer confirmed that a significant amount of residents were commuting to outside the District.

Members referred to the '5 Year Survivability of Enterprises Born in 2015 (%)' slide and were concerned that this appeared to be growing smaller over time. Members requested that this graph broken down by sector should be included in the next update to the Committee.

Members also requested that 'job density' information for the whole District should be included in the next update to the Committee.

The Committee asked a number of questions about the role of the Council's partners. Members were advised that the Council worked with a number of partners, and in particular Homes England.

The Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer spoke to the Committee about attracting businesses to the District, and explained that one of the largest issues was having enough land. He added that officers were considering opportunities for the land on the back of the Council's Mill Lane building.

The Chair suggested that social enterprises and charities might be a way to attract businesses.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

BSC **Cabinet Business**

23/2

3-24

The Governance Manager presented a digest of Cabinet decisions taken since 29 June 2023. The digest set out key information for each decision, including information on how each decision would contribute towards the delivery of the Council Plan.

The Chair indicated that the formatting of the digest's .pdf file made it difficult to view on iPads. The Governance Manager agreed that alternative methods to view the digest would be investigated.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

BSC **Work Programme**

24/2

3-24

Members requested that Clay Cross Regeneration Scheme be added to the Work Programme for the 26 February 2024 meeting.

Members also requested that officers should be asked to field questions at the 26 February 2024 meeting about the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

The Governance Manager suggested that based on earlier discussions about Performance, the Committee could scrutinise how services were achieving Council Plan objectives.

Members considered Internet coverage in the District, and because they felt that Internet quality linked with the amount of people wanting to work in the District, they agreed to add an item to the Work Programme relating to Internet coverage.

Members also agreed to add an item to the Work Programme about how to increase job density.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the update be noted.
- (2) That Clay Cross Regeneration Scheme be added to the Work Programme for the 26 February 2024 meeting.
- (3) That officers should be asked to field questions at the 26 February 2024 meeting about the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).
- (4) That an item be added to the Work Programme relating to Internet coverage in the District.
- (5) That an item be added to the Work Programme relating to increasing job density.

BSC **Additional Urgent Items**

25/2

3-24

None.

BSC **Reflection**

26/2

3-24

The Chair asked Members to reflect on if the work of the Committee at the meeting had added value to the Council Plan objectives.

The Committee felt they were asking the right questions and scrutinising the correct areas to appropriately oversee the Council Plan objectives.

BSC **Date of Next Meeting**

27/2

3-24

The next meeting of the Business Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on 26 February 2024 at 3.00 pm.