

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Economic Development Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, Notts NG24 1BY on Wednesday, 20 November 2019 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs P Rainbow (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor R Blaney, Councillor L Brailsford, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor Mrs R Crowe, Councillor Mrs M Dobson, Councillor N Mison, Councillor N Mitchell, Councillor M Skinner and Councillor K Walker (Substitute)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor L Goff

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor K Girling (Chairman) and Councillor R White (Committee Member)

29 DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND AS TO THE PARTY WHIP

NOTED that no Member or Officer declared any interest pursuant to any statutory requirement in any matter discussed or voted upon at the meeting.

30 DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO RECORD MEETING

NOTED that the Council would undertake an audio recording of the meeting.

31 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2019

AGREED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 September 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32 PRESENTATION OF NEW VISITOR WEBSITES

The Committee considered the report and presentation of the Business Manager – Tourism which presented for the first time the Council's new website and three tourism destination brands: Visit Newark; Visit Southwell; and Visit Sherwood Forest.

In considering the presentation, Members queried whether the website was accessible by mobile phones and whether the eating and drinking establishments that were advertised had been checked for quality and food hygiene. In response, the Business Manager confirmed that the website was accessible by mobile phones. He advised that the Tourism Action Group had engaged with all accommodation and food providers to provide a filter. All those wishing to advertise were required to complete a template which was checked prior to their establishment being promoted on the website.

In response to whether the websites were checked to ensure bandwidth usage, the Business Manager confirmed that spot-checks were being carried out externally, including those with poor wifi coverage.

Members suggested that a commentary or narrative be added to the interactive element of the website to enhance to users viewing. It was also suggested that information be included on the Trent Vale Trail which promoted routes suitable for cycling, running and walking.

In noting that the Southwell Workhouse was being promoted, which was a National Trust attraction, Members queried whether they were reciprocating the arrangement by promoting NSDC attractions and whether work was ongoing to promote attractions within the rural areas of the district. The Business Manager confirmed that work was ongoing with the National Trust to promote a trail with them from the Workhouse to the shops in Southwell. He also advised that as much linkage as possible with the more rural areas was included, citing that the attraction in Laxton was included within the Sherwood Forest element. It was also suggested that information be included on public transport and the park and ride facilities within the district.

AGREED (unanimously) that the creation of the new visitor websites and social media channels for Visit Newark; Visit Southwell; and Visit Sherwood Forest be noted as a welcome and positive development in promoting the destinations' tourism offers going forward.

With the permission of the Committee, the running order of the Agenda was amended to take Agenda Item No. 13 – Development and Promotion of Visitor Offer in Sherwood Forest next. Thereafter the Agenda resumed its published running order.

33 DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF VISITOR OFFER IN SHERWOOD FOREST

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Tourism which sought to update Members on the implementation of the Destination Management Plan (DMP) for Sherwood Forest. The report set out the work undertaken since the DMPs approval in January 2019 with the activities listed in paragraph 2.2 of the report.

It was noted that there had been a productive start and enthusiastic contributions from the Sherwood Forest Trust.

AGREED (unanimously) that recent progress made in a number of significant areas towards both the development and promotion of the Sherwood Forest visitor offer be noted.

34 BT REMOVAL OF TELEPHONE KIOSKS - CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Planning Policy which set out the details of British Telecom's (BT) consultation on the removal of telephone kiosks within the Newark & Sherwood District and which also sought endorsement of the draft response prepared by Officers and the approach taken which was detailed in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

In considering the report Members noted that the deadline for the submission of responses to BT was 11 December and queried whether the relevant town/parish councils would be contacted to provide a response where one had not already been received. The Business Manager confirmed that they would be contacted prior to the deadline date for submission.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report be noted with the proposed approach being endorsed; and
- (b) Appendix C, subject to any additional comments from town and parish councils and meetings be approved as the District Council's response to BT's consultation on the removal of telephone kiosks.

35 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Planning Policy which sought to update Members on progress towards delivery of the Plan Review in relation to the Allocations and Development Management Policies and which also proposed amendments to the timetable within the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The report set out the background to the recent consultations undertaken and the work subsequently required following their outcome.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) progress towards meeting the timetable of the adopted Local Development Scheme be noted;
- (b) amendment to the Local Development Scheme to reflect the proposed approach set out in Section 3 of the report be approved; and
- (c) the amended Local Development Scheme comes into force on 21 November 2019.

36 EDWINSTOWE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY AMENDMENTS AND ADOPTION OF APPRAISAL

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration which sought Members' approval to amend the Edwinstowe Conservation Area (CA) boundary and to adopt the Edwinstowe CA Appraisal and Management Plan.

The report set out the background to the review of the District's CAs which included: Edwinstowe; Newark; Ollerton; Laxton; and Southwell. It was reported that the Council's Conservation Team had carried out a comprehensive review of the Edwinstowe CA and had also explored further areas beyond the existing boundary. The review had undertaken consultation and public engagement with the range of these being listed in paragraph 2.4 of the report. Details of the proposed boundary changes to the CA were listed in paragraphs 2.7 to 2.19.

In considering the report Members commented that given the start of the Master Planning at Forest Corner, the outcome of the consultation with residents provided a sound base for that to commence.

Members also commented on the historic use of trains in the area and that the local MP was actively promoting the extension of the nearby Robin Hood Line to include Edwinstowe.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the amendments to the Edwinstowe Conservation Area and the adoption of the Edwinstowe Conservation Area Appraisal be approved; and
- (b) delegated authority be given to the Director – Growth & Regeneration to carry out the legal requirements for the aforementioned amendments

37 EV CHARGEPOINTS

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Resources/Deputy Chief Executive which sought to update Members on the progress made with the installation of the Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points which were promoted by Highways England (HE) and BP Chargemaster (BPCM).

The report set out the background and reasons behind the installation of EV chargepoints in 4 of the Council's car parks and that there were 2 phases to the proposals. Phase 1 would be at no cost to the Council as they were provided by BPCM for a 10 year term with an additional 3 year optional term. The chargepoints would remain the property of BPCM and would be returned to them at the end of the term. BPCM would also manage all maintenance and report, promotion, data and usage reports. It was further reported that there was potential for a Phase 2 but that it would likely require direct Council investment (beyond provision of the land upon which they could be sited). Such investment could be offset by implementing a profit share or a licence fee with the supplier/operator.

In considering the report Members queried whether any suitable sites had been identified should Phase 2 be implemented, citing Rufford Abbey or Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre. Officers reported that HE had initially focussed on the strategic road network for siting the chargepoints but that future discussions could include provision on the 'A' roads within the district. In considering the Officers' comments Members queried whether there was any potential for siting a chargepoint on the roadside rather than in an existing car park, for example, alongside the A1. Officers confirmed that this would form part of future discussions.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) Phase 1 free issue chargepoints provided by BPCM as part of the Highways England initiative be accepted; and

- (b) the report be noted with a further progress report being presented to the June 2020 Committee.

38 COUNCIL POLICY FOR MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACE

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration which sought to provide Members with an overview of the current arrangements for securing the long-term management and maintenance of new open space provided as part of new (predominately housing) development proposals with clarity also being sought on the preferred approach. The report also provided an update on the arrangements for maintaining new open space on the next phase of the Barratts David Wilson Homes (BDW) development at Fernwood.

The report provided Members with background information and the existing concerns with management companies (ManCo's). Paragraph 3.0 of the report set out the Council's options for the future, providing Members with two questions for consideration: 1. A Council first approach to maintaining open space?; and 2. Do ManCo's need to remain? with Members being asked to consider the proposals as detailed in paragraph 4 of the report.

In considering the report Members commented that promoting Council ownership on maintenance on large strategic open spaces likely to have a catchment wider than just the development proposed was understandable as a preference to multiple ManCos. There was less support for smaller development sites where the open space was linked to just that development, especially if viability would mean less developer contributions such as affordable housing.

In response to the above comments, the Director advised that, nationally, there were two questions to be considered: 1. Should viability exist as a concept?; and 2. Can a ManCo be controlled or be abolished at a national level? He added that if there was no national resolution the questions remained for this to be determined at a local level. He commented that there were several ways to deal with managing an open space and that these could be further explored with a report being presented to the January 2020 meeting of the Committee.

In considering the above comments Members agreed that a Working Group be established to further explore the issues in relation to the Council administering a ManCo and that the findings thereof be reported back to the January 2020 meeting of the Committee.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) a Working Group be established consisting of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson of the Economic Development Committee and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee. The Working Group shall consider the implications of the Council administering a ManCo;

- (b) consideration of recommendations (a) and (b) be deferred to the next meeting of the Economic Development Committee to be held on Wednesday, 15 January 2020 and that the findings of the Working Group inform those considerations; and
- (c) the decision, as agreed with the Council's Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Opposition to take on the ownership and management of open space delivered at the end of each phase of Fernwood North be noted.

39 FEES & CHARGES PROJECT

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive/Director – Resources which sought to provide Members with a summary of the work undertaken within the Fees & Charges Project, the aim of which was to review all non-statutory fees & charges across the Council. Paragraph 3 of the report listed the proposals for Members' consideration including: a Fees & Charges Register; a Fees & Charges Toolkit; Reconciliation and Monitoring; and a Marketing Plan.

In considering the report Members queried whether all committees would be provided with the toolkit for consideration. It was also noted that the Council's recent LGA Governance review had found that Members were not as involved in the budget setting process as they had been in previous years, further noting that draft budgets had, in the past, been presented to committees for consideration in November. Reference was also made to inflation charges and that there needed to be discretion in this regard so that a parking fee, for example, did not increase by 3 pence. Officers confirmed that the comments would be captured as part of the toolkit and common sense approach.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) the toolkit (Appendix 1) and associated procedure for development and review of the Fees & Charges Register be adopted as Policy for the setting of corporate fees & charges; and
- (c) subject to consultation and confirmation by Financial Services and the graph being revised to fit in with the Council's budget setting timetable, a draft budget report be presented to the November meeting of the committee cycle for consideration.

Councillor R.V. Blaney left the meeting and took no part in the following items.

40 NEWARK BEACON UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration which sought to update Members on the progress made at the Newark Beacon. The report set out the background to the management of the Beacon being brought back in-house and the subsequently approved five year business plan. Included within the report was information relating to the Business Plan; staffing changes; and essential works. Performance of the Beacon was detailed at paragraph 4.

In considering the report Members commented on the lack of parking provision for cyclists. The Business Manager – Asset Management & Car Parks advised that they were keen to introduce alternative parking provision but that, at present, the car park was already working to capacity. Members queried whether they could be provided with information to a future meeting as to the number of staff and/or jobs created at the facility.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report and achievements made to date be noted; and
- (b) a further progress report be presented to the Committee in June 2020.

41 UPDATE ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES - FUTURE TOWN FUND AND HERITAGE ACTION ZONE

The Committee considered the verbal report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration which sought to update Members about the Future Town Fund and Heritage Action Zone.

Future Town Fund

The Director advised that the prospectus for the Fund had now been published and all the identified towns were being invited to develop plans as to how the fund would be utilised. This would involve the development of a Town Board for which there is a prescriptive criteria as to who could be included. By Summer 2020 it would be necessary to set out how the Council would seek to apply for the £25m and how any funding awarded would be spent. A report would be presented to the March meetings to set out the Town vision and masterplanning.

Heritage Action Zone for Newark

The Director advised that the Council had been successful in its initial expression of interest and that it was now necessary to set out further details to formalise the extent of the proposed zone and have the HAZ endorsed by Historic England.

AGREED (unanimously) that the verbal report be noted.

42 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORWARD PLAN - DECEMBER 2019 TO NOVEMBER 2020

AGREED (unanimously) that the Economic Development Committee's Forward Plan be noted and that Officers continue to add reports for consideration over the next 12 month period.

43 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 7 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

None

Meeting closed at 8.16 pm.

Chairman