

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Minutes

MONDAY, 21 JUNE 2021

PRESENT: Councillor D Shaw (Chair)

Councillors J Aberley, G Heath, I Herdman, T Holmes, K Hoptroff, B Johnson, K Martin, T Riley, P Roberts, L Swindlehurst, P Taylor and R Ward

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor C J S Atkins, M Bowen, E Fallows, J Porter, S Scalise and P Wood

APOLOGIES: Councillors T McNicol, B A Hughes and N Yates

42 **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS, IF ANY.**

Councillor Atkins was substitute member for Councillor Yates.

43 **URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS, IF ANY (24 HOURS NOTICE TO BE PROVIDED TO THE CHAIRMAN)**

There were none.

44 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:**

None were declared.

45 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.**

DECIDED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on the 22nd March 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

46 **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, IF ANY.**

None had been received.

47 **REFRESHED COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY**

The Panel considered a report which explained that the Council was required by statute to work in partnership with other listed organisations to tackle community safety problems in Staffordshire Moorlands. The Council's corporate plan committed the Council to 'Review the Council's community safety arrangements in order to maintain strong partnerships with community groups'. This report supported the delivery of that commitment.

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The District Council had three main duties in relation to community safety and must:

- work with partners to formulate and implement a community safety strategy;
- ensure that it had a committee to scrutinise crime and disorder matters at least once a year; and
- consider the crime and disorder implications when exercising its functions.

The District Council discharged its duty to work with partners to formulate and implement a community safety strategy through its involvement in the Moorlands Together Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership. Appendix C provided a summary of the Council's contributions to the Partnership.

The Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel scrutinised crime and disorder matters at least once a year. The Panel received an annual report on the activity of the Community Safety Partnership as well as an annual update from Staffordshire Police.

Each report included a section on community safety implications, which ensured that such considerations formed part of the Council's decision making process. This included an evaluation of the impact of regeneration, asset management or planning policies.

The Council provided a range of services that contributed to improving the safety of Staffordshire Moorlands. This included CCTV in town centres across the District, the work of the Democratic and Communities Service, licensing taxis and places that sold alcohol, responding to statutory nuisances, supporting the homeless, and providing support to vulnerable people and those at risk of becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Given the recent issues at Brough Park, a member enquired if it was possible for a mobile CCTV unit to be temporarily installed to discourage poor behaviour and numbers of young people gathering. In response, David Smith advised there were no plans to increase CCTV coverage in the area. However, should members wish for this to be considered the Council could bid for partnership funding from the Staffordshire Commissioner. The District Council's representative on the Police, Fire and Crime Panel offered to contact the Commissioner in relation to this and members were asked to identify problem areas which would be passed on to Chief Inspector Thorley.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, informed the Panel that he had been in contact with Chief Inspector Thorley in relation to mobile CCTV and explained there was also a requirement for CCTV signage.

The Panel debated the increased level of fly-tipping which was originally attributed to the start of the pandemic when recycling centres were closed. Despite recycling centres being fully open, the levels of fly-tipped refuse remained high. The majority of these incidents occurred during the night and in rural locations. Staff would investigate, take into account any information left in the refuse and a communications and publicity scheme was planned to take place.

DECIDED: The Panel noted:

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- the Community Safety Partnership's strategy and plan; and
- the contributions that the Council made towards community safety.

48 CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN (PART 1)

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity, presented the Council's 2021/22 Climate Change Plan (Part 1) 'Towards Carbon Neutrality 2030' to the Panel and listened to suggestions from members.

On 10th July 2019, in recognition to the serious threat posed by climate change, the responsibility for our institutions, businesses and communities to eliminate net CO2 emissions and also the need to take immediate measures to prepare for climate change impacts Staffordshire Moorlands District Council declared a Climate Emergency.

The Council had initiated a series of actions to procure data, analyse options and introduce measures to reduce its own Carbon emissions.

The Plan has been developed in two parts: Part 1 considered the Council's own greenhouse gas emissions and was presented to Cabinet for approval. Part 2 considered the wider greenhouse gas emissions from the District and remained in development with a target date for publication of November 2021.

To summarise, the Panel found the report and appendix to be comprehensive. The following suggestions and comments were made:-

- For the plans in the Moorlands to be acted upon as a matter of urgency
- A list of areas to receive less frequent grass cutting to be circulated to members
- Electric vehicle charging points to be prioritised in Part 2 of the Plan
- The recent dedicated officer support for climate change was welcomed
- To allow for effective scrutiny, milestones, interim measures and timescales should be included in the Plan
- Improved typeface and background was requested, as the current design was difficult for people with dyslexia or visual impairment to read
- Inclusion of more ambitious tree planting schemes
- The Industry and Agriculture Working Group reported success with partnership working amongst large private companies to achieve climate change ambitions

Councillor Porter noted the comments and agreed to look into the possibility of milestones being incorporated into the Plan, prior to the next Cabinet meeting. Members were assured that electric vehicle charging points were a priority and the Council was committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 with partnership working.

He highlighted the importance of trees being planted at the correct site and a Tree Planting Strategy would be included in Part 2 of the Plan. The Council would initially focus on the reduction in carbon emissions and then carbon off-setting.

DECIDED: The Panel noted and made comment on the 2021/22 Climate Change Plan (Part 1).

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49 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel considered its Work Programme and agreed the items listed.

DECIDED: That the Work Programme for 2021-22 be agreed.

The meeting closed at 7.07 pm

_____ Chairman _____ Date