

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE DELIVERY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Minutes

WEDNESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2024

PRESENT: Councillor L Malyon (Chair)

Councillors C Beswick, C Brady, B Emery, K Flunder, M Haines,
I Herdman, K Hoptroff and P Wilkinson

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor C Atkins, B Cawley, M Gledhill, T Holmes, M Johnson,
J Porter, D Price, P Roberts, M Spooner, L Swindlehurst,
M Swindlehurst, C Wood and N Yates

APOLOGIES: Councillors J Cox, V O'Shea, D Pascall and C Smith

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

The following substitutions were made:-

- Councillor Holmes for Councillor Cox
- Councillor Spooner for Councillor Pascall
- Councillor Johnson for Councillor Smith
- Councillor L Swindlehurst for Councillor O'Shea

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

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 November 2023,
be approved.

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

There were none.

32 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:-**

Agenda No.	Member Declaring Interest	Nature of Interest
Agenda item 9 -Green Spaces Strategy	Councillor Beswick	'Other' – member of Horton Parish Council who are lease holders of a site listed within the report.

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

Questions received from Councillor Flunder:

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Q1. “*Could you please give the Panel an update on the development and launch of the 'new' website: Discover the Staffordshire Moorlands and explain what the content might contain and what is delaying its launch in time of the coming traditional tourism season?*”

Response from Councillor M Swindlehurst, Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Tourism:-

We have a fabulous opportunity for our very own microsite called ‘Discover Staffordshire Moorlands’ – this will enable us to showcase the wealth of opportunities our wonderful district has to offer.

The website domain has been secured and the website will be designed to reflect the unique characteristics of our district. Work is underway to develop content, include brand design and photography and it is expected to go live in the summer.

The webpage will form part of the wider Enjoy Staffordshire tourism website. This collaboration brings great benefits in that our local tourism businesses only have to input content once for it to feature on both the Discover Staffordshire Moorlands and Enjoy Staffordshire websites. This approach helps to rationalise costs as it does not require separate licence fees, makes best use of staff resource and more importantly, provides a streamlined process for uploading content for our tourism businesses. We understand that licences can cost £20k per year for websites of this nature, before adding to this graphic design and costs for photography and video content. There are no costs linked to the creation of our microsite as described. Linked to this, we are working with partners to benefit from a platform through which we can acquire rights to high quality photographs / video and drone footage. This will enable us to develop a high-quality image library of our visual assets and allow us to gain consent to share content with others on social media and websites.

By way of supplementary questions, Councillor Flunder asked for clarification on whether any progress had been made with the empty property on the corner of the Market Place?

The Portfolio holder advised that it was hoped a new tenant would be in place prior to the closure of the Butter Market.

In response to a query around the promotion of tourism whilst the works are being carried out in the market, the Portfolio Holder advised, that the new website would be launched late Spring/Summer. The Enjoy Staffordshire website was still available. Discussions were taking place with a view to increase overnight accommodation.

34 WORK PROGRAMME

Members were encouraged to suggest items and were advised that a scrutiny workshop was due to take place at the beginning of February.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Work Programme be agreed;
- 2) For the Panel to receive regular progress updates on the Tourism Strategy.

35 **ALLIANCE NORSE - DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (PRESENTATION - TONY TAYLOR, OPERATIONS DIRECTOR)**

Due to technical difficulties this item was deferred to the following meeting.

If members had any questions regarding this presentation they could email the Democratic Services Team.

36 **GREEN SPACES STRATEGY**

The report informed the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the progress made to develop a new Green Spaces Strategy for the Council.

Full details were contained within the report.

Members had the opportunity to provide feedback and make suggestions on this draft policy which included;

- The importance of working with town and parish councils
- For the smaller sites in Cheadle and the rural areas to be taken into account
- To engage with youth groups, schools and Staffordshire Moorlands Green Network
- Ensure that a variety of groups were engaged to ensure continuity and longevity
- More reference to be made to the various types of habitats
- Ensure local residents were consulted in relation to management plans for green spaces in their areas
- For the Tourism Strategy to be included as a key strategy
- Consultation with the users of the green spaces and input from AES in terms of maintenance of the sites

A member of the Panel commented on the upkeep of the land at Stanfield Crescent and Thorley Drive. It was suggested that the installation of seating would improve Glebe Road.

The Portfolio Holder agreed to revisit these sites to determine how the individual management plans would work.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel discussed the proposed Green Spaces Strategy and associated Green Spaces Development Fund.
- 2) For the Panel to be updated on the progress of the Strategy at a future meeting.

37 **TOURISM STRATEGY (PRESENTATION/REPORT)**

The purpose of the report was to provide a progress update on the Tourism Strategy and action plan for the Staffordshire Moorlands. It also provided detail on UKSPF activity to support tourism and background on the Local Visitor Economy Partnership work with Enjoy Staffordshire and Visit Peak District, Derbyshire and Derby.

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In addition to the report, the Panel received a presentation which covered the following topics:

- Tourism Update
- Tourism Strategy
- Tourism Partnership Forum
- Areas of focus
- Progress Update
- STEAM Data and headlines
- Discover Staffordshire Moorlands Microsite
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Marketing Activity
- Timeline and Monitoring
- Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP)
- Tourist Information Provision

Discussion took place around objectives, targets and levels of available tourist accommodation as well as dormitory towns in the District. Comments were made in relation to all year round tourism to support villages.

Further discussion took place concerning Air B and B's, affordable housing, hotels and the importance of good pubs for the economy and to attract visitors to the Cheadle area whilst taking into account the distance of the coach park in the vicinity of the town centre. Photographs of the lower region of the Churnet Valley were requested.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the Council was committed to encouraging longer stays by tourists.

RESOLVED:

1. The Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel noted the content of the report and the progress made since approval of the Tourism Strategy.
2. The Leader would raise the tendering issue for specialised services at the next UKSPF board meeting.
3. For the figures relating to the number of bed spaces in Derbyshire and Staffordshire to be supplied to members of the Panel.

38 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

The Chair moved:-

“That pursuant to Section 100A (2) and (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or nature of the proceedings whereby it is likely that exempt information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act would be disclosed to the public in breach of the obligation of confidence or exempt information as defined in Section 100I (1) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act would be disclosed to the public by virtue of the paragraphs indicated.”

39 TO APPROVE THE EXEMPT MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the exempt minutes from the previous meeting held on 8 November 2024, be approved.

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The meeting closed at 8.18 pm

_____ Chairman _____ Date