

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, 2nd December, 2015

**Present:-** Councillor David Stringer – in the Chair

Councillors Burgess, Holland, Huckfield, Johnson, Loades, Matthews, Northcott, Stubbs and Williams

Apologies Apologies

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Councillor Frankish was present as Substitute for the Call-In items. Councillor Matthews was in attendance for the remainder of the agenda items.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 September, 2015 be agreed as a correct record.

### **4. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION**

**Resolved:-** That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1,2, and 3 in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

### **5. CALL-IN - LAND ADJ TO THE FORMER MAXIMS NIGHT CLUB, NEWCASTLE**

Consideration was given to a report regarding a Call-In which had been received in respect of the Former Maxims Night Club.

Members agreed not to support the Call-In.

**Resolved:** That the Call-In not be accepted.

### **6. CALL IN - ASSET DISPOSALS - LAND AT SHELDON GROVE, CHESTERTON**

Consideration was given to a report regarding a Call-In which had been received following the decision of the Cabinet on 11 November, 2015 in respect of this item.

Councillor Snell commented that the final decision at the Cabinet meeting had not been subject to full scrutiny and that the tabled recommendations were different to

those on the printed agenda. This had not given Members any time to comment on them. In addition, Councillor Snell remarked on the Cabinet's recommendation which included the 'retention of a significant amount of accessible public open space', stating that she was still unclear as to what was 'significant'.

Furthermore, the piece of land was the only one available in the Holditch Ward and it was used on a daily basis.

Members were advised that an Asset Policy Committee would be formed and that the Land at Sheldon Grove would form part of that review. A report from the Committee would go before a Special Council Meeting in January, 2016

Members discussed the item further as to whether it should go back to Scrutiny. The Call-In was accepted.

**Resolved:** That the Call-In be accepted.

**7. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**

There was no report available for this item. Therefore a request was made for deferral.

**Resolved:** That the item be deferred to the March meeting.

**8. TOURISM AWARDS WITHIN THE BOROUGH**

Consideration was given to a report informing Members of Awards that had recently been given at the Enjoy Staffordshire Tourism Awards.

The Dorothy Clive Garden, Keele University Conferences and Events and The Limestone Vaults had all received Silver in their respective categories.

Members welcomed the report. The Portfolio Holder for Town Centres' Business and Assets stated that he would like all Members to get involved in this to encourage businesses within their ward to put themselves forward for future awards.

The Chair requested that the Council's Business Development Officer be asked to contact Members to advise them how to become involved and promote particular businesses.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the information be received and the comments noted.
- (ii) That the Business Development Officer be asked to contact members with advice on how to get involved.

**9. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to a report on the Homelessness Strategy for 2016 – 2021.

The Council's Head of Housing and Regeneration Services informed Members that a comprehensive review had been carried out. In addition, there was now increasing

pressure to find accommodation for vulnerable people and that there was a lack of suitable accommodation for the young homeless.

Members welcomed the document and thanked the officers involved in its production, stating that the Strategy needed to be followed through to the letter.

The document will be ongoing and would be approved annually by the Portfolio Holder. Members questioned the possibility of the document or update report being brought to the Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

**Resolved:** That the information be received and the comments noted.

**10. HOUSING STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to the Council's draft Housing Strategy 2016 -2021.

The Policy identified five key priorities which Members were asked to agree. The priorities were agreed as was the suggestion that there was more that the Council could do.

Members also requested that more evidence be sought that affordable housing is put into place.

The Council's Head of Housing and Regeneration Services informed Members that they could make comments on the draft Policy for up to twelve weeks when it goes out for Consultation in January, 2016.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the information be received and the comments noted.
- (ii) That the draft Policy be agreed for Consultation in January, 2016.

**11. NEWCASTLE HOUSING ADVICE CONTRACT PROGRESS - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE STATISTICS**

Consideration was given to a report on the quarter two performance for the Newcastle Housing Advice.

Members were advised that, generally, performance was good and that they were meeting all targets.

The report also contained figures for Aspire Housing. Members asked if the Council received regular feedback from its representative on the Aspire Housing Board. The representative would report back to the Cabinet informally but would attend the meetings as a Board member not as a Councillor.

Members felt that it would be useful for officers from Aspire to come in once a year to update the Committee. A suggestion was made for the March meeting. In addition, a job description of outside members would be useful to ascertain what their duties/expectation were.

**Resolved:** (i) That the information be received and the

- comments noted.
- (ii) That officers from Aspire be invited to attend meetings on an annual basis to provide updates.

**12. NEWCASTLE TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE STATISTICS**

Consideration was given to a report updating Members on the progress of the Business Improvement District and events which have taken place in the town centre.

Members were asked if the Council should continue to receive facts and figures from the Partnership. Members agreed that the Council should continue to receive information but it would be a request rather than a requirement.

**Resolved:** That the information be received and the comments noted.

**13. KIDSGROVE TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP**

Consideration was given to a report updating Members on Go Kidsgrove.

The Chair stated that he would like an update on how much of the grant from the Borough Council had been spent. The Council's Head of Housing informed the Committee that she had received the figures and would email them to Members.

Members were asked if they still wanted to scrutinise Kidsgrove Town Council if the Borough Council's financial input comes to the end. Members felt that it should be looked at every six months or when something arose.

Members requested that Kidsgrove's plans to promote the town for the next twelve months be subject to scrutiny and a decision made where to take it from there.

Members suggested that the next meeting of this Scrutiny Committee be held at Kidsgrove Town Hall.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the information be received
- (ii) That arrangements be made to hold the March, 2016 meeting of this Committee at Kidsgrove Town Hall.

**14. WORK PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Work Plan for this Committee.

Members agreed that the Joint Finance, Resources and Partnerships / Economic Development and Enterprise meeting, scheduled for 16 December, 2016 be postponed until certain Cabinet Panels had met

The Executive Director for Regeneration and Development stated that there would be information regarding HS2 to consider at the next meeting.

**Resolved:** That the information be received and the comments noted.

**15. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

16. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Business.

17. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of this Committee will be held on 24 March, 2016 at 7pm. The venue is likely to be Kidsgrove Town Hall.

**COUNCILLOR DAVID STRINGER**  
Chair