

**COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, 24th September, 2020**

Present:-

Councillor P Innes (Chair)

Councillors	Borrell	Councillors	Dyke
	Blakemore		Fordham
	L Collins		Kellman

\*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

**54 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS  
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

No declarations of interest were received.

**55 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**56 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED -**

That under Section 100(A)(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 3 and 7 (respectively) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**57 CABINET MEMBER FOR TOWN CENTRES AND VISITOR ECONOMY  
- CHESTERFIELD VISITOR ECONOMY**

The Assistant Director – Economic Growth presented a report on the current position of the Chesterfield visitor economy and the development of the visitor economy strategy and action plan.

The report referred to the Visitor Economy Audit (VEA) which had recently been completed and which would form the baseline for the development of the strategy and action plan. The report outlined key points from the VEA, including Chesterfield being:

- a historic market town with the Crooked Spire and Market alongside heritage related attractions such as Barrow Hill Roundhouse and Chesterfield Canal;
- a visitor hub for the wider Peak District and surrounding major attractions such as Chatsworth House and Hardwick Hall;
- a provider of a range of serviced accommodation and a sub-regional service centre with a range of national and local retail and food and drink outlets.

The report identified increasing use of the Visit Chesterfield website as an information source, and a previous survey had identified the profile of visitors to the area as fitting the 'country-loving traditionalists' category. It recognised the need for the impact of Covid-19 to be considered in the development of the strategy and action plan, and it outlined some of the recent and current developments, including:

- Northern Gateway area – Saltergate multi-storey car park, Premier Inn, food and drink units in the former Co-op building, upgraded public realm along Elder Way and Knifemithgate and the new Enterprise Centre;
- The outdoor screen in St James Square;
- Additional funding to support the redevelopment of the outdoor market as part of the Revitalising the Heart of Chesterfield (RHOC) scheme, designers for which were about to be procured, with the potential to support a more ambitious events programme in the town centre;
- On-going investment in Chesterfield Canal, including a new canal basin as part of the Chesterfield Waterside regeneration scheme;
- The Peak Resort development, including an indoor activity centre and a health and wellbeing campus;
- The future provision of high-speed rail services to Chesterfield station and a masterplan for a high quality urban realm and gateway to the town centre.

The report outlined the purpose of the Visitor Economy Strategy to establish priorities for marketing, investment, product development and training to enable sustainable growth of the visitor economy, and it was proposed to build partnerships with organisations and stakeholders through a new Visitor Economy Board to oversee the delivery of the strategy and action plan. Following further engagement with key stakeholders it was planned to complete the strategy and action plan for adoption by the Council by April, 2021.

Arising from Members' questions and discussion the following points were raised for consideration as part of the ongoing work on the development of the Visitor Economy Strategy:

- The importance of an enhanced online presence to attract visitors and assist them to plan their visit;
- Potential to grow the arts and cultural offer;
- Scope to develop a broader story of the town's heritage (e.g. Roman, industrial, arts and crafts) and current attractions and events, and for signposting of these within the station masterplan;
- Development of family friendly events at weekends;
- The need to take account of the Council motion from December, 2019 regarding the economic benefit of tourism and the visitor economy.

It was confirmed that a brief had been produced for the engagement and research work required in preparation for the development of the Visitor Economy Strategy and it was hoped to procure specialist support to undertake this in the near future.

The Chair suggested that a Scrutiny Project Group be set up to contribute to the preparation of the Visitor Economy Strategy and action plan. Councillors Dyke, Fordham and Borrell offered to be part of such a group and an invitation would be made for other members to join this.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Town Centres and Visitor Economy, the Executive Director and the Assistant Director – Economic Growth for their contribution to the meeting.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the current and proposed work on the development of the Visitor Economy Strategy be supported.
- (2) That a Scrutiny Project Group be set up to contribute to the preparation of the Visitor Economy Strategy and action plan, to include Councillors Dyke, Fordham and Borrell, and that an invitation be made for other members to join this group.

#### **CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE**

For Minute Nos. 58 - 60 the Committee sat as the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee, in accordance with Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

#### **58 CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING - PROGRESS REPORT ON COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The Assistant Director - Health and Wellbeing and the Community Safety Officer presented the progress report on the Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership's (CSP) action plan for 2020-21 and the crime and disorder data as at July, 2020.

It was explained that the 2020-21 action plan (attached as Appendix A to the report) continued to have a local focus on addressing anti-social behaviour (ASB), domestic abuse and sexual violence, acquisitive crime and organised crime groups and substance misuse. In addition the CSP would work collaboratively with partners and neighbouring districts to support work addressing serious violent crime, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and serious organised crime.

The report outlined a number of achievements, including successful diversionary activity, use of CCTV to support those at risk of crime, PREVENT training to reduce the risk of radicalisation and use of Community Protection Warnings and Notices.

It was noted that the crime data statistics (attached as Appendix B to the report) showed an increase in all areas across Derbyshire, as a result of changes in the recording of crime data, with the exception of the April – July 2020 period during the Covid-19 ‘lockdown’. The report included an explanation of crimes included within each type of crime category (attached as Appendix C to the report). Future statistics would be based on consistent recording criteria when compared to the previous 12 months. A strategic sub-group of the CSP was being formed to work collaboratively with the County Violent Crime Group to determine how to address violence with injury crimes, which had shown one of the largest increases.

It was recognised that the Covid-19 control measures had impacted on the availability of some partners to respond to specific issues, but it was confirmed that additional enforcement capacity was being recruited, which would enable a more rapid response to enforcement issues.

Arising from Member’s questions and discussion the following points were raised:

- The importance of coordinated approaches across Council services to address issues such as modern slavery and the delivery of PREVENT training for Council staff, including engaging with the Police Modern Slavery Team;
- The hate crime priority to include crimes against members of LGBT and BAME communities and against women;
- A Derbyshire toolkit was being developed to support how cyber crime could be tackled;
- It was anticipated that there would be an increase in reports of domestic violence arising from the Covid-19 restrictions;
- There had been a positive impact on prevention of ASB in parks and the town centre from the involvement of PCSOs.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, the Assistant Director - Health and Wellbeing and the Community Safety Officer for their contribution to the meeting.

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the Community Safety Partnership progress report be noted.
- (2) That a further progress report on the Community Safety Partnership’s Action Plan and Performance be provided to the Crime and Disorder Committee in March, 2021.

**59 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - RE-ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED -**

That the public be readmitted to the meeting following consideration of items containing exempt information.

**60**     **CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING - UPDATE AS CHESTERFIELD SCRUTINY MEMBER OF THE DERBYSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

The Assistant Cabinet Member, as Chesterfield Scrutiny Member of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel (PCP), presented the minutes of the meetings of the PCP held on 25 June and 13 August, 2020 for the information of the Committee.

It was noted that the appointment of Mrs Rachel Swann as Chief Constable had been confirmed following the PCP meeting in August and that this was for a 5 year period.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Cabinet Member for his contribution to the meeting on this item.

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the minutes of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel meetings held on 25 June and 13 August, 2020 be noted.
- (2) That a further report from the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel meetings be provided to the Crime and Disorder Committee in March, 2021.

**COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

For the remaining items the Committee sat as the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee.

**61**     **CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION AND CUSTOMERS - PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

The Head of Operations and the Operational Benefits Manager presented a progress report on the implementation of Universal Credit (UC) in Chesterfield since the previous report to the Committee in January, 2020.

The report referred to the continuing work by the Benefits team with partners and stakeholders to ensure the best possible outcomes for claimants and the Council, noting that UC take up had increased by 166% between March and August, 2020 as a result of the impact of Covid-19. There had also been dramatic increases in the number of Council Tax Support claims.

New online digital claiming had been successfully introduced and extra hours worked in order to keep up to date with the increased workload.

The report referred to the following issues:

- Assisted claiming and budgeting support continued to be provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), although data on its use was not currently available. The Benefits team continued to support claimants where necessary;
- The managed migration of existing claimants from legacy benefits to UC had been suspended with no reactivation date yet known;
- The Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) budget for 2020/21, had been increased to £257,306, and proactive action had been taken to ensure relevant claimants could access this.
- There had been an increase in the number of households with Council tenancy arrears (3,826 in August, 2020), with a corresponding reduction in the proportion of rent collected (84.9%);
- The Council was exploring the possibility of engaging with the DWP Kickstart programme to support UC claimants aged 16 - 24 securing work placements with local employers.

Members expressed their appreciation of the work of staff in responding to the increased workload and in embracing new working methods and technology as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions. The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation, the Client Manager, the Head of Operations and the Operational Benefits Manager for their contribution to the meeting.

#### **RESOLVED -**

- (1) That the ongoing work on the implementation of Universal Credit be supported.
- (2) That progress of the implementation of Universal Credit be reported to the Committee in September 2021, subject to any significant changes occurring before then being reported at an earlier date.

## **62 SCRUTINY MONITORING**

The Committee considered the Scrutiny recommendations implementation monitoring schedule. It was noted that the monitoring of recommendations on Community Rooms would be scheduled for November, 2020.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That the Scrutiny monitoring schedule be noted.

## **63 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 October, 2020 – 31 January, 2021.

**RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

**64 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee considered the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2020/21, which had been approved at the meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 17 September, 2020.

**RESOLVED -**

That the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee items from the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be approved and updated to include the decisions of the current meeting.