

SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE – ECONOMIC GROWTH AND COMMUNITIES

Thursday, 7th December, 2023

Present:-

Councillor Flood (Chair)

Councillors Bagley
Dyke
Jacobs

Councillors Ogle
Twigg
Yates

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

20 **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillors Dyke, Jacobs and Ogle declared an interest in Agenda item 3.

21 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hollingworth, Niblock and Wheeldon.

22 **UKSPF PROJECTS UPDATE (DIGITAL PRESENTATION)**

The Policy Officer, Health and Wellbeing Officer and Community Development Worker presented a report detailing the Community Development Activities funded by UKSPF. These fall into three categories:

- Community Grants Programme
- Community Development Worker Project
- Capacity Building Project.

It was noted that all targets set were well on the way to being met.

In the area of the Community Grants Fund, in Tranche One £59,900 was awarded. This was split between 16 organisations – 11 UKSPF and 5 Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhoods (CIL). A range of causes was supported from small constituted groups to local and national charities.

In Tranche Two £54,272 has been awarded. This has been split between 18 organisations – 13 UKSPF and 5 Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhoods (CIL).

Within 2023/2024 there will continue to be ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the 44 funded projects. In 2024/2025 organisations will be supported to apply for further funding, with a focus on priority areas.

The area of Community Capacity Building focuses on building expertise and resilience within the voluntary sector particularly at a grassroots level and in areas with higher levels of deprivation which may require more support. Two organisations will be worked with who can deliver training on:

- Searching for relevant grant funding and writing grant funding applications
- Recruiting and supporting volunteers in a community setting
- Marketing and promoting services and activities to residents and communities
- Health and safety for services and activities delivered in a community setting.

Three areas have been identified within Chesterfield, using the Indices of Deprivation 2019, for the Community Development Workers to focus on. These are:

- Duckmanton (decile 2)
- Poolsbrook (decile 1)
- Old Whittington (decile 2)

Each area has recently been introduced to the Community Development Team and relationships with local schools and community groups are being built. Plans are in place to link communities with local businesses.

Members praised the work completed thus far and asked for Officers to return in 6 months' time to present an update on progress.

23 TRAVELLERS (VERBAL REPORT)

The Service Director – Leisure, Culture and Community Wellbeing, Head of Community Safety & Regulatory Services and Head of Streetscene & Environmental Services presented a verbal update reflecting on Illegal Encampments within the borough earlier in the year and the processes and plans in place to lessen their impact on local communities and resources should these occur again.

It was reported that Target Hardening has been taking place in order to prevent access in the first instance. This includes padlocks hidden under metal sheaths, boulders, lockable barriers and Ditch and Dive banks. There is a programme of constant review of possible sites.

In the case of an Illegal Encampment being set up, the landowner, usually CBC, has to start by asking them formally to move. Health and wellbeing checks then have to be done before the court can be applied to for eviction. This is a lengthy and costly process. It was reported that a Memorandum of Understanding was being developed with Derbyshire Police. This would ensure that there is a single point of contact within the Police force. The notice to move would be served within the first 12 hours. A joint visit would take place within 24 hours to complete welfare checks. This would also give the opportunity to identify vehicles and Individuals as well as safeguarding checks on any children. Within 36-48 hours a community survey should be conducted by CBC and the Police. This is a process to identify all crimes and incidences that occur within that community. If the encampment is still there after 48 hours the Police may be able to use their Section 61 powers. Proactive visits would continue every 24 hours until the encampment moves on. Mobile CCTV cameras may also be utilised within those areas to monitor criminality.

It was noted that within the local plan the planning policy needs to be looked at in order to identify areas for the provision of temporary sites and negotiated stopping sites. This will put the Police in a much stronger position if they are able to move the encampment on to other arranged sites.

Members thanked the officers for their thorough report. It was requested that when the Memorandum has been finalised that is shared with Members. It was noted that all information about how to report an Illegal Encampment will be available on the CBC webpage. Members asked for the officers to return in a year's time so that activity over the Spring and Summer could be reviewed in light of the new processes in place.

24 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUPS PROGRESS UPDATES

There were no Scrutiny Project Groups updates to be presented.

25 SCRUTINY MONITORING

This is a standard agenda item for the Committee to consider the scrutiny recommendations implementation monitoring schedule.
Members discussed the planned reports for up-coming meetings.
Different approaches to completing Budget Scrutiny were identified as this will be taking place in January.

RESOLVED –

There was no scrutiny monitoring schedule to be noted.

26 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 December 2023 to 31 March 2024. Members were reminded to check this document regularly as dates are changeable. As this Committee can complete pre-decision scrutiny it is timely to scrutinise areas before they go to Cabinet for decision.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

27 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE - ECONOMIC GROWTH AND COMMUNITIES

There is no current formulated plan but new items have been identified which will become part of the work programme for the Scrutiny Select Committee – Economic Growth & Communities.

These are:

- UKSPF - what happens once the funding ends in 18 months.
- Illegal Encampments – Planning for Temporary sites and Negotiated Stopping sites.
- NHS Referral changes.

RESOLVED –

That the action be noted.

28 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting Scrutiny Select Committee – Economic Growth & Communities on 26th October 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.