



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE, SAFETY AND GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 13th SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillor C Dean (Chair), Councillors B Clarke, R Claymore, J Jones and L Wood

CABINET: Councillor P Turner (Leader of the Council), Councillor S Smith, Councillor M Summers

The following officers were present: Anna Miller (Assistant Director – Growth & Regeneration), Richard Powell (Planning Policy and Delivery Team Leader), Laura Massey (Planning, Policy & Delivery Officer), Lisa Hall (Safer Communities and Homes Manager), Leanne Costello (Senior Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer) and Tracey Smith (Democratic Services Assistant)

23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair apologised to Members for the delayed start to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Clements, B Price, R Pritchard and J Oates.

Apologies were also given on behalf of the Leader of the Council, P Turner who was going to be late to the meeting which he was attending in respect of item 8 on the agenda.

24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12th July 2023 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor R Claymore and seconded by Councillor B Clarke)

25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

26 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair apologised to Councillors L Wood and R Claymore for not having arranged a meeting of the Migrant Travellers Working Group but said she would look to arrange this within the next couple of week.

27 RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH COMMITTEE

There were none.

28 CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS REFERRED TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH COMMITTEE FROM CABINET OR COUNCIL

29 ENDING PLASTIC POLLUTION WITHIN TAMWORTH

The Committee agreed to add this item on to their Work Plan to be discussed at a future meeting with Officers to be invited from the Joint Waste Services and Street Scene.

30 SECURING DOSTHILL PARK

The Leader of the Council arrived at 18:18

A petition regarding Securing Dosthill Park was discussed at Full Council on the 18th July 2023 where a recommendation was made to pass the item to scrutiny to Progress a resolution.

The Chair provided the Committee with an update from Mark Greaves, Operations manager, which advised that:

'Last year a soil bunding was created behind the existing bollards, all damaged bollards were replaced, and new locks and chains were fitted to the access gates, the site was re-visited early this year to increase the height of the existing bunding,

Our intention is to plant a native hedge along the full length of the bunding during the planting season (November to February) my understanding is there have been no illegal encampments on Dosthill since the additional traveller defences were installed'

A further update was shared via the Chair from Andrew Smith, Environmental Health which confirmed that Travellers has accessed the site the previous evening. Bolt cutters had been used to break the padlock on the gate. The Council had visited the site where there were 22 individuals, and 5 caravans present. Welfare checks had taken place. They had advised that they are expecting to stay for a couple of days.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health and Community Partnerships confirmed that the Council have been asked to consult with Police when installing any defences. The Council were still looking into the possibility of a transit site, but this was in the very early stages and that they are working with the Police on the matter. It was highlighted that this would not be considered near recreation grounds or housing.

The Chair acknowledged the duty to consider a site nearby.

The Committee agreed to consider this item under their Working Group 'Review of Policy/engagement relating to migrant Travelling Community.'

31 EXTENSION OF PSPO TAMWORTH DOG CONTROL AND ALCOHOL RESTRICTED ZONES

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health and Community Partnerships / Assistant Director – Partnerships to consider extension of the Public Space Protection Order (Tamworth Dog Control) and Public Space Protection Order (Alcohol Control in a Public Space), was introduced by the Safer Communities and Homes Manager, Lisa Hall, who highlighted that the current PSPO's expire in October 2023 and that they are looking to extend two of the PSPO's around Alcohol related Anti-social behaviour in the town centre and dog control for three years. At this stage an extension around the PSPO in Amington is not recommended as since the regeneration which was started in 2018 and has recently been completed in the area, the demographics of the area and the amount of significant issues are very low, if not negligible.

The Committee made the following comments/observations and asked the following questions:

1. How many fixed penalties for dog fouling and off lead offences had been issued in the last three years? It was confirmed that no penalties had been issued. Where issues arose, guidance had been offered and situations have been monitored with the back-up of the order which had worked to prevent further action being needed.
2. How easy it would be to reinstate to PSPO for the Amington area if necessary and how regularly this would be reviewed? It was confirmed that the area would be monitored to see if there would be any change in circumstances, and that it would be a relatively quick process to reinstate this if needed. The Council hold weekly meetings to look at hotspots and if issues were identified in this area, then this would be reviewed on a weekly basis.
3. Clarification around the dog control and whether, although there are no penalty notices issued, had there been complaints? The Officer confirmed that there can be small spikes of complaints at which point the Council increases their response and people in the area.

RESOLVED That Committee approved :

1. The delegation to the Portfolio Holder Environmental Health and Community Partnerships for the extension of the Public Space Protection Order (Dog Control) until October 2026;
2. The Ceasing of the restriction of alcohol in a public place – Amington Alcohol Restricted Zone but continuing to monitor the situation; and
3. The delegation to the Portfolio Holder Environmental Health and Community Partnerships for the extension of the Public Space Protection Order (Alcohol in a Restricted Zone) to include the Town Centre Zone only until October 2026.

(Moved by Councillor B Clarke and seconded by Councillor R Claymore)

The Portfolio Holder and Safer Communities and Homes Manager left the meeting.

32 STAFFORDSHIRE SUSTAINABILITY BOARD UPDATE

The Leader of the Council introduced the report to adopt the draft Staffordshire Adaptation Strategy which has been developed in conjunction with the Staffordshire Sustainability Board.

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Growth advised that the report is currently a draft as it is still waiting to go through Staffordshire's Governance Process which is scheduled for October but that this is the final version other than an update to the foreword with the new Portfolio Holders details following elections in May. It was confirmed that there was a budget of £60,000 for an action plan looking at Climate Change mitigation for Council Operations in accordance with the Council Climate Change Declaration, however there is a possibility that the adaptation plans may be deliverable from this budget which may mean it could be delivered sooner.

It was highlighted that adaptation was around making us resilient to the changes that are expected to come rather pure mitigation.

The Committee made the following comments/observations and asked the following questions:

1. Clarification around the acronym Suds used in the report. It was confirmed that this is Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems which is a component of any new development coming forward, not just looking at hard infrastructure, but natural solutions such as drainage ponds and swales.
2. How many/what other steps had been taken since the Council made their Climate Change declaration. It was confirmed that the Council declared a Climate Change emergency in 2019 following a motion at Full Council relating to borough Council Operations with a target of delivery by 2050,

with a view to delivering sooner if financial resources allowed. The Assistant Director confirmed that since taking over responsibility for Climate Change a couple of years ago, they had pulled together a baseline report which had come to the IS&G Committee in October 2022 which provides the operational carbon footprint and the starting to understand what we are trying to achieve with Net zero ambition. The second stage of which is the action plan which is just about to be commissioned and is on track to be completed as requested by the Committee by the end of 2024 which should set out the details of which services to focus on, what the Council can do to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and how much that will cost the authority which will need to feed in to medium term financial strategy. The adaptation plan will sit alongside the action plan.

3. The Chair commented that the impact of Climate Change cannot be looked at in isolation as it can impact other areas, such as damp and mould in homes, and that there is not a simple fix such as planting trees but about getting that right around location and maintenance. The Assistant Director confirmed that there is not a quick fix and that it is not just about planting trees but more about putting the right tree in the right and having a strategy around this. The Assistant Director confirmed that this does extend into many if not all service areas. It was acknowledged that there will also be fluctuations in greenhouse gas emissions as there are times that the Council may have infrastructure projects that will increase the carbon footprint their greenhouse gases and that is why it will take time to do this work properly.
4. With reference to planting trees do the Council have the rights skills and expertise within the Council? It was confirmed that the Council do have an arboriculturist within Street Scene with knowledge around the management and maintenance of trees but would need to look in to whether the Council has the knowledge around the strategy needed, but that a tree policy would be necessary to meet this agenda.

RESOLVED That the Committee:

1. Endorsed the draft Staffordshire Adaptation Strategy at Appendix 1;
2. Endorsed the preparation of an Adaptation Plan for the Borough.

(Moved by Councillor B Clarke and seconded by Councillor L Wood)

The Leader of the Council left the meeting.

33 LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, Samuel Smith introduced the report to seek the Committee's endorsement of the proposals and recommendations to be made to Cabinet in respect of the publication of the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Responses and Introduced before

introducing the report authors Richard Powell, Planning Policy Team Leader, and Laura Massey, Planning Policy and Delivery Officer.

The Planning Policy and Deliver Officer advised that the Council are in the early stages of developing a new local for Tamworth to guide development in the borough until 2043. The first stage is the issue and consultations document which was approved by Cabinet in 2022. The Consultation went out for 7 weeks between September and November 2022 looking at the key issues affecting the borough and what people thought were the options to address these issues.

Representations were received from 47 local groups including local residents, business, governing bodies, charities, developers and landowners.

All of the responses were collated in the Appendix documents and planners have provided an initial response.

The Committee made the following comments/observations and asked the following questions:

1. It was highlight by the Committee that only one business within the town had responded and this made it difficult for the Council to understand their wants, was this due to apathy or that they do not feel that their comments will be listened to. Could we use areas such as the assembly rooms to run regular consultations, or workshops, would using boards in empty properties within the town be an option to increase participation?
The Assistant Director acknowledged that as a learning point this may be something that needs to be focussed on at the next consultation but that they have had a similar response on the Future High Street Fund Project.
2. Clarification around whether the Public were invited to consultations? The Officers confirmed that resident's views were as important as business owners and any other group. The next stage of Consultation would continue to involve residents. The Officers acknowledged that the consultation did go out at the same time of the resident's survey and this something they could look to avoid in future and that communication was key. The Officers confirmed that this stage of the consultation it was not unusual to see more responses from statutory agencies and developers as this is very high level and may have been difficult for residents to see the impact on them. The next consultation stage will see more engagement as they see more of a link to their own lives.

RESOLVED That Committee:

1. Endorsed the recommendation for Cabinet to approve the publication of the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Responses, as included in Appendix A;
2. Endorsed the recommendation for Cabinet to delegate authority to the Assistant Director – Growth and

Regeneration to make any final typographical and formatting amendments to the document prior to publication.

(Moved by Councillor L Wood and seconded by Councillor R Claymore)

34 FORWARD PLAN

Members ask for the following items from the Forward Plan be bought to the Committee –

- Council Housing Decant Policy 2023-2026
- The Leaseholder Service Charges Review

35 WORKING GROUP UPDATES

The Chair confirmed ;

That as per her update a meeting would be arranged for the Migrant Travellers Working Group.

That the Housing Repairs Working Group was being led by Corporate Scrutiny but that there were 3 members of the Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee were on the Working Group and they were waiting for a meeting to be set up. Members could provide an update to the Committee.

36 INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The Chair highlighted the items that had been added to the Work Plan since the last meeting.

Members asked for the Council Housing Repairs Policy to be assigned a date, the Chair confirmed that this may now fall under Working Group and this would be confirmed.

It was suggested that the Monitoring Report be moved and that this could be looked in to.

Chair