



## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE, SAFETY AND GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 24th MARCH 2022**

**PRESENT:** Councillor S Goodall (Chair), Councillors T Clements, R Claymore, C Cooke, A Cooper, J Harper, Dr S Peple and B Price

**CABINET:** Councillor Stephen Doyle  
Councillor Martin Summers

The following officers were present: Anna Miller (Assistant Director – Growth & Regeneration), Joanne Sands (Assistant Director Partnerships), Matthew Fletcher (Head of Economic Development and Regeneration), Liz McCusker (Future High Streets Fund Project Officer) and Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer)

### **81 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from one member of the Committee, Councillor J Chesworth, from Councillor Jeremy Oates the Leader of the Council, and the Chief Executive, Andrew Barratt.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Chris Cooke and Councillor John Harper as new members of the Committee and thanked Councillor Dan Maycock who had retired from this Committee.

The Chair paid tribute to and thanked Councillor Dr S Peple for his contribution to scrutiny over the years.

### **82 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022 were approved as a correct record.

*(Moved by Councillor S Goodall and seconded by Councillor S Peple)*

### **83 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**84 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR**

The funding of public toilets was raised as a potential future item for the Committee's consideration.

**85 RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH COMMITTEE**

The Chair reported that the Committee's recommendations to full Council in respect of Fireworks were received and approved at its meeting on 22 February 2022 as follows:

Council agreed:

1. to look at all options with regards to visual aerial displays; and
2. the Leader of the Council would write to the Minister with regard to:
  - online sales of fireworks and that this reflects the same legislation as shop sales of fireworks were guided by; and
  - that the decibel level of fireworks available for the public's purchase be reviewed with a view to the decibel level being reduced.

The Chair reported that he had presented the Committee's recommendations on the Economic Development Service Workplan item to Cabinet at the Cabinet meeting on 17 March 2022, and reported that Cabinet approved the first year's contribution into the Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership and agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for extending contributions on a year by year basis and further agreed that Organisations which remained at this time subject to investigation by HMRC in respect of any applications for COVID related claims would be ineligible for Town Centre Business Grants.

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

The Chair reported to the Committee that at full Council on Tuesday 15th March 2022 a Petition to Stop the Netting of Hedges in Tamworth was received and that Council moved and carried the following resolutions:

1. That the Council notes and shares the sincere concerns of the signatories to protect our local natural wildlife;
2. That a prima facie review suggests that the power to act may lay outside the Council's statutory powers;
3. That given the importance of this issue, the matter be referred to the Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee (ISG) with the brief that they review the relevant sections of the National Planning Policy

- Framework (NPPF) and new Environmental legislation currently before the Commons, and any other material they believe relevant;
4. That ISG bring a report to Council by the Autumn so that there would be time to act on the report by the next breeding season.

The Committee agreed that this item should be added to its work plan.

## **87 TAMWORTH COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2020-2023 (2022 ANNUAL REFRESH)**

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder, Councillor M Summers and the Assistant Director Ms Jo Sands to the meeting to present this item.

It was reported that the Tamworth Community Safety Plan 2020-2023 was a three year rolling plan which outlined how partners are going to collectively tackle community safety issues in the Tamworth borough. The 2022 refresh highlighted what had been achieved against the outcomes set in the previous year and outlined priorities moving forward identified in the Community Safety Strategic assessment (Appendix 2).

The Assistant Director provided an overview of the key achievements and challenges faced during 2021, and outlined that the priorities for 2022 were unchanged from 2021.

The Committee welcomed the report and made the following comments and sought and received clarifications in the following areas:

1. The importance for Tamworth to be and to be perceived to be safe, given the wider work within the borough to regenerate the town centre and make Tamworth a destination, and the role that the presence of the police had as a deterrence and in supporting Tamworth to be and to be perceived to be safe.
2. The statistics included in the report, which stated that there had been a fall in serious violent crime by -48%, and in all crime by -22%, and fully understanding whether these statistics were fully representative (given sample sizes) and the impact that COVID lockdowns had on these statistics.
3. Litter and fly tipping figures, where there appeared to have been limited enforcement action undertaken.
4. The all members seminar on community safety was welcomed as a forum for broader discussion with relevant stakeholders which was planned to become an annual event.
5. The Portfolio Holder reported that he would be holding quarterly meetings with the Chief Inspector and that if members had areas which they wanted raising the Portfolio Holder would be happy to receive those.
6. Welcomed the return of the command to Tamworth with a response team based from Tamworth and the additional officers expected for Staffordshire Police, and how this would translate locally for Tamworth.
7. Sought clarification of the statistics for Castle, which it was noted were based on the Police data, and covered both the town centre and more

residential areas, and the need to drill down in the data and if possible split the data.

8. The role of the Tamworth Business Crime Reduction Partnership and the activities it undertook, which the Assistant Director, Partnerships confirmed covered retail and other businesses as well as the night time economy and offered training for its members.
9. The importance of the public reporting incidents to the police, or using Crimestoppers, and the importance of the police engaging with the community as well as councillors and the ward PCSOs connecting and engaging on local issues.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee

1. Considered the Tamworth Community Safety Plan 2022 Refresh for recommendation for endorsement by Cabinet
2. Considered and recommended that Cabinet continue to endorse the main three year overarching plan only from 2023 following review by Scrutiny.
3. Recommended the endorsement of the annual refresh of the Community Safety plan be considered at Scrutiny only for publication from 2024.

*(Moved by Councillor Dr S Peaple and seconded by Councillor T Clements)*

## **88 RENEWAL OF NUISANCE VEHICLE PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER**

The Chair invited the Assistant Director, Partnerships to provide an overview of the Report to extend the Borough Wide Nuisance Vehicle Public Space Protection Order and to support delegation to the Portfolio Holder for implementation.

The Assistant Director, Partnerships reported that the current Order would expire on 30 April 2022, and that the renewal of this PSPO was supported by the Police.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee

Approved delegation to the Portfolio Holder Voluntary sector, Town Centre, Evening economy & Community Safety for the extension of the of the Borough Wide Nuisance Vehicle Public Space Protection Order (as attached to the Report)

*(Moved by Councillor B Price and seconded by Councillor R Claymore)*

The Committee thanked the Assistant Director, Partnerships, who then left the meeting.

## **89 DRY RE-CYCLING CONTRACT UPDATE**

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder, Councillor S Doyle and the Customer Relations and Performance Manager, Joint Waste Service, Ms V Woodhouse to the meeting.

The Committee received the presentation.

The Committee commented and sought clarification on the following:

1. The fact that in rural areas new purple bins would be distributed rather than re-purposing old blue bins. It was reported that this was due to the need to be able to clearly differentiate between the different coloured bins to avoid any potential cross contamination.
2. Why there was no mention in the communications material circulated regarding the assisted service available to vulnerable residents given this had been raised at the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021 meeting and minuted as follows:  
**RESOLVED** that the Committee recommend that there be improved communication and advertisement of the assisted service available to residents.

The Committee drew the Portfolio Holder's attention to the above minute from the meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021 which he agreed to consider further.

The Committee thanked the Portfolio Holder and Officer for their attendance and the Officer then left the meeting.

## 90 FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND UPDATE

The Chair welcomed the Assistant Director, Growth & Regeneration and the Future High Street Fund Project Officer, Ms L McCusker to the meeting to provide the quarterly update report.

The Assistant Director reported that the progress since the last report included:

1. The project was working with McBains on the programme, on design, costings, risk management and planning, and also working with external organisations, County council, Highways, Archeology, Ecology.
2. The Council had taken possession of the Co-op building and the demolition application had been submitted.
3. College Quarter, where the Co-op building had been acquired and now working on designs. The project is yet to hear if the College had received their funding from the Department for Education. Working on a planning application which was expected to be made in Spring.
4. Middle Entry, where agreement had been reached with the landowners with the aim to achieve vacant possession from June 2022. Work on the design to remove aspects continued
5. St Edith's Square, where work continued with county regarding Highways
6. Castle Gateway, still working on structural aspects of the Peel Café and working with the Nationwide and expect the planning application to be made shortly. Survey work had also been undertaken for the Market Street properties.
7. Engagement sessions had taken place with local businesses.
8. A high level review had flagged initial costing concerns; due to two reasons, firstly the cost of raw materials, which was unforeseen two years

ago when the bid was submitted, and secondly because the cost consultants add a 20% risk contingency given the project was at an early design phase.

The Committee commented and sought the following clarifications:

1. The options for St Edith's Square including the potential to pedestrianise St Edith's Square, or otherwise improve pedestrian and vehicular access
2. How the 20% risk contingency interacted with the design process where it was reported that as the project progressed through the RIBA stages the contingency levels would reduce, as the design became clearer. However, this meant that the project was over budget as a result.
3. Whether further work in this Committee on a strategy for the older buildings could be undertaken once there was more clarity from survey work to understand how to take forward, given this was an area of uncertainty. It was also noted that working with buildings of this age involved working with Historic England, and working within tight timescales.
4. In terms of Middle Entry, further clarification was sought on the details of this aspect of the project which went to Council in 2020, and the proposals which were now under development.
5. The importance of the design aspect of the new college building, and making it a quality and aspirational building. It was noted that there were planning policies and documents which would need to be complied with, and that the building would need to look good on the outside and work functionally on the inside for the college, and this would need to be realistic and within budget.

The Chair agreed that he would work with the Assistant Director to organise a site visit for members of the Committee.

The Committee noted the Report and thanked the Officers for their attendance, following which the Future High Street Fund Project Officer left the building.

## **91 FORWARD PLAN**

No new items were identified.

## **92 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 2021/22**

The Chair reported that this draft Annual Report for 2021/2 aimed to summarise the work covered by the Committee this year. He reported that it would be updated following this meeting to cover any relevant items from this meeting. Following that the final version would be prepared for presentation to full Council in the next municipal year.

## **93 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That members of the press and public be now excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item

on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

*(Moved by Councillor D S Peaple and seconded by Councillor T Clements)*

**RESOLVED** That in accordance with Rule 9.1.13 of Schedule 1, Part 4 of the Constitution , the meeting be extended to 9pm.

*(Moved by Councillor S Goodall and seconded by Cllr B Price)*

#### **94 RESET & RECOVERY - REGENERATION OF MARMION HOUSE UPDATE**

The Chair welcomed the Assistant Director, Growth & Regeneration and the Head of Economic Development and Regeneration to the meeting.

The Committee received an update and considered the supporting documentation received, and sought clarifications on the options under consideration. It was noted that a report was expected to be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

After consideration, the Committee:

**Resolved** to make a recommendation to Cabinet.

*(Moved by Councillor Dr S Peaple and seconded by Councillor S Goodall)*

The Committee thanked the Officers for their update and attendance.

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Chair

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