

## **PUBLIC**

**MINUTES** of a meeting of the **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – RESOURCES** held at County Hall, Matlock on 13 March 2014.

### **PRESENT**

Councillor C R Moesby (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs C Bisknell, P Dunn, T A Kemp, M V Longden, D Lomax and S Marshall - Clarke.

Also in attendance was Councillor Mrs J Innes.

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor S Freeborn.

**06/14**      **MINUTES**      **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Resources held on 16 January 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**7/14**      **DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR JOBS, ECONOMY AND TRANSPORT**      Councillor J Dixon, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy and Transport, attended the meeting to give an update on some of the current issues that were being addressed, principally in relation to economic development.

- Following the Heseltine Review significant changes had taken place with regards to economic development, with Regional Development Agencies being replaced by LEPs. Locally, by the D2N2 and the Sheffield City Region LEPs.
- The LEPs were required to bid competitively for resources for economic development and the main focus was to get the County into the best position to compete economically.
- The Economic Development Team had now become part of the old Environmental Services Department to form the new Economy, Transport and Environment Department.
- An Economic Strategy was being created, which was now in its first draft stage and out for consultation. The aim being to bring all the strengths of the County together to show why Derbyshire was a great place to invest with a view to delivering jobs and growth.

- A new Assistant Director, Joe Battye had been appointed to take this work forward.
- The announcement at the last Council Meeting of the £14.2 million award for the Seymour Link was evidence that the Authority was being successful in its work.
- Two more sites on Markham Vale had been given Enterprise Zone status.

Members of the Committee welcomed the progress being made and projects being undertaken to ensure that the Authority competed with other parts of the country.

#### **08/14      REVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE ENERGY – PROGRESS REPORT**

Councillor Dunn presented a report on the progress made by the Working Group set up to investigate the potential of the use of sustainable energy for DCC property. Initial meetings had taken place and the group had visited the Markham Vale and Tapton Lock Visitor Centre sites to look at the bio-mass boiler system and potential for a water power project.

A further meeting had taken place with the Council's Head of Planning Service to look at the assessment of sites for possible sustainable development. He was currently looking at land/property owned by the County Council which could be used for sustainable energy development.

Although the Council had, for some time invested in small projects such as wind turbines at Shipley Park and some schools the Authority was now keen to explore the possibility of commercial scale energy production.

Hugh Ellis, Town & Country Planning Association had been invited to attend the meeting and spoke to members regarding municipal authorities in Germany who had been producing green energy on a large scale, mostly through solar power installations on closed landfill sites and informed members that there was potential to undertake similar programmes in the UK and possibly within Derbyshire. Whilst environmental credentials of such schemes were evident the German authorities based their projects purely on sound commercial reasons.

Derbyshire was considered viable for this type of solar energy farming and the County Council had numerous sites which had potential with a local infrastructure which could process the energy produced.

To ensure an efficient and effective corporate approach was applied to assessing the viability of energy generation projects the Working Group had

considered the establishment of a Corporate Sustainable Energy project group, which will undertake project appraisal. The work of a project group would contribute to and compliment the work of the Environmental Sustainability Group.

**RESOLVED** (1) to note the report of the Chair of the review of Sustainable Energy Working Group;

(2) that a further meeting of the Review Working Group be held with Councillor J Owen (Deputy Cabinet Member) and appropriate officers to consider the development of a Sustainable Energy Project Group which would oversee all projects or potential projects to ensure a corporate approach; and

(3) that a final report would hopefully be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on 29 May 2014.

**09/14 REVIEW OF NON OPERATIONAL PROPERTY** The final report on the review of the Council's non-operational property holdings had been approved at Cabinet at its meeting on 3 December 2013. The Director of Property now reported on the work being undertaken and progress made by the Corporate Property Services Division to assess the performance of the Council's operational properties in accordance with the recommendations contained in the action plan.

**RESOLVED** to note the work currently being undertaken in Corporate Property Services Division to assess the performance of and requirement for the Council's operational properties.

**10/14 WORK PROGRAMME** A draft work programme up to May 2014 was presented. This would form the basis of work over the coming year and would be developed.

The Chair confirmed that 32 responses had been received following the request for possible scrutiny reviews and these would be considered by the Improvement and Scrutiny Management Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.