

MINUTES of a meeting of **the IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – RESOURCES** held at County Hall, Matlock on 26 May 2016.

PRESENT

Councillor C R Moesby (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs M Booth, S Bull, S Freeborn, T A Kemp, D Lomax and S Marshall-Clarke.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs K D Lauro.

06/16 MINUTES **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Resources held on 17 March 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

07/16 SUSTAINABLE ENERGY/SOLAR POWER REVIEW UPDATE
An update was reported on the potential to develop large-scale, ground-mounted solar photovoltaic on council-owned land and other sustainable energy opportunities currently being considered.

The position in relation to the sites identified was reported, the sites being at Williamthorpe, Temple Normanton, Westthorpe, Swanwick, and Pye Bridge.

The Committee was disappointed with the amount of progress that it had been possible to make. The difficulties arose from Western Power Distribution's inability to facilitate connection of the sites to the local grid network. Costs associated with connection were also high in view of the fact that reinforcements to the network were required.

The latest position on subsidies was reported and, in light of the uncertainty surrounding the subsidies, these projects were now to be considered over a medium term basis. This was because it was forecast that the cost of panels would significantly reduce over the next 12-18 months coupled with likely increases in Power Purchase Agreements arrangements would negate the need for subsidies and the projects would again become financially viable. This longer term view would also keep an option open to re-visit the sites where grid connection was not available to see whether capacity does become available and those schemes could be progressed at a later stage.

Other sustainable energy opportunities were being considered and a wider Energy Strategy was being developed to provide a clear direction on sustainable energy priorities for the Council. This would include, but not be limited to, its on-going work on energy efficiency and carbon reduction; supporting communities and SMEs in the low carbon economy; supporting the Derbyshire Healthy Home project and exploring opportunities for larger scale

sustainable energy projects. Such opportunities were to include looking at developing a biomass supply chain using waste wood from managed woodlands to establishing district heat networks at key development sites in the county.

RESOLVED (1) that progress be noted; (2) that, in view of the Committee's disappointment at the progress made, an invitation be extended to a high level representative of Western Power Distribution to attend a meeting with the Committee to discuss the company's inability to connect sites to the local grid network; and (3) that officers report to the Committee with fuller information on the other sustainable energy opportunities that were being considered

08/16 REVIEW OF INCOME GENERATION At the request of the Cabinet Member for Council Services, the Committee undertook a review of the potential for income generation for the Council to off-set budget reductions and protect services.

Information secured following meetings with Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council had already been referred on to the Leader and, following further meetings within the Council, the working group had concluded that the Council had untapped potential to achieve additional income through selling its services more widely. There appeared to be a muddled, ad hoc approach at present across the Council's Departments with individual officers doing the best they can under the current circumstances and with the resources they have available to them.

It is evident that a much more co-ordinated approach was required to consolidate and maximise income potential. This would only be achieved through strong leadership, with both senior Members and Strategic Directors making this a priority. Learning from the approach adopted by Nottingham City Council, a "champion" Member and Officer should be given the responsibility to promote a co-ordinated, council-wide, income generation initiative.

RESOLVED (1) to note the work currently underway to generate income for the Council and the potential for this to be increased; and (2) that a recommendation be submitted to Cabinet that:-

- (i) A Cabinet Member and a Strategic Director be assigned responsibility for leading and developing a co-ordinated Income Generation approach across the Council's Departments.
- (ii) A business plan be developed for all Council services which could potentially be offered to generate income and help alleviate the cuts to the Council's budget.
- (iii) The Cabinet Member and Strategic Director appointed to lead on this initiative be invited to report back to the Committee after an appropriate

period of time to report on progress.

09/16 WORK PROGRAMME RESOLVED (1) that, as part of the Committee's 2016/17 work programme, reviews be undertaken on:-

- (i) The roll-out of Superfast Broadband across Derbyshire.
- (ii) Job creation and Apprenticeships in Derbyshire.

(2) that scoping reports for these reviews be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee when working groups to undertake the reviews would be appointed.