

PUBLIC

**MINUTES** of a meeting of the **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PLACES** held on Wednesday, 16 November 2022 in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Matlock.

**PRESENT**

Councillor S Bull (in the Chair)

Councillors J Siddle, N Gourlay, D Greenhalgh, D Murphy, J Nelson, P Niblock, A Clarke and T Kemp (substitute Member).

Also in attendance was Councillor S Hobson.

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillors D Collins and R Redfern.

**26/22 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (IF ANY)**

There were no declarations of interest.

**27/22 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

**28/22 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (30 MINUTE MAXIMUM IN TOTAL)**

There were no public questions.

**29/22 COMMUNITY MANAGED LIBRARIES**

Michelle Parker, Head of Libraries and Heritage and Councillor Susan Hobson, Cabinet Support Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture, Tourism and Climate Change attended the meeting provide the Committee with an update about progress on the programme of work to transfer some libraries to a community management model focussing on current challenges, lessons learned and customer satisfaction.

In August 2021, Woodville Library had successfully transferred to community management via an organisation called Circularity that had wider interests in the building and the local service offer; the Library Service was continuing to provide ongoing support to the organisation.

In addition, the Library Service was actively engaged with those groups/organisations who had a successful EOI and Business Case in place - at Old Whittington and Wingerworth. There was also ongoing

interest for the potential transfer of Tideswell Library. However, despite re-launching the Library Strategy in January 2022, to date, no further groups/organisations had expressed an interest in the management and running of static or mobile libraries.

At its meeting on 23 February 2022, the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee noted the following key areas of learning:

- The need for nominated project resources to help drive and provide oversight for the transfer – and maintain good working relationships with the community groups.
- Clear need for dedicated project management resources.
- Training needs for community groups to support smooth handover – including their establishing ‘ways of working’ (e.g., advanced notice).
  - checklists and training packages will be updated to reflect this for future transfers.
- Lead in time to support the handover process – including legal, facilities management and property processes.
- Time needed to transfer records off site to be stored securely for the appropriate retention period. Measurers are in place (on the checklist) to ensure that any records are transferred with full regards to any General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements. Records are handled by Council staff who are GDPR trained and sent to Chesterfield Library to be stored securely until the retention period ends.
- Online offer: Improving the online joining system and developing an online tool, so customers could update their address and renew their library privilege themselves, was achieved working closely with IT and eContent for the benefit of all customers.

A number of planned developments were also highlighted and these had since been achieved. Active discussions were taking place with districts and boroughs to identify opportunities for improving the wider library estate for example, as part of town centre renewal and regeneration schemes such as Clay Cross and Killamarsh, all of which would contribute to a refreshed strategic approach.

The Service also recognised that there was a gap in customer satisfaction data and had since implemented a customer satisfaction survey which took place in July 2022. In total, 915 responses had been received and overall, 97.6% of Library Service customers were satisfied with Derbyshire

Library services. More detailed information regarding specific data for each library would be circulated to Members along with details of the press releases and publicity that the Service had made available relating to Warm Spaces.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Michelle for her informative presentation.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee

- a) Notes the current level of progress being made regarding the community managed library programme and specifically the current challenges and lessons learned; and
- b) Notes the areas of future development as detailed in the report.

**30/22 THRIVING COMMUNITIES UPDATE**

Sarah Eaton, Assistant Director – Strategy and Policy, and Becky Lomas, Principal Policy Officer attended the meeting to present an update on progress on the development of the Thriving Communities approach.

Following the local induction sessions, held in February and March 2022 to re-connect and build relationships post Covid, work had been progressing to develop the Thriving Communities model and ways of working at the local level. As previously reported, this had included building Connected Teams of staff and local people and opening up welcoming, open spaces for staff and people to build community activity and offer help and support.

Feedback from community activity during this period, had been provided to the Board to assist in its remit to steer the corporate direction of the Thriving Communities approach. Whilst good progress had been made, the capacity of DCC (and partner) services to support innovative work on the ground had been limited. The impact of the pandemic, service priorities and pressures had all placed a heavy burden on delivering this collaborative agenda.

A presentation was given to the Committee which provided a recap on the Thriving Communities aims, update on recent progress and explained the current activity of the Thriving Communities Board in determining the future of the approach and its relationships with other strategic Council priorities.

## **RESOLVED:**

That the Committee note the latest position in respect of the Thriving Communities approach and current Thriving Communities Board activity to determine the future direction of the work.

### **31/22 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE - PRESENTATION**

Richard Ward, Senior Project Engineer (Drainage and Flood Risk) attended the meeting to inform Members of the current and future proposals for flood risk management in Derbyshire.

At the meeting on 23 February 2022, the Committee were informed of the lessons learned from flooding incidents, customer satisfaction with flooding services responses and the review of the Derbyshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The Committee was asked to consider the following:

- Achievements over the past 12 months
- Community flood resilience
- Next 12 months and beyond
- Future challenges

One of the key objectives in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy was around individual and community led resilience initiatives. It was essential that the Council empowered and enabled communities to become more self-resilient to flooding. Derbyshire would continue with well-established initiatives like Flood Warden Schemes and would also promote proposals like the Flood Warden Community Signage schemes.

The new Highway Drainage Team would continue to work more collaboratively with the Flood Risk Team and start to realise efficiencies, increase the effectiveness in terms of reducing flood risk on the carriageway. A long-term cyclical gully cleansing contract had been awarded, which would hopefully start to realise efficiencies and savings in this area of work.

With regard to future challenges, climate change was the single biggest factor, which was affecting rainfall events both now, and in the future.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Mr Ward for his most informative presentation.

## **RESOLVED:**

That the Committee keeps abreast of, and reviews, the ongoing and future proposals for flood risk management in Derbyshire.

32/22 **WORK PROGRAMME 2022-23**

The Committee's work programme was presented and Members were invited to suggest possible agenda items for the remainder of the municipal year 2022-23.

One item that was put forward was in relation to members requests for public rights of way.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee notes the 2022-23 work programme.