

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 2 DECEMBER 2021 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), S E N Rook (Vice-Chairman), S J Chambers, A Coleman, R H Coleman, N J Desmond, P Dyke, C Edginton-White, S Miah and T L Onslow.

Observers

Councillors: G W Ballinger, H E Dyke, A L L'Huillier (observed remotely), F M Oborski MBE, M Rayner and C Rogers.

OS.68 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: A L L'Huillier and D R Sheppard.

OS.69 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor R H Coleman was appointed as a substitute for Councillor D R Sheppard.

OS.70 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.71 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

OS.72 Update on Future High Streets Programme Delivery

The committee considered a report from the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedR) which provided a summary progress update on the delivery of the Future High Streets Fund (FHSE) programme since June 2021.

The Head of NWedR presented the report. He gave a short summary of the key issues of the three projects that form the basis of the fund namely: the former magistrates court, Worcester Street / Bromsgrove Street connectivity, and the bull ring site.

The Head of NWedR outlined the next key steps for each project. He assured members that all three projects were on programme and reminded them that the

deadline for spending the monies received from the fund was 31 March 2024.

The committee fully considered the report and were given the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on any issues that had not been included in the update.

Agreed: The update be noted.

OS.73 Update on the Levelling Up Fund

The committee considered a report from the Head of NWedR which provided a summary progress update on the Levelling Up Fund (LUF).

The Head of NWedR presented the report. Members were advised that in June 2021 the council submitted a £17.9m LUF 'package bid' for Kidderminster, which was approved on 27 October 2021.

The Head of NWedR explained that the Kidderminster LUF bid was a culture and heritage led, town centre regeneration proposal. It would strengthen a key town centre heritage asset as a culture space and venue, bring back into use an empty listed building and improve a pedestrian and cycling artery linking the heritage and natural assets with Kidderminster town centre. He gave a short summary of the three interconnected projects: (project one) town hall, (project two) new boutique hotel and (project three) canal towpath, that form the package.

The Head of NWedR explained that the package had been chosen as it would deliver against the longer-term vision for Kidderminster. He said the LUF package compliments and builds on the £20.5m FHSF programme and the wider town centre re-purposing effort.

The Head of NWedR outlined the next key steps for the LUF programme.

The committee fully considered the report and were given the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on any issues that had not been included in the update.

Agreed: The update be noted.

OS.74 Update from the Fireworks Review Panel

The committee received an update from the Chairman of the panel, Councillor S Miah, on the work of the Fireworks Review Panel. The panel had been established in response to the number of complaints received by members around the use of fireworks and the distress caused by the loud noise produced.

Councillor Miah explained the reasons why the work had been delayed and advised that the panel would reconvene in January 2022.

The Chairman of the committee, Councillor M Hart, acknowledged that the authority could only act within the current legislation on the use of fireworks, however it was within the remit of the panel to recommend a guidance policy relating to the use of

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fireworks on the council's own land. He asked that the review panel conclude its work and present the findings to the March meeting of the committee.

Agreed: The update be noted.

OS.75 Work Programme

The committee reviewed the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. The Chairman asked that the recommendations from the Fireworks Review Panel be added to the work programme for March and confirmed that as there were no items to consider in January, the meeting would be cancelled.

Agreed: The updated work programme be noted.

OS.76 Press Involvement

There were no further items for scrutiny that might require publicity.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6.55pm.