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COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 21 August 2019 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Matlock at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Chris Furness - In the Chair

Councillors Robert Archer, Jason Atkin, Sue Bull, Neil Buttle, Helen Froggatt, Clare Gamble, Susan Hobson, Tony Morley, Peter O'Brien, Joyce Pawley, Garry Purdy, Claire Raw, Alasdair Sutton, Colin Swindell, Steve Wain and Mark Wakeman.

Paul Wilson (Chief Executive), Lee Gardner (Legal Services Manager), Ashley Watts (Head of Community & Environmental Services), Steve Capes (Head of Regeneration and Policy), Rob Cogings (Head of Housing) and Jackie Cullen (Committee Assistant).

3 members of the public.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Martin Burfoot, Mike Ratcliffe and Andrew Statham. Councillors Robert Archer, Jason Atkin and Claire Raw attended as Substitute Members.

111/19 – MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor Jason Atkin, seconded by Councillor Susan Hobson and

RESOLVED That the minutes of the meeting of the Community & Environment Committee held on 26 June 2019 be approved as a correct record.
(unanimously)

The Minutes were signed by the Chairman.

112/19 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In accordance with the procedure for public participation, Mr Ken Parker (Matlock Community Vision) commented on Item 6 on the agenda: MATLOCK COMMUNITY VISION – LAND AT BAKEWELL ROAD, MATLOCK and Mr Peter Dobbs (Ashbourne Resident) commented on the

Ashbourne Memorial Park Bandstand in respect of ITEM 7 on the agenda: MEMORIAL BENCH DONATION POLICY, with particular reference to the Council's plans for the Bandstand in Ashbourne Memorial Park.

113/19 – MATLOCK COMMUNITY VISION – LAND AT BAKEWELL ROAD, MATLOCK

Councillor Colin Swindell arrived at 6.10pm during discussion of this item.

The Committee considered an updating report on progress with identifying redevelopment proposals for the Bakewell Road site, Matlock, and continued partnership working with the Matlock Community Vision Steering Group. The report sought approval to scope potential redevelopment opportunities for the site and note the proposed approach to the Commercial Board to secure project development funding.

An initial feasibility study had been commissioned by Matlock Community Vision (MCV) (funded by the District Council) undertaken by Aspinall Verdi Ltd, whose conclusions were set out in the report, together with a summary of the MCV feasibility study and additional work carried out by Thomas Lister Ltd, the Council's Commercial Advisor.

The Committee were advised that the Council's submission of an external funding bid for Matlock town centre (working alongside the MCV Steering Group) to the Government's Future High Streets Fund had been submitted on 22 March 2019, but this had unfortunately been unsuccessful. However, the Chief Executive had been notified by the Government that they were to carry out an analysis of all bids received and would then put forward helpful suggestions for future bids. The next round of the Fund would be announced in the New Year,

Members were reminded that a potential cinema use on the site had originally been put forward in 2017 following interest from a local entrepreneur and comprised a central element of the feasibility work commissioned by MCV. The Future High Streets Fund bid had also identified a small cinema with ancillary food and beverage as potential uses, to be explored through more detailed work. To this end, work had continued in order to establish interest in the site focusing on the area within the freehold ownership of the Council, as detailed in the report. The requirement for bus operators to maintain access through the site remained one of the problematic issues.

It was reported that a further meeting had been held with the Steering Group on 12 August and it was acknowledged that there was a need to test the viability of any new potential uses. Public consultation would be undertaken once further feasibility had been carried out and prior to the finalisation of any redevelopment scheme.

It was therefore proposed to undertake further feasibility work to scope potential redevelopment opportunities for the site, to include a small cinema development within the Market Hall, as set out in section 4 of the report. Officers proposed to present a further report to the Council's Commercial Board setting out the programme of work and resources required, and a further report would be brought back to Members in due course.

It was moved by Councillor Garry Purdy, seconded by Councillor Susan Hobson that

1. The Committee note the outcome of the Matlock Future High Streets Fund bid to Government;

2. The Committee note the further work undertaken by officers alongside the Future High Streets Fund bid to establish potential interest in the site and engagement with key stakeholders;
3. To undertake further feasibility work to scope redevelopment opportunities for the site to include a small cinema development in the Market Hall;
4. A further report be considered by the Council's Commercial Board to agree the forward work programme and resourcing, and approach to public consultation should feasibility work identify a workable scheme;
5. The Matlock Community Vision Steering Group are thanked for their continued joint working with the Council to develop potential options for the site.

An Amendment was moved by Councillor Peter O'Brien and seconded by Councillor Claire Raw to include the following additional recommendation:

- RESOLVED**
6. That urgent discussions take place at the highest level with Derbyshire County Council and bus operators to enable full redevelopment potential of the District Council's assets to be realised.

Voting:

For	5
Against	12
Abstentions	0

The Chairman declared the motion LOST.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote, and it was

- RESOLVED**
1. The Committee note the outcome of the Matlock Future High Streets Fund bid to Government;
 2. The Committee note the further work undertaken by officers alongside the Future High Streets Fund bid to establish potential interest in the site and engagement with key stakeholders;
 3. To undertake further feasibility work to scope redevelopment opportunities for the site to include a small cinema development in the Market Hall;
 4. A further report be considered by the Council's Commercial Board to agree the forward work programme and resourcing, and approach to public consultation should feasibility work identify a workable scheme;
 5. The Matlock Community Vision Steering Group are thanked for their continued joint working with the Council to develop potential options for the site.

Voting:

For	16
Against	0
Abstentions	1

The Chairman declared the motion CARRIED.

114/19 – MEMORIAL BENCH DONATION POLICY

The Committee considered an outline of the proposed new Memorial Bench Policy to manage requests for memorial benches on Council owned land.

In response to Mr Dodd's comments under the public participation item, the Head of Regeneration and Policy advised that the Council's plans for the bandstand, or any other memorials in the district, were not covered by this report.

As part of the Corporate Signage report to Governance and Resources Committee, 29th June 2017 (Minute No. 65/17), it was resolved:

3. That a new, easy maintenance, approach to memorial plaques is approved, enabling the Council to promote subscriptions to existing wooden benches in our parks; the plaque and bench to be maintained for a specified number of years by the Council, with the plaque provided by the subscriber to our specification.

The methodology for the policy in order to deliver the Resolution was set out in the report.

It was reported that members of the public regularly made requests for memorial benches to be placed on council land, leading to some areas, especially Bakewell and Monsal Head, being oversubscribed. However, these areas did have other undedicated benches that could host a memorial. Presently the Council only provided a full bench and dedication service, where space allowed, for a donation of £680.

Comparison with other Councils had been undertaken, and proposed donation levels based on the existing costs for benches and plaques were tabled in paragraph 2.7 of the report, with a proposal to review the prices annually, as outlined in the report.

The Guidance Notes for applicants were attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

It was moved by Councillor Helen Froggatt, seconded by Councillor Mark Wakeman and

RESOLVED That the Memorial Bench Donation Policy, set out in Appendix 1 to the
(unanimously) report, is approved.

115/19 – VOLUNTARY RIGHT TO BUY SCHEME

The Committee considered a report that set out the development of the Voluntary Right to Buy (VRTB) scheme established by the government and the housing sector, as summarised in the report. The report also identified a way in which the scheme could be delivered in the Derbyshire Dales.

An initial pilot ran during 2016-17 with five housing associations across England, and a larger regional pilot was confirmed in the Government's 2017 Autumn Budget, which was open to participating housing association tenants in the East and West Midlands.

The agreement between the Government and the Housing association Sector was based on four key principles, as listed below and detailed in the report:

- Right to Buy level discounts for eligible housing association tenants;
- Board control over which homes to sell;
- Full compensation;
- Flexible one for one replacement through new supply nationally.

As government policy had evolved, the largest development funding grants were being awarded to the biggest Housing Associations. The merger between Waterloo and Fortis to form Platform in 2018/19 meant that the new combined housing association could build an additional 500 per year, thus maintaining a close working relationship with Platform was key to the future delivery of affordable homes within the Derbyshire Dales.

Details of the policy adopted by Platform were set out in the report, together with a number of exempt categories. It was reported that Platform had previously decided to decline applications from rural settlements, but as this had proved hard for them to defend they were considering rural applications on a case by case basis, due to legal challenge.

The Regional pilot had been based on a ballot and tenants were given a 3 month window in which to log in to a government website, expressing an interest to buy. Across the East and West Midlands funding existed for 20,000 of the 40,000 bids that had been received. However, as the initial pilot was underspent with a high dropout rate, it was possible that the ballot would reopen. The procedure for tenants was set out in the report.

The existing Right To Buy scheme would continue to operate in the normal way, i.e. people who were tenants of the District Council before 1996 and who were still living in their original property had a protected Right To Buy. It was noted that there were currently fewer than 10 Right To Buy sales per year.

It was moved by Councillor Jason Atkin, seconded by Councillor Tony Morley and

RESOLVED That subject to Member approval the following criteria be adopted in the delivery of the Voluntary Right To Buy scheme:

- (i) The scheme is restricted to Ashbourne and Matlock
- (ii) The scheme only operates for the life time of the VRTB deal, funded by government
- (iii) 1 for 1 replacement takes place in accordance with the government timetable, i.e. within 3 years
- (iv) Platform work with the Housing Team to secure replacement stock as near as possible to the sold homes and to support other council initiatives including the Hurst Farm regeneration project and empty homes
- (v) The scheme would only apply to houses, with bungalows and flats excluded.

Voting:

For	15
Against	1
Abstentions	1

The Chairman declared the motion CARRIED.

116/19 – WASTE & RECYCLING – ORGANICS CONTRACT

Councillor Jason Atkin left the meeting at 6.52pm during discussion of this item.

The Committee considered an updating report on the procurement of the new contract for the disposal and processing of organic waste.

As part of a joint contract in 2010 with Derby City Council and South Derbyshire District Council, the District Council had been disposing of its organic waste at Vital Earth Ltd. However, this contract was due to end in June 2020, and for reasons set out in the report, District Council officers had decided not to undertake a joint procurement exercise for renewal. Therefore the District Council's Waste & Recycling Procurement team, supported by Eunomia Research & Consulting Ltd. and colleagues from Derbyshire County Council's Procurement department, had developed a specification and strategy for the procurement of a new organic waste contract. The main scope of the contract was summarised in the report, and on 22 May 2019 the contract was advertised in the open market. Following a competitive tendering and evaluation process, Vital Earth were awarded the contract in July 2019, at a competitive cost which was more financially advantageous than the current contract.

The new contract was due to start in June 2020, when the current one ended, for a period of 26 months, with the opportunity to extend for a further two years.

It was moved by Councillor Sue Bull, seconded by Councillor Alasdair Sutton and

RESOLVED That the awarding of the new organic waste disposal contract to Vital
(unanimously) Earth Ltd be noted.

MEETING CLOSED 7.03PM

CHAIRMAN