

# **STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **HEALTH AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING**

### **Minutes**

**MONDAY, 12 JUNE 2023**

PRESENT: Councillor K Mills (Chair)

Councillors M Durose, K Hoptroff, B Hughes, M Johnson, J Jones,  
J Kempster, J Porter, R Ward and L Whitehouse

IN ATTENDANCE: C Atkins, P Barks, B Cawley, M Gledhill, I Herdman, T Holmes,  
A Hulme, L, Malyon, A Parkes, D Pascall, D Proudlove, P  
Roberts and N Yates

APOLOGIES: Councillors M Haines, J Salt, D Shaw and C Smith

1 **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS, IF ANY.**

Substitutions were as follows:

- Councillor Pascall for Councillor Haines
- Councillor Parkes for Councillor Salt
- Councillor Herdman for Councillor Shaw
- Councillor Barks for Councillor Smith

2 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.**

**DECIDED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Community Overview and  
Scrutiny Panel held on 13 March 2023 be approved.

3 **URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS, IF ANY. (24 HOURS NOTICE TO BE  
PROVIDED TO THE CHAIRMAN).**

An issue was raised regarding the appropriate Council logo being incorporated in  
documentation.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:-**

<b>Agenda No.</b>	<b>Member Declaring Interest</b>	<b>Nature of Interest</b>
Not specified	Councillor Porter	Other – Employed by Staffordshire Police
Agenda item 6 – Questions to Portfolio Holders	Councillors Herdman & Holmes	Other- Member of Forsbrook Parish Council

## Health and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 12 June 2023

	Councillor Durose	Other – Shortly to be appointed to Forsbrook Parish
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### 5 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS IF ANY.

#### **Questions received from Cllr Porter:**

1. What plans does the new Portfolio Holder for Climate Change have to release the Plan for Nature developed by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, commissioned by me as his predecessor, over the last year and how does he intend to implement it?

#### **Response:**

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust has informed officers that they will provide them with a first draft of the Plan for Nature within the next fortnight. A meeting been arranged for the first week of July to discuss the draft and consider approaches for launching the strategy. Whilst these arrangements are yet to be determined, I can assure the Councillor that it will include a presentation by the Wildlife Trust to this panel. With regards implementation, the Council has successfully recruited to the role of Biodiversity Officer and this post will be key to implementation of the plan. I will provide further information on implementation of the plan once I have had opportunity to review its content.

By way of supplementary questions, Cllr Porter enquired if a budget was available to implement the Plan for Nature and how relationships with partners would be strengthened. Councillor Yates advised, that the budget had been previously agreed, there were financial restraints but there was contingency for climate change work. Once the Plan for Nature had been received, it was anticipated that town and parish councils would be involved with the implementation of the strategy and be based around the seasons.

A meeting was planned with Jeff Sim – Staffordshire Wildlife Trust at the beginning of August and the Communities and Climate Change team had been initially invited to visit Biddulph Town Council. Reference was made to task and finish working groups and parish and town councils being empowered to deliver their green spaces.

2. Will the Portfolio Holder be carrying on my Climate Change Community Fund and will he commit to ensuring that value for money is obtained from all projects funded by the scheme?

#### **Response:**

Yes, the Council intends to continue to deliver the fund and will provide regular updates to this Panel.

In response to a query around maximisation of the take up of this fund and value for money, the Portfolio Holder advised, that he hoped task and finish working groups consisting of a geographical spread of members, could review different aspects of the plans to mitigate climate change. He had reviewed all of the current grants awarded and complimented Councillor Porter on the work carried out to date.

Going forward, he would continue to ensure all monies were spent wisely and that priority would be given to biodiversity and nature recovery projects.

**Questions received from Cllr Ward**

3. The previous administration created a new Community Lottery to raise additional funding for local volunteer groups. The contract was signed in January and had a 6-month lead in time for delivery. Could you please update this council on the progress of this and if it has fallen behind schedule, when we can anticipate its final roll out?

**Response:**

The Community Lottery is on schedule to be launched within the timescales originally set out in the Cabinet Delegated Decision of 13<sup>th</sup> January. As set out in that report, the Gambling Commission can take up to six months to approve the establishment of a local authority lottery. This approval is now in place and we have arranged an on-line event on 27<sup>th</sup> June at 11am to encourage good causes from across the district to sign-up and benefit from the lottery. The first ticket sales will then start on 11<sup>th</sup> July with the first prize draw on the 29<sup>th</sup> July. I would encourage all Councillors to encourage all clubs, charities and societies in their wards to sign-up and use the lottery to raise additional funds.

In response to queries around the eligibility criteria, further detail prior to the rollout of the scheme and measures to ensure funds raised were awarded to community groups, the Portfolio Holder explained that councillors had been fully briefed earlier in the year. He would ensure as much information as possible would be supplied to community groups, prior to the launch later in June. An explanation of the operation of the fund was provided to members which would be reviewed after a year and reported back to this Panel.

4. Forsbrook Parish Council have successfully negotiated the release of funding from SMDC to replace their localised CCTV system that was damaged several years ago. The money was due to be awarded following a successful insurance claim by SMDC. Forsbrook Parish Council have provided the necessary quotes to install a new locally administered system, as agreed last year, and are now awaiting the funding to be released. Could you please confirm when these monies will be released?

**Response:**

The District Council commissioned independent experts to carry out a review of its public realm CCTV in 2018. Following this review, the Council decided to remove the lowest use cameras and retain only those in Leek, Biddulph and Cheadle; and to update the control room and retained cameras from an outdated analogue system to a "future-proof" digital system. The Forsbrook cameras was one of the low use cameras that the Council agreed to decommission.

I am informed that the Parish Council asked the previous administration to fund the re-instatement of the camera but that the Cabinet did not make a formal decision about the funding. In response to Councillor Ward's question, I will ask officers to prepare a paper that sets out all the relevant information so that the Cabinet can make an informed decision on whether or not the funding should be approved. This would include financial information and consider compliance with the Code of Practice. The Council is required by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 to have regard to the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice when exercising its functions in this respect, and hence would need to satisfy itself that the code would be complied with.

## **Health and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 12 June 2023**

Councillor Ward requested assurance that the Council would honour the commitment to protect the residents of Forsbrook. The Portfolio Holder advised, that the Authority was following the appropriate principles to ensure public safety and law enforcement, he was aware of the on-going issues around CCTV and the Police recommendation to purchase mobile cameras would be investigated further.

### **6 BITE-SIZE BRIEFING. (PRESENTATION)**

The Panel received a presentation from Neil Rodgers - Executive Director (Place). This included:-

- The Council's Decision Making Process
- Forward Plan
- Overview & Scrutiny
- Review of Scrutiny
- Role of the Health & Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel
- Work Programme development
- Task & Finish Groups
- Role of Officers

**DECIDED:** That the presentation be received.

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date