

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

Present: Councillor P Stuart (Chair)

Councillors J Robinson JE Green
J Williamson H Cameron
P Gilchrist S Mountney
EA Grey L Rennie
A Davies H Gorman
S Powell-Wilde J Bird
T Jones C Cooke (In place
of P Cleary)

39 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that due to a technical issue, the meeting would be recorded but not live streamed.

The Chair advised the Committee that the Leverhulme appeals had been rejected by the Planning Inspectorate and placed on record his thanks to all of the officers and campaigners involved in the appeals. Councillors Green, Gilchrist and Gorman echoed the Chair's remarks.

40 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received by Councillor Pat Cleary, with Councillor Chris Cooke in attendance as a substitute.

41 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

42 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 12 July 2023 and 27 July 2023 be approved as a correct record.

43 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Chair reported that there were no public questions, statements, petitions or questions by members.

44 **DEPARTMENT FOR LEVELLING UP, HOUSING & COMMUNITIES
SIMPLIFICATION PATHFINDER PILOT**

The Director of Regeneration and Place introduced the report which sought approval to take part in a Simplification Pilot delivery model known as a “Pathfinder” as established by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) which the Council had been selected and formally invited to join.

The proposed pilot would streamline the delivery of 3 local growth funds (external grants) overseen by DLUHC. The funding streams in question were the Towns Deal, Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) and the Council’s Levelling Up Round 1 (LUF1) allocation. The Pilot would allow the council to amalgamate the three funds into one large regeneration fund and only one claim will be completed each quarter instead of three separate claims.

The Committee discussed the benefits of the pilot and thanked officers for their work in securing the potential pilot to bring the projects together. In response to queries by members the Director of Regeneration and Place gave assurances that the additional flexibility would not unduly delay the delivery of projects but ensure that the projects were fully developed, and the funding was in place. Further assurances were given by the Director of Finance that effective treasury management was in place and that capital funding was used to offset borrowing costs.

The Committee further discussed the governance of the delivery of the projects, reiterating that the Council was the accountable body and seeking broad representation on any oversight bodies.

Resolved – That

- (1) the invitation to participate in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Simplification Pilot be accepted.**
- (2) the Director of Regeneration and Place be authorised to enter into the Pathfinder Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance.**

45 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair introduced the report which provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and review its work across the municipal year. The Chair brought members’ attention to items for future consideration and matters

outside of the Committee where it was noted that all items were now scheduled.

Additional information was sought on the detail to be included in the briefing notes listed in the work programme and the report on the introduction of the ERP system. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the workshop on risk would be a collaborative session held in-person.

Resolved – That the work programme be noted.