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ECONOMY, REGENERATION & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting: 7 September 2023

At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Claire Vibert (Chair) in the chair; Councillor Dena Ryness (Vice-Chair); Councillors Helen Foster-Grime, James Frizzell, Ian Hunter, Ian Powney, John Taylor and Pete West.

1. MINUTES

The minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 15 June 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

In relation to agenda item 5 'Economy & Regeneration and Climate Change & Environment Portfolio Performance and Resources Reports: 2022/23 Annual reports' of the minutes of the last meeting, it was asked that the following be circulated to members:

- the reports relating to the policies developed for the Draft Local Plan and considered by the Development Plan Working Party; and
- further detail as to the types of employers signed up to the Greater Manchester (GM) Good Employment Charter scheme.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

The following interests were declared:

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Paul Richards	Agenda item 5 'Interchange Park Update' and agenda item 11 'Hazel Grove Ambulance Station' as Chief Executive of the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC).

3. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

RESOLVED - That the press and public be excluded for the following items of business (if required) as exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3, Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 as containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the local authority):

- agenda item 11 'Hazel Grove Ambulance Station'.

4. CALL-IN

There were no call-in items to consider.

5. STOCKPORT HOMES DELIVERY PLAN OUTCOMES 2022/23

A representative of the Director of Place Management submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which set out the Stockport Homes Group (SHG) delivery plan 2021 – 2026. The plan set out what SHG planned to deliver the period 2021 - 2026, how SHG and Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) would work together, and how tenants, the council and other stakeholders could measure the success of SHG in achieving its objectives.

Sandra Coleing (Assistant Chief Executive, SHG) attended the meeting to respond to questions from members.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:

- SHG were assessing properties built between 1950 and 1990 with a concrete frame to see whether reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) was present. It was noted that the housing regulator did not believe that RAAC was widespread in the housing stock, and that there was thought to be a small number of cases of RAAC present. If found, immediate action would be taken. The Scrutiny Committee would be kept informed of any developments.
- Due to the cost-of-living crisis, more and more customers were approaching Stockport Homes to 'Right Size' their property to better suit their needs.
- SHG were managing a backlog of repairs owing to the covid-19 pandemic. It was expected that the backlog of repairs could take up to 12 months. It was noted that customers were being kept informed on progress, and that emergency repairs were not affected.
- SHG were commended for the support they had provided to residents during the cost-of-living crisis.
- It was noted that cases of damp and mould had reduced but SHG were preparing for when the weather turned towards autumn/ winter. Ensuring that properties had not suffered from damp, mould or condensation had been a major focus of SHG's over the last 12 months.
- Progress on the Lancashire Hill regeneration plan would be reported to members when information became available.
- It was advised that the council were working with Homes England as to how additional grants could be sought in supporting more affordable housing for Stockport. Land availability, high construction costs and the cost of borrowing money were challenges for the target for building.

Thanks were expressed to officers for a comprehensive report.

RESOLVED – That the Stockport Homes Delivery Plan 2022/23 Outcomes Report be noted.

6. INTERCHANGE PARK UPDATE

A representative of the Director of Place Management submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing progress made in the design, construction and plans to

animate the park on top of the new interchange, and sought views of members to facilitate contribution to the final development stage prior to the grand opening in spring 2024.

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Housing (Councillor Colin MacAlister) attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Scrutiny Committee.

The Director of Place Management reported that he had written to members of the Communities & Transport Scrutiny Committee to offer his apologies that the committee had been inadvertently misled in relation to the provision of CCTV at the new interchange park. It was stated that it had always been the intention to provide CCTV through the new interchange development. However, it was noted that the key element in making the park a success was to animate it and bring people to it, thereby ensuring that it was a well-used and well-loved park which would consequently be a space that would feel safe for everyone.

The following comments were then made/ issues raised:

- It was noted that the report had also been considered by members of the Communities & Transport Scrutiny Committee.
- The park was an integral part of transformational change for the town centre and would be a visible sign of the council's regeneration ambitions. It was expected that the park would be a major asset to the town.
- It was noted that there would be CCTV to support the success of the park in ensuring it was well-used and respected.
- The park was designed with accessibility as a focus, and would have hearing loops, ramps, and a wheelchair-friendly trampoline.
- It was requested that further information on security measures to protect people's safety, and in particular, women and girls, be circulated to members.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report and progress on the park be noted; and

(2) that the use of existing funding to maintain and develop the space be endorsed.

7. PUBLIC FACING INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO ASSIST TENANTS IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

A representative of the Director of Place Management submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on a number of initiatives being delivered under the GM Good Landlords Scheme to improve the private rented sector, as well as what information was currently available on the council website in relation to the sector, and what new information was being added following a recent review.

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Housing (Councillor Colin MacAlister) attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Scrutiny Committee.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:

- It was felt that detail on user experience on the council's website could be useful in understanding how people in the privately rented sector are engaging with the council and their customer journey when contacting the council.

- Information in relation to the private rented sector had been recently updated on the council's website, and included information on the cost-of-living crisis and partner agencies that could provide support if required.
- It was suggested that useful information for residents on the council's website and SHG's website be consolidated.

RESOLVED – That the report and work of the Housing Standards Team be noted.

8. DRAFT EDUCATION CONTRIBUTIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) CONSULTATION

A representative of the Director of Place Management submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) on the proposed Education Contributions supplementary planning document (SPD) and consultation approach.

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Housing (Councillor Colin MacAlister) attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Scrutiny Committee.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:

- It was noted that all section 106 contributions would be subject to a viability test.
- The importance of infrastructure around developments, particularly schooling provision, was stressed.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. PORTFOLIO DASHBOARD

The Scrutiny Committee considered the Stockport Council Portfolio Performance Dashboard for the Economy and Regeneration and Climate Change and Environment portfolios.

It was noted that this was a standing item at meetings where there were no quarterly or annual performance reports to consider.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

10. AGENDA PLANNING

A representative of the Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Governance submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which set out the work programme the Scrutiny Committee, and detailed forward plan items that fell within the remit of the committee for information.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:

- It was asked that figures on evictions, homelessness, and temporary accommodation be included within the report on homelessness scheduled to be considered at the November meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

- That a report on the six housing providers in the borough and how they work together be brought to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee or a meeting of the Scrutiny Review Panel as part of their review into the accountability of social housing providers to the council and residents of Stockport.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

Item containing information 'not for publication'

11. HAZEL GROVE AMBULANCE STATION

A representative of the Director of Place Management submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on the delivery of a new ambulance station on the site of Hazel Grove Park and Ride which would replace the existing North West Ambulance Service facility at Travis Brow.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.36 pm