

ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

25th January 2022

OPEN

PRESENT:

Labour Group

Councillor Taylor (Chair) Pegg (Vice-Chair)
Councillors, Heath Singh and Southerd.

Conservative Group

Councillors Brown, Watson, Haines, Redfern and Smith.

Independent Group

Councillors Fitzpatrick and MacPherson.

Non-Grouped

Councillor Wheelton

EDS/169 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that apologies have been received from Councillor Corbin (Conservative Group).

EDS/170 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of Meetings held on 23rd September 2021 and 11th November 2021 were noted and approved as true record and signed by the Chair.

EDS/171 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed of a declaration of interest had been received from Councillor Smith relating to EDS/175 by virtue of being a County Council.

EDS/172 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Public had been received.

EDS/173 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

EDS/174 CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY GROUP

The Head of Environmental Services presented the report and informed the Committee that the Council was reaudited during November and December 2021 and that the audit had identified 6 nonconformities along with 12 observations to make improvements. It was noted the Auditors visited operational locations and spoke to staff, which demonstrated their understanding of environmental issues and awareness of the Councils climate change aspirations.

The Staff Travel plan was also presented which highlighted the progress made regarding sustainable travel to work along with the carbon emission reductions in the Council fleet. The Committee was informed that new Waste Hubs had been installed in all public buildings and that an amendment had been made to the website advising the public on carbon reduction and environmental activities and gave advice on how they could contribute. The installation of 16 electric charging points across the District along with the funding to install a further 24 was noted.

The Chair and Members recognised the excellent progress that had took place and congratulated the Head of Environment Services and the team regarding the significant amount of work which had been carried out and for successfully securing Green Grants.

Councillor Wheelton raised the importance of supporting residents in rural areas in relation to fuel poverty.

The Strategic Director (Service Delivery) advised the Committee that there were proposals to engage with businesses and social housing, to support households to upgrade their homes with energy efficient measures and that the Council was working with partner organisations on the future use of hydrogen.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1. The Committee noted the progress made in improving the environmental performance of the Council further to this Committee establishing a Corporate Environmental Sustainability Group in August 2018.***
- 1.2. The Committee noted the content of the report and approved that the Corporate Environmental Sustainability Group was making good progress in delivering the environmental improvements contained within the terms of reference.***

EDS/175 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORTS

The Head of Planning and Strategic Housing presented the report and informed the Committee that whilst restrictions had been in place for the 2021/21 due to Covid, the housing delivery had been good for the 3rd consecutive year and that 165 affordable homes had been delivered. It was further noted that employment land was still becoming available within regeneration streams.

Members congratulated the Planning Team on the work carried out and confirmed that even though there had been challenging times there was still good news and some excellent results achieved.

Members raised queries regarding the number of residential and business properties that had been built on brownfield sites and how other councils had been impacted by Covid.

The Head of Planning and Strategic Housing confirmed that 132 residential properties had been built on brownfield sites and information on the number of business units would be provided to the Committee. Members were also advised that various factors such as rural locations and sought after areas had affected other councils but it would be difficult to quantify how this had affected their housing delivery.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the content of the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) and authorised the publication of the document on the Council's website.

EDS/176 **PETITION AGAINST THE TINTED WINDOWS REQUIREMENT IN THE PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY**

The Senior Licensing Officer presented the report and explained how the requirement was introduced as a safeguarding measure. The Committee was informed that a petition had been received in relation to the requirement regarding tinted windows whereby drivers had stated that they had found it difficult to find a suitable vehicle which was less than eight years old without tinted windows and that the windows were expensive to replace.

Members sought clarification on how many private hire vehicles failed the tinted window test and whether it was private hire operators or license holders who had submitted the petition.

The Senior Licensing Officer advised that between 10-20% of private hire drivers failed the tinted window test and that the majority of those who had submitted the petition were license holders.

Members understood the concerns of the petitioners but expressed the need to ensure that measures were in place to protect vulnerable people.

Councillor Southerd sought clarity regarding advice given to license holders. The Senior Licensing Officer advised that the policy provided detail of the compliance required in respect of tinted windows.

Councillor Southerd suggested a review of the guidance notes and the application form so that drivers were fully aware of what the requirements were.

RESOLVED:

1.1 *The Committee reviewed the petition regarding the tinted windows requirement of the Council's Private Hire Licensing policy*

- 1.2 *The Committee resolved to:***
Keep the tinted windows requirement within the policy

EDS/177 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Strategic Director–Service Delivery presented the report to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

The Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.

EDS/178 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it would be likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

TO RECEIVE THE EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:

The Exempt Minutes of the Meetings held on 23rd September 2021 were received.

EXEMPT QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11

The Committee was informed that no exempt questions from Members of the Council had been received.

CONTINUATION OF TEMPORARY RESTRUCTURE DUE TO COVID19

The Committee approved the recommendation within the report.

The meeting terminated at 19.25 hours

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR

CHAIR