



Buckinghamshire Council

High Wycombe Town Committee

Minutes

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2021 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER QUEEN VICTORIA ROAD HIGH WYCOMBE, COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 8.00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

A Alam, M Angell, M Ayub, K Bates, A Baughan, T Green, S Guy, O Hayday, A Hussain, I Hussain, M Hussain, M Hussain, M Knight, S Raja, N Rana, N Thomas, P Turner and J Wassell

OTHERS PRESENT

S Ali, N Graham, F Mugari, A Sherwood, Cllr Towns, M Williams (HWBID CO) and I Malik

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs L Clarke (OBE) S Barrett, D Hayday M Hussain (JP) and Miss K Wood.

2 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the High Wycombe Town Committee held on 28 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor P Turner updated Members on the petition brought to the previous meeting relating to the children's play areas on the Pine Trees estate. He confirmed that Council had now met with Taylor Wimpey and that an update report would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received

4 HW BID CO PRESENTATION

Melanie Williams Chief Executive of HW BidCo gave a presentation on the recent summer activities and grass roots events that had taken place as a key part of the recovery of the Town Centre. It was highlighted that the events would continue to be held on a little and often basis until the challenges presented by Covid had been fully overcome.

A Member commented on the increase in rough sleepers within the town and its impact on the town's recovery. It was agreed that this was indeed was a problem which required a long term strategy to be put into place to tackle the issue, and that in working closely with partners funding should be ring fenced into the Street Life Programme to improve the current situation.

Members thanked Ms Williams for an informative presentation and for all her hard work.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

5 TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

A report was submitted which provided an update on the current and proposed activities undertaken by the Council in relation to the delivery of the regeneration of the Town Centre.

Members were informed that the Council had been awarded a total of £11.8m with match funding of £3m over 3 years for Future High Streets Funding. Currently £6.7m had been received with the remaining amount to be distributed at intervals.

Other developments included the production of a regeneration framework which would set out the key principles and plans for town centres across the County. The framework would be developed with input from a range of partners. It was also highlighted that the council was looking to update and refresh the High Wycombe Regeneration strategy making it more relevant to current times, and providing a collective vision for the town centre.

The presenter stated that as further more detailed information on all the projects underway became available, it would be shared in due course at future meetings of this committee, so that Members could have an opportunity to input and comment.

A Member asked what was being done to address the disproportionately higher unemployment rates within the local area and in reskilling of the workforce especially following the impact of Covid. He was informed that the council was working closely with partners to alleviate these problems and featured as a priority in the plans for recovery. It was also mentioned that the services provided by the Buckinghamshire Skills Hub and Business Growth Hub that were hosted by Bucks Business First were available for all to use.

Another Member emphasised the need to clean up the areas around some of the ancient historical monuments within the town, and enquired as to whether any funds via the High Street Fund had been ring fenced for the 'Grot spots'. The presenting officer stated that the long term future for High Wycombe Town would be picked up within the refresh strategy by way of an action plan, and assured the Member that whilst it could not be confirmed whether the money would be ring fenced, the regeneration of High Wycombe was indeed a priority area for the Council, and that the matter would be rectified.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

6 QUARTER 1 BUDGETARY CONTROL

A report was considered which provided information on the quarter 1 revenue forecast position for 2021/22 and the impact of working balances at year end for the High Wycombe Town Committee. The net forecast outturn position for 2021/22 was £351k a favourable variance of £15k against a total budget of £366k.

The information was highlighted within the table on page 15 of the agenda, covering activity areas such as cemeteries, community grants, allotments and community centres.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

7 WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme report was presented for information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the High Wycombe Town Committee be held on Tuesday 23 November 2021 at 7pm at QVR High Wycombe.