

Eden District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

Date: 12 May 2022 Venue: The Council Chamber, Town Hall, Penrith Time: 6.45 pm

Present:

Chairman: Councillor J Raine

Vice Chairman: Councillor D Ryland

Councillors: D Banks G Nicolson OBE
R Burgin G Simpkins
M Hanley D Smith
D Holden D Wicks
D Lawson

Officers Present: Les Clark, Deputy Chief Executive
Laura Cadman, Assistant Director Delivery
Corentin Cortiula-Phelipot, Sustainability Team Leader
Fergus McMorrow, Assistant Director Development

Democratic Services Officer: Karen Edmondson

OS/63/05/22 Apologies for Absence

At the beginning of the meeting the Chair announced that there was to be an alteration to the order of the agenda. Agenda item 6 'Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and Cabinet Work Programme 2021-22' was moved to Agenda Item 10. This was to help further the efficient transition of business. These minutes reflect that amended order.

No apologies for absence were received.

OS/64/05/22 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

OS/65/05/22 Minutes

Proposed by Councillor Raine
Seconded by Councillor Simpkins

and **RESOLVED** that the minutes OS/54/03/22 to OS/62/03/22 of the meeting of this Committee held on 1 March 2022 be confirmed and approved by the Chairman as a correct record of those proceedings.

OS/66/05/22 Portfolio Holder Question and Answer Session

The Chairman welcome the Leader to the meeting for a question and answer session. The Leader gave a presentation on the Planning aspect of her portfolio. Upon completion of the presentation the Chairman opened the floor to questions from Members.

A Member asked if the A66 duelling that was mentioned in the presentation is not in direct contradiction to nutrient neutrality, as this project will require lots of temporary services.

The Assistant Director Development explained that National Highways have been alerted to the issue and they are engaged with Natural England on it. It is likely to be a number of years before this project starts, so there will be time to identify and implement mitigation to achieve nutrient neutrality. We will continue to monitor their actions in this regard.

A Member asked if the Consultation on the Beacon was still ongoing.

The Leader responded that the consultation had closed a while back, and the examiner had responded. The Assistant Director Development commented that the plan would need to go to a referendum and a report will be brought to members in the near future.

A Member raised a question on nutrient neutrality. As farmers have applied for grants to have their slurry tanks covered, because of the increased in raw materials they can no longer afford to do this – have you had any feedback on this?

The Leader confirmed that she had not been in contact with anyone on this.

A Member raised a question on nutrient neutrality. They raised the fact that these measures were trying to reduce algae blooms, the cause of that is too much fertilizer on land. What is happening to reduce fertilizer? Surely housing development has a huge impact on that. How does Housing development lead to increase nitrogen and phosphorus in the rivers?

The Assistant Director Development commented that it is both agricultural fertiliser and housing development. Foul waste from residential accommodation is the main problem. Outflows from waste treatment plants can go into the rivers and add undesirable nutrients.

A Member raised a query in regards to climate change, here the Member raised that developers are using gas boilers in their developments. The Member queried if this is going to change?

The Assistant Director Development explained that there was new building regulations coming into force that will be stricter in regards to carbon.

A Member raised a query in regards to nutrient neutrality, and if surface water was included in this, as some developments have an excess of surface water that is going into rivers.

The Assistant Director Development commented that there is a link – but it is not as big as an implication as other factors. There is lots of factors to this, and he believes that this isn't a central consideration in the nutrient neutrality measures.

A Member raised a query in regards to nutrient neutrality, and if Council's can mitigate this by taking agricultural fields out of circulation.

The Assistant Director Development explained that fertiliser and livestock can contribute, this can be offset by taking nutrients out of the system by changing agricultural land uses.

A Member queried the Planning enforcement backlog. They asked where the Council stands as of right now with the backlog.

The Assistant Director Development stated that a written response will be given to this question.

A Member requested that they would like to see a future projection of this backlog if we are actively reducing the backlog now.

A Member raised a query on nutrient neutrality, they queried that since this scheme was going to cost money, they hoped that this isn't going to impact the level of affordable housing provided by developers.

The Assistant Director Development confirmed that existing applications should not be impacted, but additional costs to developers related to nutrient neutrality mitigation may have some impact.

A Member queried that lack of communication between Cumbria County Council and Eden District Council on enforcement matters, they asked that with LGR occurring, will there be better communication between the two organisations?

At 8:45 Councillor Hanley left the meeting.

The Assistant Director Development stated that, although communication does take place there would be better communication and a common set of priorities when there is a unitary authority.

At 8:48 Councillor Hanley re-joined the meeting.

A member queried the recent announcement that the Weymouth Pine outside Voreda House is due to be used as an art installation. They asked whose idea was this, how much will it cost and who will install it.

The Leader responded that she wasn't sure whose idea it was. She stated that the costs shouldn't be majorly significant.

OS/67/05/22 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2021-22

Members considered Report No: DoR41/22 of the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee which presents the work of the Committee and its Task and Finish Groups during the 2021 – 2022 Council Year.

The Chair informed the meeting that due to a change in the constitution there is no longer an obligation to take this item onto Full Council. Therefore the recommendation will be altered.

Proposed by Councillor Wicks
Seconded by Councillor Banks

and **RESOLVED** that the work of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Task and Finish Groups during the 2021-2022 Council year be noted.

OS/68/05/22 Single Site Update

Members considered Report No: DCE28/22 of the Deputy Chief Executive which sought to provide an update on progress with the single site programme.

Members raised the following points in debate:

- The costings of the Salix Funding;
- The sale of Mansion House;
- The details and logistics around utilising the Council Chamber as a 'soft trial' for events;
- The implications of nutrient neutrality on the sale of mansion house;
- The implications of Local Government Reorganisation on the use of Voreda House as a local service hub.

The Deputy Chief Executive informed Members that the sale of Mansion House had restarted, and that they had swapped heads of terms with the developer. In relation to the use of Voreda House as a local service hub, he clarified that it is too early to state the use of it in relation to Local Government Reorganisation, however, it allows the opportunity for jobs to be located here.

The Assistant Director Development confirmed that the development of Mansion House would have to be in line with nutrient neutrality, the Council would work with the developer on it like any other application.

Proposed by Councillor Banks
Seconded by Councillor Wicks

and **RESOLVED** that this Committee notes the report.

OS/69/05/22 Zero Carbon Update

Members considered Report No: DCE29/22 of the Assistant Director Delivery in respect of an update on the progress of the Zero Carbon Strategy and associated action plan, with particular attention to the COP26 and Green Business Grant Funds.

Members raised the following queries:

- The use of the COP26 Community Fund and who could apply for it;
- The online tool that assesses the carbon footprint at a parish level;
- Why was Eden's carbon levels so high?

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that the reason that Eden's carbon levels are so high, despite being sparsely populated, is the M6 running through the district and a cement works. These are two big contributors.

A written response was undertaken to be provided in relation to the online carbon footprint tool.

Proposed by Councillor Lawson
Seconded by Councillor Wicks

and **RESOLVED** that Overview and Scrutiny Committee note this report.

OS/70/05/22 Section 106 Planning Agreements Task and Finish Group

Members considered Report No: DCE30/22 of the Assistant Director Development in respect of the formation of the Task and Finish Group and the Terms of Reference.

Proposed by Councillor Lawson
Seconded by Councillor Banks

and **RESOLVED** that Committee notes the contents of the report.

OS/71/05/22 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and Cabinet Work Programme 2021-22

Members considered Report No: DoR40/22 of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which:

1. Reviews the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the remainder of the municipal year 2021-22, and the first meeting of the municipal year 2022-23. The report also invites, as a continuous option, suggestions for possible agenda items from all non-Executive Members; and
2. Notes the Cabinet Work programme and considers any items which might benefit from the input of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to the Cabinet making a decision.

Members raised the following queries:

- The desire to have the Leader back for a Questions and Answer session on different areas of her portfolio;
- The need for Members to have a list of all the portfolio holder responsibilities;
- The need for the portfolio holder presentations to be time-limited in order for the session to be better managed;

Proposed by Councillor Ryland
Seconded by Councillor Smith

and **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the municipal year 2021-22 and the first meeting of the municipal year 2022-23 be noted, and any revisions be agreed.

2. That the Cabinet Work Programme be noted.

OS/72/05/22 Any Other Items which the Chair decides are urgent

The Chair raised the fact that she would like to see a report on the Council's Gas Supply brought to Committee. She had talked to the Officers prior to the meeting about this possibility.

OS/73/05/22 Date of Next Scheduled Meeting

The date of the next scheduled meeting was confirmed as Thursday 7 June 2022 at 6:45pm.

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm

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