

Minutes of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Walsall Council House

Tuesday, 9 July 2024 at 6.00p.m.

Committee Members present: Councillor M Follows (Chair)
Councillor J Whitehouse (Vice-Chair)
Councillor E Russell
Councillor S Cheema
Councillor A Hicken
Councillor I Hussain
Councillor R Larden
Councillor K Margetts
Councillor G Singh-Sohal

Officers present: Katie Moreton - Director of Place and Environment
Paul Gordon – Director of Resilient Communities
Matt Powis – Senior Democratic Services Officer

74. Apologies

An apology was received from Councillor Bott.

75. Substitutions

Councillor Russell substituted for Councillor Bott.

76. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest or party whip.

77. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

There were no items to consider in private session.

78. Minutes

A copy of the Minutes of the meeting held on the 11 April 2024 was submitted. [annexed].

Resolved

That, the minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2024 copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

79. Areas of focus – 2023/24 and Forward Plans

The Committee noted the proposed areas of focus for the remaining meetings of the municipal year. [annexed]

The Chair highlighted that the Executive Portfolio Lead presentations would be presented at the next meeting of the Committee. This was due to recent appointment of a new executive administration. As such, Members welcomed and received presentations from the Director of Place and Environment and the Director of Resilient Communities on behalf of the Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Communities.

The presentations outlined the key services within directorates which fall under the remit of the Committee, the structure of directorates, priority focuses within service areas, and suggested areas of focus for the Committee.

The Democratic Services Officer provided an overview of the outstanding items identified in the previous municipal year. Following a lengthy debate, it was resolved that the following items be included in the work programme for the 2024/2025 municipal year:

- Town Deals and District Centres
- Protection of Trees, Wildlife and Biodiversity
- Markets
- Willenhall and Darlaston Train Stations
- Rewilding and Grass cutting
- Section 125
- Derelict Building Taskforce
- Devolution Deal and Levelling Up.
- Recycling and Waste Collection
- Heritage Assets
- Net Zero
- Planning Enforcement
- Decarbonisation Building Programme
- Underutilisation of Community Assets (Town Hall)
- Community Cohesion
- Flood Management

The Chair requested suggestions for working groups in relation to the remit of the Committee. Following a brief discussion, two items on Borough High Streets and Enforcement (All-Encompassing) were recommended for inclusion into the work programme. The Senior Democratic Services Officer advised that final working group topics would be agreed once all Scrutiny Committees had considered their work programmes.

Resolved
That, forward plans be noted.

80. **Recommendations Tracker**

The Senior Democratic Services Officer updated Members on the recommendations from previous meetings of the Committee. [annexed]

Resolved:
That the progress on recommendations from the previous meeting be noted.

81. **Date of next meeting**

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 6.40p.m

It was noted that the date of the next meeting would be 10 September 2024.

Signed:

Date: