

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING

Monday, 9 March 2020

PRESENT: Councillor(s): T Graham (Chair), V Anderson, D Burnett, B Clelland, S Dickie, Diston, F Geddes, H Kelly, P Maughan, J Reay, J Turnbull, R Waugh and A Wheeler

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): K Dodds, A Geddes, S Hawkins and M Hood

CPL68 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED:

- (i) The minutes of the last meeting held on 27 January 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

CPL69 FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT ACT 2010 - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report providing an update on the implementation of the duties and responsibilities of Gateshead Council as lead local floor authority.

From the report, the Committee were provided with an overview of the key implications of the legislation for local authorities. It was also noted that the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy had been approved by full Council in January 2017.

It was noted that in 2019 the Environment Agency consulted the Council on a proposed national flood risk management strategy and that this is expected to be published in 2020. It was highlighted that the strategy will be changed to consider the new national strategy and the Council's approach to climate change.

A question was asked as to whether the sewage infrastructure in Gateshead were enough to cope with a sever flood. It was advised that most sewage systems are old and that nationally, there are more hard surfaces such as roads and pavements than the infrastructure had been originally designed to cope with. The Committee were also advised that it is the responsibility of the water company to ensure that new developments manage surface water responsibly.

It was noted that flooding appears to be a particular issue in Crawcrook/Greenside. It was further stated that on occasion, roads have been impassable for emergency vehicles. The Committee were advised that officers are acutely aware of these issues; it was also stated that drainage systems on private land are the responsibility of the land owner and that the Council do not routinely clean systems across the network.

It was asked how Councillors would know who is responsible for what drains. The Committee were advised that public sewers are the responsibility of Northumbrian Water, highways drains were the responsibility of the Highways Authority and that land drainage and water courses are the responsibility of the land owner. It was noted that this can be ambiguous, but the Committee were reminded that they can contact officers for advice as required.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the report.
- (ii) The Committee agreed to receive an annual progress report in March 2021.

CPL70 LAND OF OAK & IRON - PROGRESS AND LEGACY

The Committee received a report and presentation providing an update on the key achievements of the Land of Oak and Iron Landscape Partnership, the Land of Oak and Iron Heritage Centre and the legacy of the project.

From the presentation the Committee were given an overview of activities conducted at the sites, this included the planting of 20,000 trees creating a new broadleaved woodland the improvement of 1km of habitat for wildlife.

From the report it was noted that the Land of Oak & Iron Landscape Partnership Project had been funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund since 2016. It was also highlighted that with volunteer time, the Landscape Partnership is worth £3.2m.

The Committee also noted from the report that a separately funded but interlinked project is in development with the Land of Oak and Iron Heritage Centre in Winlaton Mill. It was further noted from the report that the visitor centre at the Land of Oak & Iron had achieved improvements in job creation, tourism and regeneration/economic benefits.

It was asked whether the Staithes formed part of the Trust; the Committee were advised that the Staithes are not currently a partner but that there was potential for the Trust to expand beyond its current borders. It was highlighted that Gateshead is a diverse geographical area and there is a lot of potential for expansion.

A discussion took place over the use of volunteers as outlined in the report; it was noted that the volunteers are professional people with experience and that soft handovers take place. A discussion also took place on local engagement with primary and secondary schools; the Committee welcomed this work.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the update within the report.

CPL71 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received the report setting out the provisional Work Programme for the municipal year 2019/20.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the Work Programme.
- (ii) The Committee agreed that the Work Programme be brought back to the Committee to identify any additional policy issues, which the Committee may be asked to consider.

Chair.....