

Minutes of a meeting of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 13 February 2024 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 5.00 pm
Concluded 7.15 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	GREEN	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
K Hussain Rowe Wheatley Mitchell Steele	Herd	Watson	R Ahmed

Observers: Councillor Ross-Shaw, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport

Councillor K Hussain in the Chair

57. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

The following declarations were made in the interest of transparency:

- (i) Cllr Watson declared that she was a Shipley Town Councillor in relation to the item on Keighley and Shipley Towns Fund Updates (Minute No. 61).
- (ii) The Assistant Director for Culture, Sport and Leisure stated that he was a board member of Active Bradford in relation to the item on Active Bradford's JU:MP Programme (Minute No. 62).

58. MINUTES

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meetings held on 5 September 2023 and 28 November 2023 be held as a correct record.

59. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

60. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

61. KEIGHLEY AND SHIPLEY TOWNS FUND UPDATES

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “AC”**) provided a brief overview of the progress to date of the Keighley and Shipley Towns Funds Programme. The Assistant Director for Economy and Development Services summarised the report alongside the Regeneration Managers for Shipley and Keighley. The projects undertaken in each constituency were outlined within the report along with any associated risks. The Committee were provided with an update on each project and informed that some of the projects were interlinked.

A Member sought clarity whether surrounding project expenditure and whether projects had to be completed by the specified date. It was clarified that project expenditure must be released and spent by March 2026, but projects were not required to be completed by that date.

The Assistant Director for Economy and Development Services was asked what options were available if a project became unviable to complete due to costs or difficulties delivering the project. It was explained to Members that various options could be explored but project adjustments would have to be approved by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Members asked about the possibility of Bradford Beck naturalisation, and it was reiterated that any adjustments would have to be approved by DLUHC.

A Member queried in relation to Active Travel if any progress had been made around connectivity to and in Saltaire and whether money for works to canal towpaths came out of the Towns Fund. Officers stated that they could obtain clarity regarding the source of the funding for works to canal towpaths and circulate a response, and that in relation to connectivity reconstructed footway improvements were ongoing.

Officers were asked how the Shipley Market would be supported and it was explained that within the Market Service work was ongoing to increase footfall and conversations were being held with traders to engage and offer support where possible. The Committee were told that work would focus mainly on engagement and promotion with the aim of increasing footfall.

Attention was drawn to Project D in Shipley, Capital Assistance to Business Growth, and Members stated that smaller businesses could struggle with the match funding and would therefore be left out. Officers explained that criteria had been set and agreed although it was stated that applications that offer something new could be explored and that there was some flexibility to offer support.

Officers were asked how much in relation to the Towns Fund had been spent on consultants and if it would be possible to get a breakdown. The Committee were informed that consultant spending would be subject to a Freedom of Information (FOI) Request. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport told Members that the Council had been given capacity funding to engage consultants so that spend would not have been deducted from the Towns Fund.

A Member asked how the impact of projects would be measured and evaluated and who would be responsible for measuring impact. The Assistant Director for Economy and Development Services explained that output would be monitored by each project lead and that DLUHC would give evidence descriptions that must be demonstrated. It was added that DLUHC would be responsible for some of the evaluation.

The Committee sought information regarding the composition of the boards of both the Shipley and Keighley Towns Fund. Officers provided the Committee with details of the composition of each board and stated that it was made up of different elements of the community alongside political elements such as the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport, the constituency MP, town councillors.

A Member raised concern regarding the redevelopment of the top floor of the Victoria Hotel into 'AirBnB' style apartments due to the reputation of AirBnB in relation to tax. Officers assured the Committee that it would be appraised by an external company to ensure no tax irregularities.

Concern was raised surrounding the wider budget of the Council and if this would impact upon delivery of the Towns Fund projects. It was explained to the Committee that the capacity of the team was secured for the lifetime of the Towns Fund delivery and that the Council was not the only source of funding.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted.**
- (2) That the updates and associated risks of each project and deliverability of the overall scheme detailed within Document “AC” be noted.**
- (3) That a further update report be circulated electronically to Members in January 2025.**

To be actioned by: Strategic Director, Place

62. AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF ACTIVE BRADFORD's JU:MP PROGRAMME

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “AD”**) set out the progress JU:MP had made, since the last report to the Committee in February 2023, and the strategic developments that Active Bradford were undertaking. The Chair of

the JU:MP programme spoke briefly about the work completed to promote and encourage physical activity. The Committee were told that approval had been received from Sport England to extend the implementation of the JU:MP programme which would help build capacity and broaden the offer.

Members asked about creating active schools and it was explained that the goal was to build sustained physical activity within school, schools were mentored to apply for active funding from government and that 88% had been successful.

The Committee expressed the need to identify best practice when applying for grant funding and asked if learning was shared across the Council and to other organisations in the district. Members were informed that funding workshops were planned with organisations and neighbourhood services in February to maximise opportunities although it was acknowledged that criteria often differ which meant the approach would vary.

Members of the Committee discussed the 'Best Life App', that was commissioned and developed by Dubit to encourage physical activity and change behaviour. Several questions were posed to officers regarding the development of the app and concerns were raised regarding potential safeguarding issues if the app was aimed at children. Members were assured that children would only be able to download the app with the permission of parents. It was added that if there was an expectation for only 6 weeks of engagement would this be enough to change behaviour. Members were told that the app was not an isolated intervention and instead was part of a wider approach.

The effectiveness of JU:MP connectors was questioned, and Members were informed that they offered insights into local communities and could train local volunteers.

A Member of the Committee stated that some of the work surrounding physical activity should be targeted towards adults, issues associated with the school run were highlighted due to congestion around schools and the lack of people who walk a short distance to school. Officers stated that this was a national issue and that more work was necessary to address physical activity with families and promote active travel.

During discussion it emerged that Active Bradford was in the process of becoming a charitable trust and that it would allow further opportunities for funding which would be beneficial to the district.

A Member asked if children had any input into the JU:MP programme or if they had been involved in the design. Members were informed children and families had been a stakeholder in the process and that the voice of the child was embedded into the programme although there was always scope for further input.

Resolved –

- (1) That the current progress of the JU:MP programme be noted.**
- (2) That a further update report be circulated electronically to Members in January 2025.**

To be actioned by: Strategic Director, Place

63. REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

The report of the Chair of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee (**Document “AE”**) was submitted to Members and presented the Committee’s Work Programme 2023-24. The work programme was briefly discussed at the meeting.

Resolved –

That the Work Programme contained in Document “AE”, Appendix A be continuously reviewed during the year.

To be actioned by: Chair, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER