

## HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

held at

The Council Chamber

Symington Building, Adam & Eve Street, Market Harborough, LE16 7AG

on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Commencing at 6.30pm.

Present:

Councillors: Ackerley, Bilbie, Dr Bremner, James, Nunn (Chairman)

Apologies: Councillor Hollick, Johnson, Mrs Robinson, Mrs Simpson

Officers: D. Atkinson – Director, Planning and Regeneration, T. Day – Service Manager Community Partnerships, N. Kwasa – Senior Democratic Officer, J. O'Connell – Young Persons Officer

Also Present: Councillor Whelband – Portfolio Holder for Communities

#### 1. Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes.

Apologies were received from Councillors Hollick, Johnson, Mrs Robinson and Mrs Simpson. Councillor Hollick was substituted by Councillor Dr Bremner and Councillor Mrs Simpson was substituted by Councillor James.

#### 2. Declarations of Members' Interests

Councillor Dr Bremner declared an interest in the Young Person's Opportunity Plan in that his daughter takes part in a number of activities at the Cube youth centre in Market Harborough.

#### 3. To approve as a true record the Minutes of the previous Meeting.

The Chairman updated the Panel on the outstanding actions from the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022 as follows;

Question / Comment	Response
P.3 - <u>Organisations by Ward Table</u> : Could information be provided covering groups by Ward?	This information was still outstanding – the Service Manager Community Partnerships confirmed he had requested this information from VAL but this had not yet been provided and he would continue to chase.
P.4 - <u>Distribution of services across the District</u> : it would be helpful to know how service provision etc for the various charities was spread across the District.	This information has been circulated to the Panel.
p.5 - <u>KPI's, challenges and general outcomes</u> : these seem to be missing from the report, and how will these be addressed to achieve the outcomes?	This information has been circulated to the Panel.

Following the discussion, it was:

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Panel held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

#### 4. Young Persons Opportunities Plan

The Service Manager Community Partnerships introduced the report, the purpose of which was to present the new Young Persons Opportunities Plan proposal for 2023 / 28, and for the panel to consider its content, aims and objectives, providing any necessary input. The Chairman invited questions and comments from those present.

The Panel made comments regarding the need to cross reference interlinking strategies across the Council, the importance of creating opportunities for young people in employment and housing and the suggestion of creating a hub of employability to centrally capture employment and education opportunities across the district, as well as tapping into local schools and events they hold. Officers noted the comments and highlighted that a lot of work is going on within the district to provide opportunities for people to learn and develop, supporting internet connectivity for allowing people to work from home and creating opportunities for more technically skilled, higher paid jobs in industry. The Panel also noted the significant difficulties for young people in relation to having to travel outside the district for work and school, as well as the need to focus within this work on understanding the exact situation around figures for unemployment and skills shortages in businesses. Officers noted that surveys have shown that although young people may be in employment, this may not be stable and wages do not allow them to save due to the high cost of living. The Panel's comments were noted and following the discussion it was;

**RESOLVED that the Panel considered the content, aims and objectives of the new Young Person Opportunities Plan proposal for 2023 / 28.**

## 5. Rural Strategy

The Service Manager Community Partnerships introduced the report, the purpose of which was to review and scrutinise the draft Rural Strategy 2023-2028. The Chairman noted that she had written out to all Members, and in particular those who are Ward Members for the more rural areas, to ask for any feedback into the strategy. She noted that she would update the Panel on that feedback following the discussion on the report. The Chairman invited questions and comments from those present.

The Panel made comments regarding the need to link strategies across the Council together and communicate this to residents, that it would be good to tailor information to Wards, and questioned how actions within the Rural Strategy would be implemented. Officers responded that the Council is actively looking to develop a global framework for all council information to better engage with residents, and are keen to develop a means of highlighting all that the Council is doing for residents. The Panel also noted that there needed to be support for young families in particular following the pandemic to help combat isolation and that the availability of smaller housing units for both young and old need to be addressed. The Chairman noted that feedback from Ward Members included issues around medical provision and transport (including electric charging points) in rural areas and these should also be considered. Officers noted the comments and following the discussion it was;

**RESOLVED that the Panel had reviewed and scrutinised the draft Rural Strategy 2023-2028.**

## 6. Any Urgent Business

The Chairman noted that this was Tom Day, Service Manager Community Partnerships' last meeting at the Council as he moves onto a new opportunity. She thanked him for all his hard work and wished him all the best.

The meeting closed at 19.30