Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Meeting held on 16 October 2014

Present: Brian Edwards (Chairman)

George Adamson	Diane Todd
Ann Beech	Mark Winnington (Cabinet
Maureen Compton	Member)
Tim Corbett	Paul Woodhead
Martyn Tittley (Vice-Chairman)	Candice Yeomans

Apologies: Len Bloomer, Geoff Martin, Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf and Geoff Morrison

PART ONE

12.   Declarations of Interest

There were none on this occasion.

13.   Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 5 September 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 5 September 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

14.   Progress Report: Superfast Staffordshire

The Committee received an update on Superfast Staffordshire (broadband).

The Council has now completed the first phase of the delivery project to deliver superfast broadband across Staffordshire in conjunction with BT and Broadband Delivery UK. Approximately 19,000 premises now have access to superfast services. All eight phases are due to be completed by June 2016. Residents and businesses are being encouraged to sign up for the service. There are take up assumptions, that have been made to justify the level of grant assistance, but if our uptake exceeds this threshold, the additional revenue generated will be reinvested to extend the network further.

Members were encouraged to look at the website for further information on which areas have access to Superfast broadband:

http://www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk/

Once the local cabinets have been upgraded and declared live, the general public can order the service by signing up with service providers such as BT, Sky, Talk Talk and many others.

Members asked about progress in obtaining the service for the small percentage of households and businesses not covered by the network. All areas will get at least a 2Mbps service. In some of these areas it may not be financially viable to obtain

complete cover. However, other technical solutions may be available and these are being explored. A full list of areas covered is available on the website or by contacting Paul Chatwin, Project Manager, Superfast Broadband. Members were advised to look at the website to find out how digital broadband champions were being identified and trained and to find out more about the Optimising Business broadband project, set up to assist small and medium sized businesses to get the most out of superfast broadband :

http://www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk/digital-champions/

Work is also ongoing to support women in rural enterprises.

The priority is to deliver of the current project by 2016.

A suggestion was made that the Council make contact with Severn Trent Water to explore the possibility of resolving coverage to those households/premises that will not be covered by Superfast broadband.

Members asked that consideration be given to sharing this information with Borough and District Councils in Staffordshire. Mr Chatwin explained that he produced a Newsletter and had visited some local councils to give an update but would give consideration as to how he might keep local councils up-to-date on current developments.

RESOLVED: That a) The Vice Chairman share details of contacts at Severn Trent Water with the Cabinet Member and Superfast Broadband Manager, and that they explore working with Severn Trent Water to extend the superfast broadband coverage in Staffordshire b) the Superfast Broadband Manager consider how best to share progress on the implementation of Superfast broadband with the Borough and District Councils in Staffordshire c) the Committee receive a further update in 6 month's time.

15.   Progress Report Project W2R

Members were pleased to receive a presentation from the Cabinet Member and Ian Benson on the W2R project at Four Ashes which has now been operating for 12 months. Members watched a short promotional video. The project has been very successful and Ian Benson reported that of all similar PFI waste management projects in the country, Staffordshire County Council's had been the fastest to start and finish. The Council will save up to £400m over the life of the project compared to landfill cost, and, in addition, a saving of 49,000 tonnes of carbon will be saved compared to a landfill based alternative. The plant employs 36 full time staff, most of whom live locally. The plant will be accepting waste from Telford and Wrekin from 2016 and is in discussion with the Ministry of Justice (Featherstone Prison) and private developers at Bericote Industrial Estate regarding a combined heat and power network to utilise waste heat from the plant. Veoila UK have plans to increase the capacity of the plant, within current planning and environmental limits. Members thanked Mr Benson for his report and asked that the Planning Committee be provided with copies of the report that had been given to Members in preparation for their visit to W2R.

RESOLVED: A copy of the report given to the Committee be forwarded to Mike Grundy, Planning and Development Control Manager, in preparation for the Planning Committee's visit.

16.   Work Programme

Members reviewed and agreed their work programme. Mr Paul Woodhead (parent governor representative) proposed that a matter, that he has raised with the Chairman, in regard to changes to the e-safety contract in schools, be added to the Work Programme. The Chairman explained that he had sought advice from the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills on this matter and would report back to the next meeting. Mr Adamson explained that he had written to Anna Halliday on this matter.

The Scrutiny and Support Manager asked that any members of the Committee should contact her if they had any training and development needs.

RESOLVED: That an update on the changes to the e-safety contract in schools be obtained for the next meeting.

Chairman

Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.