



Communities
Overview Committee

20 October 2021

1.00 pm

Item
Public

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21
JULY 2021
1.00 - 2.40 PM**

Responsible Officer: Emily Marshall
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Present

Councillor Robert Macey (Chairman) Ted Clarke, Nigel Hartin, Nick Hignett (Vice Chairman), Dan Morris, Vivienne Parry and Nicholas Bardsley (Substitute) (substitute for Elliott Lynch)

4 Apologies for absence and substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Elliot Lynch and Councillor Nick Bardsley was in attendance as a substitute.

Councillor Viv Parry joined the meeting remotely

Councillor Rosemary Dartnall joined the meeting as an observer.

5 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no interests declared

6 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 15 March 2021 and 20 May 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

7 Public Question Time

There were no questions from members of the public

8 Member Question Time

There were no questions from Members.

9 **Armed Forces Covenant**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Ian Nellins (Armed Forces Champion) and Councillor Kirstie Hurst-Knight (Deputy Armed Forces Champion), both with backgrounds in the armed forces, and Sean McCarthy Leisure Services Project Officer, with responsibility for the Armed Forces Covenant, to the meeting. Sean McCarthy provided an overview of the work that was ongoing within the County and the projects throughout Shropshire.

In response to questions, the Armed Forces Champion confirmed that:

The census would provide more information on the number of veterans within the County, and this will lead to a very accurate picture of the number of veterans within the County.

Outline the various associations and charities within the area who provide support to veterans and work with the Royal British Legion and work within the local food bank. It was agreed that it was very important to raise awareness of the work that was taking place to support veterans in the areas of mental health and housing or in crisis.

There was legislation currently going through parliament to enshrine the armed forces covenant in law, and the areas being focused on were housing, health care and education. In terms of timescales on the legislation, it was likely for implementation in 2022.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked, Sean McCarthy, Councillor Nellins and Councillor Hurst-Knight for their informative update.

RESOLVED:

That the Communities Overview Committee note the covenant, the armed forces needs assessment and the covenant action plan, highlighting the opportunities identified to further strengthen the covenant action plan.

That a report, updating the Committee be brought to a future meeting

10 **Public Rights of Way**

The Chairman welcomed, Councillor Cecilia Motley, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure, Tourism and Transport and Clare Featherstone, Culture, Leisure and Tourism Manger, and Pete Banford, Interim Outdoor Partnership Manager.

The Interim Outdoor Partnerships Manager advised Members that the business case to secure funding for additional staff had been successful and that an additional

Mapping and Enforcement officer appointed, the process for recruiting an Apprentice Countryside Officer was nearing conclusion and that a bridge inspector was currently being sought.

The Interim Outdoor Partnership Manager advised members that £200,000 had been allocated to the ROW team from the Highways budget which would allow the development of scheme of works for bridges to ensure network kept open.

The Interim Outdoor Partnership Manager advised members that a target of £163,870 of generated income had been set for the current financial year which would allow the employment of 2 Countryside Officers, and that he had requested that any income not used in current financial year be carried over to create a reserve for extraordinary work such as thought caused by extreme weather.

The Interim Outdoor Partnership Manager advised members that the ROW team was experiencing problem with obtain materials such as metal. Stone and wood and that it was envisaged that this problem would not improve in the short term which would have a knockon effect on works.

In response to a question regarding the effect of officers carrying out income generating work on the core work of the ROW team the Interim Outdoor Partnership Manager advised Members that there was a trade off with Officer time which was balanced by using some of the income generated to employ further officers. He added that the ideal would be to have a team solely doing income generation and using surplus income to support other work but in the meantime the situation was monitored to ensure that the core work of the team was not affected.

In response to a question regarding the additional funding secured for bridge works the Interim Outdoor Partnership Manager advised the meeting that the money would be prioritised to address safety concerns and if there were still outstanding concern additional budget would be sought or the route would need to be closed until such works could be carried out.

The Portfolio Holder Councillor Motley informed the meeting that she was in contact with the Portfolio Holder for Finance regarding the ability to carry over income raised and that she was trying to ascertain how many other services were affected, and that she would also raise this when the Cabinet were discussing the budget in September.

In response to a query the Interim Outdoor Partnership Manager advised that whilst only one Mapping and Enforcement Officer had been appointed additional budget had been secured which would be used to employ outside contractors to support the work of the Mapping and Enforcement officers.

RESOLVED:

That Members noted the report

11 **Work Programme**

Members considered the forward work programme

RESOLVED:

That the proposed committee work programme attached as appendix 1.be agreed

12 Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Communities Overview Committee was scheduled to be held at 10.00am on Wednesday 22nd September 2021.

<TRAILER_SECTION>

Signed (Chairman)

Date: