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Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: 9 March 2015

To all Members of the Community Development Group

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the **Community Development Group** will be held on Tuesday 17 March 2015 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

Yours sincerely



Executive Manager Operations and Corporate Governance

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Notes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 20 January 2015 (pages 1 - 7)
4. YouNG Update

There will be a presentation.

5. Solar Energy Briefing Note – Draft

The Group will consider the draft Briefing Note on Solar Energy.

6. Work Programme

The report of the Executive Manager Operations and Corporate Governance is attached (pages 8 - 9).

Membership

Chairman: Councillor T Combellack
Vice-Chairman: Councillor L B Cooper
Councillors D G Bell, S J Boote, B Buschman, Mrs M M Males, G R Mallender,
E A Plant and J E Thurman

Meeting Room Guidance

Fire Alarm Evacuation: in the event of an alarm sounding please evacuate the building using the nearest fire exit, normally through the Council Chamber. You should assemble in the Nottingham Forest car park adjacent to the main gates.

Toilets are located opposite Committee Room 2.

Mobile Phones: For the benefit of others please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off whilst you are in the meeting.

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**NOTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP
TUESDAY 20 JANUARY 2015**

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road,
West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors T Combellack (Chairman), S J Boote, B Buschman, L B Cooper,
Mrs M M Males, G R Mallender, E A Plant and J E Thurman

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

P Angus Nottingham Energy Partnership

OFFICERS PRESENT:

D Banks Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods
A Goodman Member Support Officer
D Mitchell Executive Manager - Communities

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillor D G Bell

12. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

13. Notes of the Previous Meeting

The notes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 October 2014 were accepted as a true record.

Investigation of New Energy Initiatives - Some Members felt that there were still many unanswered questions and suggested that the Environment Agency attend the next meeting. The Executive Manager – Communities reminded Members that the purpose of the Item on Fracking was to produce a Members' Briefing Note and this had been completed. However, the Executive Manager Communities explained that it would be more appropriate for Members to submit any questions to the Chairman and they would then be submitted to the Environment Agency and the answers provided back to the Group.

Action Members to inform the Chairman of any questions on fracking they wish the Executive Manager – Communities to submit to the Environment Agency

Update on Delivery of Rural Broadband in Rushcliffe – In respect of the Bassetlaw system, Members enquired if Bassetlaw District Council had contributed to the scheme.

Action **the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods to investigate whether Bassetlaw District Council had contributed to the scheme**

Details of the areas which were likely to not have high speed broadband coverage had not yet been provided to the Group.

Action **the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods to chase up details of areas which will not have high speed broadband coverage**

14. **New Energy Initiatives - Solar**

Mr Angus, a representative from the Nottinghamshire Energy Partnership, gave a presentation to the Group on Photovoltaics. He informed Members that the Nottinghamshire Energy Partnership was originally formed by Nottingham City Council but was now a separate independent charity. He explained that feed in tariffs were introduced in 2010 and that the first phase of Government grants were due to end in 2016, however there would be an overall review of the scheme in the summer of 2015. The funding rate for the feed in tariffs in phase one had remained constant for the first two years, followed by regular reductions every three months. Although the initial domestic rate of £ 0.43 per unit had been very favourable the return had decreased by two thirds since 2010 and was currently £0.14 plus £0.15 export rate.

Mr Angus explained that each photovoltaic system was rated by its maximum capacity to produce electricity and this was measured in kilowatt peak (kWp). To be classified as a domestic system the output had to be less than 4 kWp, which equated to around 14 panels, each measuring 1.6 metres by 0.9 metres, however 3.5 kWp was regarded as a good size system. The Nottinghamshire Energy Partnership could assist people in calculating what size system they required and the potential return. Over the last few years the cost of installing a 3.5 kWp system had reduced considerably from £11,500 in 2011 to £5,600 in 2014. Currently, the average return on a 3.5 kWp system was £484 per year which included the feed in tariff, export tariff and import tariff, therefore it would take around 11 years to recover the outlay. However, if domestic electricity costs continued to increase by 5% annually, as they had over the past few years, it would take less time to recoup the outlay.

In response to questions, Mr Angus confirmed that if the property was sold the panels would remain in place and the new occupier would benefit from the free electricity and the tariff funding. Some companies offered a scheme whereby they leased peoples' roof spaces for a set period of time, with the benefits being shared between the company and the occupier. Mr Angus confirmed that when the Government scheme was first introduced and the tariff rate was £0.43 there were some less reputable companies selling solar panels however due to lower rates and legislation had improved.

Nottingham City Council had installed photovoltaic panels on 3,500 of its housing stock and were considering installing them on a further 5,000 properties.

Although the tenants received a small benefit of free electricity, the main financial benefit went to Nottingham City Council, who were financing the deal. Mr Angus informed Members that some medium to large schemes producing 42 kWp had been installed by placing the panels on canopies over car parks. Nottingham City Council had applied to install similar schemes at the Queen's Drive and Race Course Park and Ride sites, with discussions ongoing

Members were shown examples from the National Farmers Union (NFU) of the integration of ground-mounted solar panels with conventional agriculture. These schemes combined the generation of electricity with continued agricultural land use for small livestock such as sheep, chickens or geese and for growing some crops. There was also a conservation element to solar farms as the gaps between the rows of panels were too small for modern farming equipment therefore reducing the use of chemicals and increasing biodiversity. The benefits did however need to be balanced against the loss of land and for this reason solar farms were generally not sited on best grade agricultural land. Currently there was no method of storing the excess electricity that was produced. Energy storage systems would be the next big development and would allow the power to be stored and used locally, getting around the issue of intermittent generation.

Members referred to a pilot scheme in the nearby Meadows area in which the community was benefitting from a scheme that involved car batteries being recycled and used to store surplus energy as it was generated.

Mr Angus concluded by informing the Group of the work of the Nottinghamshire Energy Partnership. He informed Members that they undertook assessments of corporate buildings including structural surveys, neighbourhood assessments for social housing schemes, as well as offering advice on private domestic properties. They also carried out design, specification and contract negotiation and had undertaken the research for the "sensible" H2020 project.

The Group discussed the potential benefits of incorporating solar panels into all new build properties. Although it would add to the initial cost of the house, it would be cheaper than individuals fitting them as the building companies purchased in bulk, and there would be energy savings for the occupants. The Executive Manager – Communities explained that currently there was no national policy and it would not be possible to impose a local policy, as developers built schemes all over the country. The issue of placing panels on Council owned buildings had been considered but had not previously been supported by Cabinet.

In response to a question Mr Angus informed the Group that the efficiency of panels was not more than 35% and that the purity of the materials increased efficiency.

Members enquired whether planning permission was required for the installation of solar panels in Conservation Areas.

Action The Executive Manager – Communities to investigate if planning permission was required for the installation of solar panels in Conservation Areas

The Chairman thanked Mr Angus for attending the meeting and for his informative presentation.

15. **Review of Parish Forums and Conferences**

The Executive Manager – Communities gave a presentation to the Group on the Review of Town and Parish Forums. He informed Members that four events had been held in 2013. The theme for the forum in February was environment and this had been attended by 44 delegates. The April forum, attended by 53 delegates, had Planning as the theme and in October, 28 delegates attended the Community led Planning and Resilience event. The Town and Parish Conference held in June and was attended by 63 delegates. It was noted that of the total of 188 attendances across the year approximately 20% of the delegates were Borough Councillors.

In 2014 there had also been four events held, the first in February again focused on the Environment and had been attended by 48 delegates. The April forum, attended by 83 delegates, had Planning as the theme and in October 37 delegates attended The Way Forward event. The Town and Parish Conference was once again held in June and was attended by 72 delegates. The total attendances for 2014 was 240, an average of 60 each event which was a significant increase on 42 the previous year. On average 96% of the attendees of the 2014 programme expressed that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the events.

The Executive Manager – Communities explained that the only external cost was £2,500 for the Conference, which included lunch and the hire of the venue, as the external speakers had given their time for free. The Forums, held at the Civic Centre, involved officer time and the administration was carried out by the Rural Officer from RCAN.

At the last Forum in October delegates were asked for their comments and suggestions on future topics, frequency and timings of events, and venue locations. The feedback from the survey suggested that delegates would like two forums a year, in February and October and that the Annual Conference should continue in June. The main themes that were identified as part of the consultation were Planning, Community Engagement and Local Community Services. The forums would continue to be held in the mornings and the next event would be at the Civic Centre in February 2015, which would cover Parish Elections and Planning. The Conference would be held at an alternative venue within the Borough and it was hoped that the October forum could be held in one of the village halls.

The Executive Manager – Communities confirmed that officers had written to the big six town/parish councils asking them to host events. The venue for the forums would have to be provided free of charge and able to accommodate at least 60 delegates, whereas the Conference would continue to be held at a commercial venue. The aim was that the big six town/parish councils would take ownership of the forums and that they would take it in turns to host events.

Following questions the Group noted that all Borough Councillors and West Bridgford Community Groups were invited to the forums. Members suggested that the events could be held in West Bridgford at Gamston Community Hall or

Lutterell Hall, however as the council owned these buildings, it was felt that this did not change the emphasis of the parishes taking ownership of the events.

The Group felt that the forums were an important method of communication with the parishes and that councillors found them beneficial. However it was recognised that it was often the same delegates that attended each event and some parishes were never represented. Members felt that it was the role of Borough Councillors to encourage all parishes to send a representative to each event.

16. **Work Programme**

The Group considered the report of the Executive Manager – Operations and Corporate Governance that set out details of the proposed work programme for the remainder of the municipal year 2014/15.

Some Members felt that an item on Renewables could be included in the work programme, for example Bio-generation, as well as any issues that may arise from the upcoming Town and Parish forum in February.

The Group AGREED the Work Programme as set out below:

Date of Meeting	Item
17 March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• YouNG update• Work Programme
May 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encouraging economic prosperity• Work Programme

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Action Sheet

Community Development Group - Tuesday 20 January 2015

Minute Number	Actions	Officer Responsible
13 Notes of the Previous Meeting	a) When received from the Chairman of the Group, submit Members' questions on Fracking to the Environment Agency b) investigate whether Bassetlaw District Council had contributed to the scheme c) chase up details of areas which will not have high speed broadband coverage	Executive Manager – Communities Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods
14 New Energy Initiatives - Solar	Investigate whether planning permission was required for the installation of solar panels in Conservation Areas	Executive Manager - Communities
15 Review of Parish Forums and Conferences	None	
16 Work Programme	None	

Responses

Minute Number	Actions	Officer Responsible	Responses
13 Notes of the Previous Meeting	a) When received from the Chairman of the Group, submit Members' questions on Fracking to the Environment Agency b) investigate whether Bassetlaw District Council had contributed to the scheme c) chase up details of areas which will not have high speed broadband coverage	Executive Manager – Communities Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods	Letter sent – awaiting response Emailed to Group 3 March 2015 Emailed to Group 3 March 2015
14 New Energy Initiatives - Solar	Investigate whether planning permission was required for the installation of solar panels in Conservation Areas	Executive Manager - Communities	Emailed to Group 3 March 2015

Report of the Executive Manager - Operations and Corporate Governance

1. Summary

- 1.1. The work programme for the Community Development Group is developed around the corporate priorities that fall within its remit and takes into account the timing of the Group's business in the previous municipal year and any emerging issues and key policy developments that may arise throughout the year. It is anticipated that the work programme for the year will be developed in line with the priorities identified in the 4 year plan for budget savings.
- 1.2. Members are asked to propose future topics to be considered by the Group, in line with the Council's priorities which are:
- *Supporting economic growth to ensure a prosperous and thriving local economy - Our economy;*
 - *Maintaining and enhancing our residents' quality of life -Our residents;*
 - *Transforming the Council to enable the delivery of efficient high quality services - Our Council.*

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Group notes the report and considers any future topics'

3. Reasons for Recommendation

Date of Meeting	Item
17 March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YouNG update • Work Programme
21 July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging economic prosperity • Anaerobic Digesters • Annual Report 2014/15 • Work Programme
20 October 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme

For more information contact:	Dan Swaine Executive Manager - Operations and Corporate Governance 0115 914 8343 email dswaine@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers Available for Inspection:	Nil
List of appendices (if any):	Nil