

Nottingham City Council

Companies Governance Executive Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at The Council House, Old Market Square, Nottingham on 20 July 2021 from 3.14 pm - 4.57 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Sally Longford (Vice Chair)
Councillor Sam Webster
Councillor Linda Woodings

Absent

Councillor David Mellen
Councillor Neghat Khan

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Ian Edward - Strategic Advisor for Companies
Samantha Veal - Chief Executive, Blueprint
Phil Wye - Governance Officer

18 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Neghat Khan – personal reasons
Councillor David Mellen – other Council business

Clive Heaphy - Interim Corporate Director of Finance and Resources

19 Declarations of Interest

None.

20 Minutes

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

21 Work plan

The work plan was noted without discussion.

22 Council owned company discussion - Blue Print

This item does not contain any decisions that are eligible for call-in.

Samantha Veal, Chief Executive of Blueprint, delivered a presentation to the Committee, highlighting the following:

- (a) Blueprint was formed in May 2005 as a regeneration partnership. Nottingham City Council (NCC) purchased their 50% share in March 2015. The other share is now owned by PfP Capital, having purchased it in 2018;

- (b) Blueprint offers NCC a commercial return on investment with matched investment from the private sector. It provides regeneration, placemaking and creation of new homes and neighbourhoods in the city and acts as a catalyst attracting further development;
- (c) Blueprint's projects deliver high quality homes and built environment which align to the Council Plan aims of a carbon neutral City and continued regeneration of the Waterside, as well as promoting walking, cycling and public transport and supporting local business and social enterprise;
- (d) Blueprint's developments also create value in the wider city by attracting new developments and schools to build as well as attracting increased spending and regeneration in the surrounding neighbourhoods;
- (e) since NCC invested in Blueprint in 2015 it has made a profit every year with £3.8m being returned to date. The total income for the current financial year, ending March 2022, is forecast to be £1.6m;
- (f) during the Covid-19 pandemic, business continuity has been confirmed with all partners, and risk assessments have been enhanced. Strong reservations and sales continue, with some delays due to supply chain constraints. There has been no change in the long term strategy of the company.

During the discussion which followed, the following further information was provided:

- (g) it is challenging to build on brownfield sites, but this remains Blueprints strategy in the future, as this is where it has expertise and it aligns with NCC's ambitions for regeneration;
- (h) there are no problems currently on contracts due to the delay in building supplies as they are fixed-price. This could potentially cause a challenge if contractors have commitments on new contracts. This is a challenge across the entire construction sector;
- (i) social value is an increasingly important factor in Blueprint's developments. For example, at Trent Basin they have worked with contractors on local employment, and they engaged with local young people, having won a National Planning Award for this. They have also conducted outreach with local schools and local community organisations are able to apply for seed funding for projects;
- (j) at Trent Basin, there is provision for a footbridge across the basin itself which will eventually link to a riverside walk to Trent Bridge and Colwick Park. A pocket park will also be provided linking to Daleside Road for connections on foot or by bike to the city in the shorter term.

23 Exclusion of the public

The Committee agreed to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the

information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, as the sensitive nature of the business affairs under consideration could, if made public, prejudice the ability of the companies concerned to operate effectively in a competitive market.

24 Council owned company discussion - Blue Print

This item does not contain any decisions that are eligible for call-in.

Samantha Veal, Chief Executive of Blueprint, delivered a presentation to the Committee.

25 Council owned companies - financial update

This item does not contain any decisions that are eligible for call-in.

Ian Edward, Strategic Advisor for Companies, presented the report, updating the Committee on the latest position in respect of Council owned companies.

Resolved to note the update.

Reason for recommendation

To ensure the Sub-Committee understands the current financial position of the group of companies of Nottingham City Council and any risks highlighted in the report for action.

Other options considered

None.

26 Exempt minutes

The Committee agreed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.