

MDDC SCRUTINY COMMIT+TEE MEETING 2ND OCTOBER 2023

PAUL ELSTONE - A local resident and council taxpayer.

My questions relate to Agenda Item 7 - Work Programme. Specifically, 3 Rivers Lessons Learnt 1

Question 1

Given the increasing level of concerns being raised about both the value and integrity of the 3 Rivers “no blame” lessons learned process, this including concerns raised by a sitting Member of Parliament plus the General; Public . Also and importantly, I believe concerns raised by more than one previous MDDC Council Leader. Council Leaders who have themselves been much maligned.

Will this Committee commit to a fully open and transparent plus very importantly a complete investigation ?

A. The committee has not yet set the terms of reference for the report. However, the committee is keen to ensure that there is value from this exercise so that the council can reflect and consider this in decision-making moving forward.

Question 2

It is noted that the Deputy CEO and S151 Officer is named as the Officer Responsible for the 3 Rivers Lessons Learned 1. Given this persons far reaching involvement in 3 Rivers day one and including being a Director is this not immediately seen as a conflict in terms of integrity of the process?

A. The committee has not yet set the terms of reference for the report.

Question 3

Has a Full Terms of Reference been prepared ?

A. Not yet.

Question 4

If so, will the Terms of Reference be made fully available to the general public ?.

A. The chairman explained that the terms of reference will be discussed at the next meeting.

Question 5

Will the investigation fully cover the period the 3 Rivers Development company formation in 2016 to full closure in 2024 ?

A. The committee has not yet set the terms of reference for the report.

Question 6

Who exactly will make up the Lessons Learned Team?

A. The committee has not yet set the terms of reference for the report.

Question 7

Will an External Auditor plus ideally a specialist Root Cause Analyst support members of the Lessons Learned Team. This to provide the necessary expertise, impartiality and therefore credibility?

A. To be clear, this is not just an(other) audit report. The company, and the council's relationship with it, has already been subject to at least four internal and external audit reports over the past few years, at significant time and cost to the council. This is in addition to the separate financial audits by external auditors of the council and the company on an annual basis. Members have considered these at multiple points and audit will continue to provide reports (via the council's audit function) as the company is wound down, so as to provide assurance to the council. However, this is about reflecting on these reports and a range of other factors to help improve decision making going forward.

Question 8

Who will draft the report ?

A. This has not yet been decided.

Question 9

Will the full and unedited report be made public and without redactions?

A. The committee has not yet set the terms of reference for the report, however there would be a strong preference for making the report public, as the chairman has already stated.

Question 10

Will ALL the previous MDDC Council Leaders be formally invited to participate and meet with the Lessons Learned Team in a face-to-face meeting rather than paper submissions if they prefer. This to enable the highest quality of information exchange. ?

A. The committee has not yet set the terms of reference for the report and will need to take a view on the involvement of any external stakeholders.

Question 11

Will other stakeholders be formally invited to participate this including well informed members of the general public?

A. The committee has not yet set the terms of reference for the report and will need to take a view on the involvement of any external stakeholders.