

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 25 July 2017

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.31pm.

***1 Public speaking**

There were no public speakers at the meeting.

***2 Minute confirmation**

The minutes of the Overview Committee held on the 28 March 2017, were confirmed as a true record.

***3 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Rob Longhurst; Minute 6

Personal Interest – May no longer be able to stand in 2019 due to the boundary changes, which therefore affects his ability to claim allowance/expenses;

Councillor John Dyson: Minute 5

personal interest – Trustee of Sidmouth Folk Festival.

***4 Council Plan 2016 - 2020**

The Chairman prefaced this item by outlining how he understood the Committee should be operating at a strategic level; whereby the Committee could recommend to Cabinet and Strategic Planning Committee on elements such as policy and direction of travel. Cabinet and Strategic Planning Committee would be the decision makers, with Scrutiny keeping a watch over the implementation.

The purpose of the Council Plan was to lay out the strategic direction of the Council for future years, covering both the statutory services and those discretionary services that helped provide a balance for both the environment and quality of life for the District's residents and visitors

The Committee discussed the Plan, including:

- Retaining the ability to publish hard copies for those not able to access online;
- Look to more focus on:
 - Neighbourhood plans and how they fit into the suite of plans
 - Health and Wellbeing, particularly in light of the impending changes to delivery of health care and how that might impact on other services; how the funding of leisure services helps the community;
 - Cover what areas of service have been identified for improvement and how that is going to be implemented;
- Build in a facilitating role of the Council in helping local community groups to link up and help themselves, either in terms of avoiding duplication of work, or act as mediator;
- Look to provide the plan in a format that meets the current social media appetite, so that the Council Plan becomes an easily digestible document for those using such media;
- Add in reference to the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) and how the plans link to that;

- Add in reference to the AONB plan so that it does become part of the Council's planning process in setting service plans.
- Add in how the Council have listened to public opinion through community engagement and what has been done as a result.

RESOLVED that the comments made on the Council Plan be submitted to the Strategic Lead Organisational Development and Transformation to take into account in the Council Plan refresh in 2018.

***5 Investigating impact of introducing charges for clearing up after events**

The Committee were reminded of the original transformation saving identified in the draft 2017/18 budget process of £9K for clear up of major events such as the Tar Barrels in Ottery St Mary; and the Sidmouth Folk Festival. The amount was added back into the approved current budget but selected for a review.

The Committee discussed their own experiences with varying events around the District, whereby many stall holders and festival volunteers undertook the vast majority of the clear up immediately after the event. Some event clear up costs were already recharged by Streetscene to the local town or parish.

Such events had additional cost implication of increased bin emptying and opening hours of public toilets. Many charitable and voluntary organisations would not be able to bear additional costs for clearing up. Many Councillors felt that the saving identified was not such a sufficient amount that it should be recharged, particularly when the District as a whole benefited from the event in term of economic and social terms.

The committee concluded that a report be brought before them identifying what events the £9K saving related to; as well as a view from Streetscene operators on the impact of clearing up after events and if those costs were likely to increase in future years. Whilst the current level of saving identified might be acceptable to include in the budget now, it may increase significantly and therefore had to be sufficiently investigated.

RESOLVED that a report be brought to the committee on recovering clear up costs from major events.

6 Local Government Boundary Committee for England Electoral Review

The committee discussed options for raising awareness of boundary changes that would impact on constituents from 2019. Suggestions included:

- Clear map showing boundary overlays accessible from the Council's website;
- Investigate having an alternative application on the East Devon App that shows information on address entry on the change of boundary;
- Press release to town and parish clerks on the boundaries for both County and District.

The committee also discussed how the responsibilities of the respective councils were often not fully understood by the public, and therefore information on the Council website should be developed to provide a clear understanding of the roles of each local government level.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet :

That the Chief Executive consider the following suggestions of the Overview Committee in raising awareness of the pending boundary changes:

1. Clear map showing boundary overlays accessible from the Council's website;

2. application on the East Devon App that shows information on address entry on the change of boundary;
3. Press release to town and parish clerks on the boundaries for both County and District in early 2019;
4. Information on the responsibilities of each level of local government in a clear and easily accessible format on the Council website.

***7 Overview Forward Plan**

Topics put forward to be scoped were:

- Neighbourhood plans and reviews
- Workforce planning
- Examination of Strata business case to see if originally forecast savings would still be delivered

The Committee also requested follow up on issues already agreed to check on progress, including the Design Guide and safeguarding issues, to ensure that the decisions were being monitored.

Attendance list

Councillors Present:

Graham Godbeer (Chairman)
Ian Hall (Vice Chairman)
Peter Faithfull
Rob Longhurst
John Humphreys
Mike Allen
Mark Evans-Martin
Jim Knight

Councillors Also Present:

John Dyson
David Barratt

Officers

Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

Councillor Apologies:

Paul Diviani
Jill Elson

Officer Apologies:

Karen Jenkins, Strategic Lead Organisational Development and Transformation

Chairman Date.....