

# Agenda for Scrutiny Committee

## Thursday, 7 July 2016, 6.00pm



### [Members of the Scrutiny Committee](#)

**Venue:** Council Chamber, Knowle, Sidmouth, EX10 8HL

[View directions](#)

**Contact:** Debbie Meakin, 01395 517540 (or group number 01395 517546): Issued 28 June 2016

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- 1 [Public speaking](#)
- 2 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2016 (pages 3 - 6)
- 3 Apologies
- 4 [Declarations of interest](#)
- 5 [Matters of urgency](#) – none identified
- 6 To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including press) have been excluded. There are no items that officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.
- 7 Decisions made by Cabinet called in by Members for scrutiny in accordance with the Overview Procedure Rules. There are no items identified.

### **Matters for Debate**

- 8 **Scoping specific examples of public engagement and consultation identified by the committee** (pages 7 - 21)

A report from the Democratic Services Officer on the four examples identified by the committee, outlining the timeline and recommendations on what the committee can debate and recommend within their remit.

- 9 **Scrutiny forward plan** (page 22)

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[Decision making and equalities](#)

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## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 9 June 2016**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.15pm.

Prior to the business of the meeting, the Chairman spoke about the sad loss of Alison Greenhalgh. She had been a very valued member of the committee and her loss was keenly felt. The Chairman's thoughts were with her family and friends at this difficult time. In response, Cllr Bill Nash spoke about her commitment to public service not only at a District level but also to Exmouth Town Council and in her working life in teaching.

As a mark of respect, the committee observed a period of silence to reflect and remember her.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Colin Brown as a new member of the committee.

#### **\*1 Public speaking**

There was no public speaking at this part of the meeting.

#### **\*2 Minutes**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on the 14 April 2016 were confirmed as a true record.

#### **\*3 Going paper light – planning online service**

The committee received a report from the Economy Practice Manager on his continued work with town and parish councils in relation to the receipt and comment on planning applications.

Ed Freeman, Service lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management, outlined the benefits many of the towns and parishes had in operating this process; as well as the cost benefit with the reduction in paper copies.

The committee raised some issues based on their experience of planning meetings at town or parish councils, including:

- Staff time in going through plans online with public, rather than being able to hand them a paper copy to read. Not all public can either access, or have ability, to use online facility to view applications and plans;
- Uploading plan images directly from website can be very slow and therefore slows down the overall meeting while members wait for images to appear;
- Quality of plans varies, with some plans being difficult to read or too much information on one page there the quality reduces if the image is scaled up to view online;
- Combe Raleigh and Sheldon needed to be added to the areas not able to access online planning facilities because of the broadband coverage.

In responding, the Service Lead - Planning Strategy and Development Management reminded the committee that comment from towns and parishes was key, and that the team were happy to work out what best delivered the applications to each individual council. Some councils downloaded the information onto a memory stick or other device prior to holding a planning meeting, so that the images could load for viewing at a quicker speed than over the internet.

The team also helped point councils towards the Parishes Together funding stream, which has been successfully used in the past, often with parishes submitting a joint bid for both equipment and training. Individual issues raised by the committee relating to specific councils had been noted and would be followed up by the Economy Practice Manager.

**RECOMMENDED** to endorse the continued work in consultation with our town and parish councils to reduce the Planning Services reliance on paper and improve their access to our online services, subject to resolving the issues raised relating to speed of access to information online, quality of images of plans, and further incorporation of rural parishes as broadband delivery permits.

**\*4 Beach hut 2016/17 season update**

The report provided a position statement on the letting of huts and sites, following the decision to increase hire charges.

The number of vacant huts and sites, set out in the position statement, was updated verbally at the meeting as at 9 June 2016: Beer (West beach) 2 site vacancies; Exmouth 3 brick hut vacancies; Seaton (West Walk) 3 vacancies and Seaton (East Walk) 5 site vacancies; all under offer.

The decision to increase the hire charges had already been extensively discussed at previous meetings of the committee. The position statement demonstrated that there had been a reduction in the waiting lists. Some members voiced concern that some tenants that had renewed for 2016/17 may not do so for 2017/18 because of the second increase in hire for that year. The position was agreed to be reviewed in 2017/18 to see if the impact was any greater on vacancies than for the current year.

Some detail was requested on the position statement, which could not be provided at the meeting, but would be sought and fed back to the committee.

**\*5 Performance monitoring for the fourth quarter 2015/16**

The committee considered the service objectives and performance indicators showing concern or variation, including:

- Priority 1b: Resolve penetrating dampness issues and ensure wind and weather tight properties – various issues still to be resolved are the subject of a report to the next Housing Review Board on 16 June 2016, the remit of which covers this service objective;
- Priority 4a: Implementation of E-billing, Self Service & Risk Based Verification – resource allocation was discussed at the Strata Joint Scrutiny meeting on 7 June 2016. The Vice Chairman informed the committee that Strata were under some pressure with staff shortages due to sickness; however recruitment was underway to ensure that projects were not adversely affected;
- Priority 4b: Complete the roll out of smartphones and mobile working technology as part of the Councils Mobile Working Project and design/implement new systems and technologies to make the way we work more efficient; allowing more time to be spent 'on site'. - MX Apps - EDDC phone App - Sita in cab solution- Training for all staff. The Vice Chairman reported that a software bug, relating to smartphones going into "sleep" mode, was the main issue and should be shortly resolved.
- Priority 4b: deliver service efficiencies within Legal. Licensing and Democratic Services and improvements through the application of Systems Thinking techniques

and ensure that we do “what matters” for customers – Will now be delivered in 2016/17, due to changes in personnel and ensuring appropriate training to properly undertake the systems thinking review;

- Council promise – Outstanding council: Number of random vehicle license checks. Recruitment of the licensing team was now complete so the checks should soon be able to be completed;
- Council promise – Outstanding council: Percentage of Minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks and Percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks. A clear explanation on workload and the improvements thanks to the employment of agency staff was provided in the report.

The Vice Chairman also highlighted some indicators from the main report for the committee to be aware of, including relating to the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), a positive collection rate of Council Tax, and securing affordable homes.

#### **\*6 Scrutiny forward plan**

Suggestions for topics to be scoped and considered for the forward plan were requested.

A suggestion put forward by the Chairman, relating to the NHS property services policy of commercial rent and the subsequent impact on community hospitals was agreed by the Committee for scoping.

The committee were reminded of the date of the next website tour for Members – 13 July 2016 at 3pm in the Council Chamber.

#### **Attendance list (present for all or part of the meeting):**

##### **Scrutiny Members present:**

Roger Giles  
Alan Dent  
Marcus Hartnell  
Cathy Gardner  
Dean Barrow  
Colin Brown  
Bill Nash  
Cherry Nicholas

##### **Other Members**

Jill Elson  
Tom Wright  
John Dyson  
David Barratt  
Megan Armstrong

##### **Officers present:**

Ed Freeman, Service lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

##### **Scrutiny Member apologies:**

Simon Grundy

Val Ranger  
Marianne Rixson  
David Chapman  
Maddy Chapman

**Other Member apologies:**

Andrew Moulding  
Geoff Jung  
Susie Bond

Chairman ..... Date.....

**Report to:** **Scrutiny Committee**

**Date of Meeting:** 7 July 2016

**Public Document:** Yes

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release** None

**Agenda item:** 8

**Subject:** **Scoping specific examples of public engagement and consultation identified by the committee.**

**Purpose of report:** On 14 April 2016 the committee considered a scoping report on public engagement and consultation; and specified specific examples of consultation that they wished to have scoped to assess if further review was merited, that may lead to recommendations that would improve future consultation exercises. The four specific examples were:

1. Exmouth masterplan consultation of 2011
2. Exmouth "Splash" and associated area, excluding current pre-planning application work
3. Beach hut consultation prior to hire charge changes, particularly on the timing of public meetings in relation to wider consultation
4. Inclusion of land at Sidford in the production process of the local plan.

This report sets out the timeline, and assessment, of these exercises in terms of scope for the committee in reviewing them.

**Recommendation:** **Consider the scoping report and take the following action on the topics within the report as follows:**

1. **Consider what recommendations, if any, are appropriate to make to Cabinet in respect of future consultation on the Exmouth Masterplan that are not already set out in the adopted consultation guide;**
2. **Consider what recommendations, if any, are appropriate to make to Cabinet in respect of future consultations on regeneration projects that are not already set out in the adopted consultation guide;**
3. **Reiterate the view that there must be early involvement of relevant Ward Members and town and parish councils in planned service and/or fees and charges changes;**
4. **Accept that the timeframe for the local plan demonstrates many opportunities for comment on the site allocation at Sidford (as set out in the now agreed Local Plan) and there is no case for further action by the committee because the plan has been agreed by the Inspector with the inclusion of the site.**

**Reason for recommendation:** The topics requested and the timeline for those issues have been examined by officers to conclude with the recommendations above,



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working within the remit of the committee as defined by the Council's constitution.

<b>Officer:</b>	Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer <a href="mailto:dmeakin@eastdevon.gov.uk">dmeakin@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Financial implications:</b>	There appears to be no direct financial implications but this will depend on the recommendations made by the Committee.
<b>Legal implications:</b>	There are no direct legal implications arising from the report
<b>Equalities impact:</b>	Low Impact
<b>Risk:</b>	Low Risk
<b>Links to background information:</b>	<a href="#">Scrutiny Committee 14 April 2016</a> previous scoping report on public engagement and consultation; links set out in the report outline documentation relating to the specific topics.
<b>Link to Council Plan:</b>	Continuously improving to be an outstanding council.

## Report in full

### Exmouth masterplan consultation 2011; subsequent “Exmouth Splash” in winter 2012/13 as element of that agreed masterplan

#### 1. Timeline

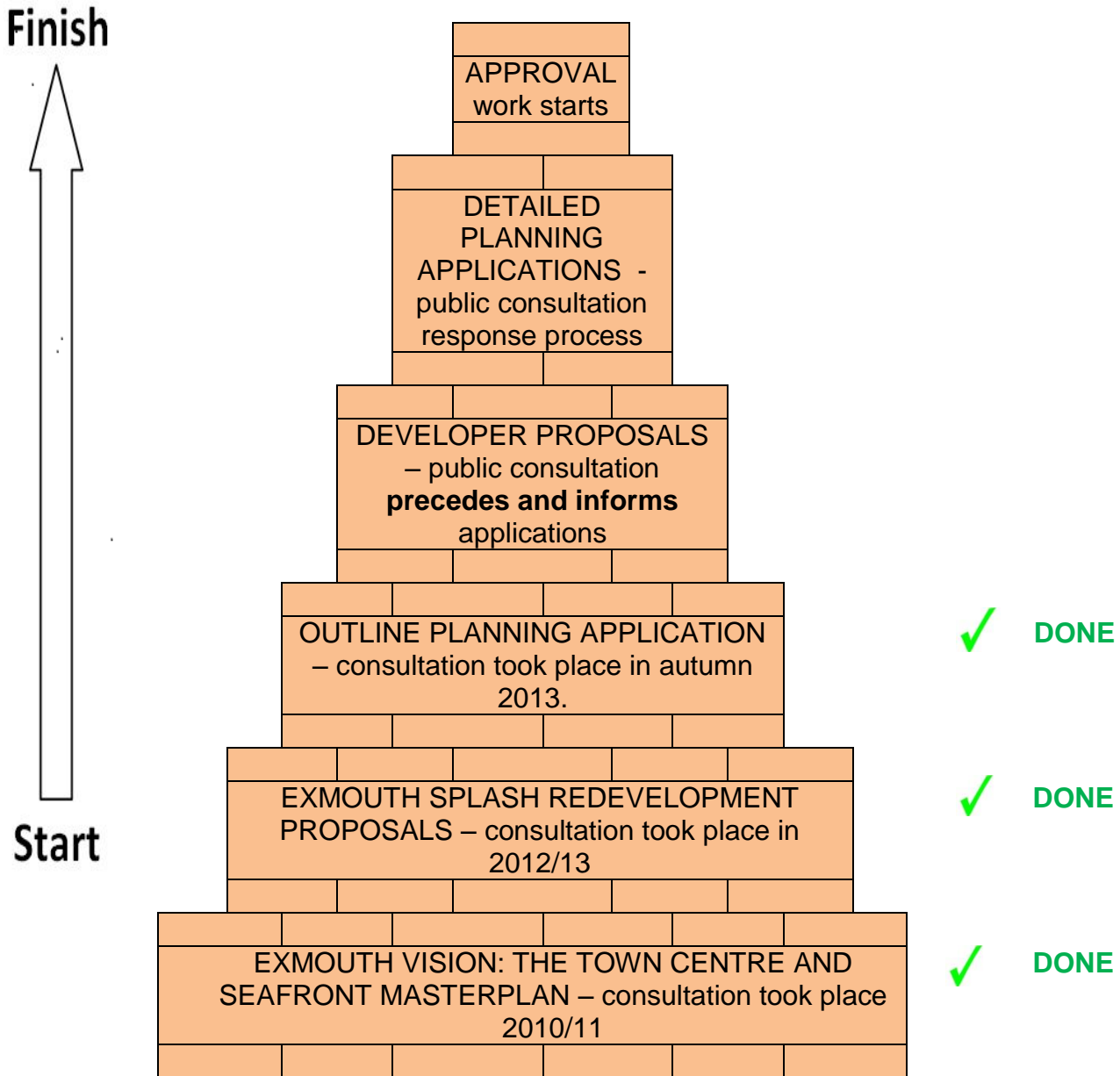
- 1.1. LDA Design produced a [masterplan](#) for Exmouth – how they consulted is on page section 1.1 of that document, which included:
  - Workshops held in March and May 2010 including councillors, landowners, leaseholders, community groups and local residents
  - Further workshops with community groups and interested parties and businesses in July and August 2010
  - Exmouth Regeneration Board involvement
  - Website and twitter by LDA
  - Public exhibition on draft masterplan June – Sept 2011
  - Students at Exmouth Community College considered it in Sept 2011
- 1.2. Feedback from consultation workshops was studied by [Exmouth Regeneration Board on 09.09.11](#)
- 1.3. [DMC report 6 December 2011](#) – Exmouth Town centre and Seafront Masterplan. This report outlines the consultation undertaken and the subsequent responses in detail. The masterplan was subsequently agreed and ratified at Council.
- 1.4. Consultation for the “Splash” started on 29 November 2012, as detailed in the [notes from Exmouth Regeneration Board on 29.11.12](#), which included:
  - stand at event in Strand
  - boards and leaflets
  - questionnaire
  - Exmouth Vision website
  - leaflet to 1,000 random households
  - Exmouth community college event



- 1.5. It was reported to [Exmouth Regeneration Board on 16.05.13](#) that consultation had ended by that meeting and changes made to scheme following the comments made and further analysis.
- 1.6. Outline planning application was submitted for redevelopment of Queens Drive Exmouth Splash on 8 August 2013; an extension to the deadline for Exmouth Town Council for making comment had been agreed by the planning team due to the number of town councillors on holiday during that month.
- 1.7. Statutory consultation undertaken in line with procedure for a planning application – who was consulted and the responses are online under [application reference 13/1819/MOUT](#). The application was approved with conditions, with the decision notice issued 24 January 2014.
- 1.8. A further application as part of reserved matters of that outline application was submitted on 26 October 2015 to cover access, appearance, landscaping and scale for highway re-alignment and parking areas, demolition of cafe, selected beach huts and shelter. Again, statutory consultation undertaken and all available online under reference [15/2487/MRES](#). Application [15/2493/FUL](#) was withdrawn.
- 1.9. Any further planning applications for the respective sites are likely to be subject to further consultation by the developers prior to any planning application being finalised and submitted; there will then be a further opportunity for public involvement during the statutory process once applications have been submitted. The committee have no remit under the constitution to make recommendations or have any bearing on such applications.

In terms of consultation, specifically leading to the development of Queens Drive, the process is simply explained below:

## THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CONSULTATION FOR QUEENS DRIVE



1.10. Members have been kept up to date with Exmouth regeneration and specific development sites, and a [Frequently Asked Question](#) webpage is available on the Council's website.

### 2. Scope for review

2.1. The committee have already been advised at their meeting on 10 December 2015 that planning applications cannot be reviewed by the committee as the Overview and Scrutiny (Reference by Councillors) (Excluded Matters) (England) Order 2012 prevents it; these provisions are reflected in the council's constitution.

2.2. The only area that the committee can consider is if the consultation undertaken for the Exmouth Masterplan back in 2011 was at a sufficient level that provided a clear view from consultees on the overall plan. It has been commented by a number of objectors who

commented on application 15/2487/MRES that insufficient public consultation was undertaken prior to the outline application 13/1819/MOUT.

- 2.3. The committee need to consider if the extent of public engagement activity by LDA Design in 2011 was not enough to elicit a high volume of responses.
- 2.4. If the committee reached the conclusion that the consultation in 2011 was not sufficient, and was not effective enough to elicit a larger response (and I do not wish to pre-empt such a conclusion) the only option is to offer recommendations relating to future consultation for any masterplan refresh, or element of that plan refresh. There has been an indication from officers that there is an intention to refresh the masterplan, but the timing of that refresh depends on resources, both financial and staff availability.
- 2.5. The committee have already made clear in previous discussions that they are content with the current adopted guide for consultation; and reaffirmed endorsement of the existing media policy that would be used in conjunction with consultation exercises. The committee therefore could make specific recommendations on additional requirements to consultation that are unique to this exercise, which are not already accounted for in the [consultation guide](#), (also set out in Appendix A), bearing in mind any cost implications additional engagement requirements may bring.

## Beach huts consultation

### 3. Timeline

- 3.1. Asset Management Forum (AMF) considered the CIPFA TNRP review report on beach huts and chalets and debated the recommendations from it at their meeting on 140814. ([AMF agenda for 14.08.14](#); [notes for 14.08.14 contained in agenda for 25 September 2014](#))
- 3.2. [AMF on 4 Dec 2014](#) considered a draft report for Cabinet and agreed the final version for providing to Cabinet's next meeting.
- 3.3. [Cabinet on 7 Jan 2015](#) considered the report and reached the following decisions:

#### RESOLVED

- 1) that a sinking fund of £19,000 per annum be established to ensure retained huts and chalets can be replaced at the end of their life;
- 2) that the Property & Estates Services team work up a detailed proposal and feasibility assessment to deliver a scheme at Jacobs Ladder for the provision of new, more permanent beach huts;
- 3) that an additional site on the beach at Sidmouth, between the end of the Esplanade and Chit rocks, be established for the provision of 10 sites for beach huts subject to planning permission and viability assessment;
- 4) that the Seaton Searchlight Emplacement be marketed for sale and invitations invited on both a freehold and leasehold basis (interest already expressed was noted);
- 5) that the future of the huts and chalets at Exmouth be considered (in consultation with the Town Council) as part of the wider Exmouth regeneration programme to ensure a coherent approach;
- 6) that 5 year leases be tendered for the existing 56 sites at Beer and 93 sites at Budleigh Salterton to commence 1 April 2016 subject to consultation with current users;
- 7) that all sites be included within StreetScene's rolling condition survey programme of infrastructure assets;
- 8) that all beach hut tenants be responsible for their own NNDR (National non domestic rates) payments, where applicable;
- 9) that all site tenants commit to their beach hut/chalet conforming (within a realistic range) in respect of design, style and colour

- 10) that Beer concession sites be brought into line with open market rents at renewal.
- 11) that the following proposals be referred back to the Asset Management Forum for further consideration, with the Forum being made fully aware of the importance of undertaking consultation:
- 12) **that at Seaton and Budleigh Salterton, from April 2016 the managed hut sites be offered on an open market basis as a site-only package, and will include a one-off charge of £250 for the existing hut;**
- 13) that alternative use options for the beach hut storage unit at Budleigh Salterton be explored and reported back to the Council's Asset Management Forum at a future date.

3.4. In light of resolution 11 making reference to undertaking consultation, AMF requested consultation proposals. AMF considered consultation proposals on [9 April 2015](#) prepared by the Engagement & Funding Officer, which were based on the proposals set by AMF. At that meeting, AMF gave feedback on the questionnaire and also recommended that town and parishes be advised of proposed consultation with beach hut tenants with the opportunity to put forward a package for management if they wished by September 2015.

3.5. The consultation became live online, and paper questionnaires sent out, on 27 May 2015.

3.6. Feedback from the consultation was considered by the [AMF on 3 September 2015](#) and recommendations made to Cabinet as part of a further report.

3.7. [Scrutiny 17 September 2015](#) debated the topic and made recommendations to Cabinet:

**RECOMMENDED that CABINET**

- 1) consider the requirements of all the community in line with equalities legislation in considering any proposals relating to beach huts;
- 2) check the validity of waiting lists for beach huts and sites, and that their management be reviewed;
- 3) confirm to tenants of beach huts and sites that the current arrangements remain in place for 2016;
- 4) review the hire charges for beach huts and sites on an annual basis;
- 5) review the decision to establish the £19k sinking fund per annum;
- 6) consider the difference between town and parish locations be given bearing in mind equality and best value requirements;
- 7) consider further discussions with town and parish councils on the options of undertaking the management of beach huts;
- 8) consider increasing the number of sites available and review more diverse letting arrangements;
- 9) In bringing forward any proposals, consider the wider environment and economic issues.

3.8. [Cabinet 7 October 2015 considered a further report on beach huts and chalets.](#) The Chairman has already voiced his view on how the Scrutiny 17.09.15 recommendations were handled at that meeting procedurally. The Cabinet noted those recommendations and the following decisions made:

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) that the report on the beach huts service consultation be noted;
- 2) that market rents be achieved by means other than auction or sealed bids as a mechanism to establish open market charges on existing beach huts;
- 3) that the standard hire charges be increased for 2016/17 with the aim of achieving open market rates in the future;

- 4) that the relevant Town and Parish Councils be invited to a series of consultation meetings, to establish how the service can best be managed for the benefit of all local communities.
- 5) that the Searchlight Emplacement structure at Seaton be offered for sale on a freehold only basis;
- 6) that the previous resolutions (2 & 3 to replace the existing huts at Sidmouth Jacobs Ladder and assess an additional site) made by Cabinet on 7 January 2015 in relation to the service provided at Sidmouth be reversed (so that the existing huts are maintained as part of the Council's on-going maintenance programme with no assessment being made in respect of a potential additional site between the Esplanade and Chit Rocks);
- 7) that the necessary arrangements be made to publish the Beach Huts Service waiting lists and list of current licensees;
- 8) that sites only be offered at Budleigh Salterton and Seaton from 1 April 2016 on a year-to-year licence, but should EDDC retain the individual management of these beach huts and chalets in 2016, they would be offered to leasees on a 5-year lease;
- 9) that the Council communicate with all beach hut holders as soon as the position going forward has been agreed.

3.9. [Scrutiny 17 March 2016](#) received an update on implementation and the following recommendations were made:

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the number of people on individual waiting lists for beach huts and beach hut sites as at 10 March 2016 be published;
2. the Scrutiny Committee expresses concern that its recommendations regarding beach huts, arrived at following detailed consideration at its meeting in September 2015, were not explicit in the officer report to the subsequent Cabinet meeting. Scrutiny Committee therefore recommends that good practice is to include any recommendations from committees who have considered the matter prior to a Cabinet decision, in the report to Cabinet;
3. the Scrutiny Committee reiterates its view that there must be early involvement of relevant Ward Members and Parish or Town Councils in issues concerning them, particularly with regard to what may be contentious issues;
4. that officers explore any potential to expand on beach hut provision where demand is high, bearing in mind the usual constraints of environmental factors and planning considerations.

3.10. These recommendations were noted at Cabinet on 6 April 2016.

**4. Scope for review**

- 4.1. The committee have expressed comment that the controversy over the increase in beach hut rents would have been lessened if public meetings held during the consultation, which brought forward a number of suggestions for the service, had been undertaken prior to the consultation and helped informed that consultation.
- 4.2. There is of course a degree of managing expectation in undertaking public meetings – with the consultation already underway, there was a clear idea of what the proposals were and could therefore be discussed openly at those public meetings. Holding meetings prior would require careful planning to ensure that debate followed what proposals may come forward and the committee may like to comment on how that could be achieved whilst managing expectation of an outcome.
- 4.3. From the timeline above, it appears that the service did follow the guide in place for consultation, and the feedback from that consultation was made clear in letters to tenants

with the changes to rents on 12 Feb 2016 (in [Scrutiny 17 March 2016](#) agenda papers)

- 4.4. Clearly the debate over the level of rent increase and the rate at which that increase brings the beach huts/sites to market value has already been discussed at committee, and recommendations made previously by the committee have been noted.
- 4.5. Again, if the committee conclude that there was scope for building in feedback from public meetings prior to the full consultation taking place (again not pre-empting any conclusion) then that would naturally lead to a recommendation around the early involvement of town and parish councils – which the committee have already resolved on previous occasions, most recently to Cabinet from the 17.03.16 Scrutiny meeting made the following Recommendation that **“the Scrutiny Committee reiterates its view that there must be early involvement of relevant Ward members and Parish or Town Councils in issues concerning them, particularly with regard to what may be contentious issues”**.
- 4.6. The committee need to decide if there is merit in pursuing this review and what outcome they wish to see from it.

## **Inclusion of land at Sidford in the production process of the local plan**

### **5. Timeline**

- 5.1. The continued development of the Local Plan, up to adoption on 28 January 2016 has been well documented in reports to Development Management Committee and Council.
- 5.2. Provision of up to five hectares of additional employment land was flagged up in the [preferred approach document of September 2010](#) on page 87, which set in principle the desire to have employment land in the Sidmouth area.
- 5.3. A [draft copy of the Local Plan of 2011](#), which was consulted on, included policy wording of the same desire with the addition of “onus on B1 space with uses and development compatible with regency qualities and current uses and nature of the town.” (page 104) Both these documents at this stage did not flag up specific sites for this development – at this stage it was setting the principle.
- 5.4. Local Plan Panel notes 20.03.12 considered inset maps and discussed the site; the panel were made aware that the Town Council did not support the site; on balance they recommended the site go forward on a phased basis of 3 hectares with the remaining 2 in second phase after a five year review of the Local Plan at that time.
- 5.5. This was incorporated into the [consultation of May – June 2012 on Sidmouth](#), where the inset maps were published showing the sites identified.
- 5.6. Development Management Committee on 17 July 2012 ([minutes relating to are on page 11](#)) considered a report on the feedback from the consultation (which included consultation on all plans) and recommended to retain the site as an employment land allocation; agreed at Council on 25 July 2012.
- 5.7. Examination Oral hearing sessions in early 2014. The Inspector had considered the question at Hearing 7 on the 11 March 2014 of “are the proposed allocations suitable for the development for which they are proposed – 2a Sidford employment allocation – traffic; landscape/AONB; flooding” taking comments from a number of participants, detailed in many cases and available online.

- 5.8. Following this hearing the Inspector had not requested further work or review on the land at Sidford from the Council.
- 5.9. 23 March 2015 DMC proposed amendments and supporting evidence to the new local plan.
- 5.10. 26 March 2015 Extra Ordinary Council on proposed amendments and supporting evidence to the new local plan – the following Recommendation to the Inspector to remove the land was carried against officer advice that the Inspector should reach his own conclusions on the allocation: “Strategy 26, 6(d) – Sidmouth employment allocation north of Sidford (Site 041A/041B) be removed from the Plan and the relevant inset map be redrawn to exclude the site”.
- 5.11. As Members will be aware, the Inspector concluded that this element of the draft local plan was acceptable and the plan was adopted on 28 January 2016.
- 5.12. At present there is now a live planning application to develop the site, validated on 6 May 2016 with status as awaiting decision.

## **6. Scope for review**

- 6.1. The process of the production of a Local Plan follows a statutory procedure, which is supported by Government Guidance. This process ensures that there is the opportunity for full community engagement. Accordingly, throughout the development of the local plan there has been significant opportunity for the public to comment, indeed some of the local community have voiced through the consultation, petition, and public speaking at meetings, that they wished to see this land allocation removed.
- 6.2. The role of the Scrutiny committee is not to comment on the merits or otherwise of a site allocation – that is not permitted under the constitution. It can look at the process of how the local plan was shaped, but it is clear from the long timeframe of production of the draft Local Plan through to Examination and then final adoption that there have been many opportunities to comment on the site allocation, and that Members on both Development Management and Overview and indeed collectively as a full Council have supported that inclusion up to the point of 26 March 2015. At that point the draft Local Plan was with the Inspector for consideration, and he recommended the inclusion of the site.
- 6.3. I cannot see any remit for the committee to challenge the consultation undertaken because of the extensive nature over a very long time.
- 6.4. The site itself cannot be discussed in its present form by the committee, as it stands as a live planning application, and therefore consultation rests with individual members in responding to that statutory consultation.
- 6.5. Whilst, in conclusion I do not underestimate how some may feel aggrieved at the outcome of the site’s inclusion into the Local Plan, the site is now included following independent Examination and there are no grounds open to the Committee to pursue that allocation.

# Community Engagement Guide for Managers

## Introduction

In this guide, engagement means all the ways in which we enable people to give their views to influence and be involved in council decisions, services, and performance checks. This document explains how we will engage across all of our activities, ensuring opportunities to work with our partners on these activities are taken whenever possible.

To develop services we wish to engage with all the communities we serve, our partners and other local organisations - such as the voluntary and community sector, health, police and fire services, and other councils and agencies.

We have adopted widely recognised engagement values, shown in the Involving People diagram. We hope that by adopting this guide our partners and other local organisations may work together to use a common approach.

This engagement guide links to our Council Plan. For us to support East Devon effectively we must engage with the people of East Devon.

## What is effective engagement?

To be useful to everyone involved and to make sure that views are shared, effective engagement requires good communication, trust and respect. We will be clear why, with whom and how we are engaging, and what we expect to achieve.

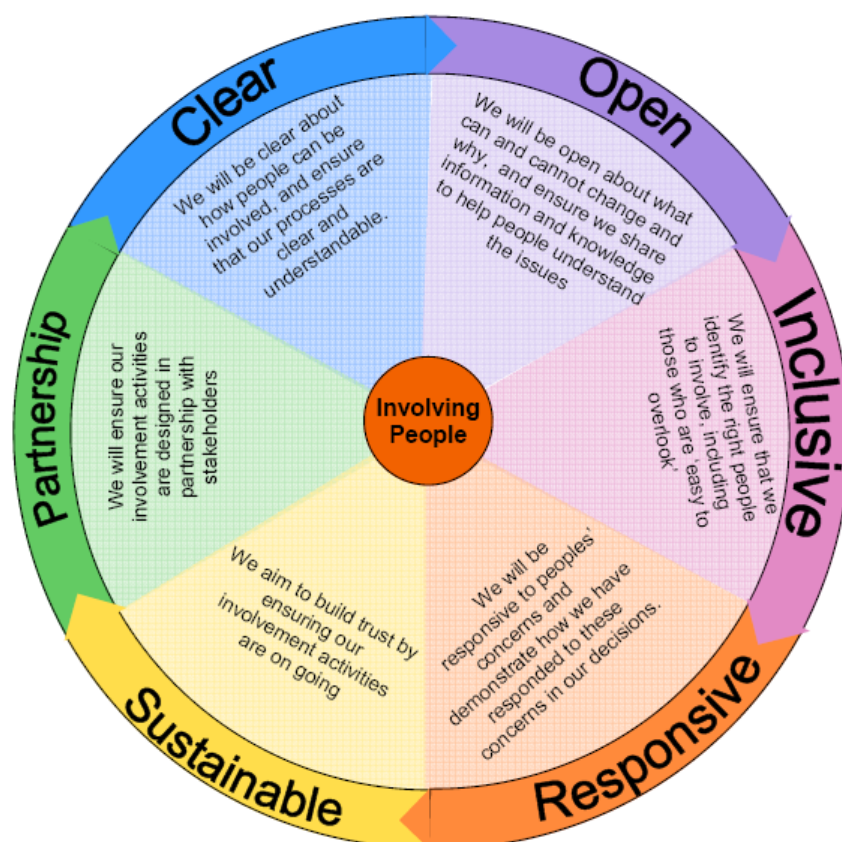
We will listen to, think about and act on issues raised, communicating what we are going to do as a result – we call this a ‘You Said, We Did’ way of working. It may be that results are considered but action is not possible for financial, legal or other reasons, we will explain this in our response.

When we engage we will seek to follow the six values in the diagram below.

This will help local people and communities have more influence and control over local services. These values will help develop a culture that supports equal opportunities for everyone to have their say.



**Involving People Diagram: Joint Engagement Policy to involve the people of Devon in Health and Social Care**



**Why do we engage?**

We engage to develop services for people in the right way and with the money available we engage with the public, service users, and carers, as well as those who work for or with us so that we develop services in the right way and with the money available. We have a legal duty to do so, known as the 'duty to consult', as well as other legal responsibilities. We also want to engage because it is the right thing to do.

**Who do we engage?**

We will seek the views of anyone appearing to have an interest in any area in which we carry out a role or task, including:

- local people across all ages, ethnicities, religions and beliefs, gender and sexual orientations, physical and/or sensory disabilities, learning disabilities, and mental health issues.
- service users, and people who might become service users
- vulnerable and seldom heard groups
- communities
- groups representing the public, including council tax payers
- elected representatives such as councillors and MPs

- businesses, voluntary and charitable organisations
- our staff and partners
- other public authorities and service providers

We recognise that when seeking views, some individuals or communities may be harder to reach than others.

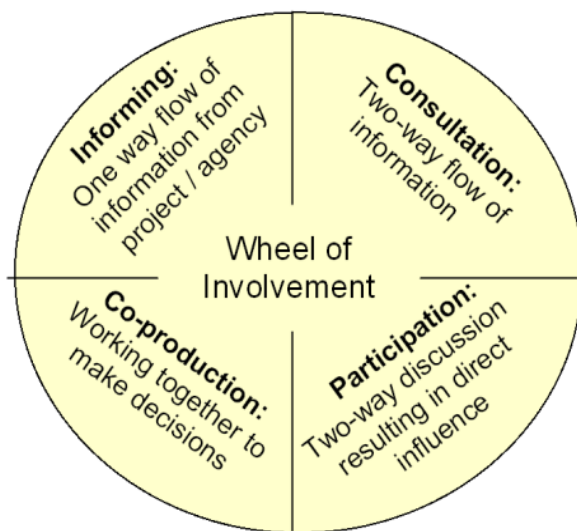
### How do we engage?

There are four types of engagement or involvement which we may adopt:

- Information
- Consultation
- Participation
- Co-production

The wheel of involvement shows that we place equal value on each type.

**Wheel of Involvement** – produced by the Fusion consortium, who were providers of health and social care engagement in Devon.



We recognise that one size does not fit all so will use different methods to meet different needs.

We will use appropriate ways of engaging with people, which may include:

Informing, things like:

- posters and leaflets
- information events and exhibitions
- media, such as local radio, press, and social media
- website and social media communications

Consultation, things like:

- complaints and suggestion schemes
- interviews, polls, surveys and questionnaires
- user and focus groups
- public meetings and residents' panels

Participation, things like:

- community planning
- participatory and stakeholder events.
- workshops

Co-production, things like:

- council and citizens working directly together
- working with existing community organisations
- partnerships – council working with other organisations

### **What are we trying to achieve?**

Our engagement activity will help us to:

- be more open and answerable.
- focus on communities - groups of people interested in the same issues or place, or both.
- build strong ties with local communities and organisations.
- make quality decisions.
- continue to develop services.

Engaging with groups and communities will enable them to participate in decision-making and to have more influence, choice, and control over the way in which local services are shaped and delivered.

By engaging with the people of East Devon we will find out more about the services they want and need. We will make sure services are delivered within the funding available and offering best value for money, while keeping our part of the council tax bill low. We will make improvements when right to do so and funds allow, joining up services to meet need and improve matters. We aim to continue to improve people's lives, and make sure East Devon remains an outstanding place.

Engaging with the people of East Devon, taking into account those with equalities needs such as people with physical disabilities, and those harder to engage, is key to putting our plans into action.

We will engage on:

- helping communities to help themselves.

- council decisions, services and performance.
- saving money and managing the impact of spending reductions on services that matter most, which also enables us to be the voice of East Devon and its people when working with central Government.
- changing the way services are provided.

### **How will we achieve this?**

- We will bring together engagement activities across the council to oversee, plan, and improve quality.
- Our staff involved with engagement will develop know-how and experience to help the council and those who engage with it to do so effectively.
- We will engage in the most appropriate and cost effective way to enable people to give their views and be heard.
- We will provide guidance to support staff and our partners with engagement activity.
- The council will work with organisations and communities to engage on council decisions, services and performance, and will publicise these activities.
- To be open and answerable, we will use a 'You Said, We Did' way of working. We will tell people what we have done and what we are going to do in a timely and open way.
- We will work with local communities to seek out relevant information to help them make decisions suited to their needs.

We wish to engage and work more closely with the communities we serve, our partners, and other organisations to develop services. Communities will have more influence over decisions and greater involvement, choice, and control over the way in which local services are shaped and delivered. We already have many good and innovative examples of engagement and involvement, from informing people and communities right through to coproduction of services and partnership working. More public and community involvement should result in services which are more in line with need, helping to reduce costly and disruptive challenges to council decisions.

### **When to engage**

Engagement will normally be carried out (amongst other times):

- When looking at changing the ways our services are delivered to customers
- When deciding upon priorities for the area and the Council for future years
- When working with partners or communities in relation to proposals for an area
- On amended or new council policies where appropriate with relevant groups
- On local level issues, such as what equipment should be put into a playing field in Axminster or what facilities should be provided in Cranbrook
- When a decision or change could have a negative impact on people with protected equalities characteristics
- We have a Duty of Best Value so when we are reviewing service provision we have to consult

### **Do not engage:**

- If the decisions have already been made on what you are proposing to ask people about
- If the results are not going to be used

- If we cannot deliver what we are asking
- If there are previous similar up to date engagement results
- If the appropriate resources, including financial resources, are not available
- If the urgency of the issue is such that the public interest lies in addressing the issue straight away
- Some regulatory matters where statutory processes must be followed

### **How we have developed this guide**

The Devon Strategic Partnership has recently published its Community Engagement Policy after working with a wide variety of residents, partners and stakeholders. Rather than engage with all these groups of people again and find the same answers again we adopted the approach they have already implemented. Also, as we are working in partnership with many of these organisations we felt that it was important we all have the same approach.

The Devon Strategic Partnership Policy was developed by:

- Devon County Council
- NHS Devon, Plymouth & Torbay
- Stakeholders from the voluntary and community sector including Devon Association of Councils for Voluntary Service (DACVS) - This partnership works to support the voluntary and community sector to develop and improve its contribution to the lives of local people in Devon
- Devon Consortium - Formed in January 2005 to provide a body with the skills, expertise, authority and mandate to work for and in partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Devon.
- Fusion - At the time this policy was written by the Devon Strategic Partnership Fusion was the principal user-led organisation for Devon. Fusion involved service users and their carers in its day to day running and brought them together to work with public sector agencies, such as NHS Devon and DCC, as well as with other charities and organisations.
- Voluntary Voice - At the time of writing this policy the DACVS project aimed to enable the voice of the voluntary and community sector to be strengthened and increased the number of voluntary and community groups involved in partnerships, communities of interest and forums. Representatives were mandated through fair and transparent election processes and had clear methods for communicating within the sector.

**Agenda Item 9****Scrutiny Committee****Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan 2016/17**

<b>Date of Committee</b>	<b>Report</b>	<b>Lead</b>
4 Aug 2016	If required	
1 Sep 2016	If required	
6 Oct 2016	Devon Partnership NHS Trust – St John’s Court Performance monitoring report Quarters 1 and 2	
3 Nov 2016	Police and Crime Commissioner	
24 Nov 2016		
5 Jan 2017		
11 Jan 2017	Draft budget and service plans <b>with Overview</b>	Simon Davey
2 Feb 2017	Performance monitoring report Quarter 3 tbc	
2 Mar 2017		
30 Mar 2017		
4 May 2017		

**Work for scoping and allocation to the Forward Plan as appropriate:**

<b>Proposed date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
tbc	Portfolio Holder update reports being sought; committee can then subsequently ask the PH to attend committee in specific aspects of their portfolio
tbc	Community Hospitals – transfer of ownership
tbc	Review of the production process of the Local Plan
tbc	Update on all beach management plans
tbc	Election 2015 accounts update