

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 1 November 2017

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 5.30pm and ended at 6.50pm.

***94 Public Speaking**

There were no questions from the public.

***95 Minutes**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 4 October 2017 were confirmed and signed as a true record after the following amendment:

Minute 90 – Guide to Project Management.

That a further resolution be added;

3. To ensure that the staff resources required to deliver a project were recorded upfront in the planning of the project.

***96 Declarations**

Councillor Paul Diviani: Minute 104; personal interest - Vice Chairman of HotSW Joint Committee

Councillor Jill Elson: Minute 104; personal interest - Governor of Exmouth Community College

***97 Matters of urgency**

None

***98 Matters referred to the Cabinet**

There were no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

***99 Exclusion of the public**

There were no items that officers recommended should be dealt with in this way.

***100 Forward Plan**

Members noted the contents of the forward plan for key decisions for the period 1 December 2017 to 31 March 2018.

***101 Notes of the Exmouth Regeneration Programme Board held on 21 September 2017**

Members received the Minutes of the Exmouth Regeneration Programme Board held on 21 September 2017.

102 Minutes of the Independent Remuneration Panel held on 2 October 2017

Members received the Minutes of the Independent Remuneration Panel held on 2 October 2017.

The Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities conveyed her concern that Members' costs were rising – telephone bills, internet connections, paper, stamps and travel costs in contacting their constituents; not all constituents were on email. These costs were also rising for councillors with responsibilities. If the Council wanted to attract younger Members in the future then these expenses needed to rise to reflect present day

costs. EDDC paid the lowest Members expenses of three local authorities including Teignbridge and Exeter.

RECOMMENDED

that the Independent Remuneration Panel reconvene to include cross-party participation to reassess Members Basic Allowances. Democratic Services would arrange a future date for this meeting to take place.

***103 Minutes of the Overview Committee held on 5 October 2017**

Members received the Minutes of the Overview Committee held on 5 October 2017.

Discussion took place on Minute 11 - Local Economic Development Activity;

- The importance of gaining employment land within the district
- 'One job for every home' principle needed to be tracked
- Creating commercial space outside the towns was an issue
- Community facilities were as vitally important as commercial space, both must be protected.

104 Heart of the South West – Joint Committee

The Chief Executive conveyed to Members that the aim of the Joint Committee was to provide a single strategic public sector partnership, which covered the entire area and provides cohesive, coherent leadership and governance to ensure delivery of the Productivity Plan for the HotSW area. The Productivity Strategy proposed to deliver prosperity and productivity across the entire HotSW and to do so in an inclusive way. It proposed to build on existing strengths such as aerospace, advanced manufacturing, nuclear energy and agri-tech as well as exploiting new opportunities and releasing untapped potential. The strategy was built around three key objectives:

- Developing leadership and knowledge within businesses in the area;
- Strengthening the connectivity and infrastructure businesses and people rely on; and
- Developing the ability of people in the area to work and learn in a rapidly changing economy.

The Strategic Lead, Governance and Licensing advised Members that further amendments had been made to the template report, which had been prepared by Somerset County Council. Missing detail was now provided and Members were notified of this in advance of the meeting. In addition to this, a number of minor changes did not need to be highlighted except one - the change in the commencement date of the Joint Committee from the 1 January 2018 to 22 January 2018. This resulted in amendments to the main body of the report and to the Inter-Authority Agreement and the Arrangements Document appended to the report.

Discussions included the following:

- Productivity was key to the success of this joint committee
- Sub groups could work one specific sectors
- The need to inspire young people to gain essential skills that businesses require
- This must not be seen as 'another committee', this had to be 'the voice' with a clear and concise remit
- There were no key indicators in the report

RECOMMENDED:

that Cabinet recommends to Council to;

- a) Approve the recommendation of the HotSW Leaders (meeting as a shadow Joint Committee) to form a Joint Committee for the Heart of the South West;
- b) Approve the Arrangements and Inter-Authority Agreement documents set out in appendices A and B for the establishment of the Joint Committee with the commencement date of 22 January 2018 and give delegated authority to the Chief Executive and Strategic Lead (Governance and Licensing) to make minor amendments including any further change to the commencement date as necessary.
- c) Appoint the Leader and Deputy Leader as the Council's named representative and substitute named representative on the Joint Committee;
- d) Appoint Somerset County Council as the Administering Authority for the Joint Committee for a 2 year period commencing 22 January 2018;
- e) Approve the transfer of the remaining joint devolution budget to meet the support costs of the Joint Committee for the remainder of 2017/18 financial year subject to approval of any expenditure by the Administering Authority;
- f) Approve an initial contribution of £1400 for 2018/19 to fund the administration and the work programme of the Joint Committee, noting that any expenditure would be subject to the approval of the Administering Authority;
- g) Agree that the key function of the Joint Committee was to approve the Productivity Strategy (it was intended to bring the Strategy to the Joint Committee for approval by February 2018);
- h) Authorise the initial work programme of the Joint Committee aimed at the successful delivery of the Productivity Strategy;
- i) Agree the proposed meeting arrangements for the Joint Committee including the timetable of meetings for the Joint Committee as proposed in para 2.14.

REASON:

Working together would deliver better results if help to businesses improve their productivity levels and deliver greater prosperity across the Heart of the South West. By collaborating across local geographies, this would strengthen the area's voice to Government and strengthen the actions the area could take to improve productivity.

***105 Financial Monitoring Report 2017/18 - Month 6 September 2017**

The report gave a summary of the Council's overall financial position for 2017/18 at the end of month six (30 September 2017). Current monitoring indicated that:

- The General Fund Balance was being maintained at or above the adopted level.
- The Housing Revenue Account Balance would be maintained at or above the adopted level.

RESOLVED:

that the variances identified as part of the Revenue and Capital Monitoring process up to Month Six be noted.

REASON:

The report updated Members on the overall financial position of the Authority following the end of each month and included recommendations where corrective action was required for the remainder of the financial year.

***106 Monthly Performance reports – September 2017**

The report set out performance information for the 2017/18 financial year for September 2017.

There were four indicator showing excellent performance:

- Percentage of Non-domestic Rates collected
- Percentage of planning appeal decisions allowed against the authority's decision to refuse
- Percentage of Council Tax collected
- Working days lost due to sickness absence

There was one performance indicator showing as concern.

- Days taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events – The processing times for new claims and change of circumstances showed a general reduction, apart from a peak in February which coincided with the issuing of annual Council Tax bills and a peak in change events in August and September due to the volumes of work received and staff resourcing during the summer holiday period. The situation was now back on track and there was no backlogs of work.

RESOLVED:

that the progress and proposed improvement action for performance measures for the 2017/18 financial year for September 2017 be noted.

REASON:

the performance reports highlighted progress using a monthly snapshot report; SPAR report on monthly performance indicators and system thinking measures in key service areas including Development Management, Housing and Revenues and Benefits.

***107 Robinson Bequest**

The report requested amendment of the signatories on the Robinson Bequest's National Savings & Investment Account.

RESOLVED:

that the request for signatories for the Robinson Bequest be amended to the Head of Finance, the Financial Services' Manager and the Treasury Management Accountant be agreed.

REASON:

The Council administers a bequest, known as the Robinson Bequest, the income from which was used to maintain the Garden of Rest in Beer. The Bequest had an investment held in a National Savings & Investment Account that required two out of three authorised signatures in order to make a withdrawal. At the Council, there now remained only two authorised signatories; these were the Head of Finance and the Financial Services' Manager. As the third signatory had left EDDC, it was proposed to appoint the Treasury Management Accountant as the replacement third signatory.

Attendance list

Present:

Paul Diviani Leader

Portfolio Holders:

Phil Twiss	Deputy Leader/Strategic Planning and Developments
Ian Thomas	Finance
Tom Wright	Environment
Marcus Hartnell	Deputy Portfolio Holder Environment
Iain Chubb	Corporate Services
Phil Skinner	Economy
Jill Elson	Sustainable Homes and Communities

Cabinet Members without Portfolio:

Geoff Pook
Eileen Wragg

Non-Cabinet apologies:

Eleanor Rylance
Simon Grundy
Alan Dent
Ian Hall
John O’Leary
Brenda Taylor
Pat Graham
Steve Hall
Jenny Brown

Officer apologies:

Richard Cohen, Deputy Chief Executive
Karen Jenkins, Strategic Lead – Organisational Development and Transformation

Also present (for some or all of the meeting)

Councillors:

Brian Bailey
Bruce de Saram
David Barratt
Roger Giles
Dean Barrow
Mike Howe
Graham Godbeer
Cherry Nicholas
John Dyson
Colin Brown
Maddy Chapman
Helen Parr
Steve Gazzard
Pauline Stott
Mike Allen
Geoff Jung
Peter Faithfull
Andrew Moulding
Paul Carter

John Humphreys

Also present:

Officers:

Mark Williams, Chief Executive

Simon Davey, Strategic Lead – Finance

John Golding, Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment

Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead – Governance and Licensing, and Monitoring Officer

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer

Chairman Date.....