

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the consultative meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 2 November 2022

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.40 pm

79 Public speaking

Cllr Marianne Rixson spoke on the Devon Carbon Plan which is recorded at Minute 90.

80 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the consultative meeting of Cabinet held on 5 October 2022 were agreed.

81 Declarations of interest

Min 88. Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 18 October 2022.
Councillor Alan Dent, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of LED.

Min 88. Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 18 October 2022.
Councillor Paul Arnott, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Is a Colyton Parish Councillor.

Min 88. Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 18 October 2022.
Councillor Paul Millar, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of LED.

Min 93. Household Support Fund (HSF) 3 and Discretionary Fund.
Councillor Jake Bonetta, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Honiton Town Councillor representative for Citizens Advice East Devon.

Min 94. Homes for Ukraine transition policy.
Councillor Peter Faithfull, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of the Ottery St Mary Refugee Response Group.

Min 97. Devon & Exeter Foundation NHS Trust request to lease office space in Exmouth Town Hall.
Councillor Steve Gazzard, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Is a Exmouth Town Councillor.

Min 98. LED request for additional support 2022/23.
Councillor Alan Dent, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of LED Monitoring Forum.

Min 98. LED request for additional support 2022/23.
Councillor Paul Millar, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of LED.

82 Matters of urgency

There were 2 late items that officers recommended were dealt with in this way. These are recorded at,

Minute 93 - Household Support Fund (HSF) 3 and Discretionary Fund

Minute 94 - Homes for Ukraine transition policy

83 **Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were 3 confidential items recorded at Minutes 96-98.

84 **Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 6 October 2022**

Members agreed to note the Minutes and recommendations of Scrutiny Committee held on 6 October 2022.

Minute 34 Beach and river water quality

1. For the District Council to liaise with the various local groups, Rivers Trusts, and the Environment Agency to help set up local volunteer group networks to carry out "Citizen Science monitoring" of our rivers and watercourses to provide the best possible data throughout the district.
2. For the District Council to liaise with landowners and farmers, the EA and Flood Resilience groups and other stakeholders to provide nature-based solutions.
3. To work with SWW on a strategy that will aid understanding and provide a clear direction of travel to reduce pollution and protect our beaches and clean our rivers.
4. For the District Council to request that South West Water provide real time data on their website.

85 **Minutes of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 10 October 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes and recommendations of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 10 October 2022.

Minute 8 Progress Update on Placemaking in Exmouth

1. That an existing budget is made available to Devon County Council to erect one additional sign directing visitors to alternative parking, and to make the offer to erect the sign ourselves. This sign to be nearby to the Queen's Drive and Sideshore car parks.
2. To improve signage within the Council's own East Devon car parks to inform members of the public of additional car parking.

Minute 9 Proposals for the temporary uses of Queen's Drive Space for the 2023 Season

To delegate to the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation:

1. To grant leases to current tenants based on their current rents and include a goodwill benefit of a reduction in their rent for the incoming season of 15% below the current market rate. If the current tenants are unable to take up the offer for 2023 season then we would market the pitches in a tender process.
2. The Events Space will be tendered to attract an operator for the season. If one cannot be appointed for the season we will then put out a tender for the 6 weeks school holidays. Out of this time, the events team will hire out the Event Space as per the events Policy, terms and conditions, and Portfolio Holder agreed prices.
3. We consider a proposal from LED for the fitness space for 2 seasons (received in 26th July 2022) i.e. 2023/2024 subject to Heads of Terms being agreed – noting that we would have to include a break clause (with a pre-agreed compensatory payment) should we reach a decision to bring forward a development at Queen's Drive Space.

Minute 10 Results of Placemaking in Exmouth Consultation and Next Steps

1. That the results of the consultation are accepted and that they be used to appoint a professional team to develop a terms of reference and a plan for a Placemaking Strategy for Exmouth Town and Seafront.
2. To request a budget of £160k from Full Council to develop the Placemaking Strategy which will include a Habitat Regulations Assessment

86 **Minutes of Housing Review Board held on 11 October 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes and recommendations of Housing Review Board held on 11 October 2022.

Minute 27 Update on Housing Task and Finish Forum

That approval be given for the Housing Task Force Service Lead, to complete discussions with the South West Procurement Alliance (SWPA) and ZedPods, for the purpose of procuring a contract to develop new housing on behalf of EDDC.

Minute 29 Emergency winter housing plan

1. That Cabinet recommends to Council the approval of a budget of £50,000 to allocate towards delivering this project and to designate as a Housing Winter Pressures Hardship Fund.
2. To give delegated authority to the Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment and the Housing Service Lead to approve the detail and criteria for the hardship fund and the grounds on which funds will be allocated to households.
3. To approve the other actions highlighted in the report that will deliver housing's contribution to the EDDC Winter Pressures Plan.

87 **Minutes of the Poverty Working Panel held on 17 October 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes of Poverty Working Panel held on 17 October 2022.

88 **Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 18 October 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes and recommendations of LED Monitoring Forum held on 18 October 2022.

Minute 24 Colyton ATP update

To delegate authority to the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation in consultation with the Strategic Lead – Finance, Strategic Lead – Governance & Licensing and the Portfolio Holder for Economy & Assets to arrange advance payment of the capital contribution of up to £140,000 prior to completion of the new lease and management agreement.

89 **Minutes of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 19 October 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes and recommendations of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 19 October 2022.

Minute 16 Proposed changes to working times

To agree the new start time for first collections be 6am.

Minute 18 Recycling and Waste web-site proposal

That the delivery be built into service planning and scoped out with the communications team and Strata.

90 **Devon Carbon Plan**

Cllr Marianne Rixson read out the following statement.

‘Originally the Prime Minister stated he was ‘too busy’ to attend COP27 in Egypt. Perhaps due to adverse reactions in the press, he has finally decided to do the right thing and actually attend in person. However, please note that he has already demoted both COP26 President, Alok Sharma, and Climate Change Minister, Graham Stuart, from his Cabinet. This is sending the wrong message with regard to the government’s real commitment to climate change.

The UN environment report published last week analysed the gap between the CO2 cuts pledged by countries and the cuts needed to limit any rise in global temperature to 1.5C, the internationally agreed target. Progress has been “woefully inadequate” it concluded. The UN secretary general, Antonio Guterres, said: “Emissions remain at dangerous and record highs and are still rising. We must close the emissions gap before climate catastrophe closes in on us all.”

Prof David King, a former UK chief scientific adviser, said: “The report is a dire warning to all countries – none of whom are doing anywhere near enough to manage the climate emergency.”

As growing climate change impacts are experienced across the globe, the message that greenhouse gas emissions must fall is unambiguous. Yet the Emissions Gap Report 2022: The Closing Window – Climate crisis calls for rapid transformation of societies - finds that the international community is falling far short of the Paris goals, with no credible pathway to 1.5°C in place. Only an urgent system-wide transformation can avoid climate disaster.

I am, therefore, very relieved that the Devon Carbon Plan has been finalised and so we now have a common blueprint for us all to work towards.’

The Strategic Lead Housing, Health & Environment presented his report which highlighted the final version of the Devon Carbon Plan following a comprehensive research, consultation and inclusive approach to evidence gathering. The report considered the process of adoption, the implications of doing so and how to integrate the actions and commitments with the council’s own Climate Change Strategy. He proposed to support the ambitions and commitments in the Devon Carbon Plan. Adoption of the Devon Carbon Plan would prompt a review and updating of the council’s own ambitions that were contained in our Climate Change Strategy and linked Action Plan.

Members thanked John Golding for his valuable input, effort and dedication to the Devon Carbon Plan. The Chair wished to thank the Chief Executive and all officers for their dedication and contribution in this matter.

RESOLVED:

That the Devon Carbon Plan be endorsed.

RECOMMENDED:

That Council reviews and refreshes its own Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan to align and show how it will contribute to delivering the Devon Carbon Plan.

REASON:

To endorse the Devon Carbon Plan and work in partnership to deliver the actions and activities contained in the Plan to reduce our carbon use.

91 **Rural England Prosperity Fund**

The Economic Development Manager updated Members on the report to Cabinet on 13 July 2022 detailing EDDC's Investment Plan to deliver the District's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) allocation of £1,796,363 through a series of projects over a three year period. While waiting for approval of the submitted SPF Investment Plan, the Government had now launched a new £110m Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), replacing EU funding previously delivered through the LEADER and Growth Programme initiatives.

Through the REPF, East Devon District Council had the opportunity to secure an additional financial allocation of up to £854,298 to be distributed as capital spend in the form of grants for business or community purposes. This allocation was regarded as a 'top-up' to East Devon's SPF allocation, taking total funding to £2,650,661. In order to access this top-up, EDDC were required to develop and submit an 'Addendum' to the existing UKSPF Investment Plan.

RESOLVED:

- That the proposed REPF Addendum to our SPF Investment Plan contained at Appendix A be approved.
- That delegated authority be given to the Service Lead for Growth, Development & Prosperity in consultation with the Strategic Lead for Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Assets to make any final changes to the REPF Addendum and to submit this by the 30 November 2022 deadline.

REASON:

To ensure that the council submits a suitable Addendum to secure REPF financial allocation of up to £854,298 and ensure delivery of the business and community interventions described in the report between April 2023 and March 2025.

92 **Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023-24**

The Service Lead Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Services, Fraud & Compliance's report was seeking approval to carry out consultation on proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age. Following consultation a report would be presented to Cabinet with the recommended final scheme to be adopted by Council. This work supported the Council's Poverty Strategy as by reducing the council tax burden for those on the lowest incomes it helped to build financial resilience; a key aim of the Poverty Strategy.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet agrees to the proposed draft scheme and carry out public consultation on it.
2. Following public consultation, any changes to our scheme will be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 4 January 2023 with a view to obtaining a recommendation to Council.

REASON:

Each financial year the Council was required by law to decide, whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme. We made significant changes to the scheme for 2020/21 where we moved to an income banded scheme and also increased maximum support from 80% to 85%.

For the past two financial years there had not been any changes to the scheme due to the impact of Covid-19 and not being able to properly assess how the changes made had affected residents' finances. EDDC was committed to undertake a full review during this year so that it would have time to consult on any proposed changes before proposing the 2023/24 scheme to Members. As it had been identified some changes to the scheme needed to be agreed as in the draft scheme, in order to consult on it.

93 **Household Support Fund (HSF) 3 and Discretionary Fund**

The Service Lead Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Services, Fraud & Compliance explained her report was presented due to concerns being raised by Members over the pressure on household's bills for residents this winter. The Household Support Fund 3 covered the period 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023. The HSF was money provided by the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) to Devon County Council who had allocated EDDC a proportion of the fund to help low income households in the district. The report set out the proposal for EDDC's approach for utilising the fund to ensure support was directed to those most in need.

In addition, the report provided an update on what was approved following the motion at Council on 19 October 2022 where it was agreed that officers were to investigate creating an additional discretionary energy support fund based on evidence from the poverty dashboard data.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Devon Framework agreement be adopted
2. That the approach for targeted support and for the remaining funding to be used under an open application basis as outlined under section 5 of the report, be approved.
3. Delegate authority to given to the Service Lead for Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Services, Fraud & Compliance, in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder to finalise the HSF Hardship policy document in line with the report and if necessary to make subsequent changes in order to ensure all funding is spent before the 31 March 2023.

REASON:

Since October 2021 the Council has been receiving funding from the DWP to help low income households provide extra financial support to those most in need. A further sum of money has been allocated to us for the period 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 to help support those low income households who are going to struggle to afford essentials due to the current cost of living crisis and rising energy costs. Our proposals for a proportion of our allocation have been based on the recommendations contained within the DWP's guidance as well as aligning with the other Devon authorities. A further proportion has been targeted to support residents who we have identified from our social resilience (poverty) dashboard as likely to need further support. The remainder of our budget will be used to help other households who we have not been able to identify as needing further support in line with our anti-poverty strategy. Once these funds are exhausted we will utilise our existing hardship fund to support vulnerable households.

94 **Homes for Ukraine transition policy**

The report sought member endorsement of the Homes for Ukraine Private Rented Sector (PRS) transition policy. The policy had been developed by Team Devon and was agreed by the Leaders and Chief Officers of all Devon local authorities at their meeting on the 5 October 2022. The policy provided an additional top up payment for Homes for Ukraine hosts. It also set out the general principles that would be followed in relation to re-matching guests with new hosts, what to do where host/guest relations breakdown and support for a guest's transition to the Private Rented Sector.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Homes for Ukraine Private Rented Sector transition policy as attached to this report be adopted
2. That the additional flat rate top-up thank you payment of £150 per host per month for 12 months be approved
3. That the Private Rented Sector transition proposals as shown in the attached report with the final decision on any payments (and the amount to be paid) to be delegated to the Service Lead – Housing, and Strategic Lead Finance be approved
4. That this scheme be delivered within the finances provided by the UK Government be agreed.

REASON:

To provide Cabinet with the Homes for Ukraine Private Rented Sector transition policy proposed by Team Devon. To highlight the parts in the report which are the discretion of the authority to set and to ensure by adoption of this policy, that Ukrainian guests are continued to be welcomed and settled in this area. That host families are supported until a longer term exit strategy is developed by the UK Government.

95 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

that under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt and private information (as set out against each Part B agenda item), is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing the items in private session (Part B).

96 **Towards Zero Carbon Development in the West End**

The report presented a draft of the Business Case for investing in the district heating 'interconnector' project.

RESOLVED:

1. That the procurement stage for the interconnector project on the basis of the draft Business Case as set out at Appendix A, be endorsed.
2. That the likely scale of anticipated borrowing that will be required to finance the project, be noted.
3. That the bid to Green Heat Network Fund to help secure an Energy Services Company to serve the Cranbrook expansion areas, be supported.
4. That a further report be received detailing the outcome of the procurement exercise alongside the Full Business Case prior to taking a final investment decision.
5. To endorse reserving 50% of the return on investment to establish a social/community fund to benefit East Devon residents that are customers of the district heating network.

The precise way in which this fund could operate will need to be the subject of a further report.

REASON:

To enable the interconnector project to proceed to the detailed procurement stage and ensure that it was supported by a robust business case.

97 **Devon & Exeter Foundation NHS Trust request to lease office space in Exmouth Town Hall**

The report summarised a proposal to lease first floor office space in Exmouth Town Hall to the NHS for a 5-year period with a 3-year break option. The space would be used by staff working in primary care, predominantly to do administration tasks.

RESOLVED:

1. That the proposal to lease surplus office space on the 1st floor at Exmouth Town Hall to the WEB Primary Care Network as back-office accommodation, along with shared access rights to other parts of the building as is reasonably necessary, be supported.
2. That delegate authority be given to the Service Lead Place, Assets & Commercialisation in consultation with Strategic Lead Finance and Strategic Lead Governance & Licensing, to agree heads of terms and enter into a lease with the WEB Primary Care Network.

REASON:

By renting the surplus space out at a commercial rate the Council would generate an income from this asset in Exmouth and also reduce its cost of managing this building through recovery of costs using a service charge. It also had the potential in the future to provide an opportunity for closer working with our NHS colleagues.

98 **LED request for additional support 2022/23**

The Service Lead Countryside & Leisure updated members to the fact that LED was significantly impacted by the impacts by the Covid-19 pandemic, with the interruptions to its business during periods of restrictions and lockdowns during 2020 and 2021. This additional financial support would be subject to the external auditing process put in place in 2020 to ensure that claims of additional financial support were scrutinised in an open book manner.

RECOMMENDED:

That Council approve further additional financial support to LED to mitigate some of their expected net loss as result of the energy and economic challenges and ensure that LED remains financially solvent.

REASON:

To ensure that LED remained a viable leisure provider for EDDC and was able to manage the ongoing financial impacts created post COVID-19 and the impacts of the current energy crisis and cost of living pressures for the remainder of the 2022/23 financial year. The request for additional support would ensure that LED were able to keep open all of the council's facilities and provide leisure activities for all of the District's communities.

Attendance List

Present:

Portfolio Holders

P Arnott	Leader
G Jung	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
D Ledger	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities
M Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action and Emergency Response
J Rowland	Portfolio Holder Finance
J Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination
N Hookway	Portfolio Holder Tourism, Sport, Leisure and Culture

Cabinet apologies:

P Hayward	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Economy and Assets
S Jackson	Portfolio Holder Democracy, Transparency and Communications;

Also present (for some or all the meeting)

Councillor Jake Bonetta
Councillor Alan Dent
Councillor Peter Faithfull
Councillor Steve Gazzard
Councillor Marcus Hartnell
Councillor Paul Millar
Councillor Tom Wright

Also present:

Officers:

Tim Child, Service Lead - Place, Assets & Commercialisation
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Service Lead Housing
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Naomi Harnett, Enterprise Zone Programme Manager
Andrew Hopkins, Communications Consultant
Libby Jarrett, Service Lead Revenues and Benefits
Robert Murray, Economic Development Manager
Charles Plowden, Service Lead Countryside and Leisure
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Mark Williams, Chief Executive
Andrew Wood, Service Lead - Growth Development and Prosperity

Chair

Date: