

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 31 May 2018

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.35pm.

- *1 Public speaking
There were no public speakers at the meeting.
- *2 Minute confirmation
The minutes of the Overview Committee held on the 13 March 2018, were confirmed as a true record.
- *3 Declarations of interest
Councillor Steve Hall
Minute *3
Disclosable Personal Interest – Chairman of Licensing & Enforcement Committee

Councillor Graham Godbeer
Minute *4
Disclosable Personal Interest – Chairman of East Devon AONB

Councillor Tim Dumper
Minute *4
Disclosable Personal Interest – member of Transition Exmouth

3 Business Development and Events planning on Council land

The Strategic Lead for Housing, Health and Environment set out his case for an Events Strategy and a new post of Business Development and Events Officer.

The proposal has come forward as part of the Transformation Strategy to deliver increased income generation to fund council services. The proposed Events Strategy gives a clear purpose, direction and ambitions to maximise the potential of some of the Council's assets.

The report set out the work already achieved by services of the Council in delivering events, highlights being the Exmouth Big Wheel, Surf Championships, and an outdoor cinema and theatre. There have also been a number of successful events held on the Council's nature reserves, the Manor Pavilion Theatre and the Thelma Hulbert Gallery.

The proposed new post would provide the expertise on a commercial footing to coordinate with other service interests and liaise with event organisers. The expectation was that the post would quickly become self-funding and progress to providing an income to the Council.

The committee discussed the proposal, including:

-) Possibility of creating £100k in additional income to the Council;
-) The risks were considered to be quite low and the initial investment required quite modest;
-) Opportunity to assist business in East Devon;
-) Need to look at East Devon as a whole and where each event would be held;

-) The need to attract a younger demographic to events in the district;
-) Question over the potential profit margins contained in the report;
-) Importance of having a third party partner for arranging larger events on Council land;
-) East Devon had some significant assets that needed to be better used to create an income stream for the Council;
-) Adopt a cautious approach building on what we have already established would be a good approach, particularly to avoid any potential reputational damage;
-) Need for a detailed business plan in due course;
-) Emphasise the importance of liaising with the Licensing Service when arranging any events;
-) The events business could be developed over a number of years at a pace the authority was comfortable with and using an approach that avoided any damage to our reputation by offering a careful explanation of our motives;
-) Post required a different skill set and there was the need to provide some additional capacity to realise the full potential from the project;
-) Concerns about the level of work expected in the responsibilities and activities of the Business Development, Marketing & Events Officer;
-) This was an excellent initiative for East Devon to put in place a person from outside with a professional budget to manage it.

RECOMMENDED 1. that Cabinet approve the outline Events Strategy, and the recruitment of a Business Development & Events Officer to deliver the ambitions contained in the strategy;
2. that the proposal go back to SMT to discuss where the Business Development & Events Officer would sit within the Council and the duration of Events and report back to a future meeting of the committee.

*4 Overview forward plan

Councillor Rob Longhurst put forward a suggestion based on his drafted motion to Council, set out below:

East Devon seeks a 100% conversion to Renewable Energy by 2030

That this Council orders a feasibility study, a cost benefit analysis and a final report, by suitably qualified consultants into the conversion of the whole of East Devon to 100% Renewable Energy (RE100). (This is to be strictly a fact-finding study with proposals and not a commitment by the Council to a full project). Special consideration must be given to AONB.

The study to be detailed and then overseen by the Overview Committee with a final report to be presented to Cabinet by the end of 2018.

-) The move to RE100 is inevitable both economically and environmentally
-) East Devon has an enviable record in waste management to the benefit of the Environment
-) The initiative dovetails with the EDDC “Outstanding” strategic objectives
-) The initiative supports the local Economy objectives since East Devon has one of the World’s Leading suppliers of Solar Lighting who manufacture in East Devon and export worldwide

- J East Devon could be at the forefront of RE100 and derive income as a provider of services to other Councils
- J Government grants are currently freely available as seed corn to this type of initiative.

The committee discussed the scale and extent of the work needed to deliver the study, cost analysis and final report requested. During discussions, the following points were noted:

- J Possibility of asking town/parish councils to see what they wanted to do about introducing renewable energy in their parish;
- J Government tariffs for renewable energy had reduced significantly in recent years;
- J EDDC had plans for PV panels on the roof of Blackdown House and new council houses had a number of renewable energy measures added to their build;
- J The Solar Range company was based in Whimble and would be happy to come to talk to the committee;
- J Planning policies could reduce the possibilities of wind turbines in some areas;
- J Possibility of adding solar panels to council housing properties when the roofs needed replacing.

- RESOLVED 1. that Richard Cohen or Andy Wood be requested to attend a meeting of the Overview Committee to talk about what they have been doing and what could be done regarding the use of Renewable Energy and achieving energy independence I the Growth Point;**
- 2. that Councillor Rob Longhurst be requested to ask Renewable First to attend a meeting of the Committee to discuss Renewable Energy;**
- 3. that the following additional items be added to the Forward Plan: Flat Pack Housing, Help with Seeking Grants, Exmouth Barrage.**

Attendance list

Councillors Present:

Graham Godbeer (Chairman)
Ian Hall (Vice Chairman)
Matt Booth
Tim Dumper
Mark Evans-Martin
Peter Faithfull
Steve Hall
Douglas Hull
Rob Longhurst

Councillors Also Present:

David Barratt
Bruce de Saram
John Dyson
Jill Elson
Pauline Stott
Ian Thomas
Tom Wright

Officers

John Golding, Strategic Lead for Housing, Health and Environment
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Chris Lane, Democratic Services Officer

Councillor Apologies:

- Dean Barrow
- Chris Pepper
- Mark Williamson

Chairman Date.....