

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Overview Committee held Online via the Zoom App on 24 September 2020. All Councillors and registered speakers will have been sent an appointment with the meeting link.

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.16 pm

59 Public Speaking

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

The Chairman advised that a letter had been received from a resident, Mr Stephen Pemberton, regarding the Sidmouth beach management plan, Pennington Point and East Beach. Mr Pemberton having agreed, the letter was read out by a Democratic Services Officer and expressed the following views:

- It appeared that EDDC had little or no intention of doing what was needed for Sidmouth
- Sidmouth residents had been silenced
- There was a lack of progress and accountability by EDDC
- The administration had been led by EDDC Senior Officer views
- The priority was the hole at Pennington Point exacerbated by the erosion along East Beach
- Revetment and rock island(s) were required for Pennington Point and East Beach

It was agreed to consider the matter under the Forward Plan.

60 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 February 2020 were approved and signed as a correct record.

61 Declarations of interest

Minute 64. Update on referral from the Cabinet meeting 21 July 2020.
Councillor Andrew Moulding, Personal, Patron of Arc.

Minute 64. Update on referral from the Cabinet meeting 21 July 2020.
Councillor Ian Hall, Personal, Devon County Councillor, DCC Mental Health Champion, Vice-Chairman of the Trustees of Arc, Chair of Cloakham Lawns Sports Centre.

62 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

63 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There were no items to be dealt with in this way.

64 **Update on referral from the Cabinet meeting 21 July 2020**

At the previous meeting the Committee had debated motions in support of the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge and the Healthy Weight Declaration. Notes to summarise and supplement the debate, with recommendations for the Committee to approve, had been circulated.

Andrew Ennis, Service Lead Environmental Health and Car Parks, presented the notes on the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge and highlighted the range of commitments and expertise which would be required, some of which was beyond existing resources and budgets.

Members discussed the following points:

- The prevalence of mental health problems was significant and likely to worsen as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic
- 44 other District Councils had Mental Health Champions and had signed the Challenge
- Cabinet was being asked at its next meeting to consider the re-introduction of a limited number of Member Champions, including a Mental Health Champion and this was supported by the Committee
- There was support for the appointment of a dedicated Officer to engage with local communities
- There was a need to ensure that poor mental health did not become mental illness
- The Council needed a robust framework to safeguard the mental health of all Members and Officers
- Members noted the recommendation to Cabinet of the Housing Review Board to approve the need for the recruitment of a specialist Mental Health Support Officer to work within the housing services team

Cllr Hall proposed the following recommendations to Cabinet which were seconded by Cllr de Saram and **RESOLVED**:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Cabinet notes that our Public Health Strategic Plan already recognises the importance of mental as well as physical health
2. That during the Covid-recovery phase we continue to work with our partners within existing parameters
3. That Cabinet notes that specialist skill sets are required for mental health interventions; this is the role of the Devon Partnership Trust and other agencies. EDDC does not have dedicated or experienced officer resource for mental health
4. As an interim measure to ensure that Members and Officers are signposted to appropriate support if necessary
5. That surveys are sent to Members and Officers to capture information on the current state of mental health
6. That Cabinet is requested to consider appointing a lead Officer for mental health in the organisation in conjunction with the request for a mental health Officer from the housing service and that Cabinet agrees the recommendation to appoint a Member Champion for mental health
7. That bespoke training for Members and Officers be provided on mental health.

It was noted during the course of the meeting that the minutes would be added as a late item to the agenda for the Cabinet meeting of 30 September 2020.

Andrew Ennis presented the notes on the Healthy Weight Declaration and outlined the 14 commitments which would be required should the Council sign up to the Declaration.

It was noted that, to date, only County Councils had signed up to the Declaration.

Cllr de Saram proposed the following recommendations to Cabinet which were seconded by Cllr Gazzard and **RESOLVED**:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Cabinet notes the contribution that our activities identified in our Public Health Strategic Plan make towards encouraging healthy weight
2. That during the Covid-recovery phase we continue to work with our partners within existing parameters
3. That Cabinet recognises that our partners' priorities are also changing in response to Covid-recovery
4. That Cabinet notes that our current priorities do not offer us the scope to afford additional resourcing at this time, but that this is reviewed after six months

It was agreed that the Healthy Weight Declaration be added to the Forward Plan in order to keep the matter under review.

65 **Forward Plan**

With regard to the Forward Plan, the Committee discussed the following:

Next meeting

The meeting on 12 November 2020 would consider the Draft Financial Strategy 2021-2031 and an update on the High Street TAFF and Our Towns Scheme.

Sidmouth Beach Management Plan

In response to the letter from Mr Stephen Pemberton, Cllr Jung advised the following:

- Cllr Jung had been engaged in correspondence with Mr Pemberton who had declined offers to meet and discuss the Sidmouth beach management plan
- EDDC had provided reassurances that it was progressing with the beach management plan
- Interested groups had attended forum meetings and had expressed their views
- EDDC had conferred with the Environment Agency regarding the recent cliff fall and noted that the works could not be classed as emergency works
- The cost of installing off shore islands as requested would be prohibitive

Economic recovery plan

Cllr Moulding proposed that an economic impact assessment of the Covid-19 pandemic be added to the Forward Plan as an urgent item.

In response, Cllr Arnott advised that a Devon County Council Officer had been tasked with economic recovery. Following the statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer earlier in the day, Cllr Arnott had written to Officers for an assessment of the business support which had been announced.

Assisted housing needs

Cllr Hall proposed that the provision of assisted housing units be added to the Forward Plan. This topic would require scoping.

Proposal form and scoping template

The Committee discussed the use of a proposal form and scoping template to assist with future work programming and to ensure that the right work would come forward at the right time whilst using resources as effectively as possible. Use of the forms could be reviewed at a future date.

Governance Review working party

It was noted that work on the Governance Review had been suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic and agreed that this item should be retained on the Forward Plan.

The Forward Plan was noted.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

N Hookway (Chairman)
V Johns (Vice-Chairman)
B De Saram
I Hall
M Hartnell
F King
T Woodward
K Blakey
S Bond
S Jackson
S Gazzard

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

P Arnott
C Brown
P Faithfull
G Jung
P Millar
A Moulding

Officers in attendance:

Andrew Ennis, Service Lead Environmental Health and Car Parks
Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing
Andrew Hancock, Service Lead StreetScene

Susan Howl, Democratic Services Manager
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Shirley Shaw, Planning Barrister

Councillor apologies:

M Allen
V Ranger

Chairman

Date: