

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Online via the Zoom app. on 3 March 2021

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.21 pm

332 Public speaking

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

333 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of Cabinet held on 3 February 2021 were confirmed as a true record.

334 Declarations of interest

Min 335. Matters of urgency.

Councillor Jack Rowland, Personal, Council appointed Shareholder of Exeter Science Park Ltd.

Min 335. Matters of urgency.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Council appointed Director of Exeter Science Park Ltd.

Min 339. Minutes of Strata Joint Executive Committee held on 25 January 2021.

Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Chair of the Strata Joint Executive Committee.

Min 340. Minutes of Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group held on 25 January 2021.

Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Chair of the Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group.

Min 341. Minutes of Community Grant Panel held on 26 January 2021.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Treasurer to Newton Poppleford Playing Field Foundation.

Min343. Minutes of Car Parking TaFF held on 2 February 2021.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Clerk to Newton Poppleford and Harpford parish council that has a free of use car park.

Min 346. Cranbrook Town Council - Community Governance Review.

Councillor Megan Armstrong, Personal, Has family members who live in Cranbrook who could benefit or be affected.

Min 346. Cranbrook Town Council - Community Governance Review.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Has family members who live in Cranbrook who could benefit or be affected.

Min 347. Cranbrook Sports Pavilion delivery.

Councillor Megan Armstrong, Personal, Has family members who live in Cranbrook who could benefit or be affected.

Min 347. Cranbrook Sports Pavilion delivery.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Has family members who live in Cranbrook who could benefit or be affected.

Min 349. Sidmouth and East Beach BMP Exemption to standing orders.
Councillor John Loudoun, Personal, Member of the advisory group and a Sidmouth ward member.

Min 349. Sidmouth and East Beach BMP Exemption to standing orders.
Councillor Marianne Rixson, Personal, Town and District councillor for Sidmouth.

335 **Matters of urgency**

Exeter Science Park Ltd (ESPL) - Letter of comfort/support

The Strategic Lead Finance stated that the council had been asked along with all shareholders to provide ESPL with a letter of comfort/support. A template letter had been provided given with a request that this is returned to the Company by the 5 March in order for the accounts to be filed for year ending 31st March 2020 as a going concern and to demonstrate the commitment of shareholders.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet agreed that as a Shareholder of ESPL the letter as detailed in the report is sent on behalf of the council to acknowledge the continued support of the Company for the next 12 months.

REASON:

To provide support to ESPL who play a key part in the economic objectives of the council.

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

None

337 **Proposed Independent Review of Council Management Structure**

At the December 2020 Cabinet meeting the Leader announced that he wished to initiate an independent review of the Council Management Structure and the Chief Executive was instructed to prepare a report. Accordingly the report set out the procurement considerations for Cabinet and Council to consider.

Discussions included the following:

- Why now? This was not the right time, the past 12 months staff had seen their workloads significantly increased due to the pandemic
- The Country as a whole had changed and adapted its working methods, the future was still uncertain so the review should be delayed
- How can we change structures and processes when we don't know what the new working requirements would be?
- Staff were extraordinarily stressed so to progress with a management review at his time was simply wrong
- The council needed support, stability and unity at this time not a review
- Reviews related to changes an organisation was trying to achieve, with clear objectives, aspirations and ambitions. Any management restructure needed consultation and clear priorities to what was wanted from its management team
- Once the vision and plan of the council was agreed then this was the time to look at its skills-base

- The council plan must be produced and considered first, followed by staff second and then take into account the staff you have to deliver the plan
- What was the evolution of the management review? Was the Chair's handling of the review affecting staff morale?
- Will we use data collected from other councils' reviews and what is the time frame of the review?
- Agree that presently staff were working in unnatural conditions with further pressures added to them outside of work. We were emerging into the 'new normal' so required concurrent planning to produce a good plan to work with new conditions; therefore needing an independent review to be undertaken of the present situation
- Reassure the management team this was to support them and acknowledge the pressures that they have been under
- In economic terms this was exactly the right time to act in order to continue to deliver exceptional services to the residents of East Devon
- We owe this to SMT as professional and responsible employees to do this review

The Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination stated there was never a right time to conduct a management review. This was a review of the senior management structure. The council had moved from Sidmouth to Honiton, invested in technology to develop services, establish remote working and working from home as well as coming out of a pandemic. All this had led to an opportunity to look into the different ways of working and how the staff had responded to this, as well as the stresses and strains this had put onto the organisation. Cabinet was looking to be positive, proactive and engaging to the needs of the organisation. This was the time to take stock and look forward to the needs of the organisation and adapt only if there was evidence of a need to do so. This review was not driven by the need or intention to save money and was looking for an outcome that was not pre-determined. The review would look at the future management structure as the council emerged from the pandemic and build on the positives that had been seen though the way the organisation had worked over the past 12 months.

The Chair explained that the council had lost two members of its SMT over the last year so therefore had lost the benefit that these roles provided, this in his opinion was causing stress and strain across the whole organisation. He stated the Country was emerging out of the pandemic so felt that this was the appropriate time for the review to be conducted. He wished to ensure staff the review was not intended to de-stabilise the council and its staff, nor reduce staff numbers.

RESOLVED:

1. that the contents of this report are noted and endorsed,
2. that delegated authority be granted to the Monitoring Officer to establish a politically balanced member working group comprising of 7 members, to oversee and input into this project. That it also be noted that the working group would include representatives from the Devon Procurement Service, DCC HR Services, Unison and the LGA,
3. that the CEO take all necessary steps to progress this project in consultation with the working group.

RECOMMENDED to Council:

4. that a budget of circa £25k to be allocated to this project.

REASON:

To take forward the Leader's request.

338 **Forward Plan**

Members agreed the contents of the Forward Plan for key decisions for the period 1 March to 30 June 2021.

339 **Minutes of Strata Joint Executive Committee held on 25 January 2021**

Members received and noted the Minutes of Strata Joint Executive Committee held on 25 January 2021.

RESOLVED (1) that the following recommendation be agreed:

Minute 6 Strata Business Plan 2020/21 and beyond

that East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council approve the Strata Business Plan 2020/21 and beyond including;

- (1)The 21/22 Proposed Savings;
- (2)Hardware budgets being returned to East Devon District Council and Teignbridge District Council;
- (3)Appointment of a Data Analyst post;
- (4)Benchmarking to be undertaken by SOCITM; and
- (5)The mechanism for work prioritisation.

340 **Minutes of Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group held on 25 January 2021**

Members received and noted the Minutes of Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group held on 25 January 2021.

Discussions included the following:

- the car park should stay
- more green space to allow for a change of use
- this was always going to be a temporary car park
- this should be used for leisure facilities
- if used as an area for a beach volleyball club there would be no need to re-grass the area

RESOLVED (1) that the following recommendations be agreed:

Minute 21 Queen's Drive temporary uses

A. That a temporary planning application be submitted for up to 2 years on the former car park site to enable the area to be grassed (seed or turf) and used for fitness uses as per the report.

B. That the temporary use on the main Queen's Drive Space for the 2021 season progress as detailed in the report (paragraphs 3.1-3.8) in respect of arrangements for the bar, the traders, events and replacement of the seating areas.

C. That the former car park site be laid to grass prior to planning permission for change of use being granted.

D. That a request be made to Devon County Council to improve highways signage to alternative car parks and that locality funding towards the cost of the signage be requested from Exmouth County Councillors.

RESOLVED (2) that Cabinet recommends the following to Council:

Minute 22 Queen's Drive resourcing

That up to £200,000 be made available from the Business Rates Pilot Reserve for a Development Surveyor and an Engagement / Project Officer for a term of 2 years, dedicated to moving forward a suite of place & prosperity based projects in Exmouth and to include Queen's Drive.

341 Minutes of Community Grant Panel held on 26 January 2021

Members received and noted the Minutes of Community Grant Panel held on 26 January 2021.

RESOLVED (1) that the following recommendations be agreed:

Minute 47 Current rules of the Community Building Fund

1. That Members defer subject to further discussion which will include data that needs to be obtained, including a timetable to then ensure that any details are considered into any budgetary considerations for 2022/2023.

2. That Members defer the question about whether to include community pubs in the current rules of the fund subject to further discussion and research.

342 Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 27 January 2021

Members received and noted the Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 27 January 2021.

343 Minutes of Car Parking TaFF held on 2 February 2021

Members received and noted the Minutes of Car Parking TaFF held on 2 February 2021.

RESOLVED (1) that the following recommendations be returned to the Car Parking TaFF to consider as part of developing the Car Parking Strategy:

Minute 46 A revised policy for motorhomes and campervans in EDDC pay and display car parks

That the Service Lead - Environmental Health and Car Parks prepare a report with

recommendations for consideration by the Car Park Task and Finish Forum Members at a future meeting in March 2021.

Minute 47 A review of options (including possible asset transfer) for managing all car parks that do not generate any revenue income or operate at a net cost to EDDC

That the Service Lead - Environmental Health and Car Parks prepare a report detailing the costings for each car park on the category 2 list and which do not currently generate any revenue, with a range of possible options for each one, which may include introducing charges or asset transfer amongst others, for the Task and Finish Forum Members to consider at a future meeting.

Minute 48 Consideration of the introduction of evening charges in car parks where we currently do not charge for parking between 18:00 and 08:00 on the following day

To propose the introduction of an evening parking charge of £1 to be reviewed after 1 year.

Minute 49 Consideration of the introduction of Sunday charges for car parking in our inland car parks. (We already charge for car parking on Sundays in the car parks in our coastal towns).

To propose the introduction of a Sunday car parking charge to be reviewed after 1 year.

344 **Minutes of Car Parking TaFF held on 11 February 2021**

Members received and noted the Minutes of Car Parking TaFF held on 11 February 2021.

RESOLVED (1) that the following recommendations be agreed:

Minute 59 The EDDC climate emergency declaration and action plan and the role of our car parking strategy in tackling this (with specific reference to investment in electric vehicle charging infrastructure and appropriate charging tariffs)

1. that the Car Parking Task and Finish Forum endorses the ongoing work with DELETTI phases 1 and 2.
2. that the Service Lead – Environmental Health and Car Parks present a report to Cabinet as a matter of urgency seeking authority to participate in the Innovate UK funded Exeter Rapid Charging project to install and operate up to 30 rapid charging units in EDDC's public car parks this year.
3. that Cabinet also approve that EDDC should investigate the options for providing electric bike charging points and the provision of an ebike rental scheme.

Minute 61 Alternative sources of revenue (events, advertising, private sector management options)

that the Service Lead – Environment Health and Car Parks, Portfolio Holder Economy and Events Officer investigate alternative sources of revenue through the use of car parks in East Devon.

RESOLVED (2) that Cabinet recommends the following to Council:

Minute 60 The use of cash and incentives to use alternative payment methods

1. that in order to encourage the use of cashless payments in car parks a trial be undertaken in a car park with multiple payment machines, making just one machine available for cash use.
2. that the signage in car parks be reviewed by officers in order to simplify it, with revised wording being brought back to the TaFF.
3. that more prominent messaging be added to car park signage notifying East Devon residents of the annual permit available online.
4. that for the time being the same tariff be used for all payment methods.

345 **Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 4 February 2021**

Members received and noted the Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 4 February 2021.

346 **Cranbrook Town Council - Community Governance Review**

The CEO explained that a request has been received from Cranbrook Town Council requesting that the Council undertake a community governance review under section 80 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The purpose of the review would be to assess whether the current boundaries of the town should be expanded in anticipation of further planning approvals for housing and related development in the neighbouring parish areas but adjacent to Cranbrook itself. The report asked for the authorisation of Council to carry out the review.

During discussion there was a concern raised that presently there were no ward members for the wards of Whimple and Rockbeare.

RECOMMENDED to Council:

- That the Council undertake a Community Governance Review of the current Cranbrook Town Council area with a view to establishing whether expansion of the current town boundaries is considered to be appropriate
- That the Terms of Reference be agreed, including the timetable and arrangements for public consultation.
- That further reports will be brought to Cabinet in order that decisions may be made in respect of draft proposals and final recommendations of the Review.
- That a budget of £5000 be made available for administrative costs associated with the Community Governance Review.

REASON:

- a) In accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007; the principal legal framework within which councils must undertake these reviews.
- b) **Alternative Options**
To not take any action and continue with current boundaries
- c) **Risk Considerations**
That objections are raised to the principle of expanding the existing town boundaries
- d) **Policy and Budgetary Considerations**
To be dealt with within current budgets
- e) **Date for Review of Decision**
N/A.

347 **Cranbrook Sports Pavilion delivery**

At the Cabinet meeting of 6 January 2021, Members resolved to require the New Community partners (Cranbrook consortium of developers) to deliver the sports changing rooms secured under the current s106 agreement and for the land and building along with other specific negotiated s106 monies to be paid to Cranbrook Town Council.

Cranbrook Town Council now requested a financial sum to be paid to them in lieu of direct delivery of the changing rooms by the New Community partners. Along with the other monies previously identified, this would enable the Town Council to procure the design and build of a Pavilion as a single entity. The New Community partners had confirmed that the sum they were willing to pay in lieu of direct delivery of the changing rooms was £600,000 which Cranbrook Town Council had indicated it is satisfied with.

While following the resolution on the 6 January the responsibility for transfer of the land and delivery passed back to the New Community Partners and the Town Council respectively, the request from the Town Council would move responsibility for land transfer and building procurement further, so that it rested solely with the Town Council. The arrangement did not involve this Council in any way other than through its normal planning function and the need to agree a deed of variation to the existing Section 106 to capture the arrangement.

The Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning wished to congratulate Cranbrook Town Council for securing this project and delivering these new facilities for their town.

RESOLVED:

That the update report now be considered within the standard terms of the Council's planning function; more specifically through a Deed of variation to the existing Section 106 agreement which would facilitate the transfer of land and monies to Cranbrook Town Council to deliver the Cranbrook Sport pavilion and changing room for the Ingrams site, be noted.

REASON:

The delivery of the enhanced pavilion in one construction exercise, so that it was designed to meet the needs of Cranbrook Town Council and the sporting body

requirements, would ensure that there were no abortive costs. Members had previously accepted that they were satisfied that the Town Council were best placed to deliver the project and that they had appropriate resources to enable them to do so.

348 **Housing Options team staffing requirement**

The Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment addressed a staffing requirement within the Housing Options team.

RECOMMENDED to Council:

that the requested change to the current staffing arrangement be noted and to agree the upgrading of a part time post to a full time post and the additional budget required for this.

REASON:

To ensure the Housing Options team are better equipped to tackle the level of pressure on the homelessness service.

349 **Sidmouth and East Beach BMP Exemption to standing orders**

The Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment notified Cabinet of the standing orders exemption used for the new additional work required on the Sidmouth and East Beach BMP. This was keeping the existing consultant to update the Outline Business Case (OBC) to match new government funding rules, which have been updated since the previous OBC was completed.

RESOLVED:

To note that a Standing Order Exemption has been used to continue work on the Sidmouth and East Beach BMP to the value of £62,514.50

REASON:

1. Central Government updated their spending rules making them more favourable, and the current OBC no longer matches these rules and would not be accepted.
2. Keeping the existing consultant to update their own figures and documents is both quicker and cheaper than procuring another consultant to start from scratch. The consultant's price breakdown is similar to their original competitive tender for like for like activities.

350 **Appointment of Surveying/Valuation Consultant Exemption to standing orders**

The Service Lead Planning and Development Management informed members of the appointment of Lambert Smith Hampton as Surveying / Valuation Consultants to undertake the valuation and negotiations of land parcels within Cranbrook town centre, to support EDDC in pursuing the option of purchasing one or more of the Cranbrook town centre parcels from the East Devon New Community Partners, as set out in the revised memorandum of understanding (MOU).

RESOLVED:

that the attached Request for Exemption to Standing Orders Report in respect of the appointment of Lambert Smith Hampton as Surveying / Valuation Consultants to undertake the necessary Valuation and Negotiations of parcels of land to enable EDDC to purchase one or more parcels of land, in or around Cranbrook Centre, be noted.

REASON:

To provide Surveying / valuation and Negotiation Services to the Planning Department. This independent work was urgently required to review the various expectations set out in the MOU before the MOU can be signed.

Attendance List

Present:

Portfolio Holders

M Armstrong	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities
P Arnott	Leader
P Hayward	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Economy and Assets
G Jung	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
D Ledger	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning
M Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action and Emergencies
J Rowland	Portfolio Holder Finance
J Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination
S Jackson	Portfolio Holder Democracy and Transparency
N Hookway	Portfolio Holder Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport

Also present (for some or all the meeting)

Councillor Kevin Blakey
Councillor Kim Bloxham
Councillor Susie Bond
Councillor Fred Caygill
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain
Councillor Maddy Chapman
Councillor Bruce De Saram
Councillor Peter Faithfull
Councillor Steve Gazzard
Councillor Marcus Hartnell
Councillor Sam Hawkins
Councillor Ben Ingham
Councillor Vicky Johns
Councillor Fabian King
Councillor Dawn Manley
Councillor Andrew Moulding
Councillor Helen Parr
Councillor Geoff Pook
Councillor Eleanor Rylance
Councillor Philip Skinner
Councillor Brenda Taylor
Councillor Joe Whibley
Councillor Tom Wright
Councillor Jess Bailey
Councillor Eileen Wragg

Also present:

Officers:

Tim Child, Service Lead - Place, Assets & Commercialisation

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer

Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance

Ed Freeman, Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management

John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment

Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing

Susan Howl, Democratic Services Manager

Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Mark Williams, Chief Executive

Chair

Date: