

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Asset Management Forum held online via zoom on 21 June 2022

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 9.40 am and ended at 11.20 am

1 Public speaking

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

2 Notes from the previous meeting held on 5 January 2022

With regard to minute 70, it was noted that the meeting to discuss procurement and materials discounts from builders merchants had not yet taken place. The meeting would be held during July.

The notes of the previous meeting held on 5 January 2022 were agreed.

3 Declarations of interest

Minute 6. Asset Management Plan for General Fund Assets.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Works for Axminster Town Council.

Minute 8. Update on Community Asset Transfer Procedure.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Works for Axminster Town Council.

Minute 9. Place and Prosperity Team update.

Councillor Marianne Rixson, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of Sidmouth Town Council and resident of Sid Valley.

Minute 9. Place and Prosperity Team update.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Works for Axminster Town Council.

Minute 10. Estates Team update.

Councillor Marianne Rixson, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of Sidmouth Town Council and resident of Sid Valley.

Minute 10. Estates Team update.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Works for Axminster Town Council.

4 Matters of urgency

None.

5 Confidential/exempt item(s)

None.

6 **Asset Management Plan for General Fund Assets**

The report before the Forum outlined the requirement to develop a new General Fund Asset Management Plan (AMP) in light of the new Council Plan in place and a number of emerging corporate strategies. Other factors needed to be taken into account in a new plan, including:

- Climate change declaration
- Increasing financial pressures
- Improved intelligence and data of the asset portfolio

The Forum were asked to consider the principles of the Plan and asked to recommend to Cabinet that the relevant officers work with the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Assets in developing the three core protocols, and the action plan, for further consideration by the Forum.

The Service Lead Place, Assets & Commercialisation highlighted the three key themes of:

- Proactive asset management
- Investment and capital programme
- Supporting wider objectives

Discussion and questions included the following points:

- The AMP covers all general fund assets including car parks.
- The financial and non-financial performance of assets is recognised in the disposal and acquisition protocol as poorly performing assets may have a hidden benefit for the future.
- Council owned housing stock is managed under a separate management plan and not included in the AMP.

Recommendation to Cabinet

That Officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy & Assets along with SMT:

- a) Develop the 3 protocols:
 - Investment / Capital programme Protocol
 - Disposal & Acquisition Protocol
 - Property Commercialism 'Let Property' Protocol
- b) Develop the Action Plan to sit within and be the core part of the Asset Management Plan

Before then bringing a draft Asset Management Plan to the Asset Management Forum seeking a recommendation for adoption to Cabinet.

7 **Land to the South of Redgates, Salterton Road, Exmouth**

The report before the Forum set out an opportunity for the Council to accept the transfer at 'nil consideration' of the freehold of land to the south of Redgates, Salterton Road in Exmouth. The development could yield 4 commercial units as part of the developer's planning obligation by unilateral undertaking under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The report was seeking a recommendation to Cabinet to delegate authority to accept the transfer, and complete the acquisition if Cabinet agrees. If so, the units would be let out on a commercial basis, and a further report would be provided to Cabinet in regards to costs for refitting prior to let.

The Project Manager Place and Prosperity (Exmouth) introduced the report. Discussion and questions included the following points:

- The management charge, which would cover the whole site including the road, would be paid to McCarthy & Stone and would be recoverable through a recharge to the tenants.
- Full planning consent for the site has been granted and the site designated for light industrial use.
- Regarding the budget for fitting out, due diligence is still to be undertaken and all costs would need to be brought back to Cabinet and full Council.

Recommendation to Cabinet

That AMF recommend to Cabinet:

- a) To delegate authority to the Strategic Lead - Governance and Licencing, the Strategic Lead – Finance and the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Economy & Assets to consider the opportunity for East Devon District Council to accept the transfer at 'nil consideration' of the freehold of the land (with the potential to develop 4 no. commercial units) as part of the Developer's Planning obligation by Unilateral Undertaking under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 relating to Land to the South of Redgates, Salterton Road, Exmouth.
- b) To delegate authority to the Strategic Lead - Governance and Licencing, the Strategic Lead – Finance and the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Economy & Assets to complete the acquisition if a decision is made to progress.
- c) If acquired, to lease these units out on a commercial basis.
- d) A further report to Cabinet with onward recommendation to Council to approve a fit out budget for the units to enable their letting.

8 Update on Community Asset Transfer Procedure

The Forum were provided with an update on the Community Asset Transfer procedure, following advice from the Strategic Lead (Governance and Licensing).

The following changes had been made to the procedure:

- Reference to the latest Council Plan
- Clarification of the decision making process at the Expression of Interest stage and Full Business Case stage;
- The 'in principle' decision to transfer being taken by Cabinet, or where appropriate, Council;
- The 'in principle' decision to transfer delegating responsibility for agreeing detailed terms of transfer to the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Assets and any other Portfolio Holder as required;
- Updated Expression of Interest form to include reference to GDPR;
- Updated Procedure Diagram to reflect the changes in the decision making process.

A report recommending the approval of the procedure will be considered by Cabinet, as this follows the recommendation by the Forum on 27 July 2021, that the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation prepares a report for Cabinet recommending the draft Community Asset Transfer Procedure be adopted.

The Forum noted the revisions to the draft Community Asset Transfer Procedure.

Recommendation to Cabinet

That Cabinet adopts the Policy.

9 **Place and Prosperity Team update**

The Forum received a comprehensive update on the work of the Place and Prosperity Team on their current projects, including:

- RHSSF & Welcome Back Fund
- Hayne Lane, Honiton
- Beer Pilot Project
- Seaton Jurassic
- Jacobs Ladder Beach Huts, Sidmouth
- Drill Hall, Sidmouth
- Axe Valley Levelling Up funding bid
- Seaton Moridunum
- Websters Garage Site, Axminster
- Devon Place Urban Renewal Project.

Discussion and questions on the report included the following points:

- The Project Manager, Place and Prosperity, would be meeting with the Chief Executive to discuss further contact with the Cadets in order to move the Drill Hall, Sidmouth project forward.
- Market research for the Jacobs Ladder beach huts, Sidmouth had been undertaken due to the technical challenges of the site. At this stage the design was not known but Members' views on the design would be sought at the appropriate stage.
- An update on the defects at Seaton Jurassic was provided and a further report currently intended to Cabinet in September would set out the options for the future. A short term offer had been received but it had not been possible to move forward due to the nature of the offer.
- It was noted that the Seaton Moridunum project had been discussed and agreed at the Cabinet meeting in May and this would now be included in the Axe Valley Levelling Up Funding Bid.
- The most pressing issue regarding the Drill Hall, Sidmouth is the signing of the Deed of Covenant. Various options are being considered, including the involvement of the MP.

The Forum agreed to note the update report.

10 **Estates Team update**

The Forum received an update on the work of the Estates Team, which included the completion of the annual asset valuation. This covered circa 180 assets with a combined value of approximately £70m for inclusion in the Council's Statement of Accounts.

The Senior Estates Surveyor advised that two new members of staff had been recruited.

With regard to the installation of EV charging points, it was noted that some delays have been due to supply chain issues. All sites are affected by issues with supply from Western Power. Works on the first sites, Ham East, Sidmouth and Imperial Road, Exmouth are due to start late summer. It was suggested that the Council considers installing photovoltaic panels in car parks in order to generate its own power.

The Forum agreed to note the update report.

11 **Progress of Placemaking in Exmouth**

The Forum received a comprehensive update on the projects specifically related to Exmouth, covering:

- Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group work, including a workshop being held in April on the themes and characteristics of successful placemaking in Exmouth;
- Queen's Drive Space;
- Bids for funding;
- Local Development Plan.

It was noted that the Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group has been renamed and is now the Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group. A consultation exercise is now underway and feedback to date has been positive.

The Forum agreed to note the update report.

12 **Property & FM Update**

The update report summarised the recent activities and planned work by the Property and FM Team. It included a summary of the planned preventative maintenance and compliance works undertaken between January and May 2022, and works planned for June – August 2022.

In response to a question, the Principal Building Surveyor advised that there is no issue with obtaining external contractors as planned maintenance work is tendered well ahead. There are issues, however, with new capital works. Compliance and reactive work is mainly undertaken by small local contractors with whom the Council has built up a good relationship over many years.

With regard to Exmouth Pavilion, it was noted that current work is directed to ensuring that the building is safe and remains open.

The Forum agreed to note the update report

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Hayward (Chair)
G Pratt
E Rylance

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

P Faithfull
N Hookway
D Ledger
M Rixson

Officers in attendance:

Tim Child, Service Lead - Place, Assets & Commercialisation
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing (and Monitoring Officer)
Rob Harrison, Senior Estates Surveyor
Alison Hayward, Project Manager Place & Prosperity

Gerry Mills, Project Manager Place & Prosperity (Exmouth)
Jorge Pineda-Langford, Principal Building Surveyor, Property & FM
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer

Councillor apologies:

P Arnott
J Rowland

Chair

Date: