

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Asset Management Forum held at online via zoom on 4 March 2024

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 9.32 am and ended at 12.19 pm

22 Notes from the previous meeting

The notes of the previous meeting held on the 4 December 2023 were agreed subject to a typographical error being corrected.

23 Declarations of interest

Cllr Ian Barlow; Affects NRI: Acquaintance of owner of garden centre in location area of masterplan

Cllrs Cherry Nicholas, Olly Davey and Nick Hookway: Affects NRI: Member of Exmouth Placemaking Group and Exmouth Town Council

Cllrs Jenny Brown and Tony McCollum: Affects NRI: Member of Honiton Town Council

24 Public speaking

None.

25 Matters of urgency

None.

26 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There was one item agreed for discussion in private session listed under minute 32.

27 Place and Prosperity Team update

A Project Manager for Place and Prosperity gave a project update to the Forum, covering:

- Depot review
- Public toilets, Sidmouth
- UKSPF Feasibility Studies
- Seaton and Axminster Employment Sites
- Seaton Moridunum

In response to questions about Camperdown Depot, in particular in relation to the potential of the site, the Forum were reminded of the scope of the depot review. The existing uses of these sites were being examined to determine the sites operational value, in terms of being fit for purpose and optimising service delivery.

The contracted consultants on this project were expected to provide their report in April, with a view to a report to Cabinet in the summer of 2024 providing the outcomes of the

review and recommendations for next steps. With the information presented through commissioning this work, it will enable Members to make informed decisions on next steps.

Officers confirmed that discussion with other bodies, such as the County Council and Exmouth Town Council, would take place as and when required.

In regard to the toilets at Port Royal in Sidmouth, the Forum were reminded of the protracted negotiations for the current proposal. Work was still underway on consultation with the Environment Agency, prior to the submission of a planning application for the works.

The Forum noted the report.

28 **Exmouth Placemaking update**

The Project Manager for Place and Prosperity who is leading on projects in Exmouth provided the Forum with an update report, which set out the stages already completed, and the next steps.

In addition, the report covered the recent update on car park signage, and the events held in the area in the previous season.

Members welcomed progress towards the final placemaking plan for Exmouth, welcoming the clear denotation of the steps involved and the transparency for the local community to see progression.

The Forum noted the report.

29 **Property and FM Team update**

Due to the workload of the Property and FM team, there had not been sufficient resource to complete a statistical report for the agenda. The Forum therefore received a verbal update from the Assistant Director - Place, Assets and Commercialisation.

This included an improvement on the landlord health and safety compliance work rising from 92% reported at the previous meeting, to 97% (exceeding the target of 90%). The capital projects were also on target.

The statistical report usually provided for the Forum would be completed and circulated to Members as soon as possible.

The Forum noted the verbal update.

30 **Estates Team update**

The Senior Estates Surveyor updated the Forum on work of the Estates Team, including:

- Seasonal leases at the Queens Drive Space and other seaside locations
- Revaluation of a significant portion of land and building assets
- Continued work to reduce the previous backlog of landlord and tenant, or acquisition and disposal cases, backlog now significantly reduced and numbers of live projects having reduced by more than 100, currently standing at 241

- Rolling out “green lease” clauses in new lease agreements
- Community Asset Transfer work in respect of one application for Jubilee Memorial Gardens, Jubilee cliff top hard standing play park, and Beach Court car park

The Chair gave credit to the team for the work in reducing the active cases, as well as their work with Beer Parish Council that had received local media interest. This put the Council in a positive light.

Discussion also took place over the work of the team in helping to upskill other services where capacity permitted.

The Forum noted the report.

31 **Public Toilets Update**

The report before the Forum set out an update on the review of public toilet provision, following recommendations by Cabinet on 3rd January 2024. This included:

- Setting up a working group of councillors, chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets to review the latest cost estimates to deliver the work and approach previously agreed by Cabinet in 2021 which set out the principles for the review.;
- Costs per square metre for the planned Category A upgrades remained at roughly the same level, but the overall cost projection of this first phase had increased due to the larger size and accessibility needs of each of the sites, again in accordance with the principles agreed by Cabinet. Inflation has impacted on cost, but the increase itself can be apportioned to the larger footprints now proposed;
- DLUHC Changing Places funding extension request had been approved on 26 February and a formal variation to contract was awaited;
- Expected timeframe for works on Category A sites would be April through to July and with temporary facilities being explored.
- Category B and C transfer terms reminder and progress on meetings with individual town and parish councils.

Members raised concerns over the potential of public backlash in locations where some toilet sites would close. Members were reminded of the decision of Cabinet and the improvement of facilities agreed principles. Communication plans would help inform the public on the reasons for the changes. Site fencing would also consider carrying visuals of the completed works.

In response to a question about the toilets at Lace Walk, it was confirmed that live monitored CCTV was being considered. This was due to the repeat vandalism at that site.

The Forum noted the report.

32 **Masterplan for Hayne Lane**

The confidential report was debated by the Forum and other attending Members, including Ward Members.

The options under the masterplan relating to bring forward an economic development opportunity on the site were discussed. A range of uses and opportunities were suggested.

In light of further information required relating to the site and possible uses, the Forum agreed that an additional report was required to expand on the discussions already undertaken.

RESOLVED to defer the matter, so that a further report on the Hayne Lane Masterplan expanding on options be presented to an additional meeting of the Asset Management Forum as a matter of urgency.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Arnott
O Davey
P Hayward (Chair)
T Olive

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow
J Brown
P Faithfull
C Fitzgerald
N Hookway
R Jefferies
G Jung
T McCollum
C Nicholas
M Rixson
E Rylance

Officers in attendance:

Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Commercialisation
Rob Harrison, Senior Estates Surveyor
Alison Hayward, Project Manager Place & Prosperity
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Gerry Mills, Project Manager Place & Prosperity (Exmouth)

Councillor apologies:

M Hall

Chair

Date: