



East Devon District Council  
Blackdown House  
Border Road  
Heathpark Industrial Estate  
Honiton  
EX14 1EJ  
DX 48808 HONITON  
Tel: 01404 515616  
[www.eastdevon.gov.uk](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk)

**Agenda for Council  
Wednesday, 17th July, 2024, 6.00 pm**

To: All elected Members of the Council; Honorary Aldermen

**Venue:** Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton

**Contact:** Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager;

(or group number 01395 517546)  
Issued Monday, 8 July 2024

This meeting is being recorded for subsequent publication on the Council's website and will be streamed live to the [East Devon District Council YouTube channel](#)

Dear Sir/Madam

**Meeting of the Council of the District of East Devon on  
Wednesday, 17th July, 2024 at 6.00 pm**

You are called upon to attend the above meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton. It is proposed that the matters set out on the agenda below will be considered at the meeting and resolution or resolutions passed as the Council considers expedient.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T. Hendren".

Tracy Hendren  
Chief Executive

- 1 **Apologies**
- 2 **Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 4 - 12)
- 3 **Declarations of interest**

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

**4 Public speaking**

Information on [public speaking](#) is available online

**5 Matters of urgency**

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

**6 Announcements from the Chair and Leader**

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

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the Press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way, but if confidential minutes from Cabinet and/or the Council's Committees are being discussed, Officers may recommend consideration in the private part of the meeting.

**8 To answer questions asked by Members of the Council pursuant to Procedure Rules No. 9.2 and 9.5**

**9 Reports from the Cabinet and the Council's Committees and questions on those reports (Pages 13 - 126)**

**10 Recommendation - Cabinet 10 July 2024 - Peer Challenge Action Plan (Pages 127 - 133)**

**11 Recommendation - Cabinet 10 July 2024 - Scrutiny Improvement Plan Actions (Pages 134 - 144)**

**12 Recommendation Cabinet 27 March 2024 Leisure & Sports Pitches (Pages 145 - 155)**

**13 Recommendation from Cabinet 1 May 2024 - New Communities in East Devon (Pages 156 - 179)**

**14 Recommendation from Cabinet 5 June 2024 - Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (Pages 180 - 198)**

**15 Recommendation - Cabinet 10 July 2024: Revenue & Capital Outturn 2023 - 2024 (Pages 199 - 213)**

**16 Recommendation - Cabinet 10 July 2024 Housing Revenue Account Revised Budget (Pages 214 - 240)**

**17 Political Proportionality and Allocation of Committee Places (Pages 241 - 262)**

**18 Recommendation from Cabinet -1 May 2024 Station Road Countryside Park**  
(Pages 263 - 288)

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If you are recording the meeting, you are asked to act in a reasonable manner and not disrupt the conduct of meetings for example by using intrusive lighting, flash photography or asking people to repeat statements for the benefit of the recording. You may not make an oral commentary during the meeting. The Chairman has the power to control public recording and/or reporting so it does not disrupt the meeting.

Members of the public exercising their right to speak during Public Question Time will be recorded.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting of Council held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 17 April 2024**

**Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.03 pm

120 **Apologies**

Apologies received from Cllrs Brian Bailey, Kim Bloxham, Violet Bonetta, Sarah Chamberlain, Iain Chubb, Marcus Hartnell, Ben Ingham, Jamie Kemp, Simon Smith, Daniel Wilson and Eileen Wragg.

121 **Declarations of interest**

None.

122 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 February 2024 and the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 6 March 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

123 **Public speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

124 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

125 **Announcements from the Chair and Leader**

The Chair of Council reminded members that during discussion on any items of business that the terms of the constitution would be adhered to and any technical questions should be referred to officers in writing as it was unreasonable to expect officers to respond at the meeting as they may not have the relevant information available.

There were no announcements from the Leader of Council.

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

There were no confidential/urgent items of business.

127 **To answer questions asked by Members of the Council pursuant to Procedure Rules No. 9.2 and 9.5**

There were no questions on notice.

128 **Reports from the Cabinet and the Council's Committees and questions on those reports**

The minutes from the following meetings were submitted to Council.

27 February 2024 – Planning Committee  
4 March 2024 – Asset Management Forum  
5 March 2024 – Strategic Planning Committee  
6 March 2024 – Licensing & Enforcement Sub Committee  
12 March 2024 – Strategic Planning Committee  
13 March 2024 – Licensing & Enforcement Committee  
14 March 2024 – Housing Review Board  
18 March 2024 – Poverty Working Panel  
21 March 2024 – Overview Committee  
26 March 2024 – Placemaking & Prosperity Investment Board  
27 March 2024 – Cabinet  
2 April 2024 – Strategic Planning Committee

There was one called minute. In respect of Strategic Planning Committee on 5 March 2024, minute no. 75, Cllr Eleanor Rylance expressed disappointment that the minute referred to site Brcl\_31 – Land at Mosshayne Lane, Pinhoe and commented that this should be referred to Broadclyst. It was noted that this matter is referred to Strategic Planning Committee to remedy this matter.

## 129 **Corporate Peer Review Report**

The Council received a report setting out the findings from the Corporate Peer Challenge conducted by the Local Government Association in early February 2024.

Council noted that the review focused on five key themes:

- local priorities and outcomes
- organisational and place leadership
- governance and culture
- financial planning and management
- capacity for improvement

The findings from the review would be used to ensure that the Council had the arrangements in place to support and maintain ongoing improvement at the Council.

The full findings were presented and included nice key recommendations:

1. Recruitment of a Chief Executive
2. Consideration of Cabinet working arrangements
3. Investment in councillor and officer development
4. streamlining the actions in the Council Plan
5. resisting the temptation to undertake further external reviews
6. developing a programme of external engagement and making outwardly focused work a priority for the new Chief Executive
7. considering using councillor and officer ambassadors
8. reviewing visibility with housing tenants
1. providing direction for leisure and culture provision

Members noted that in order to take the nine recommendations forward an action plan, including a timetable for completing actions would need to be developed including identifying any resources required to deliver the recommendations. The action plan would be presented to Cabinet in June 2024 and an Extraordinary Council in late June or early July 2024.

Councillor Dan Ledger moved the recommendations and was seconded by Cllr Joe Whibley having duly been put the recommendations were unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Council note the report and recommendations from the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Review.
2. That Council request that the Corporate Directors prepare an Action Plan identifying the resources required to deliver the recommendations from the Corporate Peer Challenge.
3. That an Action Plan is presented to Cabinet and to an Extraordinary Council meeting in June/July 2024.

130 **Recommendation from Extraordinary Cabinet - Council Plan 2024/2025**

The Council received a recommendation from an Extraordinary Cabinet meeting on 10 April 2024 setting out details of the Council Plan for East Devon District Council.

The Council noted that the council plan would provide a strategic framework for the council to deliver projects and services. The plan had been developed over the last six months and the draft plan had been reviewed by the Peer Challenge team and their feedback had been used in the plan's development.

During consideration of the report members made the following comments:  
Ambitious plan with a number of actions and measures included and it was important that the actions and measures were achievable and deliverable.

Cllr Alasdair Bruce proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Cllr Mike Howe and having duly been put to the vote was unanimously approved.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council Plan for 2024/2028 be approved.

131 **Recommendation from Housing Review Board - HRB Terms of Reference**

The Council received a recommendation from a meeting of the Housing Review Board on 14 March 2024 seeking to amend the Terms of Reference to change the frequency of Housing Review Board meetings and to formally change the Council's Constitution.

Members welcomed the change to the Housing Review Board's Terms of Reference and the recommendation was proposed by Councillor Paul Hayward and seconded by Cllr Tony McCollum. Having been duly proposed and seconded the recommendation was unanimously supported and Council **RESOLVED:** That the Terms of Reference for the Housing Review Board are amended so that the number of meetings is decreased from five to four to read as follows: Meetings: Four times per year (or more frequently as required).

132 **Recommendation from Overview Committee - Public Health Strategy**

Members received a recommendation from the Overview Committee on 21 March 2024 in respect of the Public Health Strategy for East Devon.

During consideration of the report the following comments were made:

- Important that the Public Health Strategy reflected the Council Plan actions and measures.
- Links to the Health Strategy should be reflected in activities within the housing stock.

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Todd Olive and seconded by Cllr Mike Goodman and duly put to the vote and unanimously carried.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Public Health Strategy for East Devon District Council is adopted.

133 **Recommendation from Cabinet - Councillor DBS Checks and Safeguarding Protocol**

Members received a recommendation from the Cabinet meeting on 27 March 2024 regarding Councillor DBS Checks and the Safeguarding Protocol.

Cllr John Loudoun proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Cllr Jenny Brown and duly put to the vote and carried by a majority show of hands.

**RESOLVED:** That the Councillor DBS Checks and Safeguarding Protocol is approved and forms part of the Council's Constitution.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

P Arnott	S Gazzard	Y Levine
J Bailey	M Goodman	J Loudoun
I Barlow	D Haggerty	D Mackinder
K Blakey	A Hall	M Martin
C Brown	M Hall	T McCollum
J Brown	S Hawkins	C Nicholas
A Bruce	P Hayward	J O'Leary
C Burhop	J Heath	T Olive
M Chapman	N Hookway	H Parr
B Collins	M Howe	H Riddell
R Collins	S Hughes	M Rixson
O Davey	S Jackson	E Rylance
T Dumper	R Jefferies	A Toye
P Faithfull	V Johns	S Westerman
P Fernley	G Jung	J Whibley
C Fitzgerald	D Ledger	

**Officers in attendance:**

Simon Davey, Director of Finance

Tracy Hendren, Director of Housing, Health and Environment

Andrew Hopkins, Corporate Lead - Communications, Digital Services and Engagement

Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager

Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

**Councillor apologies:**

- B Bailey
- K Bloxham
- V Bonetta
- S Chamberlain
- I Chubb
- M Hartnell
- B Ingham
- J Kemp
- S Smith
- D Wilson
- E Wragg

Chair .....

Date: .....



## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Council held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 8 May 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 5.15 pm and ended at 5.55 pm

#### **134 Apologies**

Apologies received from Cllrs Charlotte Fitzgerald, Marcus Hartnell, John Heath, Mike Howe, Sarah Jackson, Richard Jefferies, Dan Ledger, John O’Leary and Daniel Wilson.

#### **135 Declarations of interest**

None.

#### **136 Public speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

#### **137 Matters of urgency**

None.

#### **138 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

The Chair of Council confirmed that there was one item of confidential business to be considered at agenda item 8 (minute no. 141 refers).

The Chair of Council proposed that procedure rule 3.2 (Business: At an extraordinary meeting the business to be conducted shall be limited to a single item of business or motion and that at least one half of the whole number of members of the Council were present that procedure rule 3.2 was duly suspended).

#### **139 Appointment of new Chief Executive**

The Council considered a recommendation of the Interviewing Sub Committee to appoint a new Chief Executive following a recent recruitment process along with the appointment of the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for East Devon. The report also set out proposals to agree new structural proposals for appointing a Director of Housing and Health and a Director of Place including a supplementary budget for the associated recruitment costs.

Members received an outline of the recruitment process and noted that the Interviewing Sub Committee were recommending that Tracy Hendren should be appointed. Members welcomed the appointment and noted that Tracy would commence the role with effect from 1 June 2024.

Cllr Steve Gazzard proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Cllr Eileen Wragg and having been put to the vote was unanimously carried.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council appoints Tracy Hendren as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Services of East Devon District Council.

In respect of the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer it was proposed that Melanie Wellman undertakes these roles with effect from 1 June 2024.

Cllr John Loudoun proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Cllr Alasdair Bruce and having been put to the vote was carried by a majority show of hands.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council appoints Melanie Wellman as the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for East Devon District Council.

Members received a short presentation setting out proposals to put in place backfill arrangements for the role of Director of Housing, Health and Environment and it was recognised that there was a need for significant focus on the Housing Service. It was proposed that two Director roles are appointed to Director of Housing and Health and Director of Place. It was noted that existing Assistant Directors within those areas would be given the opportunity to act up into these positions with a permanent recruitment process being undertaken.

Members welcomed the proposals and Cllr John Loudoun proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Cllr Paul Hayward and having been put to the vote was carried by a majority show of hands.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Council agrees the new structure proposals for appointing a Director of Housing and Health and Director of Place.
2. That a supplementary budget of up to £30,000 is agreed for the associated recruitment costs.

140 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

The Vice Chair of Council moved that the Press and Public are excluded from the meeting by virtue of paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**RESOLVED:** That the press and public are excluded from the meeting by virtue of paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

141 **Recommendation from Personnel Committee Request for additional funding and resource within the HR and Payroll Service**

The Council received a report setting out recommendations from the Personnel Committee seeking funding to support the Grow Your Own budget and the creation of a new post of HR Operations Manager and associated budget.

Members noted that the Grow Our Own Project was established alongside other initiatives to improve recruitment and retention. The project scope included the development of routes into the Council (such as work experience, T levels, graduate schemes and apprenticeships), establishing career pathways and identifying where apprenticeships could support the existing workforce with relevant qualifications, which also supports workforce development.

Members were advised that a new post of HR Operations Manager was requested and would be responsible for overseeing all operational HR activity, for example absence management, disciplinaries, grievances etc and providing advice and support to the team and managers. The role would also be responsible for overseeing HR policy, ensuring that policies are regularly reviewed in line with the Council's Policy Register and legislative changes.

The Council supported the Grow Our Own Budget recognising the important to invest in staff and support the Council in retaining and developing staff for the future.

Cllr John Loudoun proposed the recommendations and was seconded by Cllr Alasdair Bruce. The recommendations were put to the vote and carried by a majority show of hands.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Grow Our Own budget of £143,000 is approved, to sit within the HR and Payroll Service.
2. That the funding for a new post of HR Operations Manager is approved.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

P Arnott	O Davey	Y Levine
B Bailey	T Dumper	J Loudoun
J Bailey	P Faithfull	D Mackinder
I Barlow	P Fernley	M Martin
K Blakey	S Gazzard	T McCollum
K Bloxham	M Goodman	C Nicholas
V Bonetta	D Haggerty	T Olive
C Brown	A Hall	H Parr
J Brown	M Hall	S Richards
A Bruce	S Hawkins	H Riddell
C Burhop	P Hayward	M Rixson
S Chamberlain	N Hookway	E Rylance
M Chapman	S Hughes	S Smith
I Chubb	B Ingham	A Toye
B Collins	V Johns	S Westerman
R Collins	G Jung	J Whibley

**Officers in attendance:**

Simon Davey, Director of Finance

Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive

Andrew Hopkins, Corporate Lead - Communications, Digital Services and Engagement

Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager

Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)

**Councillor apologies:**

C Fitzgerald

M Hartnell

- J Heath
- M Howe
- S Jackson
- R Jefferies
- D Ledger
- J O'Leary
- D Wilson
- E Wragg

Chair .....

Date: .....



Report to: Council

Date of Meeting 17 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Reports from the Cabinet and the Council's Committees and questions on those reports

### Report summary:

To receive reports from the Cabinet and the Council's Committees and receive any questions on those reports from meetings between 4 April 2024 and 1 July 2024.

Recommendations from Cabinet and the Council's Committees are set out as separate agenda items and contained in the agenda pack.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

To note the reports from Cabinet and the Council's Committees and the responses to any questions raised.

### Reason for recommendation:

In accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish (Corporate Lead Democratic and Scrutiny) –  
andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

### Report in full

The minutes from the following meetings are included:  
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Scrutiny Committee – 4 April 2024  
Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum – 9 April  
Standards Committee – 11 April  
Personnel Committee – 16 April  
Scrutiny Committee – 18 April  
Planning Committee – 23 April  
South & East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee – 24 April  
Strategic Planning Committee – 30 April  
Cabinet – 1 May  
Licensing & Enforcement Committee – 8 May  
Licensing & Enforcement Sub Committee – 8 May  
Planning Committee – 21 & 24 May  
Overview Committee – 30 May  
Strategic Planning Committee – 4 June  
Cabinet – 5 June  
Arts & Culture Forum – 12 June  
Personnel Committee – 13 June  
Scrutiny Committee – 13 June  
Asset Management Forum – 17 June  
Planning Committee – 18 June  
Poverty Working Panel – 24 June  
Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum – 25 June  
Licensing & Enforcement Sub Committee – 26 June  
Cranbrook Placemaking Group – 1 July

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**Financial implications:**

None.

**Legal implications:**

None.

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 4 April 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.50 pm

#### **81 Minutes of the previous meetings held on 24 January 2024 and 15 February 2024**

The minutes of the meetings held on 24 January 2024 and 15 February 2024 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

#### **82 Declarations of interest**

It was noted that item 8 at minute 87 affects all Councillors who are members of East Devon Town and Parish Councils which are in receipt of S.106 and CIL monies.

#### **83 Public speaking**

One member of the public, Mr Ron Metcalfe, had registered to speak and made the following points with regard to his concerns about EDDC's oversight and management of the assets on Exmouth sea front:

- Residents were asking if the re-routing of the road and construction of Sideshore had caused or contributed to the recent failure of the sea wall.
- There was no evaluation of the impact of development on the sea wall either prior to, or following the failure.
- Vibrations during construction work in 2019 had been felt by residents at some distance and could have impacted the sea wall.
- Lack of rigour in assessing potential risk could have cost the Council and taxpayers in a number of ways, including financially.
- It was recently noted that there are issues of non-compliance with planning permissions on the sea front, including at the small retail units at Sideshore, the amount of square meterage agreed for retail, provision of disabled washrooms and making toilets and changing rooms available to the public. Non-compliance has not been challenged by EDDC.
- Should a TaFF be set up, this should examine the lack of rigour in planning enforcement as well as interrogating previous planning approvals.

One member of the public, Mrs Ann Membery, was unable to attend the meeting and had requested that a statement be read out. The Democratic Services Officer read out the statement which included the following points:

- The member of the public had read the comments by the Leader regarding his awareness of concerns surrounding the previous administration funding a new road and encouraging development so close to the sea wall.
- Planning application 18/0376/MFUL for the development of Sideshore included a flood risk report. The member of the public was of the view that the report should have detected that the sea wall would be vulnerable to collapse due to climate change.
- As EDDC has to meet the cost of repairing the sea wall, as a tax payer, the member of the public was of the opinion that previous officers and Councillors should be scrutinised as to why planning permission was granted and why the flood risk report did not detect a potential failure of the sea wall.
- The member of the public supported the setting up of the TaFF.

The Chair thanked the members of the public for their contributions.

84 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

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

There were no confidential / exempt items.

86 **Decisions made by Cabinet called in by Members for scrutiny in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules**

There were no items called in by Members in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

87 **Interim update on progress with S.106 and CIL resources and processes**

The Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Management introduced the report which provided an update on progress with addressing resourcing issues involved in S.106 obligations and CIL administration. The report was further to a report to the Committee on 7 September 2023 and subsequent resolutions from Cabinet on resourcing these key areas of work.

The Assistant Director introduced the newly recruited Planning Obligations Team Leader.

The following points were highlighted:

- The revised S.106 Monitoring Fees charging schedule is now on the Council's website.
- Three of the four vacancies in the new Planning Obligations Team had now been filled. The Planning Obligations Team Leader was now in post with two officers starting at the end of April and beginning of May.
- The remaining S.106/CIL officer post was still unfilled, and recruitment was proving difficult as this is a very specialist area of work. An interim agency CIL officer was currently in post pending permanent recruitment to the vacant post.
- The development of the best practice guidance for Town and Parish Councils would be undertaken by the new Planning Obligations Team in partnership with the Towns and Parishes.
- The Team is transitioning from the interim arrangements and the work programme is under development.

Discussion and responses to Members' questions included the following:

- The number of outstanding historic S.106 cases had reduced from 150 to below 100. Outstanding CIL debt to be recovered was in excess of £400k.
- Future infrastructure needs are shown in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan available on the Council's website. As infrastructure needs to be provided in a co-ordinated manner with the Council's partners, funds are not necessarily spent as they are collected but are saved towards larger projects, resulting, at times, in seemingly large amounts held by the Council.
- Other S.106 monies are for specific purposes and may be unallocated currently.
- The Planning Obligations Team would be introducing new spending and monitoring processes going forward and this needs to be developed with realistic timescales.
- There is no time limit for CIL expenditure.



- The best practice guidance for Town and Parish Councils would provide a simplified procedure which would better enable Towns and Parishes to engage with the system. The new work plan included providing training for Town and Parish Councils on the new process.
- The remaining vacant post in the Planning Obligations Team was currently filled by agency staff. Recruitment of quality staff with the required specialist skills was difficult currently. Advice from the HR Team had been to wait a few months before re-advertising the vacancy in order to reach a new target audience. Succession planning included training junior officers to take on specialist posts going forward.
- There is no legislation which would allow the Council to stop granting planning permission for those developers failing to fulfil planning obligations. However, the Government is aware that some developers do not comply as required. It is very difficult to pursue payment where a developer has gone into administration.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Management and his team for the report and update. The Committee noted the progress that had been made on addressing the resourcing of CIL and S.106 work. A further update report will be brought to the Committee in late summer 2024.

With regard to the S.106 and CIL Resources and Processes Task and Finish Forum (TaFF), it was agreed to request a scoping report to include a timescale and terms of reference. This would be brought back to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee in June, unless officer resources and capacity allowed for an earlier date to be found in May.

## 88 **Report to Scrutiny on South West Water feedback on the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2024**

A report had been circulated which set out the feedback from South West Water (SWW) on the minutes of the virtual consultative meeting held on 1 February 2024.

With regard to concerns relating to a sewage spill in the Cranbrook Country Park, raised under question 11 of the minutes of 1 February 2024 [page 19 of the report], and the subsequent feedback on this issue from SWW, Cllr Kim Bloxham had submitted comments on the SWW response. Cllr Bloxham's comments were read out and highlighted the following points by way of correcting SWW's feedback:

- The sewage spill occurred in the Country Park on the south side of the London Road and the sewers in this part of the Country Park are all adopted by SWW as they preceded the Cranbrook development.
- This leak spilled foul waste from the Rockbeare area carried in a dedicated pipeline to Clyst Honiton and onwards to Countess Wear.
- A new separate sewer system takes foul waste from Cranbrook and does not connect to the pipeline that caused the leak.

Discussion on the feedback from SWW contained in the report included the following:

- The Corporate Lead – Communications, Digital Services and Engagement is currently the single point of contact in EDDC for Member communications with SWW. The forthcoming Members' newsletter would include details of a dedicated contact at SWW.
- With regard to the Water Cycle study, the first draft has been received however, further data is needed, following which the final draft will be circulated to Members. A Member Briefing session with the consultants is currently being arranged with a date to be agreed.

- It was not clear to whom in EDDC the SWW consultation on the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) had been addressed and whether this had been responded to or not. The Water Cycle study would provide the expert knowledge to enable EDDC to challenge SWW and could lead to changes to the DWMP in the future. SWW had attended a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in November 2022 and would have been aware of EDDC's concerns at the time the DWMP was being prepared.
- EDDC should be in communication with the Environment Agency as the body responsible for monitoring SWW.
- With regard to the length of time taken to prepare the Water Cycle study, it was noted that consultants are in high demand nationally due to the nationwide issues with sewage spills and that there had also been delays in the consultants obtaining information from SWW.

The feedback from SWW was noted.

## 89 **Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for the civic year 2023 - 2024**

The Annual Report on the work of the Scrutiny Committee during the civic year 2023 – 24 was agreed for submission to the annual meeting of the Council in May.

## 90 **Forward Plan**

### **1 Forward Plan**

Discussion on the Forward Plan included the following points:

- It was noted that the Committee previously received reports on coastal monitoring. The Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment advised that the reports are very technical and need interpretation by engineers. The reports are continually referred to as part of the on-going beach management plan work for Exmouth, Sidmouth and Seaton.
- The Corporate Lead – Communications, Digital Services and Engagement was requested to liaise with SWW regarding a date for the Committee to meet with them again in September.

It was noted that the Democratic Services Manager is currently preparing the Scrutiny Action Plan following the review by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS).

As part of the CfGS review, it had been recommended that the Committee agree specific elements within a Portfolio on which the Portfolio Holder would be asked to report. It was noted that the next Portfolio holder to report would be Cllr Davey, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning, reporting on 6 June 2024. Issues to be covered by the report would be agreed by the Committee beforehand.

The Forward Plan was agreed.

### **2 Resolution from Council on 6 March 2024 regarding Exmouth sea wall**

The Committee was asked to consider the resolution referred from Council on 6 March 2024 regarding the reasons relating to the failure of the Exmouth sea wall and the previous approvals that led to businesses and associated infrastructure being built next to it. The Committee considered whether to carry out further investigation and set up a Task and Finish Forum to undertake the work.

Discussion included the following points:

- There is a need to scrutinise why the Council was not aware that the sea wall did not have good foundations and whether moving the road contributed to its failure.

- The reason the sea wall failed is due to recent storms and a lack of foundations. It is unlikely that the facts could be obtained due to the age of the wall, and the Council should concentrate on repairing the wall which is a huge and expensive undertaking.
- It is crucial to agree the right terms of reference and further discussion on scoping is needed.
- Concern was expressed as to what exactly would be scrutinised and whether the Committee could achieve a good outcome and learn anything for the future.
- The sea wall failure was only one part of the issues raised by the public speaker and other items such as planning enforcement matters also need to be considered.
- It would be prudent to understand what information is still available in the Council and to ascertain whether there is sufficient information to make the scrutiny task worthwhile.

The Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that he had made a note of the planning enforcement issues raised by the public speaker and would report back.

It was agreed to request a detailed scoping report for either the June or July meeting to include terms of reference, a timetable for the investigations to be conducted and a date for presenting the outcomes of a TaFF back to the Committee.

The Committee also noted that a separate report on planning enforcement issues would be brought back in due course.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

I Barlow  
J Brown  
M Chapman  
R Collins  
M Goodman (Chair)  
A Hall  
J Heath  
V Johns (Vice-Chair)  
D Mackinder  
A Toye

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

B Bailey  
C Brown  
P Faithfull  
G Jung  
T Olive

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Ed Freeman, Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Management  
Andrew Hopkins, Corporate Lead - Communications, Digital Services and Engagement  
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer  
Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance & Licensing (Monitoring Officer)  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Jonathan Smith, Planning Obligations Team Leader

**Councillor apologies:**

B Collins

S Smith

J Whibley

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum (formerly LED Monitoring Forum) held at Online via Zoom app on 9 April 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.11 am

#### **40 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 January 2024**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 January 2024 were noted as a true and accurate record.

#### **41 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

#### **42 Public Speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

#### **43 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **44 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There was one item to be considered in private session (minute 49 refers).

#### **45 LED Facilities and Activities report April 2024**

The LED Facilities and Activities report for April 2024 was received and noted.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The number of memberships is growing, and numbers were back up to pre-Covid levels.
- The report set out that there were 24,285 visits to the swimming pools in February 2024. It was understood that this included junior swim activities and swim school, whereas the numbers on the KPI Dashboard related only to people using the pools on a pay-as-you-go basis.
- LED currently employ approximately 700 staff equating to around 300 full-time equivalent employees. Staff numbers have grown since the pandemic.
- The LED CEO provided an explanation of the trading and financial relationship between LED Community Leisure and its trading subsidiary, LED Enterprises Ltd, details of which had been set out previously in a report to this Forum on 11 April 2023.

#### **46 LED KPI Dashboard March 2023 - April 2024**

The Forum received and noted key details of the performance of LED Community Leisure for the period March 2023 – April 2024.

#### **47 Leisure and Playing Pitch Requirements**

The Chair welcomed Rachel Fowler and Liz Taylor, from Strategic Leisure.

Liz Taylor introduced this report which referred to a background paper considered by Cabinet on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 outlining significant challenges in meeting deadlines, demands and funding requests arising from Leisure Strategy Action Plan, the Playing Pitch Strategy 2024 and other programmes and assessments associated with the Council's leisure work programme.

Cabinet had formally considered the recommendations in the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 report and approved the appointment of Strategic Leisure to carry out a high-level options appraisal of the Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy 2021-2031 with an Implementation Plan, and possible options for delivery to inform decisions on the affordability of the Council's current and future leisure provision.

The Forum was asked to note the report and to oversee and steer the options appraisal work led by Strategic Leisure.

Liz Taylor outlined how Strategic Leisure intended to carry out the options appraisal, this being by way of a series of six workshops spaced 3-4 weeks apart, at the end of which a summary report would be produced reflecting the review, the options discussed and suggested next steps. It was proposed to start the process from the end of April 2024.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Members will be invited to the workshops along with guests, where appropriate.
- The appraisal will be a challenging process requiring members to make difficult decisions about the leisure services they feel the district needs and how this can be facilitated within the confines of the available finance.
- It is not irregular to appoint external consultants such as Strategic Leisure to carry out work of this nature. They are independent and impartial and very well connected nationally with other local authorities facing similar difficult decisions about their leisure provision, and therefore bring a level of expertise which this Council does not have access to in-house.
- Strategic Leisure are familiar with this Council and its leisure provision, having previously been commissioned to facilitate the development of the Leisure Strategy.
- Part of the purpose of the workshops is to help members to understand how different factors interlink, where this may not be obvious. For example, the condition and number of facilities, and the catchment areas they have are inextricably linked to their sustainability, since a smaller catchment area means that fewer people will use a facility and it will therefore be more difficult to generate income. A benchmarking exercise might also be appropriate to understand where East Devon's leisure charges sit, in a wider context.
- The cost for appointing Strategic Leisure for the options appraisal is relatively low, and within the cost allowed for running the Council's leisure facilities for the year.

## 48 **Cranbrook Leisure Centre**

The Assistant Director – Growth, Development and Prosperity introduced this report and asked the Forum to note the outcome of the Cranbrook town centre community consultation carried out in late 2023 and the progression of the Cranbrook town centre masterplan, and to note the establishment of a project for a Cranbrook Leisure Centre.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The project initiation document is currently being prepared which will confirm membership of the project team and set out the relationship with Sports England, the Sports England local delivery pilots, the local community and the town council.

- The Forum will receive six-monthly updates on this project.

## **RESOLVED**

1. To note the outcome of the Cranbrook town centre community consultation and the progression of the Cranbrook town masterplan.
2. To note the establishment of a project for a Cranbrook Leisure Centre.

The meeting then went into private session.

## 49 **LED Service Management Fee 2024/25**

The Finance Director introduced this report which set out a final management fee request received from LED and a draft Service Level Agreement framework to be used for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years, for the Forum's consideration.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The additional request for £25,000 to support the work of the outreach service would enable LED to subsidise the up-front costs of setting up new groups with a view to changing behaviours and fostering a long-term love of physical activity. As an example, the funding could cover hall hire, instructor costs, training, equipment and upskilling members of the community, meaning that LED could deliver new groups at only a nominal cost to the user where passing on full costs at the outset would constitute a barrier to participation.
- The benefits of LED's outreach work align with the county council's priorities in social care and community inclusion and have the effect of covering some gaps in NHS services. It was recognised that by funding the outreach work, this Council is plugging a hole which arguably should be plugged by other agencies with a larger overall budget. However, the work also aligns with this Council's Public Health Strategy and delivery of outcomes set out in its Leisure Strategy and it was therefore considered appropriate and good value for money to support the spend.
- It was noted that the new Service Level Agreement framework does not come into effect until 2025 and if appropriate and necessary, it can be amended in the interim, following outcomes of the options appraisal being led by Strategic Leisure.

## **RECOMMENDED to Cabinet**

1. The request from LED to provide a budget allocation of £1,603,162 for the 2024/25 management service fee which includes £53,350 for its outreach payment.
2. To consider the additional request for a further £25,000 to support the work of the outreach service.
3. To agree the new Service Level Agreement framework to be used for the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years subject to final agreement and sign off from the Director of Governance and Licensing and Monitoring Officer.

## **Attendance List**

### **Councillors present:**

P Arnott

M Hall

S Hawkins (Chair)

N Hookway (Vice-Chair)

J Loudoun

A Toye

### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
C Brown  
G Jung  
J Brown  
R Collins  
R Jefferies  
M Rixson

**Representatives of LED Community Leisure in attendance:**

Karen Best, LED Finance Director  
Janette Cass, Pavilion Manager  
Andrew Dare, LED Fitness and Wellbeing Manager  
Lottie Edwards, LED Community Engagement Manager  
Peter Gilpin, LED CEO  
Richard Purchase, Chairman of LED Board  
Matt Wright, LED Director of Delivery

**Representatives of Strategic Leisure in attendance:**

Rachel Fowler  
Liz Taylor

**Officers in attendance:**

Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer  
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer  
Andrew Wood, Assistant Director Growth Development and Prosperity  
Simon Davey, Director of Finance  
Tracy Hendren, Director of Housing, Health and Environment

**Councillor apologies:**

P Hayward  
S Smith

Chair .....

Date: .....



## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Standards Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 11 April 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.30 am

#### **18 Minutes of the previous meeting**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 14 November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

#### **19 Apologies**

Apologies received from Cllr Tim Dumper.

#### **20 Declarations of interest**

None.

#### **21 Public speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

#### **22 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **23 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential/exempt items at the meeting.

#### **24 Member/Officer protocol**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented a report setting out details of a redrafted Member/Officer Relations Protocol.

The committee noted that following recommendations from External Auditors and feedback from the Peer Challenge team and the Centre for Public Scrutiny, the opportunity has been taken to redraft the Protocol to ensure that it complies with best practice and is up-to-date.

The Protocol explained the roles of Members and Officers and sets out how they should work together and if any issues arise, to whom those issues should be reported.

The committee were advised that the Protocol had also been reviewed by the Constitution Working Group and their comments had been incorporated in the document.

Members of the committee made the following comments:

- important that all members receive training on the protocol from the Monitoring Officer

- useful to understand the wording of the current protocol to enable a comparison of the changes set out in the existing document
- comments from Standards Committee to be submitted to the Constitution Working Group for consideration and resubmission to committee
- to request that the Constitution Working Group invite an Independent Representative from the committee to assist in their work reviewing the constitution

In light of discussions members of committee are asked to reflect on the document and send any further comments to the Democratic Services Manager for referral to the Constitution Working Group.

The Chair proposed the recommendations which were unanimously carried.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To note the comments raised by the Standards Committee on the member/officer protocol to the Constitution Working Group to review the document and to request the CWG to resubmit to the Standards Committee
2. That any further comments on the Member/Officer protocol are submitted to the Democratic Services Manager within 7 working days.
3. That the Monitoring Officer is invited to provide training to all Members on the Protocol once adopted.

25 **Code of Conduct complaints update**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented a report updating the Committee in relation to Code of Conduct complaints received and progress made since the last meeting in November 2023 together with an updated complaint form.

The committee made the following comments:

- reasons for delays should be included in the timetable
- report contains a number of cases from 2022
- Next steps – process already started further details to be included in the next update
- charts welcomed – needs some tweaking, setting out different outcomes in future reports
- Sanction – subject member refusing to take the proposed action useful to understand the reason for the refusal
- sanctions training to reflect that training has been completed
- important to manage the expectations of complainants

The Chair proposed the recommendation which was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** That the Standards Committee note the update and support the updated Code of Conduct complaint form.

26 **Work Programme update**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented the work programme for the Standards Committee for 2023/2024 and were invited to consider any items to be included for the 2024/2025 work programme.

The committee noted the work programme for 2023/2024, including:

- general update on matters affecting Standards (good practice, etc )
- Work programme to include information circulated relating to the work of standards committee and including government updates and good practice
- Training for 2024 – Code of Conduct should we be more proactive in offering training for parish and towns?
- programme for 2024/2025.

**RESOLVED:** That the Standards Committee note the Standards Committee work programme for 2024/2025.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

E Rylance (Chair)  
J Bailey  
I Chubb  
S Hughes  
J Loudoun

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

**Officers in attendance:**

Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager  
Katie Webb

**Councillor apologies:**

T Dumper

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Personnel Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 16 April 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.44 am

#### **29 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 January 2024 were agreed.

#### **30 Declarations of interest**

None.

#### **31 Public speaking**

None.

#### **32 Matters of urgency**

None.

#### **33 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

One item was agreed to be discussed after the exclusion of press and public, detailed under minute 38.

#### **34 CEO Recruitment update**

The Corporate Lead – Human Resources verbally updated the Committee on the recruitment process for the role of Chief Executive.

Following the closing date of 5 April, the advertisement campaign had received a good response, with positive feedback. The interviewing process, of which the Interviewing Sub Committee were part of, would take place on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> April. The Sub Committee would then recommend to Council their recommendation of candidate for the role on 8 May.

The details of the number of applications would be included in the full report to Council, but could not be shared at the meeting.

The committee noted the update.

#### **35 HR Policy Review - Performance Improvement Policy**

The Committee were asked to approve the revision of an existing policy. The existing policy, named the Dealing with Unsatisfactory Performance Policy, had a number of revisions, including a change of name to Performance Improvement Policy. The change of name helped to better reflect the purpose of the policy.

The response from Unison on the revisions were shared with the Committee at the meeting, summarised as:

- Paragraph 6 relating to confidentiality – Unison felt that there were some circumstances whereby an officer should be able to discuss with other members of their team the performance issue. The committee were advised that the policy did not prevent an officer from discussing work related issues with other team members, but that the procedure being followed under the policy should not be shared and remain confidential;
- Paragraph 12.4 – Unison requested that the ability to have a solicitor present should be included. Legal advice was that this should not be included in the policy
- Paragraph 5 already covered Unison request for an interpreter;
- Paragraph 14.3 – Unison request for a recording of meetings. Again legal advice and best practice was not to record the meetings; but a record in the form of minutes taken or a formal letter recording the discussion would be undertaken, as per the existing policy.

During discussion, some clarifications were sought over making an accurate record of meetings, and who could accompany the officer to those. An officer had the right under the policy to be accompanied and also have another present to assist with any reasonable adjustments required.

**RESOLVED** To approve the Performance Improvement Policy, subject to final amendments agreed between the Corporate Lead – Human Resources and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Personnel Committee.

## 36 **People Data**

The Committee received the People Data report for the period up to 29 February 2024.

Highlighted in the report were:

- Market supplement numbers have not changed since December and remain at 11; however the next report will reflect an increase in the next period due to a new surveyor market supplement in Housing which has recently been agreed;
- Vacancies are at 44 compared to 29 in December. Appointments have been made to 10 of these vacancies and start dates have been agreed in the forthcoming weeks;
- The average time taken to fill vacancies has decreased from 72.83 days to 61.69 days since December. Benchmarking data indicates that c100 days is around the average time taken by organisations to fill posts;
- We are beginning to see a return to pre-pandemic turnover rates and the current forecast for cumulative voluntary turnover for 2023/24 is 8.85% which is lower than pre-pandemic rates;
- Sickness absence levels are continuing at a similar level to those reported from December to February. The projected forecast is currently 9.76 days, which is still above the end of year absence target of 8.5 days per FTE.

The Committee discussed obtaining some form of benchmarking data, recognising the difficulties in other authorities supplying such data, and differing service delivery across local authorities. The Committee was advised that the LGA/South West Councils were exploring a new benchmarking service which would assist with this in the future.

Workforce planning was key in helping the authority to be robust to changes in future years. The HR service continued to monitor and assist service areas with workforce planning.

Issues around recruitment were still an issue for local authorities for more specialised roles, such as surveyors and solicitors. Other specialised roles such as environmental health and planning were still difficult to recruit, but some developments such as the LGA's "Pathways to Planning" were helping, in response to a national shortage, and the Council was engaged with this programme.

Breakdown of paygrades against the FTE workforce would be provided in the annual people data report to the Committee.

A request was made for headcount figures prior to the relocation to the current offices used by the Council. This figure was not readily available; however, some anecdotal evidence was offered by both officers and Members on the low levels of staff in previous years; increases in recent years had been in accordance with budgetary requests agreed by Council.

The Committee endorsed the report.

37 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

The Committee agreed to go into private session for the next item.

38 **Request for additional funding and resource within the HR and Payroll Service**

The Committee considered the report setting out the establishment of a new 'Grow Our Own' budget to support the Council's Grow Our Own strategy, and a new post of HR Operations Manager.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

1. that the Grow Our Own budget of £143,000 be approved, to sit within the HR and Payroll Service
2. that funding for a new post of HR Operations Manager of £76,000 be approved.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

E Rylance (Chair)  
J Loudoun (Vice-Chair)  
K Blakey  
V Bonetta  
J Brown  
T Dumper  
P Faithfull  
D Haggerty  
N Hookway  
M Martin

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow

**Officers in attendance:**

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer  
Simon Davey, Director of Finance  
Joanna Fellows, Corporate Lead - HR and Payroll  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

P Arnott  
M Chapman  
M Hartnell  
P Hayward  
E Wragg

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 18 April 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.13 pm

#### **91 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

#### **92 Public speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak.

#### **93 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **94 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There was one item which officers recommended should be dealt with in this way at minute 97.

#### **95 Decisions made by Cabinet called in by Members for scrutiny in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules**

There was one decision and one recommendation made by Cabinet which has been called in in accordance with paragraph 15 of Part 4.5 of the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules.

#### **96 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set out on the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B).

#### **97 Call-in request of Cabinet resolution on 27 March 2024 relating to Leisure and Sports Pitches Requirements - Cabinet minute 167 (2) & (5)**

The Committee considered a call-in request in respect of the Cabinet resolution on 27 March 2024 relating to Leisure and Sports Pitches requirements. The call-in requested that Minute no. 167 (2) and (5) be re-considered as the Cabinet decision was based on the late submission of the item which prevented proper consideration by Cabinet



members, added to which some Cabinet member comments contained incorrect information which may have affected the decision.

The Democratic Services Manager outlined the call-in.

Cllr Kim Bloxham had submitted written representations which were read out.

Cranbrook ward members, Cllr Kevin Blakey and Cllr Sam Hawkins outlined their views.

The Assistant Director – Growth, Development & Prosperity outlined the background and context to the Cabinet decision of 27 March 2024. He and the Director of Finance provided points of clarification in response to members direct questions.

The members of the Scrutiny Committee outlined their views on the matter. The Chair commented for Cabinet, in their pre-meeting process, to ensure that all relevant facts are presented timely, within reports.

## **RESOLVED**

The Scrutiny Committee agreed that it was content to let the Cabinet decision stand but was concerned that affected ward councillors should be actively engaged in the paper to go to Cabinet in June 2024.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

I Barlow  
J Brown  
M Chapman  
B Collins  
R Collins  
M Goodman (Chair)  
A Hall  
J Heath  
V Johns (Vice-Chair)  
D Mackinder  
J Whibley

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

B Bailey  
K Blakey  
P Faithfull  
S Hawkins  
R Jefferies  
G Jung  
N Hookway  
T Olive  
C Brown

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer  
Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager  
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Andrew Wood, Assistant Director Growth Development and Prosperity  
Simon Davey, Director of Finance

**Councillor apologies:**

S Smith  
A Toye

Chair: .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 23 April 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.01 am and ended at 12.37 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 11.20 am and reconvened at 11.35 am.

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Eileen Wragg, the Vice Chair, Councillor Sarah Chamberlain chaired the meeting and the Committee agreed to Councillor Mike Howe being Chair for this meeting.

#### **140 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 26 March 2024 were confirmed as a true record.

#### **141 Declarations of interest**

Minute 146. 22/1910/MFUL (Major) EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM .  
Councillors Steve Gazzard and Daniel Wilson, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Minute 146. 22/1910/MFUL (Major) EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM  
In accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Councillors and Officers dealing with planning matters as set out in the constitution, the Chair, Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, on behalf of the Committee Members, advised lobbying in respect of this application.

#### Non Committee Member

Minute 146. 22/1910/MFUL (Major) EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM  
Councillor Nick Hookway, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

#### **142 Matters of urgency**

There were none.

#### **143 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were none.

#### **144 Planning appeal statistics**

The Committee noted the Development Manager's report which included an update to an appeal allowed for planning application 22/0975/MFUL – land adjacent Old Tithebarn Lane, Clyst Honiton.

#### **145 22/1910/MFUL (Major) EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM**

##### **Applicant:**

Mr Azim Lalani.

**Location:**

Devoncourt Hotel, 16 Douglas Avenue, Exmouth, EX8 2EX.

**Proposal:**

Demolition of the existing Devoncourt building and outbuildings, construction of 51 open market and 15 affordable residential apartments and new 65 bed hotel with access via Maer Road car park, associated car parking and landscaping works.

**RESOLVED:**

Deferred for a site visit to allow Members the opportunity to view the site from the car park and to fully consider the impact upon the neighbouring property at 14a Douglas Avenue and neighbouring properties at Maer Road.

146 **24/0166/FUL (Minor) OTTERY ST MARY (APPLICATION WITHDRAWN)**

**Applicant:**

Taylor.

**Location:**

9 Mill Street, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1AA.

**Proposal:**

Conversion of existing office to two dwellings.

**RESOLVED:**

**APPLICATION WITHDRAWN**

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

B Bailey  
I Barlow  
C Brown  
J Brown  
A Bruce  
S Chamberlain (Vice-Chair)  
S Gazzard  
D Haggerty  
A Hall  
M Howe  
Y Levine  
E Rylance  
S Smith  
D Wilson

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

P Arnott  
R Collins  
N Hookway  
G Jung  
T Olive

**Officers in attendance:**

- Damian Hunter, Planning Solicitor
- Wendy Ormsby, Development Manager
- Ed Freeman, Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Management
- Gavin Spiller, Principal Planning Officer (West)
- Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

- J Heath
- E Wragg

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of South and East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee held at Council Chamber, East Devon District Council, Blackdown House, Border Road, Heathpark Industrial Estate, Honiton EX14 1EJ on 24 April 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 2.32 pm

#### **123 Minutes of the previous meeting**

Under Rule 21.1 of the Agenda & Rules of Procedure, Rule 4.2 which states that the meeting should be held at the offices of the Chair, was suspended in order that this meeting could take place at the EDDC offices.

Minutes of the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee meeting held on 27 April 2023 were agreed by the committee.

Officers were asked to report to the next meeting with an update on minute 117, specifically the development of the new Mitigation Strategy and how this Committee can be involved in its development.

#### **124 Declarations of interest**

Cllr Martin Wrigley: personal interest – his property overlooks the estuary and he is a member and Treasurer of Cockwood Boat Club.

#### **125 Public speaking**

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

#### **126 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **127 Confidential/exempt items**

There were none.

#### **128 Monitoring Petalwort at Dawlish Warren**

The Economy and Delivery Manager introduced this report and associated Vegetation Survey and Assessment concerning Petalwort monitoring at Dawlish Warren National Nature Reserve in 2023.

Petalwort is a nationally scarce plant in the UK, and Dawlish Warren is one of seven sites in England where the plant is recorded and one of the special interest features for which Dawlish Warren Special Area of Conservation is designated. The Vegetation Survey and Assessment suggested that without management intervention, there is a high risk that Petalwort may disappear from Dawlish Warren entirely.

Comments from the Committee included:

- It was noted that whilst the Vegetation Survey and Assessment set out a number of recommendations, the current focus was the Petalwort translocation scheme as the preferred intervention, the evidence from which would inform the future decisions of this Committee.
- In the event that translocation is unsuccessful, then it would be appropriate to consider the interventions recommended in the Vegetation Survey and Assessment.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive Committee

1. Notes the vegetation survey and assessment report and the recommendations set out therein.
2. Receives an update from Teignbridge District Council at the next meeting regarding the status of the proposed Petalwort translocation scheme.
3. Subject to (2) above, considers funding the next survey on the conservation assessment of Petalwort in 2026.

## 129 **Dawlish Warren NNR - 2023 trampling and nutrient enrichment assessment**

The Economy and Delivery Manager introduced this report and associated Dawlish Warren National Nature Reserve Trampling and Nutrient Assessment 2023.

The Assessment had been commissioned in 2010 by Teignbridge District Council, to consider the impacts of recreation on Dawlish Warren and to identify the extent to which access was impacting the site. The Assessment suggested that the impact of trampling (people treading on plants) was somewhat nuanced, in some places contributing to maintaining the preferred habitat conditions, but in other places leading to significant erosion problems.

Comments from the Committee included:

- Concern was expressed that whilst informative, the reports do not set out what is being done to respond to the changes that are happening. Moreover, they do not consider the wider context including foreseeable changes such as rising sea levels, the impact of planned work by Network Rail, and the Environment Agency's intention to remove the geotube from the back of the Dawlish Warren, now planned for 2050.
- Whilst recognising the aforementioned concerns, it was not possible to know what changes will have occurred decades from now.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive Committee:

1. Notes the results of the trampling and nutrient enrichment assessment relating to impacts associated with human activity at Dawlish Warren NNR.
2. Receives an updated trampling and nutrient enrichment survey report as part of the ongoing monitoring programme in 2026.

## 130 **Branding update**

The Delivery Manager introduced this report which provided an update on branding for the work of South East Devon Wildlife, the public facing brand for the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership and South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee, together with a revised Communications Protocol.

A recent review of how the organisation, partnership, project work and committee are referenced had shown that the use of plain English and standardisation of the name would reinforce and improve awareness, and it was therefore recommended that the

organisation be consistently referenced as South East Devon Wildlife across all communications.

Comments from the Committee included:

- Confusion could arise from referring to Habitat Mitigation Officers as Wildlife Wardens, given that other organisations have Wildlife Wardens too; however, it was argued that it was not important for the public to distinguish between the different roles, since they were doing similar work.
- Members sought to understand what changes had been made to the Communications Protocol, and the Delivery Manager stated that she would request a copy of the original Protocol to be shared with the Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive Committee:

1. Notes the branding update for South East Devon Wildlife, South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership and South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee.
2. Approves the revised communications protocol for the partnership and Committee.

131 **Habitat mitigation team update**

Members noted this report which provided an update on the work of the Habitat Mitigation Delivery Team.

At Members' request, future update reports will set out where there has been a change in personnel.

The Chair thanked Members and Officers for their contribution to the meeting.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

- P Bialyk (Chair), Exeter City Council
- G Jung, East Devon District Council
- M Wrigley, Teignbridge District Council

**Officers in attendance:**

- Naomi Harnett, Delivery Manager, East Devon District Council
- Rebecca Heal, Solicitor, East Devon District Council
- Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer, East Devon District Council
- Fergus Pate, Economy and Delivery Manager, Teignbridge District Council
- Dale Cooper, Principal Projects Manager, Exeter City Council

Chair: .....

Date: .....



## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Strategic Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 30 April 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.47 pm. The meeting was briefly adjourned at 11.27 am and reconvened at 11.40 am.

#### **93 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 2 April 2024 were confirmed as a true record.

The Chair advised that following the resolution from Full Council on 17 April 2024 to amend the Strategic Planning Committee minutes from the meeting on 5 March 2024, the address description for site Brcl\_31 – land at Mosshayne Lane, Pinhoe will now be shown as Mosshayne Lane, Broadclyst for Minute 75 – Consultation on Housing Sites.

#### **94 Declarations of interest**

Minute 99. Green Wedge Boundaries in the new Local Plan.

The Chair, on behalf of Committee Members advised about receiving a lobbying email from PCL Planning Ltd, in respect of the emerging East Devon Local Plan – Green Wedge.

##### Non-Committee Member

Minute 100. Clyst Valley Regional Park Local Plan Consultation Paper.

Councillor Peter Faithfull, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Known to a landowner within the Clyst Valley Regional Park boundary.

#### **95 Public speaking**

There were no speakers.

#### **96 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **97 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential or exempt items.

#### **98 East Devon Local Plan Further Regulation 18 Consultation and Update**

The report presented to the committee provided an update on the additional East Devon Local Plan consultation under Regulation 18 of the plan making regulations which would include the following subject matters for consideration:

- Designated Neighbourhood Area housing requirements
- Potential additional housing allocations sites
- Town centre retail boundaries

- Proposed employment sites for allocation
- Coastal Preservation Areas

The consultation would be undertaken online through the Commonplace software and would commence on or before Friday, 3 May 2024 for six weeks closing on Monday, 17 June 2024.

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management did not provide an update on the Local Plan making timetable as Members felt, through discussion at the Local Plan Members Working Group, they wanted to see the site allocations brought forward to the summer and therefore there was a need to reconsider the timetable for the production of the plan. The updated timetable would now be brought back to the next committee meeting in May.

Discussions covered:

- Queried whether the National Landscape boundaries would be included in the map to help understand any overlapping. As National Landscape boundaries were set by government and Natural England there was no need to consult on these.
- Queried whether the Green Wedges and Coastal Preservation Area boundaries would be overlapped for clarity. These will both be shown together.
- Update requested on the Water Cycle Study. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged Members frustration and that he had been chasing this on a daily basis and was confident that Members would have it soon.
- Clarification was sought on the receipt of a report to address the resource implications for the Energy Policy that Members had supported. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that discussions had taken place and a report would be brought to committee soon.
- Queried whether the housing allocation for 1,000 homes at Mosshayne Lane, Broadclyst was in excess of the housing number that had been previously consulted on. Although the housing allocation was not in addition to the housing numbers it did allow some breathing room when considering site allocations.
- A concern was raised that Members had still not commented on some items from the last consultation that ended in January 2023. It had been envisaged that Members would consider this chapter by chapter but this has been superseded by the Regulation 18 consultation and the site allocations that have now been brought forward.
- Queried whether the quality of the map in the Regulation 18 consultation would be interactive so that the public could look at the Green Wedge boundaries in detail. It was acknowledged there had been issues with the previous consultation and Commonplace and that other routes were being considered to make the maps easier to use but at this stage due to time constraints pdf maps would be used.
- Clarification was sought on the aim of the consultation. The aim was to understand whether it was appropriate for housing sites and employment sites to be included or excluded in the Green Wedges.
- There is no Green Wedges proposed for Axminster and Honiton.
- It would be good if Members could have sight of the Regulation 18 consultation before it went live. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management was happy for Members to see it and would make provision for some form of briefing before it went live.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To endorse the draft Local Plan proposed development sites to be shown on the Coastal Preservation Area consultation maps (assuming they are also shown on, and therefore to be consistent with, those on the Green Wedge and Clyst Valley Regional Park consultation maps).
2. That the consultation to be undertaken in accordance with the format set out in this report be agreed with delegated authority being given to the Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management to agree final content of paperwork and online content, to include minor text changes (from committee drafts) to ensure consistency of approach and correct any clear minor errors.

## 99 **Green Wedge Boundaries in the new Local Plan**

The Committee considered the Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management's report which sought agreement to the boundary formatting of Green Wedges for consultation in the new Local Plan. This followed on from the Members Workshop where Members wished to retain the existing Green Wedges as much as possible.

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management highlighted some risks associated with this proposed approach and Members noted that the policy wording would need to closely reflect the wording in the existing Local Plan as the extent of the Green Wedges and the evidence available would not justify the policy definition as previously proposed.

Members noted a minor boundary change due to an historic drafting anomaly detailed in the map (figure 1) at paragraph 5.2 that showed a correction on land between Poltimore and Westclyst.

There was also a number of development areas for exclusion where significant development had come forward that were within the Green Wedges detailed in the maps at paragraph 5.3 from Figure 2 to Figure 7. It was now proposed to consult on the Green Wedge boundaries but to show the potential development allocations on the maps. These affected sites equate to approximately 1,000 homes.

Discussions covered:

- Queried why a piece of parkland south of the old A30 was excluded from the Green Wedge. This piece of land is within the flood zone and would be protected from development.
- It was suggested that Gittisham should be protected from the encroachment from Honiton.
- A concern was raised about some of the proposed developments within Green Wedges and whether the Inspector would find the Local Plan unsound at the examination stage. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged this concern and advised there were risks and that the council would need to defend its position if it was challenged.
- What weight should be given to the complaints by developers to not stand in the way of development. There is pressure from developers to release land for development and to meet housing needs will be a challenge.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the proposed policy wording be agreed and the boundaries in relation to Green Wedges in the new Local Plan be consulted on.

## 100 **Clyst Valley Regional Park Local Plan Consultation Paper**

The report sought Members endorsement to the proposed amendments to the existing Clyst Valley Regional Park boundary as set out on the map in Figure 2 on page 54 and also included some areas that were proposed to exclude where some small development had taken place.

Members noted that although the Clyst Valley Regional Park would run through the proposal for the second new community, it had had been 'greyed out'. It was felt at this stage it was seen as premature to identify routes and that it would be done through the master planning work of the new community.

The Portfolio Holder, Coast, Country and Environment, Councillor Geoff Jung said he was a great supporter of the Clyst Valley Regional Park and asked Committee Members to support the endorsement of the proposed changes as it would help to protect and improve the access to the countryside.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the proposed changes to the existing Clyst Valley Regional Park boundary and the proposed expansion of the park in line with the assessment methodology attached as Appendix 1 to this report be endorsed.
2. That the public consultation, in the form of Appendix 2 attached to this report, be agreed and be undertaken on the proposed Clyst Valley Regional Park boundary.

## 101 **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Level 1 and Scoping for Level 2 SFRA**

The report presented to committee provided details of a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) evidence document to demonstrate the relationship between development coming forward and the risks of flooding in the district that the Council was required to complete to support the production of the Local Plan.

The executive summary for the SFRA level 1 appended to the report provided the main sources of flooding in East Devon which included, water courses, surface water, sewers and the sea. Members noted that the most recorded incidents were due to fluvial flooding and surface water flooding as well as tidal flooding along the coast.

The level 2 SFRA looks specifically at particular sites where housing allocations could possibly take place where there are flood issues. This evidence will allow Members to make an informed decision as to whether or not these sites should be allocated. Level 2 has commenced this month and will take 4 – 5 months to complete.

Discussions covered:

- The Honiton Flood Scheme needs to be acknowledged in the appendix.
- It was queried why Sid\_6a was not being assessed in Level 2 SFRA as the road floods regularly in that area and its also in a flood zone area.
- Clarification was sought on the timescale for the Level 2 SFRA. It would need to be completed before the finalisation of the allocations and before it goes out for consultation at the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan.
- How many sites were not looked at because of the cost?

- Sowt\_09 has not been listed in the sites being assessed. Although the site is not in the flood zone the access is. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he would take this away with regards to Sowt\_09 and Sid\_06a to fully understand the implications and if necessary broaden out the scope provided it is covered within the budget.
- It is difficult to understand the map of accumulative impact detailed in appendix 3 – could this be made easier to understand?
- The Water Cycle Report could actually make some of these sites undeliverable.
- Note of correction to the wording on page 77 paragraph 3.6 to read Millwey Rise and not Millway Rise.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To note the Level 1 SFRA and to endorse it as evidence to underpin flooding issues for the emerging Local Plan.
2. To agree that the SFRA should be used in the formulation of policies to be included in the Local Plan relating to flood risk.
3. That the need to consider the results of ongoing work on a Level 2 SFRA before local plan allocations are finalised be noted.

102 **Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Update and Monitoring Report for 2022 - 2023**

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management presented an annual report that summarised the self-build and custom housebuilding in the district undertaken for October 2022 to October 2023.

Members noted that the overall demand for plots was a total of 13 individuals that had been added to the self-build register. This created a need to commission 11 suitable plots between October 2023 to October 2026 to meet the level of demand and a further 3 plots to meet the residual requirement from the previous year.

Key points to note included changes in the legislation and policy about how self-build and custom housebuilding would be considered. Historically it had been based on counting permissions to meet the need but this was no longer an appropriate approach and it now puts onus on the council to be more explicit when granting consent. This could mean that more applications could come forward beyond settlement boundaries or in locations expressly to provide self and custom build housing and the need for such plots would have to be given significant weight.

Discussions covered:

- Are the public aware of this opportunity and do we advertise this? The council's approach has been to stand back and let it happen as its complicated to promote as there are different types of self-build and custom homes such as affordable or grand designs. Finding suitable land is also a factor and these types of opportunities are rare as land is in high demand and at a premium.
- There is a need for more houses in our villages, we must allow small expansions.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the legislative and national policy changes described in the report be noted and consideration be given to including a planning policy in the emerging Local

Plan that will enable greater levels of self-build and custom housebuilding being delivered through small and medium sized sites.

2. That the draft monitoring report for use in planning decisions (to inform both local plan production and decision making on development proposals) be endorsed.
3. To note that 13 individuals were added to the self-build register during the latest monitoring period (31/10/22 – 20/10/2023).
4. That the need to permission 11 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/2023 and 30/10/2026 be noted to meet the demand shown on Part 1 of the self-build register (between 31/10/2022 and 30/10/2023).
5. To permission a further 3 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/2023 and 30/10/2025 to meet the 'residual' requirement from the demand shown on the register for 31/10/2021 to 30/10/2022.
6. To note that the demand for self-build plots indicated on the register should be taken into account in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions.
7. To invite the Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management to prepare a further report on self-build and custom housebuilding options to bring back to committee when resources are available to do so.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

B Bailey  
J Bailey  
K Blakey  
B Collins  
O Davey (Chair)  
P Fernley  
C Fitzgerald  
P Hayward  
M Howe (Vice-Chair)  
B Ingham  
Y Levine  
T Olive  
H Parr

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
R Collins  
P Faithfull  
R Jefferies  
G Jung

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Ed Freeman, Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Management  
Damian Hunter, Planning Solicitor  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

M Hartnell

D Ledger

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 1 May 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.02 pm and ended at 6.59 pm

#### **179 Minutes of the previous meetings**

The minutes of the previous meetings of Cabinet held on 27 March and 10 April 2024 were agreed.

#### **180 Declarations of interest**

Min 181. Public speaking.

Councillor Paul Arnott, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Colyton Parish Councillor and Ward Member for Colyford.

Min 190. New Communities in East Devon.

Councillor Kevin Blakey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Cranbrook Town Councillor.

Min 190. New Communities in East Devon.

Councillor Kim Bloxham, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Cranbrook Town Councillor.

Mon 190. New Communities in East Devon.

Councillor Sam Hawkins, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Cranbrook Town Councillor.

Min 190. New Communities in East Devon.

Councillor Todd Olive, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Whimble Parish Councillor.

Min 194. Station Road Countryside Park - Delivery & Management Options.

Councillor Matt Hall, Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Employee of Exeter City Planning Department.

#### **181 Public speaking**

The Chair handed this item over to the Vice Chair due to a conflict of interest.

Cllr Ian Priestley, Chair of Colyford Parish Council spoke with the full support the Parish Council who were present. He was concerned that the transfer of land and associated documents from Colyton Parish Council had not happened even though it had been reinforced by a Judicial Review in the High Court six months ago which was not subject to an appeal. He stated that last October he was promised the full support of Cabinet on this matter. The continued delay was causing additional expenses and time wasting for Colyford PC. He asked that he get a written response from the council's legal department to what was being done to force the reorganisation order by Friday 10 May 2024.

In response the Principal Solicitor confirmed that Colyford Parish Council would hear from EDDC by this date.

The Deputy Leader thanked Councillor Priestley for his attendance and addressing Cabinet on this matter.



182 **Matters of urgency**

There were none.

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

There was one item dealt with in this way which is recorded at Minute 194.

184 **Minutes of Housing Review Board held on 14 March 2024**

Members agreed to note the Minutes and recommendations of the Housing Review Board held on 14 March 2024.

**Minute 58 Finance report**

that Cabinet acknowledge the variances identified as part of the housing revenue account and housing capital finance up to month 10 2023/24.

**Minute 60 Annual report of the Housing Review Board**

that Cabinet and Council note the work that the Housing Review Board has undertaken during the 2023-24 civic year.

Cllr Steve Gazzard stated he had asked the Board that information on void breakdowns be recorded in district areas and noted this had not been done.

185 **Minutes of Poverty Working Panel held on 18 March 2024**

Members agreed to note the Minutes of the Poverty Working Panel held on 18 March 2024.

186 **Minutes of Overview Committee held on 21 March 2024**

Members agreed to note the Minutes and recommendations of the Overview Committee held on 21 March 2024.

**Minute 44 Tree Strategy for East Devon District Council**

1. The development of a Tree Strategy for East Devon District Council; and
2. To procure an external resource to draft the Strategy as agreed previously by Council.

**Minute 46 East Devon Parking Strategy 2024-2031**

1. To adopt the Car Parking Strategy 2024-2031, subject to appropriate amendments reflecting discussions
2. That public consultation on the Strategy is not undertaken, subject to appropriate consultation on any decisions resulting from its adoption; and
3. That a small, politically balanced Working Group or Portfolio Team be convened to deliver key elements of the Strategy, with relevant Ward Members and Portfolio Holders invited whenever appropriate.

187 **Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 4 April 2024**

Members agreed to note the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 4 April 2024.

## 188 **Minutes of Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum held on 9 April 2024**

Members agreed to note the Minutes and recommendations of the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum held on 9 April 2024.

### **Minute 49 LED Service Management Fee 2024/25**

1. The request from LED to provide a budget allocation of £1,603,162 for the 2024/25 management service fee which includes £53,350 for its outreach payment.
2. To consider the additional request for a further £25,000 to support the work of the outreach service.
3. To agree the new Service Level Agreement framework to be used for the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years subject to final agreement and sign off from the Director of Governance and Licensing and Monitoring Officer.

## 189 **Minutes of Extraordinary Scrutiny Committee held on 18 April 2024**

Members agreed to note the Minutes of the Extraordinary Scrutiny Committee held on 18 April 2024.

## 190 **New Communities in East Devon**

The Assistant Director – Growth, Development & Prosperity stated that the council had a track record of bringing forward major strategic developments, particularly in the West End of the District. Since the late 2000s these developments had been set up such that they included some form of enhanced local management regime, notably in the form of an Estate Management Company. Whilst the council had fulfilled its statutory obligations, it had not adopted public open space or other discretionary facilities. This had inevitably altered the mix and balance of public service delivery, in terms of the funding regime and the role that the District Council plays, relative to more established settlements.

The report sought to take stock of this approach. This was in the context of the District continuing to grow at a rapid pace and preparations beginning to be made for accommodating a second new community. This would ultimately lead to a scenario whereby around 20% of households in the District would be the subject of these alternative arrangements by 2040.

Cllr Kim Bloxham read out the following statement.

‘This report is very welcome, long overdue and presents a refreshing approach to how officers are recognising the wider impacts of strategic development in the West End. The old and new East Devon referred to in the report is welcome now, perhaps finally, it can benefit from the lessons learnt during the past 12 years or so of development at Cranbrook.

Just to dwell on management companies - the experience at Cranbrook was of an expensive and totally ineffective management company that left a legacy of poor maintenance and a great deal of remediation of open space once the Town Council managed to assume responsibility.

I agree with our officers, that management companies do not work when it comes to major development. It is true that the Town Council was successful in taking over responsibility for public open space and assets like play parks, but the Town was

fortunate in that it had the co-operation of the developer consortium. Since then, the Town Council has been approached by many towns and parishes for advice on how to move away from management companies in their areas. This includes areas within East Devon. Only one other Parish has managed this nationally. It is extremely difficult to wrest responsibility from a management company if there is resistance and this has proved to be the case across the Country. So, the message on management companies is - do not go there in the first place and find a way to manage open space locally.

In terms of the Cabinet recommendations, these are supported with the following comments:

Recommendation 1. The Planning Advisory Service report is welcomed and helpful and forms a strong basis to move forward particularly in how the Town and District can work together more effectively. This is particularly so with regards to the PAS recommendation 5 about both the Strategic Delivery Board and Partnership Board and PAS recommendation 8 about a re-set and improvement of relations with the Town Council.

Recommendation 2b. The Community Governance Review needs to be commenced as soon as possible if it is to avoid the difficulties with Management Companies. There does however remain some concern about whether the surrounding Parishes will support such a review and the consequences if they do not.'

The Chair wished to thank Councillors Bloxham, Blakey and Hawkins for their efforts and achievements in getting to this stage of the Cranbrook development.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

1. Notes the findings of the Planning Advisory Service report and associated recommendations as set out at Appendix B
2. Requests that the incoming Chief Executive, and the Assistant Directors for Planning Strategy & Development Management and Growth, Development & Prosperity, in conjunction with the Strategic Planning Portfolio Holder urgently review this report and its recommendations, and to propose any additional recommendations to Cabinet, whilst Cabinet:
  - a) Endorses the proposed terms of reference for the Cranbrook Placemaking Group to take forward recommendation 5 from the Planning Advisory Service report.
  - b) Endorses the principle of re-activating the Community Governance Review for Cranbrook in consultation with ward members and local communities.
  - c) Endorses undertaking a strategic review of the Council's approach to the delivery of assets and services in major new developments to take forward recommendation 9 from the Planning Advisory Service report.

**RECOMMENDED to Council:**

- d) That a budget of up to £80k is made available from the general fund to ensure that capacity is in place to undertake both the Community Governance Review for Cranbrook and wider strategic review of asset and service delivery in major new developments.

**REASON:**

To ensure that new communities in the District continued to be supported by high quality community infrastructure and public services.

To ensure that there were effective governance arrangements in place, both currently and to support the continued expansion of Cranbrook.

## 191 **Response to the Clyst Honiton Neighbourhood Plan Submission**

The purpose of the report was to formally agree the response by the council to the submission consultation for the Clyst Honiton Neighbourhood Plan. Clyst Honiton Parish Council had formally submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to the District Council. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (Regulation 16) required the District Council to formally consult on the Plan for a minimum of 6 weeks.

Cllr Peter Faithfull stated his concern that Clyst Honiton did not have a village hall and had to use other parishes facilities for their meetings. In an area of high employment per head of population he felt they should be better treated and thought the larger employers in the Parish could offer their support and contribute to this.

Cllr Olly Davey thanked officers for their contribution to this thorough Neighbourhood Plan.

### **RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

1. Note the formal submission of the Clyst Honiton Neighbourhood Plan and congratulated the producers of the plan on their dedicated hard work and commitment throughout the process.
2. Recommend that the proposed representation set out at paragraph 1.21 in this report is made in response to the consultation.
3. Give delegated authority to the Assistant Director - Planning Strategy and Development Management in consultation with the Portfolio Holder – Strategic Planning to consider and make a decision on the examiner's findings and, if considered appropriate, to proceed to the next stage of the plan making process as set out in the Regulations, without further need to seek agreement from Cabinet, in line with paragraph 1.15 of this report.

### **REASON:**

To ensure that the view of the District Council was formally recorded and informed the consideration of the Neighbourhood Plan by the independent Examiner, and to help ensure that after the examination, a decision could be made on the Examiner's findings within the 5-week timescale set out in the Regulations.

## 192 **Exemption to Contract Standing Orders - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

The report advised of an Exemption to Standing Orders of the appointment of consultants, to undertake a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to support the emerging Local Plan. The exemption had been formally signed by the Assistant Director for Planning Strategy and Development Management, Director of Finance and Director of Governance and Licensing.

### **RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

That the Exemption to Standing Orders had been approved in accordance with the council's Contract Standing Orders Rule 3.2 in respect of the appointment of JBA Consulting to undertake a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment be noted.

### **REASON:**

To notify Cabinet that an Exemption to Contract Standing Orders had been granted.

193 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED:**

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt and private information (as set out against each Part B agenda item), is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing the items in private session (Part B).

194 **Station Road Countryside Park - Delivery & Management Options**

The report provided an update on the delivery and future management of a 10Ha Country Park at Station Road, Broadclyst which sits within the wider Clyst Valley Regional Park.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

1. Approves the preferred option for the management and ownership of the Country Park and delegates authority to the Assistant Director - Countryside & Leisure, in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Governance and Licensing, to develop arrangements for the future management of the site with engagement from local Ward Members and Broadclyst Parish Council and local communities.
2. Delegates authority to the Assistant Director – Countryside & Leisure in consultation with Director of Finance, Director of Governance & Licencing, and the Assistant Director Planning Strategy & Development Management, to finalise the arrangements for operational management and creation of an endowment fund for the in perpetuity management of the site.
3. Delegates authority to the Assistant Director – Countryside & Leisure in consultation with the Assistant Director Place Assets and Commercialisation, Director of Finance and Director of Governance & Licencing to finalise the acquisition of the additional land, subject to the completion of appropriate legal documentation.
4. Subject to CIL Member Working Party's decision, approves the increased budget for delivery.
5. Requests that the Assistant Director - Countryside & Leisure, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Governance & Licencing, prepares a future report to Cabinet to set out the proposed arrangements for a Special Purpose Vehicle to enable East Devon District Council to maximise the biodiversity value of the site (and other future sites).

**RECOMMENDED to Council:**

6. The provision of a budget for the 2024/25 financial year to support deliver of the project.

**REASON:**

The retention of the site and management by Countryside Services will enable the biodiversity value of the site to be maximised, supporting East Devon's obligations in relation to the Environment Act and nature recovery. It will also enable Countryside Services to work with the Parish Council and local community to deliver additional social value benefits through volunteering, educational activities and community engagement and events in the western part of the district.

**Attendance List**

**Present:**

**Portfolio Holders**

M Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action & Emergency Response
G Jung	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
M Hall	Portfolio Holder Economy
O Davey	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning
S Jackson	Portfolio Holder Communications and Democracy
J Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination
N Hookway	Portfolio Holder Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
P Arnott	Leader of the Council
P Hayward	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Finance (Assets)

**Cabinet apologies:**

D Ledger	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes & Communities
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**Also present (for some or all the meeting)**

Councillor Brian Bailey  
Councillor Ian Barlow  
Councillor Kevin Blakey  
Councillor Kim Bloxham  
Councillor Colin Brown  
Councillor Jenny Brown  
Councillor Roy Collins  
Councillor Peter Faithfull  
Councillor Steve Gazzard  
Councillor Sam Hawkins  
Councillor Todd Olive

**Also present:**

**Officers:**

James Chubb, Countryside Team Manager  
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer  
Simon Davey, Director of Finance  
Ed Freeman, Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Management  
Naomi Harnett, Delivery Manager  
Tracy Hendren, Director of Housing, Health and Environment  
Andrew Hopkins, Corporate Lead - Communications, Digital Services and Engagement  
Paul Osborne, Green Infrastructure Project Officer  
Charles Plowden, Assistant Director Countryside and Leisure  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Andrew Wood, Assistant Director Growth Development and Prosperity

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Licensing and Enforcement Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 8 May 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.03 am and ended at 11.48 am

#### **23 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 March 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **24 Declarations of interest**

Minute 30. Review of taxi rank provision in East Devon and proposals for amendment. Councillor Tim Dumper, Other Registerable Interest, Councillor is a member of Exmouth Town Council, a member of the DCC East Devon Highways and Traffic Order Committee and Chair of Exmouth Transport Partnership.

#### **25 Public Speaking**

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

#### **26 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **27 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential / exempt items.

#### **28 Committee update report**

The Licensing Officer presented the report which provided an update on the activities of the Licensing Service under the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Taxi legislation and General Licensing including Street Trading and Pavement Licences.

The Licensing Manager highlighted the following points:

- A high number of Licensing Act 2003 applications, including Temporary Event Notices, had been received during the reporting period.
- The Gambling Commission annual return 2023 to 2024 had been submitted.
- It was noted that the Gambling Commission had confirmed that it is still considering the responses to the public consultations held in summer 2023. The Commission will not be in a position to amend Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities before the deadline for review of their Statement of Gambling Policy. The Commission had therefore advised Local Authorities to continue with reviewing their Statement of Gambling Policy. The Statement could be reviewed again when amended Statutory Guidance has been received.
- The reporting period had seen a slight drop in the number of taxi driver licences and a small increase in the number of taxi vehicle licences.
- Under the mandatory reporting requirements, two entries had been made to the National Register of Revocations, Refusals and Suspensions.

- Licensing Officers had attended the meeting of the East Devon Taxi Association held on 23 April 2024.
- At the time of writing the report, 29 street trading consents are in operation.
- Staffing levels have been addressed with the recruitment of an experienced previous Licensing Officer and recruitment to replace a current post holder is currently underway.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Licensing Officer advised that clearer door signage for taxis would be considered to make the operating company name more visible.

The Committee thanked the Licensing Manager and agreed to note the report.

## 29 **Hackney Carriage fare tariff review**

The Licensing Officer presented the report which asked the Committee to consider a request from the East Devon Taxi Association for an increase to the East Devon hackney carriage fare tariff. If approved, the Committee were asked to indicate their preferred option from the revised fare tariff tables set out in Appendix G of the report, and to authorise the publication of a public notice setting out the proposed fare tariff in a local newspaper and at the Council offices in line with the powers conferred by Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

The report contained a suggested new fare tariff table based on the current method of calculating hackney carriage fare tariff increases. As previously agreed, a separate report would be brought to a future meeting with a view to implementing a fare setting formula in 2025 based on the Guildford Borough Council methodology.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the Department of Transport's Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice Guidance for Licensing Authorities in England.

In presenting the report, the Licensing Officer also highlighted the costs of running a hackney carriage vehicle in East Devon [section 8] and the draft revised fare tables based on an increase of 5%, 10% or 15% [Appendix G].

Should the Committee agree to revise the fare tables, a public consultation, with a minimum period of 14 days, would be undertaken. If no objections are received, the revised fare tables would come into immediate effect. If objections are received, the matter would be brought back to the Committee for further consideration.

Questions and comments from the Committee included the following points:

- The very poor condition of the roads is seriously impacting taxi operators, and this should be taken up with Devon County Council.
- Taxi Association meetings are held in Exmouth which has the largest amount of trade although there are other operators in the rest of the district.
- Implementing the Guildford methodology would ensure that any future fare tariff increases take account of the frequency and magnitude of repairs, including cost of tyres.
- The fare tariff tables show the maximum costs which can be charged by taxi operators and not the costs which have to be charged to the public.
- There was discussion on the league table of fares as published in the Private Hire & Taxi Monthly magazine and how various factors such as the rural nature of the district and the resulting dead mileage can impact on the authority's position in the league table.
- The view was expressed that it is not the right time for a fare increase due to the on-going cost of living crisis and the impact on the travelling public.



- Regarding the cost of fuel, the current exceptional fuel prices surcharge, adopted in 2022, had been retained in the figures shown in the report. This enables an extra charge of 10p to be added to the fare when the price of fuel oil exceeds £1.75 per litre based on the latest available AA Fuel Price Report.
- A fare increase was needed due to year on year cost increases.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The East Devon hackney carriage fare tariff be increased by 10% as shown in Appendix G on page 49 of the report.
2. The Council's powers under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 be exercised to move to public consultation on the proposed amendments to the East Devon hackney carriage fare tariff.
3. The requisite public notice of 14 days be given of the proposed amendments as required by Section 65 (2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
4. If no written objection or representation is received relating to the notice given under Section 65 (2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 with the period specified in the notice, that the amended fare tariff be implemented with immediate effect.
5. If valid objection is received relating to the notice given under Section 65 (2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the matter be returned to the Licensing and Enforcement Committee for further consideration.

30 **Review of taxi rank provision in East Devon and proposals for amendment**

The Committee considered the report which set out the request from Devon County Highways to undertake improvement and several amendments to taxi ranks within East Devon, following a review of taxi rank provision across the District Council area.

Most of the proposals from Devon County Highways are in respect of plans to upgrade the status of the ranks in local Traffic Regulation Orders to 'No Stopping At Any Time'. Several additional proposals related to recommendations for the amendment of existing taxi ranks as summarised in sections 1.2.2 to 1.2.5 of the report.

The Licensing Officer outlined the background to the matters set out in the report which had previously been considered by the Committee on 15 November 2023 and 13 March 2024. The Licensing Officer drew the Committee's attention to sections 1.2.9 to 1.2.11 of the report which set out the impact on EDDC's current powers of the Devon County Highways proposals to amend the relevant traffic orders.

Mr James Bench and Mr Matt Lake of Devon County Highways were in attendance to answer any questions.

Responses to questions and discussion included the following points:

- All East Devon hackney carriage drivers had been advised of the proposed amendments and most of the eight responses related to Exmouth.
- It was noted that any East Devon District Council licensed hackney carriage driver can use any rank in the district.
- Currently EDDC's powers enable the Council to prosecute drivers who contravene taxi rank regulations, and it was considered advisable for EDDC to retain such powers under licensing legislation.
- Devon County Highways was aware of the recommendations in the report. Should the recommendations be agreed, two consultations would be run in tandem, one by DCC for

the traffic order changes and one by EDDC for other changes to taxi ranks, with further discussion and work between the two authorities required.

- It was noted that the recommendations in the report, if agreed, would maintain the status quo.
- The Committee's attention was drawn to Proposal 3: Victoria Road, Exmouth and the proposal to remove one car space on the existing taxi rank to facilitate a time-limited disabled space. The East Devon Taxi Association's response to this proposal as part of the previous consultation was that this would disrupt the natural flow of the taxi rank and that a more appropriate solution would be to use the first space of the taxi rank on the Strand, as this is never used by taxis and would not disrupt the flow of the rank. An alternative proposal, which would be acceptable to DCC, would be to move the proposed disabled space to the western end of the taxi rank in Victoria Road [page 59 of the report] and this would be detailed in the DCC traffic order.

## **RESOLVED**

1. To exercise the Council's powers under Section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to approve moving to public consultation on the proposed amendments of the existing taxi ranks as set out in 1.2.1 to 1.2.5 of the report.
2. That the requisite public notice be given of the proposed appointment as required by Section 63 (2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
3. That if no written objection or representation is received relating to the notice given under Section 63 (2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 within the 28 day period following recommendation will be deemed appointed.
4. That following the appointment of the taxi ranks Devon County Council Highways Authority be requested to put in place the appropriate legal provisions and to mark out the ranks.
5. To indicate the support of East Devon District Council for the plans to upgrade the status of the ranks in Local Traffic Order Regulations, and to improve signage and markings as put forward by Devon County Council Licensing.

The Chair thanked Mr Bench and Mr Lake for attending the meeting.

## **31 Pavement Licensing update report**

The Committee considered a report which set out the changes to the temporary pavement licensing regime under the Business & Planning Act 2020 and the impact of the changes to this regime made by the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

The Licensing Manager highlighted the key points as follows:

- The introduction of maximum standard capped fees for new and renewal applications at £500 and £350 respectively.
- An increase of the maximum term for which a licence can be granted has increased from 1 to 2 years.
- Consultation and determination periods have increased from 7 days to 14 days.
- Pavement licences will be issued with mandatory, national and local conditions.
- Members were asked to note that Devon County Council has now stopped issuing pavement licences due to an amendment of Section 115E (5) of the Highways Act.
- Members were also asked to note that a recommendation from the Committee to Cabinet will be required to set a level for the proposed fees increase and a further report to the Committee would follow to outline the proposals, together with a draft policy for consideration.

The Committee thanked the Licensing Manager for her report and noted the changes to temporary pavement licensing and proposed transitional arrangements and work plan as outlined in the report.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

K Bloxham (Vice-Chair)  
V Bonetta  
T Dumper  
P Faithfull  
S Gazzard  
S Hawkins  
Y Levine  
S Westerman  
J Whibley (Chair)

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
R Collins

**Officers in attendance:**

Lee Staples  
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer  
Phillippa Norsworthy, Licensing Manager  
Giles Salter, Solicitor  
Emily Westlake, Licensing Officer

**Others in attendance:**

James Bench, Devon County Highways  
Matt Lake, Devon County Highways

**Councillor apologies:**

M Chapman  
J Heath  
R Jefferies

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Licensing and Enforcement Sub Committee held at Otter Room, Blackdown House, Honiton on 8 May 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 1.30 pm and ended at 2.12 pm

#### **48 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 March 2024**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 March 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **49 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **50 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **51 Confidential/exempt items**

There were two items which officers recommended should be dealt with in this way at minute number 53 and minute number 54.

#### **52 Exclusion of press and public**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set out in the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing these items in private session (Part B).

#### **53 Hackney Carriage vehicle suitability**

The purpose of the item was to determine whether a hackney carriage vehicle licensed by East Devon District Council, as set out in the officer's report, is safe and suitable to continue to be licensed as a hackney carriage vehicle.

The Chair introduced the members of the Sub Committee and those in attendance.

The applicant was present at the meeting.

The Legal Advisor, Giles Salter, outlined the procedure to be followed.

The Licensing Officer, Emily Westlake, introduced the report.

There were no questions for the Licensing Officer from the Sub Committee or the applicant.

The applicant addressed the Sub Committee and outlined the background to the circumstances set out in the officer's report.

Members of the Sub Committee viewed the vehicle.

There were no questions from the Sub Committee for the applicant and the applicant had nothing further to add.

The Chair advised the applicant that the Sub Committee would retire to make its decision which would be notified in writing within five working days.

The Chair thanked the applicant for attending the meeting.

#### 54 **Hackney Carriage driver suitability**

The purpose of the item was to determine whether the person named in the officer's report is a fit and proper person to continue to be licensed as a hackney carriage driver.

The Chair introduced the members of the Sub Committee and those in attendance.

The applicant was in attendance.

The Legal Advisor, Giles Salter, outlined the procedure to be followed.

The Licensing Officer, Lee Staples, presented the report and outlined the background to the circumstances.

The applicant had no questions for the Licensing Officer.

The applicant addressed the Sub Committee and explained the circumstances of their business.

The Chair advised that the Sub Committee would retire to make its decision which would be notified in writing within five working days.

The Chair thanked all those present for attending the meeting.

#### **Attendance List**

##### **Councillors present:**

K Bloxham (Vice-Chair)

T Dumper

J Whibley (Chair)

##### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

Y Levine

##### **Officers in attendance:**

Rebecca Heal, Solicitor

Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer

Giles Salter, Solicitor

Emily Westlake, Licensing Officer

Lee Staples

**Councillor apologies:**  
M Chapman

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 21 May 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

Due to technical issues the meeting which was due to commence at 10.00 am started at 11.30 am and ended at 6.15 pm. The meeting was adjourned for lunch at 2.00 pm and reconvened at 2.40 pm and a further brief adjournment took place from 4.10 pm until 4.20 pm.

#### **147 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 23 April 2024 were confirmed as a true record.

#### **148 Declarations of interest**

Minute 152. 22/1910/MFUL (Major) EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM.  
Councillors Olly Davey, Matt Hall and Brian Bailey Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Minute 152. 22/1910/MFUL (Major) EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM.  
In accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Councillors and Officers dealing with planning matters as set out in the constitution committee members advised lobbying in respect of this application.

##### Non Committee Members

Minute 152. 22/1910/MFUL (Major) EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM.  
Councillor Nick Hookway, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Minute 152. 22/1910/MFUL (Major) EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM.  
Councillor Daniel Wilson, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Minute 158. 4. 23/0685/MOUT (Major) AXMINSTER  
Councillor Paul Hayward, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Employed as the Town Clerk by Axminster Town Council and a resident of Cloakham Lawns.

#### **149 Matters of urgency**

There were none.

#### **150 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were none.

#### **151 Planning appeal statistics**

The Committee noted the Development Manager's report which included an update to an appeal dismissed for planning application 23/0556/FUL – land north of Martin Gate, Sidmouth Road, Aylesbeare. The Development Manager drew Members attention to this appeal as it was relevant to item 11.

152 **22/1910/MFUL (Major) EXMOUTH LITTLEHAM**

**Applicant:**

Mr Azim Lalani.

**Location:**

Devoncourt Hotel, 16 Douglas Avenue, Exmouth, EX8 2EX.

**Proposal:**

Demolition of the existing Devoncourt building and outbuildings, construction of 51 open market and 15 affordable residential apartments and new 65 bed hotel with access via Maer Road car park, associated car parking and landscaping works.

**RESOLVED:**

Refused contrary to officer recommendation for the following reasons:

Having regard to the layout, siting, scale and massing of the proposed development it will have an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties due to noise and light spill from vehicles using the access drive adjacent the eastern site boundary; overlooking and loss of privacy, overshadowing causing loss of sunlight and due to its overbearing impact. As such the development is contrary to Policies D1 and EN14 of the East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023.

Having regard to the siting, scale, massing, design and site density of the proposed development it is out of keeping with the urban grain and character of the area and as such contrary to policy D1 of the East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031, policy EB2 of the Exmouth Neighbourhood Plan, 2018 to 2031 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023.

153 **23/2506/MFUL (Major) CLYST VALLEY**

**Applicant:**

Mr Peter Quincey.

**Location:**

Winslade Park, Clyst St Mary.

**Proposal:**

Installation of solar array with associated infrastructure, access and landscaping.

**RESOLVED:**

Deferred – to be considered at an additional meeting on Friday, 24 May 2024.

154 **23/2537/FUL (Minor) SIDMOUTH TOWN**

**Applicant:**

Mr Jorge Pineda-Langford (EDDC).

**Location:**

Sidmouth Swimming Pool, Ham Lane, Sidmouth.

**Proposal:**



Erection of a new public toilet building.

**RESOLVED:**

Deferred – to be considered at an additional meeting on Friday, 24 May 2024.

155 **23/2455/FUL (Other) DUNKESWELL and OTTERHEAD**

**Applicant:**

Mr & Mrs M & J Summers.

**Location:**

Kains Park Farm, Kains Park Storage, Awilscombe, EX14 3NN.

**Proposal:**

Change of use of land for the storage of caravans, motorhomes and boats (use class B8) and associated works.

**RESOLVED:**

Deferred – to be considered at an additional meeting on Friday, 24 May 2024.

156 **24/0313/FUL (Minor) EXMOUTH TOWN**

**Applicant:**

Mr David Freer.

**Location:**

The Octagon, Esplanade, Exmouth, EX8 2AZ.

**Proposal:**

Proposed change of use from shop (Class E(a)) to café (Class E(b)) two side extensions and internal alterations.

**RESOLVED:**

Deferred – to be considered at an additional meeting on Friday, 24 May 2024.

157 **22/2719/FUL (Minor) WOODBURY and LYMPSTONE**

**Applicant:**

Misters M & C Tanton.

**Location:**

Stables & premises, Bond Lane Farm, Bonds Lane, Woodbury Salterton.

**Proposal:**

Change of use from poultry farm to industrial (Use Class E(g)) and storage (B8).

**RESOLVED:**

Deferred – to be considered at an additional meeting on Friday, 24 May 2024.

158 **23/0685/MOUT (Major) AXMINSTER**

**Applicant:**

Hortons Estate Developments Ltd.

**Location:**

Land adjacent Cloakham Lawn and Chard Road, Chard Road, Axminster.

**Proposal:**

Hybrid application: outline application for the erection of up to 140 dwellings, 0.8 hectares of Class E employment land, public open space, drainage and ancillary works (all matters reserved except access).

Full application for works to football training pitch, including drainage improvement work, 4 x 15m tall floodlighting columns and erection of 6m high ballstop netting on west side of football pitch and training ground.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To adopt the appropriate assessment.
2. To secure financial contributions and other matters through a Section 106 legal agreement.
3. Approved with conditions as per officer recommendation.

159 **24/0352/FUL (Minor) WEST HILL and AYLESBEARE**

**Applicant:**

Matt & Kaylee Smith.

**Location:**

Lindridge, Elsdon Lane, West Hill, EX11 1UB.

**Proposal:**

Demolition of existing bungalow and garage with construction of a replacement house and integral double garage.

**RESOLVED:**

Approved with conditions as per officer recommendation subject to an amendment to condition 9 to retain hedge at a height of 4m and additional condition to require the garage with studio above to be used for purposes incidental to the use of the main house only.

160 **23/1973/FUL (Minor) WEST HILL and AYLESBEARE**

**Applicant:**

Miss Kate Boulten.

**Location:**

The Croft, Bendarroch Road, West Hill, EX11 1UW.

**Proposal:**

Replacement dwelling including the demolition of the existing dwelling and multiple outbuildings located within the grounds.

**RESOLVED:**

Approved with conditions as per officer recommendation.

161 **23/2471/FUL (Other) YARTY**

**Applicant:**

Mr & Mrs Lippett.

**Location:**

Merrywood, Blackpool Corner, Axminster, EX13 5UH.

**Proposal:**

Single-storey side extension to bungalow and existing vehicle access widened.

**RESOLVED:**

Approved as per officer recommendation.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

B Bailey  
I Barlow  
C Brown  
J Brown  
S Chamberlain  
M Chapman  
O Davey (Chair)  
P Faithfull  
D Haggerty  
A Hall  
M Hall (Vice-Chair)  
M Howe  
S Smith  
E Wragg

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

J Bailey  
J Loudoun  
T Olive  
P Hayward  
N Hookway  
D Wilson

**Officers in attendance:**

Jeremy Ebdon, Principal Planning Officer (East)  
Jill Himsworth, Planning Officer  
Damian Hunter, Planning Solicitor  
Wendy Ormsby, Development Manager  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer  
Gavin Spiller, Principal Planning Officer (West)  
Jamie Quinton, Senior Planning Officer  
Jack Richards, Planning Assistant

**Councillor apologies:**

A Bruce  
S Gazzard

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 24 May 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 1.30 pm and ended at 5.55 pm. There were two adjournments for this meeting, the first at 3.00 pm and reconvened at 3.10 pm and the second at 5.27 pm and reconvened at 5.35 pm.

#### **162 Declarations of interest**

Minute 165. 23/2506/MFUL (Major) CLYST VALLEY.  
Councillor Mike Howe, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Bishops Clyst Parish Councillor.

Minute 166. 23/2537/FUL (Minor) SIDMOUTH TOWN.  
Councillor Ian Barlow, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Sidmouth Town Councillor and advised of predetermination and would not take part in discussions or vote for this application.

Minute 167. 24/0313/FUL (Minor) EXMOUTH TOWN.  
Councillors Oly Davey and Brian Bailey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

#### Non Committee Member

Minute 167. 24/0313/FUL (Minor) EXMOUTH TOWN.  
Councillor Aurora Bailey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

#### **163 Matters of urgency**

There were none.

#### **164 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were none.

#### **165 23/2506/MFUL (Major) CLYST VALLEY**

##### **Applicant:**

Mr Peter Quincey.

##### **Location:**

Winslade Park, Clyst St Mary.

##### **Proposal:**

Installation of solar array with associated infrastructure, access and landscaping.

##### **RESOLVED:**

Refused contrary to officer recommendation for the following reasons:

1. Having regard to its siting, scale and design the proposed solar farm would harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it would

be located and as such is contrary to Strategy 7 (Development in the Countryside), Strategy 39 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Projects), Strategy 46 (Landscape Conservation and Enhancements and AONBs), Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023.

2. The proposed development will prevent the delivery of public open space required as part of extant planning permission 20/1001/MOUT, adversely affecting the amenity of future occupiers of that development and the wider community, contrary to Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the East Devon Local Plan, 2013 to 2031 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023.
3. The proposed development will result in less than substantial harm to nearby heritage assets which is not outweighed by the public benefits of the proposed development. As such the development is contrary to Strategy 39 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Projects), Strategy 49 (The Historic Environment) and Policy EN9 (Development Affecting a Designated Heritage Asset) of the East Devon Local Plan, 2013 to 2031 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023.

166 **23/2537/FUL (Minor) SIDMOUTH TOWN**

**Applicant:**

Mr Jorge Pineda-Langford (EDDC).

**Location:**

Sidmouth Swimming Pool, Ham Lane, Sidmouth.

**Proposal:**

Erection of a new public toilet building.

**RESOLVED:**

Refused contrary to officer recommendation.

Having regard to its siting, scale and design the proposed building would appear as an incongruous feature in the street scene, out of character with the area, failing to conserve or enhance the setting of nearby heritage assets and adversely impacting on the visibility of and access to and around adjacent public buildings. As such the proposed development is contrary to Strategy 6 (Development within Built-Up Area Boundaries), Strategy 26 (Development at Sidmouth), Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness), Strategy 49 (The Historic Environment) and Policy EN9 (Development Affecting a Designated Heritage Asset) of the East Devon Local Plan, 2013 to 2031 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023.

Councillor Ian Barlow did not take part in discussions and did not take part in the vote.

167 **24/0313/FUL (Minor) EXMOUTH TOWN**

**Applicant:**

Mr David Freer.

**Location:**

The Octagon, Esplanade, Exmouth, EX8 2AZ.

**Proposal:**

Proposed change of use from shop (Class E(a)) to café (Class E(b)) two side extensions and internal alterations.

**RESOLVED:**

Approved with conditions as per officer recommendation.

168 **23/2455/FUL (Minor) DUNKESWELL & OTTERHEAD**

**Applicant:**

Mr & Mrs M & J Summers.

**Location:**

Kains Park Farm, Kains Park Storage, Awliscombe, EX14 3NN.

**Proposal:**

Change of use of land for the storage of caravans, motorhomes and boats (Use Class B8) and associated works.

**RESOLVED:**

Refused as per officer recommendation.

169 **22/2719/FUL (Minor) WOODBURY & LYMPSTONE**

**Applicant:**

Misters M & C Tanton.

**Location:**

Stables & premises, Bond Lane Farm, Bonds Lane, Woodbury Salterton.

**Proposal:**

Change of use from poultry farm to industrial (Use Class E(g) and storage (B8)).

**RESOLVED:**

Approved with conditions as per officer recommendation.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

B Bailey  
I Barlow  
C Brown  
J Brown  
O Davey (Chair)  
P Faithfull  
A Hall  
M Howe  
E Wragg

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

A Bailey

T Olive  
R Collins

**Officers in attendance:**

Wendy Ormsby, Development Manager  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer  
Nigel Barrett, Senior Planning Officer  
Gavin Spiller, Principal Planning Officer (West)  
Jill Himsworth, Planning Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

A Bruce  
S Chamberlain  
M Chapman  
S Gazzard  
D Haggerty  
M Hall  
S Smith

Chairman .....

Date: .....



# **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the meeting of Overview Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 30 May 2024**

### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.09 pm

### **1 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 March 2024**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 March 2024 were signed as a true and accurate record.

### **2 Declarations of interest**

Minute 6, An Economic Development Strategy for East Devon  
Councillor Vicky Johns, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Director of Ottery Larder.

### **3 Public Speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

### **4 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

### **5 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential/exempt items.

### **6 An Economic Development Strategy for East Devon**

The Economic Development Manager presented this report and asked members to consider the new five-year Economic Development Strategy (EDS) for East Devon and make recommendations, before it is presented to Cabinet for approval.

The EDS had been developed following an Economic Development Review (LDR) presented to Cabinet in October 2023, the findings from which highlighted the core issues and challenges facing the district's economy. The Strategy had been widely consulted on, addressed the core challenges highlighted by the LDR, supported delivery of the new Council Plan and set a clear vision for East Devon's economy to 2029.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Members commended the Economic Development team on carrying out the work in-house, remarking that Officers were therefore more likely to want to own it and deliver on it.
- The EDS is deliverable from within the current in-house resource and existing devolved funding (UKSPF/REPF). It does not propose delivery of any major new projects for which funding is not identified.
- The Service Plan for the Economic Development service will be based on the EDS, once adopted, and actions will align with the priorities set out.
- There are sites in the Enterprise Zone and Exeter Logistics Park which are suitable for large employers and particularly inward investors with good budgets, and this is beneficial

for business rate income. It was noted however that logistics and warehousing have low job density relative to the size of the footprint.

- Large employers struggle to recruit local staff, since the district has high levels of employment, and house prices mean that workers from elsewhere cannot afford to relocate to the area. The Economic Development team recognise the impact of the housing difficulties on recruitment and are committed to exploring what best practice exists in other local authorities and what this Council can seek to emulate, to ease the pressures.
- Average wages in the district have increased relative to the regional average and this might be related to the constrained local labour market, with employers having to pay more to attract workers in from greater distances who cannot afford to live locally.
- In regard to strategic planning, delivery of employment land followed by development of houses will help to reduce the requirement for people to commute across and out of the district and reduce the carbon impact of this travel.
- There are different types of demand for different areas of the district, with significant logistics demand in the west due to proximity to the transport infrastructure, but with rural centres in the east looking for smaller, more affordable B2 units to grow their businesses.
- The EDS reflects a holistic view of what good economic growth looks like, with a focus on environmental impact and how this is mitigated, and with consideration to the quality of jobs proposed and how valuable they are to the district's economy.
- There are factors within the report which are outside of the Council's remit including the cost of housing relative to wages, the cost and reliability of public transport, the road network and availability of WiFi, and Members expressed concern that these factors will restrict the capacity of the Council to deliver on the EDS.
- In regard to public transport and the availability of services to and from places of employment, the Council will work closely with the new Combined County Authority (CCA) to provide them with the appropriate data to inform their thinking around service provision.
- There is clear market failure in the delivery of employment land in East Devon and it was noted that to prevent the further loss of employment land to residential development, it is important that any proposed employment allocation site within the new Local Plan has been subject to robust viability testing prior to adoption. We will then have 1) the evidence we need to both protect those allocations from subsequent COU to more profitable residential development, and 2) an understanding of the infrastructure and investment requirement of those sites being delivered. This will form our pipeline of projects for which both centralised and devolved funding can be applied for.
- It has become apparent that the rail industry is unable to develop a freight terminal in the west end of the district and the Assistant Director – Growth, Development and Prosperity explained that due to the steep gradient, it is not possible for container traffic to use the stretch of line between Exeter St Davids and Exeter Central. There is ongoing work with Network Rail and others to look at the passing loop around getting a half-hourly service on the Great Western mainline out to Axminster, and this will boost reliability.
- It is understood that the Housing Task Force is considering the potential use of garages for housing. A Member suggested they could be used for small industrial units, in the alternative, and this potential use could be considered through a group of employment stakeholders and subjected to a feasibility assessment, if appropriate.

Following the discussion, the Committee endorsed the draft Economic Development Strategy (2024-2029) for East Devon.

**RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:**

To adopt the Economic Development Strategy (2024-2029) for East Devon

**7 E-petitions briefing note**

The Committee received this briefing note and a full officer report is expected to a future meeting, outlining a business case for the introduction of an e-petition scheme for the

Council. The Overview Committee will then consider if the proposed scheme is cost-effective.

**8 Work Programme 2024-2025**

The Committee considered the Cabinet Forward Plan and noted the Work Programme for 2024-2025.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

B Bailey  
T Dumper (Vice-Chair)  
A Hall (Chair)  
J Heath  
V Johns  
Y Levine  
M Martin  
H Riddell  
D Haggerty  
A Bailey

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
R Collins

**Officers in attendance:**

Simon Davey, Director of Finance  
Robert Murray, Economic Development Manager  
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Andrew Wood, Director of Place (interim)

**Councillor apologies:**

P Fernley  
O Davey

Chair: .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Strategic Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 4 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.30 am

#### **103 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 30 April 2024 were confirmed as a true record.

#### **104 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **105 Public speaking**

Alison Stenning who spoke on behalf of Colyton Parish Council addressed the committee regarding the proposed development and asked Members to respect Colyton's neighbourhood plan by removing Coly\_02a and Coly\_02b to help protect the natural setting of the town and its conservation area. These sites can be viewed across the Coly Valley and Axe Valley from Musbury which are both in the national landscape and outside the established built up area boundary of the settlement. Residents believe that Colyton does not need additional housing especially as 72 houses were already being built on the old Ceramtec site and the further 49 dwellings proposed would be unsustainable due to existing infrastructure being at capacity.

Colin Pady, a parishioner of Colyton spoke about how the proposed development to the north west of Colyton at Hillhead would impact on the setting of the conservation area and should not be included for development. He urged Members to listen to the residents of Colyton as they do not want any skyline development which could be seen for over 3 miles away to the east. Mr Pady suggested that a more sustainable site could be chosen on land to the south west of Courtenay Drive where the joint landowners are amenable for this land to be released.

#### **106 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **107 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential or exempt items.

#### **108 Assessment of potential development sites and plan making update**

The report presented to the committee provided details of the process for reviewing the selection of housing allocations sites that would go forward into the Local Plan and sought Members agreement for this work to commence to allow future work to progress.

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to Section 2 of the report and sought Members views on the proposed stepped approach. He advised that the member working party, with invitations extending to all relevant ward members that fall within the boundary, would meet over a number of meetings to consider each town area-based report which would then be brought back to the Strategic Planning Committee for approval. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management emphasised that at no point would any decisions be made outside of the Committee but that it would be an opportunity for sites to be discussed and issues debated and shared.

Members noted that an updated timetable would be brought back to Committee at the next meeting to allow discussions from this meeting to take place first.

The Chair emphasised two points to Members. The first being that Members were not to discuss individual site allocations but to focus their attention on the process itself and the second was to bear in mind that an alternative process could be considered by discussing all the housing allocation sites in formal committee rather than the member working party.

Questions and discussions from Members covered:

- Clarification was sought on when the water cycle study will be ready as although it keeps getting promised but keeps getting delayed. It was advised that a date had been set in June but this has been postponed until after the General Election.
- A concern was raised about public perception to the member working party being discussed behind closed doors. The intention was to have discussions with officers and members to understand public concerns about particular sites and to share knowledge to make sure the assessment work is robust before final details are brought back to committee.
- Clarification was sought on the meaning of paragraph 3.1 Section 2. For example 'a big picture' local plan strategy could be referring to constraints in sustainable locations that may need to be considered and how it fits into the wider strategy and in other cases where other better performing sites are not allocated would mean sites in less sustainable locations such as in tier 4 that have fewer constraints but may not be in a sustainable location.
- Clarity is needed to make sure everyone is clear what the roles are for the working party and Strategic Planning Committee. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that notes will be taken at the working party meetings and put in the public domain for transparency.
- A concern was raised that paragraph 5.1 could suggest it could form the policy writing.
- Clarification was sought on the number of meetings needed. It was suggested between 7 – 8 half day meetings but these could be longer and more meetings needed.
- Councillors Ingham and Parr expressed their support for the meetings to be done within the Strategic Planning Committee as it was important to get this right. Some members were not in favour of this suggestion due to work commitments and other members raised concerns that discussing hundreds of sites within the committee would be unworkable.
- Clarification was sought on how many members were on the working party. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised it was 6 Committee Members and the Leader.
- It was suggested to invite at least one town and parish council member to each relevant working party meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

That the work proposal and timetabling as set out in this report be endorsed with the addition to invite one representative from each relevant town and parish council to the working party meeting.

## 109 **Defining and Justifying Major Development in National Landscapes**

The report sought Members endorsement to the proposed methodology as set out in Section 4 of the topic paper to consider a small number of sites within the National Landscapes to ensure that any proposed allocations within a national landscape are assessed in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Questions and comments received from Members included:

- Reassurance was sought that the same methodology would not be used for the Green Wedges and boundaries methodology. In response the Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he was mindful of the issues from the Green Wedge methodology and suggested that if Members were minded the recommendations could be amended to ‘note’ rather than ‘agree’ until the findings are presented.
- Clarification was sought on what constitutes ‘major development’ as it is not defined in the NPPF. Although a definite answer could not be given as national landscapes were all very different in character it was suggested it related to site specific and was left to councils to interpret each case on its own merits.
- Support was expressed for the methodology but it goes against council policies and opinions of the planning officers. In response it was advised that all sites would need to be robustly considered for the Local Plan to be found sound.
- A query was made about the tilted balance and the housing land supply if by the time this Local Plan was submitted for examination the council was required to consider the five year housing land supply. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that there would be an issue if the current 4.25 housing land supply dropped which would mean the tilted balance would apply but this would not change things in terms of national landscapes.
- Clarification was sought on what the difference would be if a development was classed as ‘major’. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that fundamentally any major development would need to be justified as exceptional circumstances for allocating housing in the national landscape.
- A concern was raised about the wording in Section 5 bullet point 2 as the wording for the Spatial Strategy appeared to be ‘set in stone’ and did not appear flexible.

Councillor Mike Howe proposed two slightly amended recommendations as follows, seconded by Councillor Bethany Collins.

1. That Strategic Planning Committee note to adopt the approach set out in Section 4 of the topic paper to identify whether any of the allocations in the national landscapes proposed in the local plan constitute ‘major’ development for the purposes of paragraph 183 of the NPPF.
2. That Strategic Planning Committee note to adopt the approach set out in Section 5 of the topic paper to establish whether there are any exceptional circumstances that would justify individual allocations that are ‘major development’ in the public interest.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the approach set out in Section 4 of the topic paper to identify whether any of the allocations in the national landscapes proposed in the local plan constitute 'major' development for the purposes of paragraph 183 of the NPPF be noted.
2. That the approach set out in Section 5 of the topic paper to establish whether there are any exceptional circumstances that would justify individual allocations that are 'major development' in the public interest be noted.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

B Bailey  
J Bailey  
K Blakey  
B Collins  
O Davey  
P Hayward  
M Howe (Vice-Chair)  
B Ingham  
G Jung  
D Ledger  
Y Levine  
T Olive (Chair)  
H Parr

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
R Collins  
M Rixson

**Officers in attendance:**

Ed Freeman, Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Management  
Damian Hunter, Planning Solicitor  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

C Brown  
P Fernley

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 5 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.25 pm

#### **1 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting of Cabinet held on 1 May 2024 were agreed.

The Chair congratulated Tracy Hendren as the newly appointed Chief Executive. He expressed his thanks to Simon Davey and Melanie Wellman for their roles as part of the interim Chief Executive team over the past few months. He congratulated Andrew Wood as the newly appointed Director of Place (interim) and Catrin Stark the newly appointed Director of Housing and Health (interim). The Chair welcomed Cllr Sam Hawkins, Cllr Todd Olive and Cllr Bethany Collins to their new roles on Cabinet.

#### **2 Declarations of interest**

Min 204. Exmouth Sea Wall Emergency Repairs Update and Phase 2.  
Councillor Aurora Bailey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is a Exmouth Town Councillor.

Min 204. Exmouth Sea Wall Emergency Repairs Update and Phase 2.  
Councillor Nick Hookway, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is a Exmouth Town Councillor.

Min 204. Exmouth Sea Wall Emergency Repairs Update and Phase 2.  
Councillor Paul Arnott, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is a candidate for the Exmouth & Exeter East parliamentary seat in the General Election.

Min 207. Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan - minor modification.  
Councillor Paul Arnott, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Is a Colyton Parish Councillor.

Min 210. Exeter Science Park - Deloitte Review.  
Councillor Paul Arnott, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is a candidate for the Exmouth & Exeter East parliamentary seat in the General Election.

Min 210. Exeter Science Park - Deloitte Review.  
Councillor Sam Hawkins, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is the Council Shareholder representative for Exeter Science Park.

#### **3 Public speaking**

There were no public speakers.

#### **4 Matters of urgency**

There were none.

#### **5 Confidential/exempt item(s)**



There was one item dealt with in this way which is recorded at Minute 210.

6 **Minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 24 April 2024**

Members agreed to note the Minutes of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 24 April 2024.

7 **Minutes of South and East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee held on 24 April 2024**

Members agreed to note the Minutes of the South and East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee held on 24 April 2024.

8 **Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28**

The Housing Solutions Manager presented the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28 for approval and adoption as required by the Homelessness Act 2002.

**RECOMMENDED to Council:**

To adopt the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2028.

**REASON:**

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory obligation on local authorities to undertake a review of homelessness in their area and develop and publish a strategy to prevent homelessness based on the findings of the review.

9 **Feniton Phase 4 Resolving risks to get to site**

Cabinet was updated on the latest set of issues the project had faced prior to getting to site, and the reason for the delay in getting to site. It highlighted the remaining risks to the project and what was being done to mitigate risks and update the total project costing, asking for approval for additional total project spend.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

1. Approves the full scheme value for approval of £6.075m (No further EDDCs funds are required at this time, with additional project budget found from external sources)
2. Agrees to postpone commencing Phase 4 until the planning permission is granted.
3. Approves EDDC entering a contract with Kier Construction to deliver Phase 4, to mobilise asap once the planning permission has been secured, noting that the current additional external funds not yet been formally approved.
4. Subject to recommendation 3, Cabinet grants authority for EDDC to enter a contract for construction with Kier up to the value of £3.5m

**REASON:**

1. To ensure project has authority to proceed.
2. To support the planning process and not risk starting a scheme with a planning objection,
3. To remove any further delay to starting on the project. As delay will likely raise costs, with more fundraising needed.
4. To enable a speedy contract signing to get to site soon.

## 10 **Exmouth Sea Wall Emergency Repairs Update and Phase 2**

The Chair left the room while this item was being debated with the Deputy Leader acting as Chair.

The Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment introduced this item detailing the events of last Autumn when the seawall collapsed due to a storm. The speed and reaction from staff to mobilising contractors within hours was superb and the moving of thousands of tons of sand to protect the wall from the next forecasted storm. Phase 2 was a challenge, but the work had to be done, he apologised to business tenants affected by the noise and disruption during this period.

The Engineering Projects Manager updated Members on the emergency repairs to Exmouth Seawall in Phase 1. He explained various options for Phase 2 and set out recommended alignment of Phase 2. The financial situation and update on the Slipway repairs and cladding options was outlined.

Members congratulated and thanked staff, contractors and the Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment for an excellent effort in achieving so much in a short space of time.

### **RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

1. Approves the carrying out of further emergency (and permanent) repairs to Exmouth seafront in respect of Phase 1, Phase 2 and associated emergency works and grants delegated authority to the Director of Housing Health and Environment (initially and then to the new Director of Place) in respect of the project, in consultation with the Director of Finance, the Director of Governance and the Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment.
2. Approves total budget spend for the Phase 1 and Phase 2 works of £3.312m. Note no additional budget from EDDC required over the £1.5m already approved. £1.812m obtained from external funding.
3. Supports the recommended option alignment and target start date for Phase 2 seawall repairs. However due to ongoing investigations, the final alignment decision being with the delegated officers as per recommendation 1.
4. Given the emergency nature of the works, Cabinet notes the exemption to contract standing orders in respect of the design consultancy total spend for the sum of £300,000 that has been approved by S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer as provided for in the Constitution. This is an increase from 6th March 2024.
5. Notes the decisions made to date on repairing the slipway.
6. Notes the Outline Business Case submission to the Environment Agency for access to national funding.

### **REASON:**

Given the location of the failed and failing wall, it was not an option to do nothing and allow the sea to erode the seafront further. Therefore Phase 2 must start in October prior to the winter storms. Starting in October dictates the wall alignment. Further spend and costs have been incurred due to further storms in April.

## 11 **Household Support Fund 5**

The Benefits and Financial Resilience Manager provided details on the proposed policy of the Household Support Fund and funding available to support households for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024.

### **RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

1. Agree to the proposed policy for the Household Support Fund for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024.
2. Agree for delegated authority to be given to the Assistant Director for Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Fraud and Compliance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities, in the event subsequent changes need to be made to the policy including providing additional groups to receive a targeted payment. Any required changes would be based on funding, available data from our poverty dashboard, other relevant factors at the time a decision needs to be made including carrying out a new Equalities Impact Assessment.

**REASON:**

The recommendation allows for the administration of the Household Support Fund to be targeted at those who require financial support with the cost of essentials. In addition, the proposed policy is in line with the Department for Work and Pensions guidance and with other Team Devon authorities who continue to work together to ensure a Devon wide framework in administering the fund.

Based on data gathered from those residents who request support from the Financial Resilience team we know that 59% of residents who are approaching us for help are those residents who have a member of the household who is disabled or is a carer. Given that this group of residents are vulnerable they may be less likely to know that they can access support from the Household Support Fund, therefore we are proposing that we target support at those households.

The open application would still allow those with vulnerable residents in the household such as low-income households with children access to the fund. The policy continued to support the Council's anti-poverty strategy.

12 **Live and Move Sport England Place Partner 2025 - 2028**

The Cranbrook New Community Manager sought endorsement for a joint bid with Exeter City Council to extend the role of Cranbrook and Exeter as a Sport England Place Partner and apply for investment to 'deepen' the work of the Live and Move programme for a further three years (2025-2028).

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

Approve the joint bid with Exeter City Council as set out at Appendix C of this report, to become a Sport England Place Partner for the period 2025-2028.

**REASON:**

To ensure that residents of Cranbrook can continue to benefit from support to promote more active lifestyles and to help realise good health and wellbeing outcomes.

13 **Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan - minor modification**

The Deputy Leader took the Chair for this item.

The 'Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan' was made (adopted) by EDDC on 10 January 2022. On 5 December 2022, following a community governance review, EDDC agreed to create a new parish of Colyford, comprising part of the original Colyton parish area, and a new Parish Council for Colyford has since been established. The Colyton Designated Area and the area covered by the Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan therefore now covers the combined area of both the reduced Colyton parish and the new Colyford parish. Colyford Parish Council have asked if the name of the neighbourhood plan could

be amended to 'Colyton and Colyford Neighbourhood Plan' to reflect this for accuracy and clarity in its use and implementation.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

1. Agree to the proposed minor modification to the Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan to reflect the change in community governance to the Colyton and Colyford Neighbourhood Plan, and to correct the error in page numbering in the index.
2. Agree to update the name of the Colyton Designated Neighbourhood Area accordingly to the Colyton and Colyford Neighbourhood Area.

**REASON:**

For clarity and accuracy and for the avoidance of doubt in the use and application of the neighbourhood plan and associated designated neighbourhood area for planning policy and development management purposes.

14 **Housing Ombudsman self-assessment and complaint procedure update**

The Monitoring Officer presented the report which covered 2 key areas, firstly the Housing Service self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code, which became statutory on 1 April 2024. Secondly it updated the corporate complaints policy and procedure to ensure compliance with the updated code and the code produced by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

1. Note and agree the procedure updates and compliance with the Housing Ombudsman code of practice in complaint handling.
2. Approve the appointment of the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities to the role of Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) for Housing complaints.

**REASON:**

The council, as social housing landlord, must demonstrate compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's code by 30 June 2024 and had made amendments to the corporate complaints procedure and policy to ensure that it was fully compliant.

15 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt and private information (as set out against each Part B agenda item), is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing the items in private session (Part B).

16 **Exeter Science Park - Deloitte Review**

The Chair and Cllr Hawkins left the room while this item was being debated with the Deputy Leader acting as Chair.

Cabinet last considered a report in relation to the Science Park at the November 2023 meeting. This committed to the results of a strategic review of the development of the

Science Park being reported to Cabinet when complete. The report fulfilled this commitment. The strategic review had been undertaken by Deloitte. The associated report highlighted a number of structural issues facing the company that went to the heart of the future development of the Science Park and made a number of recommendations to address these.

A variety of issues were discussed including how the recommendations from the review were influencing the development of the next business plan for the Science Park and the challenges around securing further investment to bring forward the next phases of development. It was agreed that a briefing session would help members to understand these issues in further detail.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

1. Notes the findings of the strategic review, endorses the associated recommendations and the accompanying activity needed to implement them to;
  - Develop a clear marketing and business development strategy.
  - Deliver a sustainable operating and funding model via cost reduction and a restructuring of the debt.
  - Improve governance by reviewing the Further Agreement and Reserved Matters.
  - Secure an updated Local Development Order and start the process to bring in either a private sector investor or private sector developer to support delivery of the remainder of the science park.
2. Receives further reports as required on specific areas of activity together with an overarching report in 12 months' time setting out the collective progress in implementing these recommendations.

**REASON:**

To ensure that the Science Park could continue to develop and fulfil its potential as a key economic driver for the District and wider region.

**Attendance List**

**Present:**

**Portfolio Holders**

M Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action & Emergency Response
G Jung	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
D Ledger	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes & Communities
S Jackson	Portfolio Holder Communications and Democracy
J Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination
N Hookway	Portfolio Holder Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
S Hawkins	Portfolio Holder Finance
P Arnott	Leader of the Council
P Hayward	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Finance
T Olive	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning

**Cabinet apologies:**

**Also present (for some or all the meeting)**

Councillor Aurora Bailey  
Councillor Brian Bailey  
Councillor Ian Barlow

Councillor Kevin Blakey  
Councillor Colin Brown  
Councillor Bethany Collins  
Councillor Roy Collins  
Councillor Paula Fernley  
Councillor Richard Jefferies

**Also present:**

**Officers:**

Thea Billeter, Cranbrook New Community Manager  
Tom Buxton-Smith, Engineering Projects Manager  
Sharon Church, Benefits Manager  
Andrew Mitchell, Housing Solutions Service Manager  
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer  
Simon Davey, Director of Finance  
Andrew Hancock, Assistant Director StreetScene  
Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive  
Andrew Hopkins, Corporate Lead - Communications, Digital Services and Engagement  
Andrew King, Tenancy Services Manager  
Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)  
Andrew Wood, Director of Place (interim)

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Arts and Culture Forum held at Online via the Zoom app on 12 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.45 pm

#### **1 Public speaking**

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

#### **2 Appointment of Vice Chair**

Nominations for Vice Chair were received for Councillor Nick Hookway.

**RESOLVED:** that Councillor Nick Hookway be appointed Vice Chair of the Arts and Culture Forum for the ensuing year.

#### **3 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 November 2023 were agreed.

#### **4 Declarations of interest**

6. Museum Development South West.

Councillor Paula Fernley, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Her father volunteered at the South West Airfield Heritage Trust.

#### **5 Museum Development South West - report on progress of the East Devon Culture Strategy**

Jo Cairns, Museum Development Officer for Museum Development South West (MDSW) gave the Forum some background to MDSW. They were a team of museum and heritage development specialists working with the museum and heritage sector in the South West to effect positive, lasting change the deliver public value. MDSW was an Arts Council England funded Investment Principles Support Organisation and was one of five museum development providers across England supporting accredited museums.

In the South West 67% of museums were independent charities, compared to 58% nationally. 57% of museums were 'micro', with fewer than 10,000 visitors annually. 42% of the museums in the South West were wholly volunteer run, with 9 volunteers to every one paid member of staff in the South West (compared to four volunteers to one paid member of staff nationally). These regional statistics highlighted the need for professional support from MDSW.

The key services of MDSW were:

- Local, place based Museum Development Officers.
- Small grants programmes and funding support.
- Skills and training networks.
- Specialist support in collections and volunteering.
- Organisational development and technical accreditation.

- Communications, advocacy and resources.
- Secure funding for projects.

MDSW worked in partnership with EDDC with funding provided through the Shared Prosperity Fund. There were four accredited museums receiving support (Allhallows Museum, Sidmouth Museum, Fairlynch Museum and Arts Centre, Axminster Heritage Centre) and there were five others not yet accredited, but still receiving support due to funding from EDDC (Exmouth Museum, Seaton Museum, Ottery St Mary Heritage Museum, Whimble Heritage Centre, South West Airfield Heritage Trust).

The Museum Development Officer explained that in 2023/24 EDDC received a 300% return on its investment from MDSW. It received:

- £4,685 in Museum Development Officer support.
- Technical accreditation support to two museums.
- £1,264 specialist officer support in collections and digital.
- One participant in Volunteering Fit for the Future at £1,400 (Exmouth Museum – dedicated volunteer management consultancy).
- 18 training attendances at 13 training sessions from 3 museums at £986.
- One On Display! grant awarded at £1,000 (Axminster Heritage Centre – Thomas Whitty Rug) which enabled a total project valued at £5,735.

It was noted that Arts Council funding was received by MDSW for accredited museums. The accreditation scheme run by Arts Council England ensured that museums were adhering to a certain standards. A return had to be submitted every five years to the Arts Council to demonstrate the museum was still adhering to the particular criteria. Being accredited showed that a museum was working to a particular standard and opened up opportunities for grants as a lot of funding was only open to accredited museums.

On behalf of the Forum the Vice Chair in the Chair thanked the Museum Development Officer for her presentation.

## 6 **Villages in Action - report on progress of the East Devon Cultural Strategy**

Mair George, Creative Director, Villages in Action explained that Villages in Action (VIA) had been in existence for over 30 years. It was an arts charity working across rural Devon. There was a small team of four part time workers – the Creative Director, two producers and a finance manager. Since 2021 VIA had embarked on a new journey to shift the way that rural touring in Devon was thought about, with a network of volunteer promoters and co-curators, re-imagining how and why towns and villages engaged with culture, and opening up the way that rural communities enjoyed and grew new creative opportunities. The aim was to strengthen the voice of towns and villages in both hosting and creating work that reflected changing communities in the wider world. This was done by growing a network of locally rooted co-curators who imagined and shaped new creative projects with VIA, inspired by what their community wanted and needed. The aim was that over time this culturally driven action network would grow meaningful. Agriculture was a way of thinking about rural touring differently.

The Creative Director highlighted four main points of VIA work over the last year:

- Community touring – hosted 25 high quality arts performances for 1,496 live audiences, with five participatory workshops sessions from visiting touring artists.
- Village exchange - Delivered 3 intergenerational skill-share projects in Ottery St Mary (young people; music focus), Honiton (older adults with dementia; reminiscence) & Membury (mixed ages; heritage storytelling).



- Zest - Active Care Homes commission, producing over 12 high quality digital works for use in care settings, engaging excluded participants, developing specialist digital production team & content (older adults dementia).
- Artist support - Supported over 80 artists including 8 open-call From Devon With Love scratch artists. Nurtured artists through the current fundraising re-submission cycle (Arts Council England). Developed a new relationship with University of Exeter Drama focusing on graduate retention in the South West.

VIA were most known for their community touring. Box office income in East Devon had increased, along with the number of performances and attendees. Some examples of high quality regional and national artists were given, including the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in Ottery St Mary. Overall there had been a range of work for all ages across a number of different community spaces with positive feedback received.

The VIA Creative Director outlined some forthcoming performances, workshops and activities and went on to thank EDDC for continuing to support the arts through VIA.

On behalf of the Forum, the Vice Chair thanked the Creative Director for her fascinating presentation.

## 7 **Arts and Culture East Devon update and Arts Council bid**

The Forum received a presentation from the Cultural Producer. The Arts and Culture East Devon (ACED) network met three times a year in person and the most recent meeting had been held on 10 June at Seaton Gateway Theatre. 34 people attended the meeting which was co-chaired by the ACED music champion. Different speakers were invited to present, including ACED climate change champion, Anne-Marie Culhane on a recent project 'Overwintering' on the Exe Estuary that had been successfully delivered and funded through the Creative East Devon Fund. The ACED network also heard about the new Carbon Action Programme, which community organisations could apply to for equipment that would help decarbonise their buildings. This built on the learning from last year's Culture, Leisure and Tourism Fund. This fund would open in the autumn and a range of other support services would be offered, including a free energy audit to ensure that community organisations were applying for the right type of equipment to be the most energy efficient.

The inaugural ACED volunteer of the year award was given to Colin Trussell, who had been volunteering with Sidmouth Folk Festival for over 30 years. The plan was for this to become an annual award in order to recognise the importance of volunteers as it would not be possible to deliver the festivals and events in Devon without their support.

The Cultural Producer explained the recently launched ACED mentoring scheme, whereby a young person aged 18 to 30 was paired with an experienced ACED network member who had training in being a mentor. There were currently 10 mentors signed up to the scheme which was in its pilot phase. Free training opportunities had also been delivered through the Shared Prosperity Fund including training specific to East Devon museums, training in bid writing, public speaking, producing live events and volunteer recruitment and retention. The next training opportunity, which was free to ACED members was equality, diversity and inclusion co-ordinated by the Thelma Hulbert Gallery.

There were now 174 ACED members, which represented a 54% increase in membership since November 2023. This increase was in part due to ACED membership being

essential for eligibility in applying to the Creative East Devon Fund. This fund was designed to provide discretionary financial support to local art and culture initiatives and projects that demonstrated a commitment to developing the East Devon Cultural Strategy. Creative projects could apply for up to £3,000. The scheme was funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The Cultural Producer reported that she had been working on some projects around theme two of the Cultural Strategy: protecting and enhancing the natural environment. The objective was to establish East Devon as an innovator and regional beacon of culture-led environmental protection, enhancement and activism. The Cultural Producer was working closely with Exmouth Festival on action 2.2 of theme two – to improve the environmental practices of the district's cultural festivals to establish them as leaders in sustainable event management. Those involved were looking forward to sharing the learnings from this once the event had taken place as it was thought that it could be a really useful blueprint for other event organisers to take actions to lower the carbon footprints of these types of events.

The Forum also considered the report on an Arts Council bid of approximately £30,000 relating to theme 2.1.2 in the cultural strategy, to work with local museums and South West Museums Development to engage in national conversations about the climate crisis and enable displays of natural science and biodiversity collections in East Devon's museums. It was noted that funding bids to the Arts Council continued to be extremely competitive, with around one in ten applications being successful. A bid was also being submitted for the Thelma Hulbert Gallery to continue the success of its current programme, engaging young people with the gallery space, with particular focus on EDI and climate.

The Vice Chair thanked the Cultural Producer for her inspiring presentation and report and commented on the extraordinary commitment that volunteers across East Devon had made to its cultural landscape.

The Assistant Director – Countryside and Leisure highlighted how EDDC's Culture Strategy, which was only two years old, was beginning to lead some interesting thinking across the county. He thanked the Cultural Producer and other officers involved for their hard work in getting funding into grassroots organisations and utilising the enthusiasm, expertise and knowledge within East Devon's communities.

**RESOLVED:** that the Arts and Culture Forum note and support the two funding bids to the Arts Council to support the Thelma Hulbert Gallery and East Devon museums.

## 8 **Thelma Hulbert Gallery update and Arts Council bid**

Gemma Girvan, Gallery Manager and Curator introduced herself to those present and stated that she was six months into the role as Manager of the Thelma Hulbert Gallery (THG). The Forum noted that gallery sales figures were in line with previous years, which was pleasing. The Gallery Manager and Curator went on to highlight the following activities:

- Present Makers exhibition had been record breaking this year, taking over £14,000 and showcasing over 60 established and emerging makers.
- The Mikhail Karikis exhibition focussed on climate change, with EDDC's Climate Change Officer and the Curator at RAMM. The exhibition showcased work by Honiton Community College pupils as part of the Create Our Space (COS) project.
- South West Academy was opened by the newly appointed president, John Nettles, with over 100 artists and supporters at the opening.

- THG Open Winners Exhibition – this was well received, with press coverage in the Midweek Herald, Exeter Living, Evolver and Devon Life.
- Gluck's Flowers – a theatre company based in Bristol that had Arts Council funding to show this performance in gallery spaces, turning the gallery into a theatre for 2 days.

The THG's engagement programme was going from strength to strength. At the beginning of the year jewellery making workshops and print painting workshops sold out. The Create Our Space (COS) project, an Arts Council funded project encouraging young people to engage with the gallery was coming to an end, with the last round of workshops being delivered to five local primary schools. An evaluation of the project would be carried out at the end of July. As part of the Arts Council funding a few people took part in carbon literacy training and had been trained as trainers. They had delivered carbon literacy training to the THG teams as well as some volunteers. It was hoped that training could be rolled out to other groups, including the ACED network.

The Creative Cabin would be out and about over the summer at festivals. The option of a more portable creative cabin was being explored (in addition to the current one), for example something that could go into the boot of a car, that was more accessible and portable as well as being more 'green'. Taking the current Creative Cabin out and about could be logistically challenging at times. The THG team were looking at the next Arts Council bid to carry on the successes from the COS project as well as building the relationships with young people and a young persons network, and also continuing to focus on the climate. The Forum were reminded that funding bids to the Arts Council continued to be extremely competitive, with around one in ten applications being successful. There was also an opportunity with Art Fund as this year's focus was museums and galleries run by local authorities. Lots of areas of potential funding were being explored, as well as how the THG could work with other partners.

## 9 **Cultural tourism update**

The Chair welcomed the Senior Economic Development Officer to the meeting to update the Forum on cultural tourism.

EDDC adopted a tourism strategy at the end of 2022 which included a very strong focus on the cultural offer. The tourism strategy vision was for East Devon to become the leading all year long tourism destination in Devon, focussing on some of its key assets and advantages like natural diversity, as well as encouraging more businesses to do the same. The Senior Economic Development Officer worked closely with the Cultural Producer and they were now working on a joint cultural tourism project to highlight the cultural offer in the area.

An East Devon Tourism Network had been set up and running for approximately 18 months, with quarterly meetings. East Devon Excellence were delivering this strong network which was going really well and showcased different aspects of the cultural offer. For example, the November meeting would focus on festivals and events as a way of attracting tourists to the area and extending the tourist season.

The Senior Economic Development Officer explained that the current main project where efforts were being focussed to nurture and promote cultural tourism was a cultural tourism map. This was a product development project where all of EDDC's key assets where visitors could experience high quality cultural activity would be depicted on a map so that people could plan their visit. There would be printed versions available as well as an interactive version online where people would be able to build their own itineraries. The map would be based on an existing map from East Devon Excellence and was a

resource that could be built on. It promised to be a really engaging project and the aim was to launch it in September 2024 at the end of the active summer season, with the aim of promoting tourism outside of the peak summer months. It was noted that although the cultural tourism map was the main project, there would be other projects too. East Devon District Council would act as an enabler for tourism in the area, rather than being a promotional agent.

Input from the Arts and Culture Forum was welcomed and members were invited to attend all economic development events. On behalf of the Forum the Vice Chair thanked the Senior Economic Development Officer for her fascinating update.

### **Attendance List**

#### **EDDC Councillors present:**

O Davey  
P Fernley  
N Hookway  
I Barlow  
T Olive

#### **Town Representatives**

J Bull, Axminster Town Council  
R Doorbar, Budleigh Salterton Town Council  
C Buchan, Cranbrook Town Council  
I Barlow, Sidmouth Town Council

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Charles Plowden, Assistant Director Countryside and Leisure  
Gemma Girvan, Gallery Manager and Curator  
Caitlin Davey, Events Officer  
Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive  
Sarah Elghady, Cultural Producer  
Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer  
Geri Panteva, Senior Economic Development Officer

#### **Also Present**

M Rixson  
Jo Cairns, Museum Development Officer, Museum Development South West  
Mair George, Creative Director, Villages in Action

#### **Apologies:**

A Aaroussi  
V Johns  
J Whibley  
S Gazzard, Exmouth Town Council  
R Sexton, Honiton Town Council substitute  
P Arnott (non committee member)

Chair .....

Date:

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Personnel Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 13 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 11.00 am and ended at 12.12 pm

#### **1 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were confirmed as a true record.

#### **2 Declarations of interest**

None.

#### **3 Public speaking**

None.

#### **4 Matters of urgency**

None.

#### **5 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

None.

#### **6 Director recruitment update**

The report set out detail on backfilling the Director of Housing role, along with the proposal to reassign some areas of responsibility and recruit to a new Director of Place position. Recruitment for these two roles; Director of Housing and Health and Director of Place has now commenced, and the committee were informed of the process and timescale for recruitment to these posts.

The Interviewing Sub Committee will be required to be part of the interviewing process, and make recommendation to full Council about the proposed appointments.

The existing interim arrangements agreed with Council to cover the two Director roles will continue until the appointment of the new postholder. Following expressions of interest and an interview process the following Assistant Directors have been confirmed as acting up in the Director role on an interim basis: Director of Place – Andrew Wood; and Director of Housing and Health – Catrin Stark.

The Committee noted the report.

#### **7 People Data**

The Committee received the regular update on key people data up to 30 April 2024. Some data highlighted included:

- The number of market supplements applied to posts has increased by 10 to a total of 21 since the last reporting period. Market supplements are applied to posts which are difficult to recruit to in a challenging labour market and the increase relates particularly to arborists, and surveyor roles in the Housing Service, where there is a general shortage of candidates, leading to increased pay rates in the market. Market supplements continue to be reviewed on an annual basis.
- Absence monitoring is currently projected to be 11.51 days lost per FTE by the end of March 2025, higher than the target of 8.5 FTE days and higher than the annual figure for 2023/24 at 10.05 days per FTE. The projected figure is expected to fluctuate through the fiscal year and will continue to be monitored.
- The average length of time to recruit has increased from 61.69 days to 85.15 days since the last reporting period in February, but remains below the national average of circa 100 days.
- The number of vacancies recruiting and not recruiting is currently 7.97% of the headcount (44 vacancies). 21 of these are currently being actively recruited to and 12 have been appointed and waiting to start employment.

The Committee also considered the Annual People Data Report, which provided a wider range of data, including equalities, training and employee relations activity. The report's main focus centred on actions relating to recruitment and retention, as this had been a specific challenge for the Council in recent years.

Highlights from the report included:

- Headcount increased by 3.75% compared to the same period the previous year but remained below the budgeted FTE of 557.3. The largest proportion of the workforce was paid at grade 4 (28.8%) (£33,945 -£40,221) and the largest service was Housing, Health and Environment which represents 55.25% of the organisation.
- Salary costs increased this year by 14.8% due to increased headcount and the nationally determined Pay Award.
- Staff travelling costs reduced for the second year running by 1.01%, possibly attributable to the Council's Worksmart Policy.
- Vacancy rates remained similar throughout the year, between 7% and 8% of headcount. This compares favourably to when vacancies were at their peak in August 2022, with 60 vacancies and a vacancy rate of 11.76%. Recruitment costs increased this year to £1,368 per head, but still significantly below the average benchmark cost of £3,000 - £5,000 per head.
- Combined voluntary and non-voluntary turnover reduced to 11.25% compared to the previous year of 13.75%. This compares favourably with other public sector organisations which are on average 14.6%.
- The number of apprenticeships grew by 54.54% over the last year, with 17 apprentices, and a significant reduction in the Levy funds therefore being lost to the government (£3,852 compared to £14,854 the previous year).
- The number of FTE days lost per employee to sickness absence reduced by 2.88% from 10.94 FTE days to 10.05 FTE days, although still above the target of 8.5 days.

Questions and comments from Members on the Annual people data included:

- How productivity was measured across the workforce; in response, Members were reminded of Key Performance Indicators and the monitoring of delivery of

action plans from the service plans and the Chief Executive explained that work was taking place to further develop the performance monitoring approach;

- An Equality and Diversity Advisor was now in place and reviewing how to improve the data held on personnel to have a better reflection of the diversity of the workforce;
- Long term sickness absence could be provided at service level as well as providing data with only the short and medium term sickness element, to see how this compared to the sickness absence rate target;
- Comment from the Leader that the voluntary turnover data did not make any reference to employees leaving due to involvement with Members;
- Workforce planning and succession planning were being developed to feed into the Workforce Strategy. Each service will continue to examine where mitigation was needed for those with a workforce likely to experience shortages in the future, for example due to retirement. Performance Excellence Reviews and 1-2-1 meetings continued to help retain staff and this approach is scheduled for audit review in the autumn;
- In response to comment on the pathway for employees unable to work, the Corporate Lead – Human Resources outlined the mechanisms in place for retirement through ill health, but did explain to Members that the pension criteria were very strict;
- Climate change training had been omitted from the list of training provided, but the Corporate Lead confirmed that a number of staff had previously volunteered to undertake “train the trainer” carbon literacy training and these employees were now being used to train staff and members. Climate change training also formed part of the Welcome Morning for new employees.

In relation to Recruitment and Retention specifically, the report highlighted:

- Vacancy and turnover rates have reduced. Although the general trend is positive, there remains challenges with recruitment to specific professions/roles, for example surveyors, solicitors and arborists. This is in line with the wider market and where necessary the Council has agreed market supplements to attempt to mitigate against this.
- A range of interventions have been put in place, including a review of the Recruitment Policy, improved pay and grading arrangements (known as the Reward Review), vacancy monitoring, and a new employer brand. There has been a review and improvements to the recruitment process, together with working more closely with managers so that they understand the process, improved training in our processes and updated information and guidance available via the intranet. Further enhancements to staff benefits and the Happy Healthy Here staff health and wellbeing programme have also been implemented, including a new staff benefits portal and Employee Assistance Programme, introduction of Wellbeing Champions and resources to support mental health and financial wellbeing.
- Further work planned for this year includes the exploration of an EV car salary sacrifice scheme and further improvements to the Cycle to Work Scheme, consideration of annual leave improvements (subject to UNISON consultation and Personnel Committee approval), a Grow Our Own/apprenticeship video to support recruitment and a review of the recruitment templates.
- Work has been undertaken to benchmark current salary levels against the market to assess whether the Council’s pay rates remain attractive. During the Reward Review, the Council reconfirmed that it aspired to being a median pay employer and to also pay the Real Living Wage as its minimum pay point. The pay

benchmarking exercise therefore took this into account when determining suitable comparators.

- The following roles which are currently paid below the median pay rate:
  - Public Health Officer, by £1,091, which has been addressed by a market supplement;
  - Solicitor, by £3,594, which has been addressed by a market supplement;
  - Arborist Team Leader, by £4,690, which has recently been addressed by a market supplement.
- The results therefore suggest that the current pay and grading structure remains competitive in the market and therefore no changes are proposed.

Questions and comments from Members on the salary benchmarking data provided in the report included:

- A request on a review of solicitor numbers – in response, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that a review was underway. Locums were used occasionally depending on the work demands, but a balance had to be struck between Locum costs and that of taking on a full time post;
- Reassurance that the vast majority of posts that were benchmarked were favourable for the Council against other local authorities;
- Market supplements were reviewed annually.

The Committee noted the report.

## 8 **Forward Plan**

The Committee were presented with a forward plan of work.

Some issues raised by the Committee for possible inclusion were:

- Tackling the issue of delays in answering calls and emails. Advice was given to raise this issue through the Scrutiny Committee for further scope. The Leader also suggested that the issue could be referred to the Overview Committee for consideration;
- An update on the Worksmart Policy should come forward to the Committee in light of changing work practices over both public and private sectors. A review was currently underway through the Estates Team on how the Council offices were utilised.

The Committee noted the forward plan.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

E Rylance (Chair)  
J Loudoun (Vice-Chair)  
P Arnott  
J Brown  
N Hookway  
M Martin  
A Bailey  
B Bailey

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
C Brown



**Officers in attendance:**

Joanna Fellows, Corporate Lead - Human Resources  
Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)

**Councillor apologies:**

K Blakey  
M Chapman  
T Dumper  
D Haggerty  
P Hayward  
E Wragg

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 13 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.46 pm

#### **1 Minutes of the previous meetings held on 4 April 2024 and 18 April 2024**

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 4 April 2024 and 18 April 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **2 Declarations of interest**

Minute 8. Review of Emergency Responses in 2023/4 by East Devon District Council. Councillor Vicky Johns, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Councillor is a member of Ottery St Mary Town Council which distributes sand bags in the event of local flooding.

#### **3 Public speaking**

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

#### **4 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **5 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential / exempt items.

#### **6 Decisions made by Cabinet called in by Members for scrutiny in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules**

There were no decisions made by Cabinet called in by Members for scrutiny in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

#### **7 Improving green spaces for wildlife**

The StreetScene Operations Manager presented the report which set out the approach, objectives for and reasoning behind targeted wildlife improvement areas. The report covered the management of designated wildlife improvement areas, legislation, policies and strategies that apply to the development and designation of wildlife improvement areas, management systems, stakeholders consultations, communication with residents and similar work by other local authorities.

The StreetScene Operations Manager highlighted the following points from the report:

- Not all green spaces in East Devon are managed by the StreetScene team as some are managed by other bodies such as DCC, town and parish councils or EDDC's Countryside / Wild East Devon team.

- The way green spaces are managed is crucial particularly in light of the loss of wildlife and bio-diversity across Devon.
- Management of wildlife improvement areas is a key priority in the Council Plan for creating a Greener East Devon and aligns with the priorities set out in the Council's Climate Change Strategy, Action Plan and the legislated Nature Recovery Plan.
- As wildlife improvement areas are all public realm, StreetScene recognises the need for on-going communication with residents regarding how the areas are created and managed. The team will be working on a communications campaign to educate residents with the help of councillors and local town and parish councils.
- All wildlife improvement areas are now mapped and can be viewed on the Council's website.
- Recommendation 6 of the report [page 12] is key to supporting good communication with residents moving forwards.

The Chair thanked Officers for their comprehensive and informative report.

Responses to questions from Members and discussion included the following points:

- Areas such as tree copses are considered vital for the sustainability of small mammals. The recent planting of the Exmouth Tiny Forest provides an example of newly planted trees and will be monitored over the next decade to assess the benefits to bio-diversity.
- As StreetScene does not have an Ecologist within the team, it is important that the team works with local groups, such as the Exmouth Wildlife Group, which provide vital support to StreetScene's work.
- Concern was expressed regarding mowing in Brixington Park, Exmouth which could be detrimental to small mammals. The StreetScene Operations Manager and the Horticultural Technical Officer agreed to give this point further consideration.
- There was discussion regarding the up-keep of closed cemeteries such as Beer Cemetery and concern was expressed that the area around graves should be kept well maintained out of respect for the deceased. The Horticultural Technical Officer advised that improvements were being made to the management of the western section of Beer Cemetery which is not a wildlife improvement area.
- There was concern that there is not always a clear distinction between formal maintained areas and areas designated for wildlife improvement. It was noted that this should be monitored closely to ensure that maintained areas are clearly kept in good condition and that any wildlife areas are mown along the edges ie. by the side of pavements etc. so that the areas are clearly defined.
- With regard to the use of yellow rattle to suppress grasses and increase biodiversity, it was noted that it can take several years to see any improvement. Use of the cut and collect mowers to scarify the ground will support the growth of yellow rattle.
- The Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment outlined the process by which EDDC takes on the management of closed cemeteries and the challenge of striking the right balance between respectful maintenance and enabling re-wilding.
- With regard to a query about Winters Lane at Ottery St Mary, it was noted that this site will be re-assessed in the next few months and consultation will be undertaken with a view to under-canopy planting such as hazel and buckthorn.
- Concern was expressed regarding basic maintenance of public open spaces in Seaton and good, timely maintenance could assist with public perception and support for wildlife improvement areas. It was noted that glyphosate had been banned on EDDC land since 2022, and this, together with mild winters and wetter springs has led to greater challenges with the maintenance of public open spaces.
- The Council has a definite role to play in leading and inspiring residents to follow the aims of wildlife improvement, however, the messaging needs to correctly identify and explain what is re-wilding or improving areas for wildlife.
- Real progress will be made when residents follow EDDC's example of improving areas for wildlife.

- Greater involvement of community groups, town and parish councils and schools would assist with encouraging residents' involvement, communications and managing resident's expectations.
- It was noted that the environment, sensitivities and residents' expectations are different in every area and that this would be an ongoing evolving project. A holistic approach to ongoing communications is needed.

It was noted that the Horticultural Technical Officer would be happy to provide workshops for new Councillors to increase awareness as part of the induction process. It was agreed that Officers would consider the use of clear and easily recognisable signage to indicate wildlife improvement areas.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

The Scrutiny Committee recommends that Cabinet:

1. Reviews the reasons that the Managing Sites for Wildlife approach was adopted and how this came about.
2. Endorses the approaches and amended process of wildlife improvement practices, and notes the wider Nature Recovery Work being led by Countryside.
3. Approves wider communication to Councillors regarding this approach, with a feature in the Councillor update and reconsiders communication with residents, towns and parishes to increase positive interaction.
4. Provides any further recommendations for supporting the important strategy of transitioning traditionally maintained green spaces to wildlife improvement areas within climatic (eg. mild winters and wet springs) and budgeting constraints.
5. Agrees that Councillors increase their awareness of the reasoning and history of this approach and how it relates to central and local government legislative and policy frameworks.
6. Agrees that Councillors help disseminate this message to residents / voters in order to bridge the gap between Council strategy and residents' expectations of wildlife improvement areas and the continual transition of EDDC-owned green spaces from traditionally mown grass areas to wildlife havens. This will help StreetScene continue to align its targeted work with the legislative framework and Council-wide agendas, policies, strategies and action plans.
7. Endorses that the Council continues to work with voluntary and community groups across the District.
8. Supports that the Wildlife Improvement Strategy is brought back to the Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

The Chair thanked Officers for attending the meeting.

## **8 Review of Emergency Responses in 2023/4 by East Devon District Council**

The Assistant Director Environmental Health presented the report which outlined the Emergency Planning and Response work undertaken in the year 2023 / 24 with particular reference to the floods in May and September 2023 and subsequent work based on lessons learned. The Assistant Director Environmental Health highlighted the following points in the report:

- The Council is defined in law as a 'Category 1' responder to emergencies which places certain responsibilities on the Council.
- The Council is an active partner in the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Resilience Forum and a member of the Devon Emergency Planning Partnership which provides support with specialist administrative tasks.

- An Emergency Planning Officer is employed by the Council, based in the Environmental Health Service.
- Weather related risks and incidents dominated the period covered by the report and it was noted that weather warnings from the Met Office are improving, supported by flood alerts from the Environment Agency, both of which assist with emergency planning.
- Weather warnings and flood alerts are widely disseminated to assist Council staff and town and parish councils to increase local resilience.
- Members' attention was drawn to the highly localised flash floods in the Otter Valley in May 2023 and storm damage to the seawall at Exmouth caused by Storm Ciaran in November 2023.
- The flash floods in the Otter Valley had highlighted that EDDC was responsible for the recovery phase due to the localised nature of the incident. The response had emphasised the need for multi-agency partnership working. The work done at the time had resulted in better engagement with the local community and increased awareness of the need for local resilience.
- It was noted that recent changes in the Senior Leadership Team had resulted in agreeing a new weekly rota for the role of Emergency Duty Officer which will enable the Council to respond to emergencies at short notice.
- Attention was drawn to the National Risk Register and the key risk of a national power outage which highlighted the need for resilience among local communities.

Responses to questions and discussion included the following points:

- The Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment thanked Officers and noted how well EDDC had responded to the localised flooding incident in May 2023 and emphasised the need for local communities to have plans in place to support themselves during such an event.
- Local community groups are key to resilience during emergencies and communities should be encouraged to start work on emergency planning if they had not already done so.
- It was noted that Devon Communities Together provided information and support for emergency planning.
- Local knowledge suggested that the localised flooding in May 2023 was exacerbated by water running off fields and lack of maintenance of drains and gullies which was previously undertaken by DCC.
- Better use of land management was discussed following the May 2023 flooding and should form part of the 'business as usual' phase following recovery from such an emergency.
- Good local knowledge would be crucial in managing an emergency such as a national power outage as it would be very difficult to hold detailed local information on residents' specific needs at District Council level.
- DCC operates an annual or tri-annual cycle of gully cleaning with an interactive map available on the DCC website showing the last time a gully was cleaned. Issues can be reported through the DCC website.

The Committee particularly noted the comments made with regard to the need for local community resilience groups and the concerns expressed regarding the importance of gully clearance. The Committee asked the Assistant Director Environmental Health to emphasise the need for gully clearance during communications with DCC.

It was agreed to ask the Emergency Planning Officer to come back to the Committee to respond to the concerns and issues raised.

It was agreed to note the Emergency Planning work undertaken in the year 2023 / 24.

## **RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET**

That the Council should encourage every community in East Devon to have a local emergency plan in place.

## 9 **Work programme**

It was noted that the Scrutiny Action Plan, which is in course of preparation, will inform much of the Committee's work programme for the rest of the civic year.

It was also noted, and agreed, that the Chair of the Overview Committee had requested early sight of the Service Plans, well in advance of the joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in January.

The work programme was agreed.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

M Chapman  
M Goodman (Chair)  
A Hall  
M Hall  
M Hartnell  
J Heath  
V Johns  
D Mackinder (Vice-Chair)

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

A Bailey  
B Bailey  
R Collins  
G Jung  
M Rixson

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Matthew Blythe, Assistant Director Environmental Health  
Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive  
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Andrew Wood, Director of Place (interim)  
Paul Fealey, Horticultural Technical Officer  
Julia Woodbridge, StreetScene Operations Manager

#### **Councillor apologies:**

I Barlow  
J Brown  
B Collins  
O Davey  
Y Levine  
A Toye  
J Whibley

Chairman .....

Date: .....

# **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the meeting of Asset Management Forum held at online via zoom app on 17 June 2024**

### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 9.35 am and ended at 11.35 am

### **1 Notes from the previous meeting held on 4 March 2024**

The notes from the previous meeting were agreed.

### **2 Declarations of interest**

Cllr Hookway; Affects NRI Member of Exmouth Town Council: Minute 3 Place and Prosperity Team update

Cllr Barlow; Affects NRI Member of Sidmouth Town Council: Minute 3 Place and Prosperity Team update

Cllr Davey; Affects NRI Member of Exmouth Town Council: Minute 3 Place and Prosperity Team update

Cllr Heath; Affects NRI Member of Beer Parish Council: Minute 2 Community Asset transfer proposal

Cllr Hayward; Affects NRI Employee of Axminster Town Council: Minute 3 Place and Prosperity Team update and Minute 5 Property and FM Team update

### **3 Public speaking**

None.

### **4 Matters of urgency**

None.

### **5 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

None.

### **6 Community Asset Transfer Proposal - Land at Jubilee Gardens, Jubilee hardstanding (including playpark) and Beach Court Car Park, Beer**

An expression of interest had been submitted by Beer Parish Council to acquire land at Jubilee Gardens, Jubilee hardstanding and Beach Court car park.

Consultation was now underway with senior management, the local Ward member, the Asset Management Forum, and others as appropriate.

The Forum were presented with the expression of interest for their comments to go forward to the consultation.

The Assistant Director for Streetscene provided the Forum with the history of maintenance of the Gardens. Negotiations had been ongoing for some time over the



wider Beer Parish asset transfer pilot. The maintenance level had been reduced since 2009 due to budget restraints, but had been carried out as scheduled. The proposal by the Parish Council aspired for an enhanced level of maintenance. Concerns still to resolve included:

- Plan in place for biodiversity and bat roosts;
- Health and safety, and risk management, for any works taking place on the bank and cliff edge
- Consider the cost of maintaining the retaining wall, which has a much higher cost;
- £1500 annual “saving” for Streetscene maintenance contract was not a tangible saving, in that those staff were still employed and would have to be deployed elsewhere. Whilst there was demand in other parts of the district, the saving to the District Council was minimal;
- An SLA would need to be in place between the Events Team of EDDC and Beer Parish Council in order to manage the bookings, administration and the health and safety requirements for events at the Jubilee.

Councillor John Health gave a provisional view from the Parish Council, with comments on their outcomes as follows:

- Beach Court car park would transfer to BPC continue to be managed by EDDC, with BCP paying costs, responsible for boundary repairs and lines – estimated £1200 income to BCP
- Beach day to day management – BCP not accept to accept liability, as need clarification on land down to the beach
- If gardens transfer, assets must be in serviceable condition, and any H&S issues are dealt with prior to transfer or the clear cost identified to the BCP which has not been quantified yet
- Cliff excluded from transfer
- Opening up of gardens – renew and maintenance of fence and railings falls to BCP if
- EDDC owns the beach, being a considerable income generator for the authority from the concessions there;
- Does not feel that the cliff area would deteriorate further at this stage.

The Assistant Director – Place, Asset and Commercialisation outlined to the Forum:

- The financial and operational risks for the area in question, because of the coastal location. It was in the gift of EDDC to close sections of the area off if there was a risk to the public, such as a risk of cliff fall. In such an instance, the two authorities would work together to undertake this;
- Any condition of transfer would be based on what was a reasonable state of the asset to both parties.

Discussion on the expression of interest included:

- Consider if a lease option would work for both parties to establish a phased transfer and that the right decision had been made before the transfer of land and responsibilities was legally binding; whilst this goes against the policy of asset transfer, the Ward Member agreed that the Parish may consider such an option if put forward;
- Any work on the site in the event of an asset transfer, if by either volunteers or employed staff, would still be subject to both risk assessment and health and safety measures to protect both those undertaking work and the public;
- Explore other Streetscene demands to redeploy staff if the maintenance of the area does transfer to the Parish Council;
- Phasing the transfer of the areas allows time to gradually redeploy to other needed areas;
- Care with any transfer that the District Council are not left with considerable liabilities in future years for cliff area;

The Forum were in agreement that there was sufficient discussion and information available for the process to proceed, in particular to consider a full business case for the proposal.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That AMF notes the report and offers its thoughts on the application at the meeting, as part of the consultation process.
2. That AMF notes that following completion of this consultation, that in accordance with the Procedure, Officers will make a recommendation to the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Assets on whether the applicant should be invited to submit a business case for one or more sites.
3. That AMF notes that should the recommendation be that this application does not progress to the Business Case stage, officers will contact the Parish Council to discuss their proposals and identify whether there is scope for a collaborative approach to achieve some of their objectives set out in the EOI.

**7 Place and Prosperity Team update**

The Assistant Director – Place, Asset and Commercialisation presented the team update, which covered updates on:

- Depots review
- Public toilets, Esplanade and Drill Hall, Sidmouth
- UKSPF Feasibility Study
- Seaton and Axminster Employment sites
- Seaton Moridunum

The Interim Director for Place spoke to the Forum about the rationale behind the rent value for small business units, making reference to the challenge of market failure. On paper, as a profit making exercise, the small business units would fail because of the cost of maintaining the units against the realistic rent level that a small business could afford. However the Council was taking a more holistic approach in supporting the social and economic needs of the area; therefore some assets would not bring profit but be of huge benefit in supplying local jobs.

Questions and comments from Members included:

- Lease land to local business to develop their own units to progress the delivery of units at a faster pace;
- Feasibility Study useful for making difficult decisions based on evidence;
- It was confirmed that ongoing maintenance for the two public toilets in Sidmouth, subject to planning permission going through, would be provided by Rockfish;
- Emphasising the importance of the Camperdown Depot site due to its location to serve the marine economy.

The Forum noted the report.

**8 Estates Team update**

The Estates team update covered:

- Turnover and occupancy;
- Review of concession provision at Steamer Steps, Budleigh Salterton following storm damage to the existing hut. The team are working with the current tenant to provide a solution that can tolerate seasonal storms;
- Terms now agreed for site at Durham Way, Honiton;
- 2 units at Riverside Workshops, Seaton being prepared for bringing to the market.

Questions and comments from Members included:

- Progress on the review on office accommodation at Blackdown House and Exmouth Town Hall, in line with the Business Centre. In response, the Forum were advised that the accommodation strategy was due before the Executive Leadership Team in the following month. The use of the Business Centre had only been a temporary measure for meeting space, and would revert back to its intended use as office space for small businesses; how the office facilities were used at BDH and ETC were currently being reviewed;
- In response to a question about the concession at Budleigh Salterton referenced in the report, the Forum were informed that the lease extended far wider than the hut that had been storm damaged. It was re-iterated that the team were working with the existing tenant to provide a solution. Demand was high for the concession in that location.

The Forum noted the report.

## 9 **Property and FM Team update**

The Forum were presented with an update report from the Property and FM Team, covering work completed and planned for the period November 2023 to May 2024.

Questions and comments from Members included:

- Increases in costs for toilets included the replacement of outdated wash and dry units, replacing them with separate units in order to keep the toilets open. Whilst refurbishment for many toilets was scheduled, repairs and replacements still had to be made to keep the facilities open;
- In response to the grant application for Sidmouth Pool works, it was confirmed that if the application was successful, the budget allocated for the same work would not be used;
- Discussions were continuing on a solution to resolve the appetite for two toilet cubicles in the Ham West area with Sidmouth Town Council;
- Explanation of gutter work at the Ocean, Exmouth.

The Chair thanked the team for their continued work. The Forum noted the report.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

T Olive  
P Hayward (Chair)  
S Hawkins

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
R Collins  
O Davey  
J Heath  
R Jefferies  
N Hookway

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Commercialisation  
Andrew Hancock, Assistant Director StreetScene  
Rob Harrison, Senior Estates Surveyor

Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Gerry Mills, Project Manager Place & Prosperity (Exmouth)  
Jorge Pineda-Langford, Principal Building Surveyor, Property & FM  
Andrew Wood, Director of Place (interim)

**Councillor apologies:**

P Arnott  
G Jung

Chair

.....

Date:

.....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Planning Committee held at Otter & Clyst Rooms, Blackdown House, Honiton on 18 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.08 am and ended at 4.26 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 12.15 pm and reconvened at 12.30 pm and adjourned for lunch at 1.25 pm and reconvened at 2.08 pm.

#### **170 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Plannings Committee meetings held on 21 May and 24 May 2024 were confirmed as true records.

#### **171 Declarations of interest**

Minute 175. 24/0263/MFUL (Major) SIDMOUTH TOWN.  
Councillor Maddy Chapman, Affects and prejudicial Non-registerable Interest, Godmother to a public speaker objecting to this application.

Minute 175. 24/0263/MFUL (Major) SIDMOUTH TOWN.  
Councillor Olly Davey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Known to one of the public speakers objecting to this application.

Minute 175. 24/0263/MFUL (Major) SIDMOUTH TOWN  
In accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Councillors and Officers dealing with planning matters as set out in the constitution the Chair, on behalf of Committee Members, advised lobbying in respect of this application.

Minute 176. 23/1657/FUL (Minor) SIDMOUTH TOWN.  
Wendy Ormsby, Directly relates Non-registerable Interest, The applicant is a close associate of a family member.

Minute 179. 22/2723/FUL (Minor) FENITON.  
Councillor Ian Barlow, Directly relates Non-registerable Interest, Friend of the manager at Combe Garden Centre.

Minute 179. 22/2723/FUL (Minor) FENITON  
In accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Councillors and Officers dealing with planning matters as set out in the constitution the Chair, on behalf of Committee Members, advised lobbying in respect of this application.

#### **172 Matters of urgency**

There were none.

#### **173 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were none.

#### **174 Planning appeal statistics**

The Committee noted the Development Manager's report which included updates on three appeals.

The first update related to planning application 22/0058/FUL for the demolition of existing buildings and construction of residential dwelling and detached garage at Pitman's Farm, Dalwood. The Inspector had upheld the Committee's decision to refuse on accessibility reasons.

The second related to planning application 23/0615/VAR for the variation of a condition to allow a building within the caravan site to be used as an open market dwelling. The Inspector concluded that as there was no evidence to show that the dwelling was needed to ensure the viability of the caravan park and that to change to an open market dwelling would have no material impact on journeys to and from the dwelling, the appeal was allowed in accordance with the officer's original recommendation.

The third related to planning application 23/0401/OUT for a single dwelling at Exton Lodge, Mill Lane, Exton which was dismissed as the Inspector agreed with the Committee reasons for refusal.

175 **24/0263/MFUL (Major) SIDMOUTH TOWN**

Councillor Maddy Chapman left the room during the debate and did not take part in the discussions or vote on this application. Councillor Chapman left the meeting after this application and did not participate any further.

**Applicant:**

Mr Paull.

**Location:**

Former Council Offices, Knowle, Sidmouth, EX10 8HL.

**Proposal:**

Redevelopment of site to provide:

- (a) Care home building (Class C2) with associated parking, landscaping, staff and resident facilities and associated works;
- (b) Extra care apartment building (53 units) with associated communal lounge, wellbeing suite, restaurant and care provision (Class C2(c));
- (c) Retirement living apartment buildings (33 units) with associated communal lounge (sheltered housing) and;
- (d) Erection of four houses and three townhouses (Class C3) along with accesses, internal car parking, roads, paths, retaining walls, refuse and landscaping associated with development; retention/refurbishment of building B, erection of habitat building and sub-stations.

(Demolition of buildings other than building B).

(Variation to previous application (23/0571/MFUL) showing removal of balconies and elevational block and alterations to the southern end/elevations of the Retirement Living and Extra Care buildings).

**RESOLVED:**

Refused contrary to officer recommendation for the following reasons:

1. The scale, massing and design of the development, in particular the two blocks closest to the southern site boundary, fails to reflect local distinctiveness and is not compatible with the character of the area and does not relate well to its context and its surroundings and so will adversely affect the townscape and local landscape of Sidmouth. As such the development is contrary to Strategies 6 and 26 and Policy D1 of the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, Policy 7 of the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2032 and the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023 in particular paragraphs 131, 135 and 139.
2. Having regards to large windows in the west elevation of the southwestern block of accommodation and the buildings scale and orientation, the development will result in an unacceptable level of overlooking and overbearing impact on neighbouring properties. As such the development is contrary to Policy D1 of the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, Policy 6 of the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2032 and the National Planning Policy Framework in particular paragraph 135.

Councillor Simon Smith left the meeting.

176 **23/1657/FUL (Minor) SIDMOUTH TOWN**

The Development Manager left the room for this application.

**Applicant:**

Mr Mitch Tonks.

**Location:**

Sidmouth Drill Hall, The Esplanade, Sidmouth, EX10 8BE.

**Proposal:**

Conversion of hall to restaurant and bar (Use Class E and sui generis, previously A3/A4), demolition of rear elevation and public toilet block and replacement with restaurant/bar extension and a new public toilet block, external terrace to form seating area and addition of new flue.

**RESOLVED:**

Approved with conditions as per officer recommendation.

177 **24/0823/FUL (Minor) SIDMOUTH TOWN**

**Applicant:**

Naomi Cook.

**Location:**

Sidmouth Lifeboat, The Lifeboat Station, The Esplanade, Sidmouth, EX10 8BE.

**Proposal:**

Extension and alterations to existing lifeboat station.

**RESOLVED:**

Approved with conditions as per officer recommendation.

178 **24/0673/OUT (Minor) DUNKESWELL & OTTERHEAD**

Councillor Alasdair Bruce joined the meeting.

**Applicant:**

Mr & Mrs Padget.

**Location:**

Cory Hill, Combe Raleigh, EX14 4TQ.

**Proposal:**

Outline permission sought (with all matters reserved other than access) for construction of a single storey dwelling.

**RESOLVED:**

Refused as per officer recommendation.

179 **22/2723/FUL (Minor) FENITON**

Councillor Ian Barlow left the room for this application and did not take part in discussions or vote on this application.

**Applicant:**

Mr Justin Lascelles.

**Location:**

Combe Garden Centre, Hayne Lane, Gittisham, EX14 3PD.

**Proposal:**

New farm shop and associated landscaping works adjacent to the site of the existing Combe Garden Centre.

**RESOLVED:**

Approved with conditions as per officer recommendation.

Councillor Anne Hall left the meeting.

180 **23/2382/MFUL (Major) WEST HILL & AYLESBEARE**

**Applicant:**

Mr Martin Small.

**Location:**

Great Houndbeare Farm, Caravan 1 Sunnyfield, Aylesbeare, EX5 2DB.

**Proposal:**

Proposal for one additional mobile home and stable with concrete floor for chickens and ducks.

**RESOLVED:**

Approved with conditions as per officer recommendation.



**Councillors present:**

B Bailey  
I Barlow  
C Brown  
J Brown  
A Bruce  
M Chapman  
O Davey (Chair)  
D Haggerty  
A Hall  
M Hall (Vice-Chair)  
M Howe  
S Smith

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

R Collins  
M Rixson

**Officers in attendance:**

Wendy Ormsby, Development Manager  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer  
Nigel Barrett, Senior Planning Officer  
Jill Himsworth, Planning Officer  
Damian Hunter, Planning Solicitor  
Jamie Quinton, Senior Planning Officer  
Gareth Stephenson, Principal Planning Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

S Chamberlain  
P Faithfull  
S Gazzard  
E Wragg

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Poverty Working Panel held at Online via the Zoom app on 24 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.00 am

#### **1 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 March 2024**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 March 2024 were noted as a true and accurate record.

#### **2 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

#### **3 Public speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

#### **4 Updated terms of reference for Poverty Working Panel**

The Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services, Fraud & Compliance introduced this report which set out proposed updated Terms of Reference, with a view to providing greater clarity and relevance on the role of the Poverty Working Panel moving forward.

**RECOMMENDED to Cabinet** to approve the updated Terms of Reference for the Poverty Working Panel.

#### **5 Template Poverty Working Panel Work Programme 2024-2025**

Members received the template work programme for the Poverty Working Panel for 2024-2025 and were encouraged to input into the programme, to shape the meetings of the Panel going forward.

#### **6 Timelines for updating the Poverty Strategy**

The Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services, Fraud & Compliance presented this briefing paper which detailed proposed timelines for updating the Poverty Strategy, noting that the current strategy ends on 1 July 2024.

It was intended to consult with the Poverty Working Panel and with the voluntary sector, to receive contributions to help shape the emerging new strategy.

Members discussed priorities for the strategy, and noted the report.

## 7 **Voluntary Sector Anti-Poverty Event**

The Chair outlined proposals to hold a Voluntary Sector Anti-Poverty Event in the autumn, to coincide with the first anniversary of the VCSE. This event would be an opportunity for networking between ourselves and community groups, listening and learning from our partners to help shape and inform our work, raising awareness of the work we are doing to help reduce poverty across the district including our updated Poverty Strategy. The day would include having key note speakers.

Members suggested to contact the Assistant Director on any feedback they had on what should be included as part of the event.

Members expressed unanimous support for the proposed event.

## 8 **Household Support Fund update**

The Benefits & Financial Resilience Manager presented this report which provided an update on deployment of Household Support Fund (HSF) 4, and detailed the HSF5 policy agreed by Cabinet on 5 June 2024. The report also set out future considerations, given that the future of the HSF beyond the end of September 2024 is unknown, and may not continue.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The financial resilience team continue to work with residents to support them to reduce their outgoings and increase incomes, particularly where there has been a repeat need for emergency help.
- The team also work collaboratively with a range of agencies and different voluntary groups to access the right support for residents.
- Voluntary groups can be invited to register their organisation with the Devon Connect online database, a community hub which aims to connect people to their community and promote social action.

Members noted the report.

## 9 **East Devon District Councils Public Health Strategy 2024-2027**

The Public Health Project Officer introduced this item, outlining how the new Public Health Strategy and some of its uppermost priorities link to the work of the Poverty Panel. These priorities include:

- Cost of living crisis
- Mental health
- Unpaid carers
- Loneliness and social isolation (also known as social health)
- Dementia
- Homelessness, housing and indoor environment factors.

Members were encouraged to use the Public Health Strategy as a tool to help to influence the decisions they take in other committee meetings, which will in turn align with the Council's anti-poverty strategies.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

P Arnott  
B Collins  
D Ledger (Chair)  
M Martin  
M Rixson  
S Smith

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
K Bloxham  
R Collins  
C Fitzgerald  
S Westerman

**Officers in attendance:**

Sharon Church, Benefits Manager  
Libby Jarrett, Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Access, Fraud & Compliance  
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer  
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer  
Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

M Goodman  
D Haggerty  
J Heath

Chair: .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum (formerly LED Monitoring Forum) held at online via Zoom app on 25 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.02 pm and ended at 6.18 pm

#### **1 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 April 2024**

After the roll call was completed, it was apparent that the meeting was inquorate. It was agreed that as there were no decisions to be made, it would be acceptable for the meeting to continue on an informal basis.

The Chair welcomed the new LED CEO, Olly Swayne, to the Forum.

Approval of the previous meeting's minutes was deferred to the next meeting.

#### **2 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

#### **3 Public Speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

#### **4 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **5 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential/exempt items.

#### **6 LED Facilities and Activities report May/June 2024**

The LED Director of Delivery presented this report which provided an update on the activities of LED including operational delivery, customer engagement, facilities projects, health and safety, and community projects.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- With regard to the number of visits to swimming pools, it is possible to report on the number of repeat visits by individual members; however, LED do not hold the data to report on repeat visits by casual users.
- In response to a member's question, it was clarified that the NPS which LED has achieved for the EDDC leisure facilities is 50, as detailed in the KPI Dashboard (minute 7 refers). The overall NPS of 58 which is set out in the Facilities and Activities report relates to the wider LED Leisure group.

The Chair thanked the LED Director of Delivery for the report and observed that it had been a positive quarter for LED.

## 7 **LED KPI Dashboard May 2024**

The Forum received and noted key details of the performance of LED Community Leisure for May 2024.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Whilst NPS surveys were sent out, the Dashboard indicates that no responses were received for three leisure centres.
- The Chair will liaise with the LED CEO and Director of Delivery to consider how the KPIs can be reported going forward in a way which benchmarks performance against the same period in previous years, to make the data which this Forum receives more meaningful.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

S Hawkins (Chair)

N Hookway (Vice-Chair)

A Toye

J Whibley (joined the meeting at 6.13pm)

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow

K Bloxham

P Fernley

R Jefferies

G Jung

T Olive

M Rixson

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Commercialisation

Simon Davey, Director of Finance

Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive

Charles Plowden, Assistant Director Countryside and Leisure

Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer

Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer

#### **Councillor apologies:**

P Arnott

M Hall

J Loudoun

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Licensing and Enforcement Sub Committee held at Yarty Room, Blackdown House, Honiton on 26 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 9.30 am and ended at 10.45 am

#### **1 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 May 2024**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 May 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **2 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **4 Confidential/exempt items**

There was one item which officers recommended should be dealt with in this way at minute number 8.

#### **5 Determination of an application to license a private hire vehicle which does not comply with the Council's vehicle age policy**

The purpose of the item was to determine an application for the grant of a private hire vehicle licence for a vehicle which does not meet the vehicle age criteria set out in the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

The Chair introduced the members of the Sub Committee and the officers in attendance.

The applicant, Mr Maxwell-Batten, was present.

The Legal Advisor, Giles Salter, outlined the procedure to be followed.

The Licensing Officer, Emily Westlake, introduced the report which set out full details of the vehicle and the documentation provided by the applicant.

There were no questions for the Licensing Officer from the Sub Committee or from the applicant.

The applicant addressed the Sub Committee and emphasised the reliability and comfort of this type of vehicle. The vehicle was particularly well suited to the applicant's clients who were predominantly older and required comfort and ease of access. The applicant was of the view that the vehicle was in extremely good condition and the engine had hardly been used.

In response to a question from the Sub Committee, the applicant confirmed that the vehicle history and documentation had been fully checked and that the vehicle had been sourced through a motoring organisation approved garage.

Members of the Sub Committee viewed the vehicle.

Following the vehicle inspection, the Sub Committee had no further questions and the applicant had nothing further to add to the application.

The Chair thanked the applicant for attending and advised that the Sub Committee would retire to make its decision which would be notified in writing within five working days.

The applicant left the meeting.

6 **Consideration of an application under the Police, Factories & etc. (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916 for a Street Collection Permit to permit a collection outside the terms of the council's policy**

The purpose of the item was to determine an application under the Police, Factories etc. (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916 for a Street Collection Permit to permit a collection outside the terms of the Council's policy.

The Chair introduced the members of the Sub Committee and the officers in attendance.

The applicant, Mr Rafferty for the Sidmouth Coastal Community Hub CIC, was present.

The Legal Advisor, Giles Salter, outlined the procedure to be followed.

The Licensing Manager, Phillippa Norsworthy, presented the report which outlined the application for multiple street collections across a number of dates between 6<sup>th</sup> July and 28<sup>th</sup> September 2024 to be held at Millennium Walk, Sidmouth.

In response to a question from the Legal Advisor, the Licensing Manager confirmed that the current Street Collections Policy permitted one collection per organisation per year in each of the towns in the East Devon District. This allowed time to be shared between organisations and prevented saturation. The policy also allowed for exceptional circumstances to be considered by the Licensing & Enforcement Committee or Sub Committee.

In response to a question from the Sub Committee, the Licensing Manager advised that most applications for Sidmouth are for street collections in the town centre and not at Millenium Walk, which is some distance away.

The applicant addressed the Sub Committee and advised that the dates set out in the application were primarily for events to raise awareness and share information about the project to provide a disability ramp at Chit Rocks, Sidmouth. The organisers, Sidmouth Coastal Community Hub, were of the view that the events would also be a good opportunity for the public to donate to the project which was included in the Sidmouth Beach Management Plan, and which would benefit both residents and visitors to Sidmouth.



The applicant also advised that he would be happy to hold the events between 10am and 6pm in line with the hours specified in the Street Collections Policy, rather than the hours set out in the application.

There were no questions from the Sub Committee for the applicant.

The Chair thanked the applicant for attending and advised that the Sub Committee would retire to make its decision which would be notified within five working days.

The applicant left the meeting.

## 7 **Exclusion of press and public**

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set out in the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing these items in private session (Part B).

## 8 **Hackney carriage driver suitability**

The purpose of the item was to determine whether the person named in the officer's report is a fit and proper person to be granted a Hackney carriage driver licence.

The Chair introduced the members of the Sub Committee and the officers in attendance.

The applicant was in attendance.

The Legal Advisor, Giles Salter, outlined the procedure to be followed.

The Licensing Officer, Lee Staples, presented the report and outlined the background to the application for a Hackney carriage driver licence.

Members of the Sub Committee had no questions for the Licensing Officer.

The applicant had no questions for the Licensing Officer and addressed the Sub Committee regarding their application.

The Chair thanked the applicant for attending and advised that the Sub Committee would retire to make its decision which would be notified in writing within five working days.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

K Bloxham (Chair)

T Dumper (Vice-Chair)

Y Levine

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

**Officers in attendance:**

Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer

Phillippa Norsworthy, Licensing Manager

Giles Salter, Solicitor

Lee Staples, Licensing Officer

Emily Westlake, Licensing Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

J Whibley

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Cranbrook Placemaking Group held at Conference Room, Younghayes Centre, Cranbrook on 1 July 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 9.30 am and ended at 10.20 am

#### **1 Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interests.

#### **2 Public Speaking**

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

#### **3 Matters of Urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **4 Confidential/exempt Items**

There was one confidential/exempt item discussed under item 9.

#### **5 Town Centre Masterplan**

Before the start of the meeting Councillor Todd Olive was elected Chair for the Group and in the absence of the Chair panel members agreed that an EDDC Cranbrook Ward Member would chair the meeting.

Councillor Todd Olive, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

Thea Billeter, the Cranbrook New Community Manager provided an update on the progress on the town centre masterplan following the initial consultation undertaken in 2023. The following fundamental changes to the service requirements were noted which had been made through the stakeholder's meetings:

- Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue – will not know if a fire station is required until a risk analysis has been completed. It was noted that Section 106 monies would be payable in relation to this building.
- Devon and Cornwall Police – would require an area of approximately 150 – 250 sq.m. but this needs to be formally confirmed by the Police Authority.
- Devon County Council – may no longer wish to pursue a stand-alone building.

It was advised there was a delay in the current timeline for the production of the masterplan. This was due to the review on the service requirements taking much longer than expected and the work needed to develop the Cranbox proposals. It was now anticipated that the masterplan document would go to the Strategic Planning Committee on 3 October 2024.

During discussions the following questions were asked:

- In response to a question raised by Councillor Kim Bloxham about whether the Police Authority had been provided with a timescale for a formal response about its requirement for a police station, it was noted that although it was important to keep the pressure on Devon and Cornwall Police for a formal response, the Force does not want an individual building but is happy to co-locate with someone else. Councillor Kevin Blakey agreed with maintaining the pressure and reported that the last information received from the Police Authority was the request for six desk spaces, six permanent car park spaces and the use of showers which he advised could also be shared with the Fire and Rescue Service.
- Clarification was sought from Councillor Henry Gent about whether Devon County Council and Cranbrook Town Council were planning to share a building. It was noted that discussions were taking place about this, but it was early days.
- In response to a concern raised about the officer resourcing issue to allow the continuation of both the masterplan and Cranbox it was advised that although additional officer support could be explored the main driver for the delay in the timeline was the time taken to get clarity from other organisations about their service requirements.
- Clarification was sought by Janine Gardner, Clerk to Cranbrook Town Council about whether there was outline planning consent for the town centre. It was noted that all the outline planning applications had lapsed.

The Chair acknowledged Members concerns about the delay from the Police Authority and the Fire and Rescue Service and asked Councillor Henry Gent about whether Devon County Council could put pressure on these authorities to help speed up the formal responses. Councillor Gent was happy to assist and asked for some suitable wording. Andy Wood, Director of Place (interim) advised he was happy to provide the wording.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the new timetable for the production of the town centre plan be endorsed that will result in a final document being presented to Strategic Planning Committee on 1 October 2024.

## **6 Implementation Plan**

Members received an updated report on specific projects and responsibilities for the delivery of key assets and services. It was noted the following projects had been completed and removed from the RAG:

- Approval of planning consent for Treasbeare and Cobdens;
- Several town council projects including the pump track.

Other projects updates included:

- Cranbox;
- DCC Community Building;
- Extra Care Housing – TC1 ongoing;
- Town Centre works including an update on the supermarket.

During discussions the following points were noted:

- It was suggested to formally write to the Chairman and Chief Executive of Morrisons in order to encourage them to bring forward the fit and opening of the supermarket. This letter was needed in advance of a Morrisons Board meeting in August which would consider how to move forward.

- It would be useful to obtain a programme of events which would be beneficial for future non-domestic rates payments currently not being paid and for job recruitments for local people.
- An update was sought on the land for a new primary sub-station which was yet to be secured. It was noted that there was an option to secure the transfer of up to 2 ha. of land for energy uses at Treasbeare and that the National Grid Electricity Distribution were also working on a number of options on how they could deliver the energy to this area.
- It was suggested there was a need to make a specific agenda item for the National Grid and to invite a representative from the National Grid to attend a future meeting to give an update.
- An update was sought on the public consultation for the London Road upgrade and it was queried how much the total cost would likely to be. Nicola Wilson, Devon County Council's Principal Planning Officer could not provide an update and advised she would follow this up. The Cranbrook New Community Manager advised that although the upgrade had not been costed the works to date had been designed with costs in mind to help lower vehicle speeds and to leave in place critical items of infrastructure.
- It was queried why EDDC were asking for quotes from external law firms to undertake the Community Governance Review as this would be costly. In response it was advised that this was EDDC's preferred route and was the most expeditious way of taking forward the Review.
- It was pointed out on the list of projects that the rollout of district heating networks final investment decision would be made in May 2024. In response it was advised this was incorrect and due to ongoing negotiations it would need to go back to Cabinet in October 2024 to seek a final investment decision.
- It was pointed out that green hydrogen plants generate a lot of heat which could potentially be harnessed in district heating networks.

## 7 **Forward Plan**

The Director of Place (interim) presented the current forward plan and advised of the following amendments:

- To add the National Grid and to invite a representative to the next meeting.
- To change the decarbonisation of district heating to Quarter 4: October to December 2024.

Following discussion it was agreed to also include:

- A progress report on the Community Governance Review.
- An item on leisure provision.
- To formally agree the Terms of Reference.
- To consider inviting the East Devon New Community Partners to the next meeting.

## 8 **Cranbox**

The meeting moved into a private session.

The report before the panel gave an update on Cranbox which was a project developed by EDDC and Cranbrook Town Council to deliver new commercial floorspace within Cranbrook Town Centre.

Clarity was required about the progression of the proposed devolution deal with Devon and Torbay and associated funding streams. Irrespective of this the intent was to continue to develop the project.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

K Blakey (EDDC)  
K Bloxham (EDDC)  
T Olive (EDDC)  
L Bayliss (Cranbrook Town Council)  
H Gent (DCC)

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow (EDDC)

**Officers in attendance:**

Andrew Wood, Director of Place (interim) (EDDC)  
Thea Billeter, Cranbrook New Community Manager (EDDC)  
Naomi Harnett, Delivery Manager (EDDC)  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer (EDDC)  
Alexandra Robinson, (CTC)  
Janine Gardner, (CTC)  
Nicola Wilson, Principal Planning Officer (DCC)

**Apologies:**

S Hawkins (EDDC)  
S Randall Johnson (DCC)  
S Ratnage (DCC)  
E Freeman (EDDC)

Chair .....

Date: .....

Report to: Council

Date of Meeting 17 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



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## Update on the Peer Challenge recommendations and delivery plan

### Report summary:

This report sets out the Cabinet recommendation to Council arising from their consideration of a report Update on Peer Challenge recommendations and delivery plans presented to Cabinet on 10 July 2024.

Note: The references in this report to Paper A relate to the relevant report considered by the Cabinet with recommendations for Full Council to consider and are appended to this report for reference.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

1. That Council receive the Peer Challenge recommendations and endorse the delivery plan and the actions set out in it.
2. That a supplementary estimate of up to £245,000 to purchase and implement a new performance, risk and complaints monitoring software system/s.

### Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the recommendations from the Peer Challenge are actioned and delivered appropriately.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk) )

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Report to: **Cabinet**



Date of Meeting 10 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Update on the Peer Challenge recommendations and delivery plan

### Report summary:

This report provides Cabinet with an overview of the Peer Challenge recommendations and the delivery plan to implement the recommendations.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

- (1) That Cabinet receive the Peer Challenge recommendations and endorse the delivery plan and the actions set out in it.
- (2) That Cabinet give delegated authority to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Director of Governance and Licensing and the Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination to purchase and implement a new performance, risk and complaints monitoring software system/s. Using monies from the Transformation Fund up to the amount of £250k.

### Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the recommendations from the Peer Challenge are actioned and delivered appropriately.

Officer: Joanne Avery, Management Information Officer [javery@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:javery@eastdevon.gov.uk)

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact



**Risk:** Medium Risk; There are reputational and organisational risks if we do not ensure that we address the recommendations from the Peer Challenge.

**Links to background information** [Appendix a – Peer Challenge delivery plan](#)

**Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
- 

## Report in full

The feedback report following the Peer Challenge 6-8th Feb 2024 set out a series of suggestions and recommendations for the council. The main recommendations were.

- Recruitment of a Chief Executive.
- Consideration of Cabinet working arrangements.
- Invest in councillor and officer development.
- Streamline the actions in your new Council Plan.
- Resist the temptation to undertake further external reviews.
- Develop a programme of external engagement and make outwardly focused work a priority for the new Chief Executive.
- Consider using councillor and officer ambassadors.
- Review visibility with housing tenants.
- Provide direction for leisure and culture provision.

In addition, there were other recommendations and suggestions throughout the feedback report all of which have been collated into a delivery plan at appendix a. Council officers have then provided information about how we can deliver those recommendations.

Currently we are looking to progress actions in all of the areas set out in the plan and updates on these actions are also included for information.

One of the main areas for transformation within the delivery plan is a project to commission a new performance, risk management and complaints monitoring system/s. This project would support the delivery of a range of recommendations including improvements to performance and budget monitoring, risk management, monitoring of review recommendations, improvements to reporting to Committees and the monitoring of the Council Plan actions and measures. We are in the beginning stages of this project and are working with Strata to identify business requirements and undertake some soft market testing.

In order to proceed with this project through the summer we are recommending that Cabinet provide us with the authority to progress the project to commission stage so that the system can be implemented as soon as possible. At this stage the costs are not fully known so we would be looking for authority to be given to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination to agree spend on this project for the first-year implementation phase of up to £250K. This budget would be to cover the system upfront cost, annual cost, Strata project implementation costs, and our own project implementation costs. The funding of this we could take from the Transformation Fund as this work will transform our management of performance and risk across all of our services bring much needed business insight.

**Financial implications:**

This is supplementary budget request of up to £250k to allow this project to progress at haste. Unfortunately, at this stage we do not have the details to produce an accurate estimate, but it is considered this sum should be sufficient. As this is implementation and year one costs and fits with our Financial Sustainability Model objectives it is felt appropriate, if agreed, that the budget is met from the Transformation Fund, however it likely that ongoing costs will have to be found through savings.

**Legal implications:**

The performance system will need to be procured in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules.

Type	Theme	Directorate	ID	Recommendations	Actions	Timeframe	Director / Lead officer	Current status	Current status update
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	CEO	PC-1	<b>Recruitment of a Chief Executive</b> Progress the plans to recruit a Chief Executive and ensure sufficient capacity at director level to support the leader and councillors with strategic vision and provide vision and direction to staff.	Recruit a new Chief Executive	Jun-24	CEO	Complete	New CEO recruited and starting in post 1st June 2024
					Revise director structure to ensure capacity and look at the broader structures within the senior leadership team.	Jun-24	CEO	In progress	New director structure agreed by full council. Interim directors in place and recruitment for permanent staff will start in mid June 2024.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	CEO	PC-1a	A councillor/officer protocol is in place and will be reviewed after the corporate peer challenge has taken place. It will be important that this protocol is a constant reference once the new chief executive is in place to ensure the head of paid service role is clearly and widely understood, as well as roles of senior councillors.	Review of councillor/officer protocol	24-Oct	Director of Governance	In progress	Draft Protocol prepared and considered by Member Constitution Working Group. Standards Committee have also considered it and have asked for a further report on 18 July 2024. Any comments will then be fed back to the Constitution Working Group and the final document presented to Full Council on 16th October 2024.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	CEO	PC-1b	The new senior management team at EDDC includes a number of Assistant Directors. This team works well together and shows great commitment to the council and the district. The talent at this level could be harnessed to lead on corporate project work and managing cross cutting themes of work, for example on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, on Performance Management, on the Green Team, on adopting a customer centric approach. This would ensure corporate oversight and perhaps offer the opportunity for other officers to become involved in work themes of particular interest to them.	Senior Leadership Team review of structure and responsibilities and undertake any recruitment required following this review.	Dec-24	CEO	in progress	Interim Director arrangements confirmed and relevant backfill being arranged. Permanent Director recruitment about to commence.
					Agree development plan for SLT as a team and individually	Feb-25	CEO	in progress	SLT (as is) have already undertaken some development, including piloting the Emergenetics psychometric tool in liaison with the LGA, which helped team members to understand their thinking and behaviour styles as individuals and a team. This will be built on further once the revised permanent SLT arrangements are confirmed
					Identify opportunities for cross-cutting working which aligns with SLT structure, responsibilities and development plan	Mar-25	CEO	In progress	Oversight and lead for corporate themes and project to be determined and monitored through project management board moving forward. We have already started some of this work in areas such as leisure, culture and housing.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance	PC-2	<b>Consideration of Cabinet working arrangements</b> Consider and explore options to enhance Cabinet working arrangements, for example: making space for strategic workshop sessions with senior management, so that the Cabinet can work even more effectively.	Workshops already being developed, leisure underway, culture set up, housing working through different workshops	Sep-24	Director of Governance	in progress	Weekly meetings between ELT and the Leader/Deputy Leader/PFH have already been put in place and monthly Cabinet briefings are in the process of being set up (to commence in September 2024). In addition workshops to cover specific topics are already underway including leisure, culture and housing.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance	PC-2a	The peer team recommend that the Cabinet consider their working arrangements as there are opportunities available to them that could make them work even more effectively together. Examples include informal workshops with ELT to sense check areas of work, empower portfolio holders to present their reports to Cabinet and developing a clear forward plan.	Director of Governance to take a paper to Cabinet briefing. Cabinet to take ownership of this work and undertake to have a workshop before the autumn to explore this.	Sep-24	Director of Governance	In progress	As above
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Finance	PC-2b	The peer team recommends that the Audit and Governance committee monitors delivery of the Annual Governance Statement action plan in addition to reviewing the draft statement prior to its approval.	A&G approve the AGS currently, monitoring of actions will be introduced going forward	Sep-24	Director of Finance	In progress	Draft 2023/24 statement is in preparation, once adopted actions will be monitored through reports to A&G committee.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Finance	PC-2c	The council could benefit from taking the opportunity to review the work programme and effectiveness of the Audit and Governance Committee, informed by CIPFA guidance, indeed it is recommended good practice to do so. By reviewing its work programme against its terms of reference (and by ensuring that its terms of reference match CIPFA guidance as part of the constitution review) it can ensure its annual work programme covers the right bases.	A number of good practice improvements have recently been introduced : Independent reps to be advertised in June/July 24, training programme to be presented to July 24 committee based on skills questionnaire matrix. Other best practice against the guidance will be reviewed to determine other actions required, to be reported to Sept A&G.	1st stage Jul 24 (training schedule & reps), 2nd stage Sept 24 (identification of other best practice requirements)	Director of Finance	In progress	All details prepared and process prepared for advertising independent reps with democratic services to progress. A&G paper to be prepared for July meeting on training.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance	PC-2d	EDDC is not unusual in reporting challenges with timetabling of formal council meetings, and a number of councillors reported issues with the timing of meetings. It will be important to understand if there is a related impact on meeting attendance. This is a topic that could perhaps be explored by a councillor working group, if the council felt it would be helpful to do so.	To broaden out this action to include the number of panels and meetings - Scrutiny to review. Democratic Service will look at starting to draft the calendar of meetings earlier in the year.	Sep-24	Director of Governance	In progress	The Member Development Working Group will be asked to consider this issue in July 2024. Members to consider conducting a survey as to the timings of meetings.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance	PC-3	<b>Invest in councillor and officer development</b> Invest in an ongoing programme of councillor development and training and political awareness training for staff to ensure wider understanding of the roles and responsibilities of councillors and officers respectively.	Political awareness training for officers and members to be scoped and commissioned, with the aim of delivering in autumn/winter 2024.	Feb-25	Corporate Lead for HR and Democratic Services Manager	In progress	Meeting scheduled to scope requirements in July 2024.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Finance	PC-4	<b>Streamline the actions in your new Council Plan</b> As the council's new Council Plan is developing, further prioritise the number of actions that sit under the four themes in the new Council Plan to and delegate to and empower staff within the organisation to deliver those actions across the life of the plan.	Reviewed and the actions streamlined in the council plan. Recognise that this needs to be reviewed with Cabinet regularly so that we continue to streamline and prioritise. Reporting on progress to come to cabinet regularly.	Apr-24	Director of Finance	In progress	Council plan actions were reviewed and challenged prior to submission to full council for agreement and sign off for 2024. We will ensure that this is a live document and review each year to ensure that the actions and measures are reviewed and updated accordingly
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Finance	PC-5	<b>Resist the temptation to undertake further external reviews</b> Consolidate the learning and recommendations from the reviews the council has undertaken and focus on addressing the actions arising from the various reports. Continue to build on governance improvements systematically reviewing all elements of the council's governance and implementing improvements where necessary.	Actions from review are collated into one spreadsheet for review.	May-24	Director of Finance	In progress	Action and measures sheet has been developed and versions for each Director has been shared to help them track required actions.
					Actions are monitored through the year using the final agreed performance / project software. Directors to report / brief cabinet on progress or issues.	Apr-25	Director of Finance	In progress	We are currently reviewing potential systems and are looking to implement a new system

Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance	PC-5a	EDDC has undertaken a comprehensive programme of external reviews prior to this corporate peer challenge taking place. This demonstrates a clear desire for continuous improvement and the council has clearly taken on board the various feedback that has resulted in a number of recommendations for EDDC to take account of. The peer team recommendation is that an action plan is produced and included as part of the next Annual Governance Statement that consolidates the actions arising and has councillor oversight for monitoring of delivery.	Outcomes are collated for the Annual Governance statement for Cabinet and A&G oversight.	24-Sep	Director of Governance and Director of Finance	In progress	Would question whether the Annual Governance Statement and the Audit and Governance Committee is the correct forum for this. It is felt that this should form part of the performance report to the Cabinet and Scrutiny.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	CEO & Governance	PC-6	<b>Develop a programme of external engagement and make outwardly focused work a priority for the new Chief Executive</b> Develop external engagement with partners and stakeholders for example, undertake work with town and parish councils to include planning matters and host a regular Developer and Agents Forum that includes officers and the portfolio lead for planning. The new Chief Executive should prioritise work on an external focus and profile for the council; external partners are waiting to work with you at a district, county and regional level.	Chief Executive development programme and part of corporate communications plan. Need to diarise our first Town and Parish event and ensure we have regular events/meetings moving forwards. Undertake a review of contacts for our Town and Parishes to ensure they are up to date.	24-Oct	CEO and Corporate Lead for Communication, Digital Services and Engagement/Director of Place	In progress	Comms Plan (corporate calendar, housing calendar), Citizens Panel, Developer and Agents Panel - link in place making and new town forward plan. We have commenced a piece of work with Towns and Parishes and this needs to be incorporated in the plan.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance	PC-7	<b>Consider using councillor and officer ambassadors</b> Consider using councillor and officer ambassadors to address reputation management and assist with 'myth busting'. Sense check where the council is now and where it wants to be.	Link to employer brand for office ambassadors. Link to cultural work and communications and engagement plan which has been developed to support the appointment of the new CEO. Look to ensure that our use of terminology of champions/ambassadors is consistent.	Dec-24	Corporate Leads For HR and Communication, Digital Services and Engagement	In progress	Scoping session arranged for Aug 2024.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance	PC-7a	The council introduced a Personnel Committee to oversee workforce matters and monitor vacancies to give councillors oversight of capacity and resource issues. The peer team would question whether this committee will be necessary once the new chief executive is in post as workforce matters will be their responsibility.	In light of all of the other steps being taken to improve our performance reporting to members and the appointment of the new Chief Executive, the Cabinet to consider whether this Committee is still necessary moving forward.	Sep-24	Director of Governance	In progress	For Cabinet to consider
Peer challenge	Homes & Communities (HC)	Housing	PC-8	<b>Review visibility with housing tenants</b> Whilst ensuring greater visibility with housing tenants is underway, ensure that engagement with them is effective and meaningful to sense check what they would find valuable to support the relationship between housing tenants and the council, and simultaneously address performance.	Regulator engagement, housing comms calendar, surveys, HRB updates and guidance. Tenant Panels set up. Plans for Getting to know you surveys, Transactional Surveys and tenant events.	Sep-24	Director of Housing and Health	In progress	HRB – paper will be going to next HRB refreshing the recruitment process and requirements of tenant members, with the aim of making engagement in HRB easier and less restrictive. “Getting to Know You Survey” – plans are underway to carry out a survey across all of our tenants in the coming year, ensuring that the data we hold for them is up to date and full. This will mean that we have better insight into the demographics of our tenant base and able to tailor our services to better meet their needs. Transactional Surveys – plans are underway to utilise ‘Common Place’ to carry out transactional surveys with our tenants, particularly in relation to repairs, so that we can obtain live feedback on service provision and be proactive in responding to negative tenant experiences as and when they happen. Tenant Event – happening on 22nd August; all tenants invited to a family fun-day style event, where there will be a menu of activities and workshops that they can choose to attend to give feedback and/or learn more about Housing and the wider Council’s services. This is planned to be an annual event.
Peer challenge	Homes & Communities (HC)	Place	PC-9	<b>Provide direction for leisure and culture provision</b> Identify specific principles for leisure and culture provision that include timescale and budget parameters to ensure a financially sustainable model of service delivery.	Workshops already underway. Will culminate in a report to ensure a financially sustainable delivery model is in place.	24-Dec	Director of Place	In progress	We are on workshop 4 for leisure and are about to commence workshop 1 for culture.
Peer challenge	Homes & Communities (HC)	Place	PC-9a	The council should consider better developing and defining its portfolio of leisure and culture as not every site needs all services. Conduct benchmarking and visit other authorities to inform the exploration for sustainable delivery models. These will need to balance opportunities (such as health and decarbonisation agendas) with threats (such as the costs of maintaining ageing leisure facilities).	Workshops underway in terms of framing options for leisure delivery going forward. Will culminate in a report to Cabinet so that these options can be considered formally. Same approach will also be adopted in relation to cultural provision.	24-Dec	Director of Place	In progress	Workshops are progressing as above.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance	PC-10	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> The council may wish to consider an overarching corporate approach at senior level to performance management with a clear formalised process so that SLT and Cabinet can quickly see and manage corporate performance and therefore respond to emerging issues that may be impacting service delivery, for example monthly performance clinics with a dashboard of indicators.	Work with Strata to develop proposals for the implementation of a new performance/project/risk system to replace SPAR.net to improve reporting function of corporate objectives and PIs, linking to complaints and Cllrs/MP corporate systems and outcomes. After the election look at our communications channels and set out how we will communicate with our local MP's  Develop an implementation plan for agreed changes.	Jun-24  Jul-24	Director of Governance  Director of Governance	In progress  In progress	Business requirements being collated with stakeholders.  Timeline for implementation being agreed with us and Strata
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance and Finance	PC-10a	EDDC should ensure that both budget monitoring and performance monitoring is done regularly at the right level.	Review reports timetable and suggest new reporting methods for ELT, SLT, Cabinet, Scrutiny and any other committees, report back on budget manager and senior officer budget meetings timetable and approach. Refreshing and reviewing the approach to budget monitoring meetings going forward.	Nov-24	Directors of Finance and Governance	In progress	Performance and finance report monitoring being reviewed as part of the project to implement a new performance system. Report going to ELT to discuss ideas for reporting and service planning changes.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance and Finance	PC-10b	Corporate oversight on a regular basis of delivery of significant programmes and projects (defined in terms of risk as well as scale) should be included to enable corporate management of projects and identification of risks that could impact on delivery.	Currently monitored through BSCAP - Improvements in corporate recording and reporting to be determined this could either follow Strata's new process following Microsoft Project and using PowerBI or be part of new performance management system.	Initial assessment Dec 24	Directors of Finance and Governance	In progress	Being included in the requirements for a new performance system.

Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance	PC-10c	Outcomes from motions to council are not reported back to councillors. Similarly, recommendations from the scrutiny committees are not tracked to show their impact. The council should develop a tracking reporting mechanism so that the loop is closed on outstanding actions and motions. This will allow councillors to see the impact of actions recommended and motions debated and passed. A summary of this could be included in an annual report to full council.	Investigate how this can be monitored and reported on, including implementation of all motions on new corporate system.	Dec-24	Director of Governance	In progress	Different solutions are being looked at including MOD.Gov and also being included in the requirements for a new performance system.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Governance and Finance	PC-11	<b>Risk Management</b> The council should continue to build on its work to update its risk management approach and ensure that Cabinet are sighted on the council's strategic risks.	Engage with external Risk Management providers Gallagher Bassett to provide audit and support training. Monitoring reports to Cabinet from Sept 24.	Sep-24	Directors of Finance and Governance	In progress	Review currently being carried out.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Finance	PC-12	<b>Finance</b> The revenue budget should be modelled for 2026/27 onwards, using a variety of scenarios regarding the potential impact of business rates revaluation and other risks, and this modelling will help to inform decisions as planning activity during the next year will be key.	Adopted Financial Plan identifies the activity for Summer of 2024.	Cabinet Workshop by Oct 24	Director of Finance	Not started	Work starting in the autumn
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Finance	PC-12a	The council may wish to review how the budget is scrutinised as it was reflected to the peer team that service plans were more of a focus than the budget itself as part of the preparation for budget setting for 2024/25. Cross party budget workshops are a mechanism used by many councils to ensure the focus of budget discussions remains high level and strategic.	It is intended that Service Plans will be prepared and presented to members for consideration earlier and budgets then to be considered in January meetings.	Service Plan in Oct/Nov 24; Budgets in January 25	Director of Finance	In progress	Service Plan timetable and layout to be discussed by ELT in June 24.
Peer challenge	Quality Services (QS)	Finance	PC-12b	Notwithstanding the robust approach to financial planning, there are a number of areas that represent a financial risk to the council. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The waste and recycling contract – a large overspend is forecast</li> <li>Housing stock – the financial impact of the stock condition survey</li> <li>Leisure</li> </ul>	These risks are being managed in the following way; Recycling & Waste Contract - ongoing oversight and regular monitoring of performance through financial monitoring reports and the recycling and waste board. Consideration also being given to future direction of travel and models of delivery. Leisure - Ongoing monitoring of performance through the Leisure Strategy Forum., a series of workshops underway to consider future leisure provision. Current review ongoing for Housing including STS and planned maintenance short, medium and long delivery programme - including motions appraisal and financial modelling.	Ongoing	Directors of Finance, Housing and Place	In progress	Work is underway in all these areas.

Report to: Council

Date of Meeting 17 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



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## Update on the Scrutiny Review recommendations and delivery plan

### Report summary:

This report sets out the Cabinet recommendation to Council arising from their consideration of a report Update on Scrutiny Review recommendations and delivery plan presented to Cabinet on 10 July 2024.

Note: The references in this report to Paper A relate to the relevant report considered by the Cabinet with recommendations for Full Council to consider and are appended to this report for reference.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

1. That Council receive the Scrutiny Review recommendations and endorse the delivery plan and the actions set out in it.

### Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review are actioned and delivered appropriately.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk) )

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Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 10 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## Update on the Scrutiny Review recommendations and delivery plan

### Report summary:

This report provides Cabinet with an overview of the Scrutiny Review recommendations and the delivery plan to implement the recommendations.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That Cabinet receive the Scrutiny Review recommendations and endorse the delivery plan and the actions set out in it.

### Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review are actioned and delivered appropriately.

Officer: Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance, [melanie.wellman@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:melanie.wellman@eastdevon.gov.uk) Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager [andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk)

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### Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Medium Risk; There are reputational and organisational risks if we do not ensure that we address the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review.

**Links to background information** [Appendix a – Scrutiny Review delivery plan](#)

**Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
- 

### **Report in full**

The feedback report following the Scrutiny Review set out a series of suggestions and recommendations for the council. The main recommendations were.

- Review Terms of Reference of the three Scrutiny Committees.
- Consideration of short-term investment to the Scrutiny Committee.
- Assign a senior officer to provide expertise and advice at the Committee meetings.
- Provide learning and development opportunities to Committee members.
- An in-depth look at the Scrutiny Protocol and terms of reference for the committees.
- That the approach to work programming for scrutiny is redesigned so anchored by long term strategic issues.
- Improved work-programming.
- Cross-party pre-meetings in advance of scrutiny sessions.
- Scrutiny support and training for officers.
- A process to track recommendations made and impacts arising.

The recommendations have been collated into a delivery plan at appendix a. Council officers have then provided information about how we can deliver those recommendations and the resources required to support this.

Currently we are looking to progress actions in all of the areas set out in the plan and updates on these actions are also included for information.

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### **Financial implications:**

There are no significant financial issues to be raised at this time.

### **Legal implications:**

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to the report.



**Scrutiny Improvement Plan – ACTION PLAN 2024/2025**

<b>Action Plan</b>			
<b>Organisational commitment and clarity of purpose</b>			
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Detailed action</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Outcome/Comments</b>
<b>Recommendation 1</b> – Review terms of reference of the three committees to ensure they operate in a complementary manner	Conduct a review of the terms of reference of the Scrutiny Committee, Overview Committee and Housing Review Board including frequency of meetings.	December 2024	Democratic Services Manager to undertake a review of the ToR's. Consultation with relevant scrutiny committee Chairs and Vice Chairs and committees as part of this process. The relevant Portfolio Holder and ELT to also be consulted. Constitution Working Group is currently reviewing the Constitution and any changes to the ToR's will be fed into that work, with a view to submitting an updated document by December 2024.
<b>Resources required</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To arrange a meeting with overview and scrutiny chairs to review the terms of reference of each committee and to take update terms of reference to a consultative workshop with overview and scrutiny committees to seek feedback. This process will be supported by the Democratic Services Officers who currently support the three committees.</li> <li>2. To submit the terms of reference to the Constitution Working Group to consider the feedback. This work can be supported within existing resources.</li> </ol>			
<b>Recommendation 2</b> - That consideration is given to providing a short term investment to the scrutiny function to ensure that the actions and recommendations arising from this	To provide a dedicated Scrutiny Officer role to support the overview and scrutiny committees. This role to be initially for a temporary period of up to 12 months (Post to be 30 hours per week) and the	September 2024	Democratic Services Manager to review the current structure of the team to provide scrutiny support along with support to other committees, forums and

<p>report can be implemented and that 'added value' scrutiny can take place</p>	<p>effectiveness of the support will be reviewed. In the short term, support for scrutiny will continue to be provided by DSO's currently providing secretariat support to committee meetings.</p>		<p>panels, including developing a new structure to deliver this.</p>
<p><b>Resources required</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To request a dedicated Scrutiny Officer role to provide the resources required to support the overview and scrutiny function.</li> <li>2. The Democratic Services Officers currently supporting the three overview and scrutiny committees will require some training to ensure they can provide support until a dedicated Scrutiny Officer is recruited.</li> <li>3. To carry out a review of the Democratic Services Team structure to provide support to scrutiny committees and work allocations.</li> <li>4. To arranged training is available from the Association of Democratic Services Officers and can be met within existing training budget (circa. £300). The DSO's are all members of the Association of Democratic Services Officers which provide useful support, guidance and training opportunities. Any further training opportunities will be identified through the PERS process.</li> <li>5. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny also offer support for officers and it is proposed that the DSO's providing support to the overview and scrutiny function sign up to receive newsletters and information from the CfGS.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Members leading and fostering good relationships</b></p>			
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b> - assign a senior officer to provide expertise and advice to guide and support each of the respective Chairs and to retain oversight of the function, work programmes and help ensure that they work within their terms of reference and within the scrutiny protocol.</p>	<p>Assignment of ELT/SLT to each committee already implemented                  Scrutiny Committee – MW                  Overview Committee – SD                  Housing Review Board – TH                  This will need to be reviewed in light of the recent changes to the ELT/SLT structure.</p>	<p>August 2024</p>	<p>The assignment of ELT/SLT to each committee is currently being reviewed following recent changes to the structure and the appointment of the new Chief Executive.</p>
	<p>Set up a quarterly Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group meeting (Chair &amp; Vice Chair of each committee and relevant Portfolio Holder) to keep</p>	<p>August 2024</p>	<p>Democratic Services Manager – set up quarterly meetings of the co-ordinating group to review work programme and keep</p>

	function of committee and work programmes under review.		function of committee under review.
<b>Resources required</b> <b>To arrange quarterly meetings of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Co Ordinating Group meetings can be supported by the three Democratic Services Officers currently providing support to the committees and can be met from within existing budgets.</b>			
<b>Recommendation 4</b> – provide learning and development opportunities for all Elected Members to include the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questioning skills</li> <li>• Scoping and Managing In-depth scrutiny</li> <li>• Making recommendations</li> <li>• Access and use of information and work programming</li> </ul>	<p>Work with the Member Development Working Group to develop a programme of ongoing training and development opportunities for scrutiny members</p> <p>Continuously identify training needs and agree how those needs may be met</p> <p>To have the opportunity to attend LGA and CfGS events and workshops</p> <p>Encourage Groups to maximise the continuity of their committee membership year on year</p>	September 2024	<p>Democratic Services Manager to submit a request to the Member Development Working Group to develop an ongoing training and development programme for overview and scrutiny members.</p> <p>This will include identifying any resources available from LGA, CfGS and external training providers.</p>
<b>Resources required</b> <b>Any training identified can be delivered from within the existing member training budget. Where the Member Development Working Group identify any additional training needs these will be assessed and an additional budget request will be submitted for consideration if required.</b>			
An in depth look at the scrutiny protocol and terms of reference for the committees, focusing on expectations, behaviours, and garnering ongoing support for participation.	Co-ordination group to review the Scrutiny Protocol annually to ensure its effectiveness. Add the Scrutiny Protocol to the Council's Constitution.	October 2024	Democratic Services Manager to arrange a session with each of the overview and scrutiny committees to work through the protocol and the implications for the committees. The Scrutiny Committee took place in the first session in May 2024 and further sessions will be arranged with

			the other two committees in September 2024.
<b>Resources required</b> To timetable a session for each committee to receive a detailed run through of the protocol which can be met from within existing budget/resources.			
<b>Prioritising work and using evidence well</b>			
<b>Recommendation 5</b> - That the approach to work programming for scrutiny is redesigned so that the work programme is anchored by long term strategic issues for East Devon.	To set up and hold quarterly meetings between the three committees (Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group, comprising Chair and Vice Chair of each committee and relevant Portfolio Holder, supported by ELT representative and Democratic Services)	From September 2024 onwards	Democratic Services Manager to arrange a quarterly meeting to take place between the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the three overview and scrutiny committees, as well as the relevant portfolio Holder. Review of Scrutiny form also to be completed.
Capacity to conduct in-depth scrutiny outside of the formal meetings	Support required from within existing service areas dependent on the nature of the work identified by the three committees	From September 2024 onwards	Availability of resources to be considered as part of the work programme and taken into account as part of the work programming for each committee. We need to ensure it aligns with officer capacity and supports and aligns with Council Plan objectives and priorities.
Regular collaboration with scrutiny Chairs which might involve routine sharing of work programmes for committees or possibly the consideration of the development of a single work programme for the entire function which is agreed annually	Each committee to produce a focused Work Programme which is aligned to the Council's corporate priorities and Key Decision Document.	From September 2024	Democratic Services Manager to arrange quarterly meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordinating group.

<p>Regular collaboration with scrutiny chairs which might involve chairs to collectively decide on member suggestions on proposal forms for what goes on the work programme – based on clear criteria that members themselves agree – process should look and feel challenging. Forward Plan could also go to this meeting for discussion (summaries of Portfolio Holder reports could go here too)</p>	<p>Hold regular quarterly meetings of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Co-ordinating group to consider what items go onto the work programme. Chair of Audit &amp; Governance Committee to be invited annually to discuss that committees work programme and any links to overview and scrutiny work programme. Forward Plan of key decisions to be reported to the group.</p>	<p>From September 2024</p>	<p>As above</p>
<p>Planned space on the work programme for detailed scrutiny of forthcoming decisions in a way that is planned in advance – for most complex / contentious issues – allowing for managed and proportionate political debate</p>	<p>Work with ELT/SLT, senior officers and Chairs and Vice Chairs to achieve this.</p>	<p>From September 2024</p>	<p>As above – Overview &amp; Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group to oversee this activity.</p>
<p>Use insight from the public (ward work, corporate complaints) to inform work programming – in a proportionate way</p>	<p>Investigate a process for engagement with the public on the work of scrutiny and forthcoming items</p>	<p>December 2024</p>	<p>Democratic Services Manager to work with the Communications Team, Corporate Lead (Performance), Portfolio Holder Democracy, Transparency and Communications and Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Communication to identify a process to ensure public views, corporate complaints and ward work can be used to deliver and support work programming.</p>

Proactively share Forward Plan with members outside of committee; signpost members to background reports where necessary.	Currently all councillors receive the Forward Plan on a monthly basis.	Ongoing	Continue existing practice of circulating Forward Plan to all councillors. Forward Plan currently reviewed by each overview and scrutiny committee. Arrangements in place for Forward Plan to be reported to Cabinet meetings on a quarterly basis to ensure it is accurate and relevant. Promote the Forward Plan through the Councillors weekly newsletter.
Organise separate All- member briefings for members on forthcoming / high profile things which are for information rather than taking up space on the formal agenda.	Introduce a timetable of all member briefings to take place on a bi monthly basis to allow high profile topics to be presented	From September 2024	Democratic Services Manager – a series of calendar dates has been arranged for Cabinet Briefings and All Member Briefings on forthcoming topics, working with ELT to identify what areas will be covered.
Continue with production of regular Portfolio Holder reports but integrate this better into work programming.	Through a Overview & Scrutiny co-ordinating group the regular Portfolio Holder reports can be better programmed into the work programme of each committee.	December 2024	Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordinating group to undertake a review of effectiveness of Portfolio Holder reports and a process to ensure the most appropriate way of doing this. The review will investigate the process in place at other local authorities.
<b>Resources required</b> <b>1. Arrangements to set up meetings of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group, including support to the group can be met from within existing budgets and resources. The Co Ordinating Group would be supported by the Scrutiny Officer.</b>			

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Additional officer support from within other service areas will be dependent on the topics that overview and scrutiny are dealing with.</b></li> <li>3. <b>For future overview and scrutiny reviews a scoping document will be produced in consultation with the relevant service area to ensure resources are available including a realistic timeline for the delivery of that work. This work would be supported by the Scrutiny Officer with backfilling provided from the three Democratic Services Officers.</b></li> <li>4. <b>Hold a member workshop for each committee to review work programme, scoping documents. This activity will be supported by the Scrutiny Officer.</b></li> <li>5. <b>To invite the Chair of the Audit &amp; Governance to the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Co Ordinating Group on an annual basis to discuss work programming and how their (A&amp;G) work links to overview and scrutiny.</b></li> <li>6. <b>Review the scrutiny request form to ensure long term strategic issues are considered.</b></li> </ol>			
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b> - Consideration of cross-party pre-meetings being held before the meeting and led in a way that helps committee members prepare for scrutiny sessions by reviewing the key lines of enquiry and coordinating their questioning approaches.</p>	<p>Develop a timetable of cross party pre-meetings to ensure each committee prepares for each scrutiny session and agreeing their questioning approaches. Also ensuring that sufficient training provided (see action above).</p>	<p>September 2024 onwards</p>	<p>Democratic Services Manager to put arrangements in place to review the meeting preparation timetables to incorporate cross party pre meetings before each overview &amp; scrutiny committee.</p>
<p><b>Resources required</b>  <b>Democratic Services Team to identify a timetable of meetings.</b></p>			
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b> - Provide development support and training for Officers across the Council to build, refresh and enhance their knowledge and understanding of the role, purpose, and powers of scrutiny. This should also include the approach to report writing and presenting and answering questions at committee meetings.</p>	<p>A new report template will be launched in July 2024 for all committees which provide further information to assist the overview &amp; scrutiny committees. Training to be provided to officers in June. Briefing session with Cabinet and Councillors to take place in June/July 2024.</p>	<p>From June 2024</p>	<p>Democratic Services Manager to discuss an approach to staff training to promote and enhance knowledge of staff in the role, purpose and powers of scrutiny. This will also include the recently approved Scrutiny Protocol and a training session on this will take place in September/October 2024.</p> <p>A new report template will be launched from July/August 2024, including briefings/training with</p>

			ELT/SLT, Cabinet and councillors. A meeting with Democratic Services and HR has already taken place to explore this approach.
<b>Resources required</b> 1. Working with HR to develop a programme of training and development for officers. 2. Arrange officer workshop/briefing sessions to deliver training on new template (session booked in June 2024 for officers and further sessions for Cabinet and Councillors).			
<b>Having an impact</b>			
<b>Recommendation 8</b> - a process is designed and implemented that tracks recommendations made and impact arising and that this is communicated back to all Elected Members.	The council is currently reviewing its approach to managing and tracking actions and those from overview and scrutiny committees should be included in this.  Use of Councillor weekly newsletter to promote and communicate overview & scrutiny outcomes and success.	October 2024	Democratic Services Manager to investigate a process for tracing motions using Issue Manager(MOD.GOV) or a similar system. Once the work to identify the most appropriate system has been completed a resource bid will be submitted identifying resources required. Members weekly Newsletter to be used to communicate scrutiny outcomes and successes.
<b>Resources required</b> Investigations currently underway to identify the resources and system required to ensure the Council effectively monitors and tracks actions arising from all committees.			



Report to: Council



Date of Meeting 17 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Delivering our leisure and playing pitches requirements – Recommendation from Cabinet on 27 March 2024

### Report summary:

This report sets out the Cabinet recommendation to Council arising from their consideration of a report Delivering our leisure and playing pitches requirements presented to Cabinet on 27 March 2024.

Note: The references in this report to Paper A relate to the relevant report considered by the Cabinet with recommendations for Full Council to consider and are appended to this report for reference.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That Council;

1. approve funding from the Council's General Fund Revenue budget of £85,000 to help support the Estates team with the priority 1 actions identified within the Leisure Strategy action plan on stock condition surveys and renegotiating existing dual use facility agreements.
2. approve the provision of a budget of up to £76,974 for the 2024/25 financial year to fund the Community Connector, Community Builder and Project Manager posts, subject to there being a review of future provision and funding. That delegated authority be given to the S151 officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sports and Tourism and Cllr Kim Bloxham, to agree the arrangements for hosting and the performance management regime.
3. approve the provision of a budget of £57,756 inclusive of 30% on costs to fund the Strategic Leisure Enabler Lead role.

### Reason for recommendation:

To enable the Council to agree a position on what and where to prioritise its future investment in its leisure facilities and activities that are identified within the Leisure and Built Facilities Strategy 2021 -2031 and the draft Playing Pitch Strategy 2024.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk) )

Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 27 March 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Delivering our leisure and playing pitches requirements

### Report summary:

Full Council and Cabinet have formally adopted the Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy 2021-31 and its Action Plan. There are currently significant challenges in meeting the completion deadlines for each priority within the Action Plan. There are also current requests for support to help deliver new sports pitches in Honiton and also hosting and taking forward the Cranbrook Local Delivery Pilot programme funded by Sport England. Currently, to be able to manage these workstreams, there has been no identification of additional resources both in terms of staffing capacity and new budget allocations. The Council does not have a statutory responsibility for delivering new sports playing pitches or providing sports clubs with new infrastructure however we work with many clubs through the maintenance of playing pitches that are owned and leased to sports clubs and also the Playing Pitch Strategy helps to identify future needs. Therefore, it is recommended to carry out a high level options appraisal of the actions within the Leisure Strategy to develop a costed Implementation Plan with possible options for affordable delivery. This will provide the Council with the necessary financial information to make strategic decisions on what we may wish to deliver from the Strategy going forward. This was one of the recommendations from the recent Peer Review undertaken on the Council

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the appointment of Strategic Leisure to carry out a high level options appraisal of the Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy 2021-31 with an Implementation Plan and possible options for delivery to inform decisions on the affordability of the Council's current and future leisure provision;
2. Recommends to Council to approve funding from the Council's General Fund Revenue budget of £85,000 to help support the Estates team with the priority 1 actions identified within the Leisure Strategy action plan on stock condition surveys and renegotiating existing dual use facility agreements.
3. Approves the request to create posts for the 2024/25 financial year for the Community Connector, Community Builder and Project Manager posts to support the Sport England Local Delivery Project within Cranbrook whilst seeking ongoing funding for the three posts to widen the programme to other areas of East Devon to help deliver the wider priorities within the Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy 2021-31.
4. Recommends to Council the provision of a budget of £76,974 for the 2024/25 financial year to fund the Community Connector, Community Builder and Project Manager posts

5. Approves the request to create a post for a Strategic Leisure Enabler Lead role for the District to take forward the strategic options for leisure provision in conjunction with wider partners and stakeholders.
6. Recommends to Council the provision of a budget of £57,756 inclusive of 30% on costs to fund the Strategic Leisure Enabler Lead role

**Reason for recommendation:**

To enable the Council to agree a position on what and where to prioritise its future investment in its leisure facilities and activities that are identified within the Leisure and Built Facilities Strategy 2021 -2031 and the draft Playing Pitch Strategy 2024.

Officer: Charlie Plowden, Assistant Director – Countryside & Leisure; Andy Wood, Assistant Director – Growth, Development & Prosperity; Ed Freeman, Assistant Director – Planning Strategy & Development Management; Tim Child, Assistant Director – Place, Assets & Commercialisation.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

[Equalities impact assessment](#)

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Medium Risk; The Leisure Strategy and draft Playing Pitch Strategy both identify significant areas of work and specific recommendations to action which, if resources are not agreed and put in place, will limit the ability of the Council to make progress in delivering the Strategy's action plans.

**Links to background information** [Place partnerships | Sport England; wellbeing - Exeter City Council](#)

**Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
- 

**Report in full**

[Summary of issues](#)

The Council, when it had its in house Leisure Department, provided a comprehensive wrap around service for leisure provision that included sports development and supported the District's sports clubs in helping to seek funding and improve their sports club infrastructure. This sports development function ceased in 2006 when the in-house leisure role was transferred to LED which was set up to focus primarily on the running of the Council's leisure centres and swimming pools.

There has been no centralised in house leisure team to help support this area of work since 2006. The various elements of the Council's leisure work has therefore been absorbed since 2006 and built into various teams over the subsequent years. The additional workloads emanating from the Playing Pitch Strategy and sports club liaison as well as from the Leisure Strategy have been taken up by the following service leads:

- Assistant Director – Places, Assets & Commercialisation responsible for the leisure assets and their maintenance, negotiating with sports clubs on leases and fees and seeking funding opportunities for decarbonising our asset stock;
- Assistant Director - Planning Strategy and Development Management responsible for the development of the Playing Pitch Strategy and S106 and CIL funding into leisure and sports.
- Assistant Director – Countryside & Leisure responsible (with Director for Housing, Health & Environment and Director for Finance) for the LED contract and work of the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum;
- Assistant Director – Growth, Development & Prosperity responsible for Cranbrook's Sport England Local Development Programme in partnership with Exeter CC.

There has been a steady growth in the demands being made of Officers and there is now an opportunity to review this arrangement and consider how best to deliver a more co-ordinated and centralised approach to the work the Council does for leisure and its playing pitches work to help manage the workload.

Following the recent Peer Review one of their questions posed in the financial planning and management section was "What leisure and culture provision do you need/can you afford? What is the timescale for decision making? Conduct benchmarking, visiting, explore options for delivery models, Consider it as a portfolio for leisure...not all sites have everything."

The Peer Review report provides the Council with an external view on our leisure provision and poses the challenge what can the Council afford to provide as a District-wide leisure offer (not as a piecemeal provision). Also, how that may look in our communities and to consider what our funding for leisure will look like in the future with the pressures on budgets identified within our MTFP.

There are currently a number of requests being made of the Council in respect of the following areas:

- Delivery of multiple priority 1,2 and 3 actions from the Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy 2021 - 31
- Leading the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot work in Cranbrook
- Enabling the delivery of the recommendations within the emerging Playing Pitch Strategy 2024
- Delivery of new sports playing pitches in Honiton (Honiton Sports Pitches Strategy 2017)
- Delivery of new sports playing pitches in Exmouth (Exmouth Sports Pitch Strategy 2017)
- A view by some sports clubs who lease land from the Council, that our role is limited to that of landlord and that the Council should do more to support their Club's sustainability and growth – these two roles do not always align

All of these requests require Council resources in terms of staffing time and also revenue or capital funds to facilitate their delivery. None of this work is a statutory requirement for the Council

however they are of considerable importance within the sports clubs and their communities who are seeking our assistance.

Therefore, it is imperative that the Council now carries out a high level options appraisal of the “asks” within the Leisure Strategy and from this an Implementation Plan with possible options for delivery that will provide the Council with the necessary information to enable it to make strategic decisions on what level of leisure provision it wishes to deliver going forward. There are multiple priority action areas which go beyond “business as usual” in our leisure provision and these need to be considered in terms of cost implications before decisions can be made to support them.

The issues that the Council are facing currently in terms of demands from sports clubs as well as our agreed actions in our Leisure Strategy delivery plan are outlined in this report.

#### 1. Leisure Strategy demands & options appraisal.work

- 1.1 The adoption of the Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy 2021-31 and its associated Delivery Plan has provided the framework for future decisions to be made by the Council and these are considered by the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum (formerly the LED Monitoring Forum) where a report is updated at every meeting with progress made against the priority 1, 2 and 3 actions.
- 1.2 There are a number of priority 1 actions which are of critical importance that currently cannot be started due to issues of staff capacity and budget but also appetite by partners (schools). The priority actions are mainly centred on the future management of the school dual use sites, negotiating the annual management fee for LED from 2023/24 onwards and developing a district-wide health and wellbeing programme that helps to provide leisure activities to improve local residents’ physical wellbeing directly in their communities.
- 1.3 Other priority actions relate to stock condition surveys being required – whilst the building fabric element is more straightforward the specialist mechanical and electrical components require significant external specialist input.
- 1.4 In respect of renegotiating the dual use agreements there is a key issue here and this is balancing the objectives of the Council with that of the school. Not all schools are receptive – we are seeking to restructure our use of the sites to best fulfil our operational needs (e.g. less demand for use in holidays) and by doing so, reducing our financial commitment. The schools though cannot easily absorb any additional costs, nor do they necessarily require increased usage at those times. Discussions with 4 schools in total to-date have proven challenging with little appetite apparent from Schools. A risk exists that in funding additional resource to take this forward, we’ll still not achieve our objectives.
- 1.5 The necessity of carrying out a high level options appraisal of the Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy has become apparent with the increasing demands being made of the Council for delivering its leisure provision. This being driven by the ambitions of the Strategy alongside the recommendations emerging from the Playing Pitch Strategy work as well as the cost of subsidising the annual management fee for LED. The Peer Review recognised this and recommended that before any decisions were made to committing more funding to leisure, at the likely detriment to funding for other council services, a high level review of affordability, what a future leisure provision in our district could look like and the options for delivering this were required.
- 1.6 Therefore, to start to map out how we can meet these challenges it is the intention to commission Strategic Leisure to cover these areas and their workscope will be:

- Hold a series of meetings as appropriate (Officers/Members) to discuss the current challenges of delivering the Leisure Strategy, understand the costs of delivering the Strategy and discuss the potential options for delivering a repurposed leisure provision set against the MTFP;
- Review and confirm Leisure Strategy recommendations and actions
- Cost and resource-plan
- Develop an Implementation Plan (following the Peer Review recommendations)
- Analyse the Implementation Plan and set out the options for delivery (following the Peer Review recommendations)

1.7 This piece of work is critical in providing the Council with the necessary background detail on how it can start to plan for the future with the affordability of its leisure offer, the contract with LED and the likely requests for support emerging from the Playing Pitch Strategy 2024 work. The recommendations and assessment of the leisure provision by the Peer Review team makes this higher level piece of work a priority to be undertaken before decisions can be made at a more granular level.

1.8 The Leisure Strategy's Action Plan priority 1 actions are:

KEY ACTIONS	Priority	Completion	Who leads	Resources needed
EDDC to revisit all stock condition survey data and associated costs within the context of the recommendations from the strategy and the need to retain and invest in its existing portfolio of leisure facilities (priority facilities are Exmouth, Honiton, Axminster). Agree a 5 – 10 year planned preventative maintenance programme of works – capital and revenue.	1	2022/23	EDDC Property & FM Team	Specialist consultancy support to inspect sites and prepare programme of works. Building fabric is more straightforward but electrical and mechanical more specialist hence external input needed. Costs: <b>£70,000 + on costs estimated.</b>
EDDC to undertake a site options appraisal to address identified shortfall in leisure facility provision highlighted within the Leisure Strategy. The priority focus should be on:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cranbrook – 6 lane 25m pool, health and fitness, 4 court sports hall, 2 studios (small pool/Leisure Local as a minimum), to ideally align to development of Town Centre</li> <li>• Exmouth - ATP</li> <li>• Honiton - ATP</li> <li>• Axminster – Netball Courts</li> </ul> Consideration should be given to new and existing sites and include an integrated offer of new leisure centre(s) provision and separate arrangements for individual sports/activities, working with partner organisations in the community.	1	2023/24	EDDC Leisure Officers  EDDC Planning Team  Devon County Council  Exeter City Council  Local Delivery Pilot  Relevant schools and sports clubs  NGBs	
EDDC to renegotiate all existing dual use facility agreements, in favour of the Council to increase access and value for the East Devon Community. Daytime access is the priority to achieve. Following re-negotiation	1	2024/25	EDDC Leisure Officers	Additional Estates Resource. These negotiations have been centred around Colyton – resulting in

<p>daytime programmes to be developed focussing on older people.</p>			<p>EDDC Estates Team</p> <p>EDDC Legal team</p> <p>Devon County Council</p>	<p>less daytime usage of the Centre but more of hockey and netball outside spaces. Still not concluded and hugely resource intensive. As such, whilst negotiations have already commenced, to deliver those 5 other sites within timescale will require such level of resource that other work will need to be back-filled. <b>As such, request £15,000</b></p> <p><b>External legal advice is also likely following an assessment on this work by the Head of Legal: £TBD</b></p>
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2. EDDC Playing Pitch Strategy 2015 & draft PPS 2024

2.1 A new Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) 2024 is in production and is due to be presented as an emerging Strategy to Strategic Planning Committee in March 2024. The work undertaken so far indicates that many of the issues highlighted by the previous Playing Pitch Strategy and Sports Pitch Strategies for Exmouth and Honiton remain. The new PPS 2024 has indicated that though the need for both these towns remains it is not significantly greater than for other towns and so demand is widespread across the district.

2.2 The draft PPS 2024 has picked up from the Football Foundation Local Facilities Plan that there is need for new artificial grass pitches (AGPs) for/at Exmouth, Honiton and specifically one at/to serve between Sidmouth and Seaton (specifically youth size).

2.3 Indeed, increased youth participation since those strategies were produced is driving additional needs for new and improved facilities. The current strategies can be found at: [Open Space - Playing Pitch Strategy - East Devon](#)

The emerging PPS 2024 has carried out substantive work on the evidence gathering side of strategy production, this has been undertaken in accordance with following Sport England guidance. The next stage, as completion of this evidence gathering side finishes, will need to move onto the strategy (the what do we do about it) element of the work.

2.4 Implementation of the PPS can be summarised under Sport England’s three categories of work:

- Protect - policies to secure new facilities as part of new developments and to protect existing facilities from development;
- Provide - delivery of new and improved facilities;
- Enhance - management and maintenance of existing facilities.

- 2.5 The first of these elements falls to the Planning Service who through the Local Plan, Cranbrook Plan and supporting guidance set out requirements for new developments in terms of requirements for new sports pitch provision particularly on large scale new developments which would in themselves require the delivery of new facilities. These are then secured through a Section 106 agreement between the developer and the Council.
- 2.6 Smaller scale developments where there is not a need for new sports facilities as part of the development itself will pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) towards the delivery of infrastructure on the Council's infrastructure list which includes sports facilities. It should however be noted that the sports facilities projects identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) are listed as priority 2 projects being "infrastructure that is important to deliver specific development schemes and meet the needs of new residents, but the precise timing is less critical."
- 2.7 There is a substantial funding shortfall for infrastructure identified in the IDP with a £70 million shortfall for priority 1 projects alone identified at the time of its adoption in 2017. It will therefore be difficult to fund projects that are not priority 1 projects based on the limited funding available. Spend decisions for CIL monies are made by Strategic Planning Committee having considered the recommendations of the CIL Member Working Group. Due to a lack of staff resource the working group has not been able to meet so far this year but with new posts having recently been agreed by Members it is hoped that officers will be able to support the working groups work again once these posts have been filled early next year.
- 2.8 The delivery of new and improved facilities is where the current strategy has not progressed. These projects do not necessarily fall to the Council to deliver, indeed EDDC has no statutory obligation to deliver them, they are for a range of stakeholders and clubs to deliver. However some relate to land owned and controlled by the Council or would potentially involve negotiations with adjacent land owners that would logically be led by the Council.
- 2.9 At the time of presentation of the Playing Pitch Strategy 2015 and Exmouth and Honiton Sports Pitch Strategies 2017 to Members it was highlighted that there were not sufficient resources budgeted to facilitate the Council's envisaged role in the delivery of the strategy. It was envisaged that the Council would play an enabling role in its delivery indeed a report to Strategic Planning Committee seeking adoption of the Honiton Sports Pitch Strategy states:
- "Members have previously agreed that the Council should play a facilitating role in the delivery of the strategy's recommendations. This does not obligate the Council to pay for or deliver any of the recommendations in itself but to work with clubs and other bodies towards their delivery. This is likely to involve at a minimum negotiating with landowners, coordinating funding bids and providing advice on detailed plans ahead of planning applications being submitted, but potentially could extend to purchasing land (including Compulsory Purchase Orders), funding a proportion of project costs, and drawing up plans for sites. The extent of this involvement will be dependent on the abilities of relevant clubs and other bodies and the preferences of Members".*
- 2.10 The report noted that there was insufficient resources in place to undertake this role and Members views were sought on how this should be addressed but no resources were committed to this work.

### 3 Sport England Local Delivery Pilot (Cranbrook)

- 3.1 The Local Delivery Pilot covering Exeter and Cranbrook has been running since 2018. In respect of Cranbrook the programme is governed through the Move More Cranbrook steering



group which includes representatives from a range of local partners including the Town and District Councils, LED, Cranbrook Education Campus, Live West, Devon County Council Public Health. The pilot is aimed at tackling inactivity, with the particular focus at Cranbrook being upon families given the age profile of the town.

3.2. In recent years a Project Manager has been recruited to support, enable and deliver the programme priorities for Cranbrook. The role has been hosted by Exeter City Council and embedded within the wider Live & Move team with funding provided through the main programme. The role has been vacant since the previous post holder left in August 2023 with funding through the Sport England pilot programme being available for the post until the end of March 2025.

3.3 Key functions of the Project Manager role include the following:

- Co-ordination of the network of capacity within posts funded by Sport England. Bringing colleagues together to share best practice, identify challenges and opportunities within Cranbrook and plan future programme delivery;
- Provide regular updates of progress against agreement project/programme documentation;
- Developing, managing, delivering and evaluating the suite of projects funded as part of Move More Cranbrook;
- Managing the Move More Cranbrook grants process;
- Building and nurturing in Cranbrook with those organisations and community groups that support and promote wellbeing and physical activity work in the town;
- Provide input to support colleagues to capture the impact, learning and tell the story of project delivery within the programme;
- Communication, evaluation and reporting of Move More Cranbrook projects;
- Liaising with key stakeholders in Cranbrook through the steering group and other forums to ensure the effective delivery of projects and programme outcomes.

3.4 Alongside this Project Manager role a further request is being made for the Council's support for a Community Connector (28hrs pw) and Community Builder (18.5hrs pw). The purpose of these two posts is to offer a range of community-based options to enable and empower people to access services to maintain health and wellbeing, reducing the need for statutory care services now and into the future. It is a model of asset-based community development (community building) and social prescribing (community connecting) and has been operating across Exeter for more than 10 years.

3.5 At present, these three Cranbrook posts are hosted alongside the wider Wellbeing Exeter (and Cranbrook) programme, which has a network of Community Connectors and Builders. This arrangement will cease at the end of March 2024. Exeter City Council have agreed a funding package to keep the Exeter side of the programme running but this leaves the posts covering Cranbrook without funding for the next financial year. There is the opportunity to try to secure Sport England legacy funding for these posts beyond this period.

3.6 The key functions of the Community Connector role (28hrs pw) are:

- Receive referrals from the health and social care system and educational establishments for members of the community who are in need of improving their social, emotional or physical wellbeing or who need practical support (e.g. debt support);
- Engage with people referred in a non-judgemental and holistic way, working together to identify priorities, set actions and goals;

- Active listening, motivational interviewing and mapping of a person's assets, drawing out motivations, strengths and passions;
- Introduce people referred to relevant groups, organisations and services;
- Maintain and up-to-date working knowledge of the support and activities available to people within the community from within the community, voluntary and statutory sectors in order to effectively introduce people to appropriate services, activities or sources of support;
- Through undertaking training and development opportunities, gain an understanding of the often complex challenges faced by the people being referred;
- Accompanying people (where appropriate) to groups, services, appointments and meeting to ensure best possible outcomes and supporting them to make sustainable changes;

3.7 The key functions of the Community Builder role (18.5hrs pw) are:

- Map and maintain awareness of formal and informal community activity and provision and identify community assets and resources;
- Listening widely to people of all ages and backgrounds within the community to understand more about people's lives and how they feel about their community;
- Connecting people and opportunities together, creating new networks;
- Encouraging and supporting local people to take action on things that matter to them;
- Creating spaces that allow people to come together, get to know each other, build trust and share skills;
- Advocate for the community and underrepresented areas of the community;
- Helping with local projects;
- Build and maintain internal and external relationships including attending training, meetings and activities;
- Collect evidence of outputs and outcomes, ensuring consistent implementation of the monitoring and evaluation process.

3.8 The request to support these posts has come as Devon CC has withdraw their funding from the Wellbeing programme. Therefore for this strategically important element of the pilot programme to continue it is imperative that East Devon DC can provide secure funding to enable Cranbrook to continue to benefit.

3.9 This report recommends that the three roles which will support activities in Cranbrook are commissioned by the Council. This is on the basis that this would allow the Council to take a more proactive approach to programme delivery. A decision would also then rest with the Council as to whether there would be merit in continuing this role beyond the end of the current Sport England Funding.

3.10 There is a short upcoming window in which the Council has the opportunity to bid for legacy funding from Sport England for a further 3 years by becoming a Place Partner. This bid needs to be made jointly with Exeter City Council as our existing pilot partner. The City Council have committed to submitting the bid by 24 June 2024. It is imperative that we engage constructively and proactively in order to put together a robust joint bid. There is scope within the bid to seek ongoing funding for the three posts discussed in this section of the report but also to widen the programme to other areas of East Devon as well as seeking funding for the delivery of a Leisure Centre at Cranbrook, which is a priority 1 project in the Leisure Strategy. As with all competitive funding rounds, there is no guarantee of success but this presents an excellent opportunity to gain support for the growing new community and to support improved health and wellbeing outcomes across the District. This will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet.

**Financial implications:**

Recommendation 2 and 3 are requesting one off budget sums of £85k and £77k totalling £162k, it is suggested if approved this should be met from the Council's Transformation Budget. Recommendation 4 is a request for an ongoing annual sum for a new post, initially at £58k, this will have to be met from the General Fund Balance in year one but should be looked to be accommodated within the Leisure budget going forward as efficiency and resource priorities are considered

**Legal implications:**

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report, Legal Services will advise and assist on individual actions as required.

Report to: Council

Date of Meeting 17 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



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## **New Communities in East Devon - Recommendation from Cabinet meeting on 1 May 2024**

### **Report summary:**

This report sets out the Cabinet recommendation to Council arising from their consideration of a report on New Communities in East Devon.

Note: The references in this report to Paper A relate to the relevant report considered by the Cabinet with recommendations for Full Council to consider and are appended to this report for reference.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget                      Yes  No

Policy Framework    Yes  No

### **Recommendation:**

That Council approves that a budget of up to £80,000 is made available from the general fund to ensure that capacity is in place to undertake both the Community Governance Review for Cranbrook and wide strategic review of asset and service delivery in major new developments.

### **Reason for recommendation:**

To ensure that new communities in the District continue to be supported by high quality community infrastructure and public services.

To ensure that there are effective governance arrangements in place, both currently and to support the continued expansion of Cranbrook.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk) )

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Report to: **Cabinet**



Date of Meeting 1 May 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## **New Communities in East Devon**

### **Report summary:**

The Council has a track record of bringing forward major strategic developments, particularly in the West End of the District. Since the late 2000s these developments have been set up such that they include some form of enhanced local management regime, notably in the form of an Estate Management Company. Whilst the Council has fulfilled its statutory obligations, it has not adopted public open space or other discretionary facilities. This has inevitably altered the mix and balance of public service delivery, in terms of the funding regime and the role that the District Council plays, relative to more established settlements.

This report seeks to take stock of this approach. This is in the context of the District continuing to grow at a rapid pace and preparations beginning to be made for accommodating a second new community. This will ultimately lead to a scenario whereby around 20% of households in the District will be the subject of these alternative arrangements by 2040. The report sets out the findings of an independent review of the Council's approach to managing this growth which has been undertaken by the Planning Advisory Service.

A particular area of focus is the experience over the past decade in relation to the development of the Cranbrook new community. The report considers how the Council's approach can continue to evolve moving forward including ensuing clear governance and decision-making arrangements. The report seeks to reactivate the Community Governance Review for Cranbrook that was paused in November 2021. This is needed to ensure that to ensure that the options for administrative boundaries are considered alongside the ongoing expansion of the town.

The report considers the Council's own role in delivering assets and services. A strategic review of the current approach is recommended such that different options can be carefully considered including how these can help to strengthen local stewardship, decision making and accountability. This will need to include opportunities for innovation and new models of service delivery which respond to the challenging financial environment. The outcome of this review and associated recommendations will then be reported back to Cabinet. Whilst focused on Cranbrook, these recommendations have a potential bearing on other major strategic developments in the District, both existing and forthcoming.

Finally the report requests that Cabinet recommend to Council that an additional budget of £80k is made available. This is needed to ensure that there is sufficient capacity both to progress the Community Governance Review and the wider strategic review of assets and services concurrently.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget                      Yes  No

Policy Framework      Yes  No

## **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Cabinet;

- 1) Notes the findings of the Planning Advisory Service report and associated recommendations as set out at Appendix B
- 2) Endorses the proposed terms of reference for the Cranbrook Placemaking Group to take forward recommendation 5 from the Planning Advisory Service report
- 3) Endorses the principle of re-activating the Community Governance Review for Cranbrook in consultation with ward members and local communities
- 4) Endorses undertaking a strategic review of the Council's approach to the delivery of assets and services in major new developments to take forward recommendation 9 from the Planning Advisory Service report
- 5) Recommends to Council that a budget of up to £80k is made available from the general fund to ensure that capacity is in place to undertake both the Community Governance Review for Cranbrook and wider strategic review of asset and service delivery in major new developments

## **Reason for recommendation:**

To ensure that new communities in the District continue to be supported by high quality community infrastructure and public services.

To ensure that there are effective governance arrangements in place, both currently and to support the continued expansion of Cranbrook.

Officer: Andy Wood, Assistant Director – Growth, Development & Prosperity, email: [adwood@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:adwood@eastdevon.gov.uk) tel: 01395 571743 Ed Freeman, Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management, email: [efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk) tel: 01395 517519

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Medium Impact

**Risk:** Medium Risk; The delivery of major new developments is an important component of the strategy set out in the Local Plan. Ensuring that these are supported by the requisite services and community infrastructure is a complex challenge which needs the engagement and support of many different stakeholders.

**Links to background information** [Freeholders' estate and service charges \(parliament.uk\)](#) [CMA finds fundamental concerns in housebuilding market - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## [Link to Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The 2021 census data revealed that the District is growing at more than twice the national average in population terms. East Devon is clearly an attractive place to live and the rise in population is in large part a function of new housing being provided in the District. Associated development ranges in size from single homes to the major freestanding new community of Cranbrook.

1.2 The Council took a decision in the 2000s to stop adopting green space, play areas and other related infrastructure in relation to new developments. This decision was driven by financial considerations and particularly whether it was possible to secure sufficient funds to provide for ongoing maintenance over the long term. This was leading to protracted negotiations on a site by site basis with the dilemma of having to either accept a lower amount or refuse planning permission.

1.3 Ultimately this prompted a change in approach whereby the delivery of these services are now normally funded by and through an Estate Rent Charge/Estate Management Company model. This was an attractive model for developers as the costs could be passed on to individual households with the charge being paid in addition to the Council Tax precept. This same approach is now prevalent across the country.

1.4 Given the scale of housing delivery in the District, and with preparations beginning for accommodating a second new town, it is important to reflect on how this approach is working in practice. This is in the context of an emerging scenario that around 20% of households in the District will be the subject of this kind of arrangement by 2040.

1.5 There is a risk that a schism develops between these new communities and older, more established settlements. Put another way there effectively becomes a 'new' East Devon and an 'old' East Devon which are distinguished not just by their very different population characteristics but also by the services they receive from the Council and how these are funded. Used as a positive force for change this can be harnessed to help implement new and more creative and innovative models of service delivery. At worst though this will become a source of lingering resentment within the District.

1.6 This report seeks to take stock of the current position particularly in the context of the development of the Cranbrook new community. The extract from the 2003 report '*Options for Service Provision and Governance: East Devon New Community*' contained at Appendix A highlights that the potential complexities in public service provision and governance structures were recognised at an early stage. The subsequent period of prolonged austerity has only served to reinforce the importance of ensuring that robust arrangements are in place.

## 2. Stewardship of Assets and Estate Management Companies

2.1 There are over 60 developments in the District that now have some form of estate management regime, particularly for the maintenance of public open space. A report to Cabinet in 2021 set out the relative size of these, in terms of the number of dwellings, as follows;

Size of development	Count
10 – 100	43
100 - 500	16
500 - 1000	2
Total number of sites	61
Total number of homes	7,577

2.2 It can be seen that a substantial number of homes, equating to around 10% of the entire dwelling stock of the District, are now part of some sort of estate management arrangement. The majority of these developments are though relatively small scale in the range 10 – 100 dwellings. The difference for Cranbrook is that it will evolve to become a town of circa 8,000 dwellings and will comprise assets that will also benefit a wider catchment as well as the residents themselves.

2.3 In 2018 Cranbrook Town Council took on responsibility for management of key assets and this rendered the Estate Rent Charge unnecessary. Through agreement between the Town Council and developer Consortium, the relevant assets and services were transferred to the Town Council and funded through an increase in the parish precept. Residents were then able to have their obligations to the Estate Rent Charge removed from their deeds.

2.4 Throughout the initial planning of Cranbrook there was a conscious decision for the Town Council to play a very significant role in relation to the receipt and management of assets. The unique aspect now in relation to other new housing developments in the District is that the costs associated with this have been integrated into the precept thereby removing the distinction that previously existed with an estate rent charge to a private company. The major drawback to funding the maintenance of assets through the precept is the effect that this has on Council Tax bills.

2.5 Whilst Estate Management Companies might be appropriate for smaller scale developments, their lack of accountability is a key concern. The willingness of the Town Council to adopt assets at the local level is to be commended and marked a bold and decisive step towards improved community governance. This has only ever been achieved in one other place in the country. Broadclyst parish is also experiencing major growth and the Parish Council has again demonstrated a willingness to adopt assets, such as allotments, alongside the role of management companies.

2.6 Estate Management Companies have come under increasing scrutiny nationally. Long leaseholders who pay service charges have a statutory right to challenge unreasonable service charges and the standard of work carried out. This is done through an application to a First-Tier Tribunal. Freeholders do not currently have an equivalent statutory right. The King's Speech on 7 November 2023 announced a 'Leasehold and Freehold Bill' will be introduced in the 2023-24 parliamentary session. The accompanying background briefing note states that the Bill will grant freehold homeowners on private and mixed tenure estates the same rights of redress as leaseholders – by extending equivalent rights to transparency over their estate charges, access to support via redress schemes, and to challenge the charges they pay by taking a case to a Tribunal, just like existing leaseholders.

2.7 Preventing the proliferation of private management arrangements on new housing estates was one of the themes in the recent Competitions and Markets Authority report into housebuilding ([Summary of housebuilding final report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)). In relation to the private management of public amenities on housing developments the report concludes the following;

*'We have observed a growing trend towards the private management model and that these arrangements often come with inadequate protection and create significant detriment for consumers. Our recommendations to the UK, Scottish, and Welsh governments are aimed at preventing the proliferation of private management arrangements on new housing estates and*



*providing greater protection to households living under private management arrangements. We also invite these governments to consider options to support the adoption of public amenities on estates currently under private management arrangements.'*

2.8 Overall the experience in relation to major developments in the District over the past two decades raises important considerations in relation to delivery and management of specific community infrastructure. The experience in Cranbrook and Broadclyst parishes suggests an alternative to the part-privatised model when new developments are delivered at scale. This is irrespective of forthcoming legislation.

### **3. Assessment**

3.1 Ensuring that the residents of new developments are supported by a range of high-quality public services and assets is a key ingredient in enabling the development of sustainable communities. Financial pressures have though led to a position whereby the District is seeing an increasing proportion of part-privatised developments where key assets are managed through an Estate Management Company. This raises concerns not just in relation to the quality of service delivery and the affordability to residents but also around long-term accountability.

3.2 There has also been a waterfall effect whereby service delivery has cascaded down to the lowest tier of local government. This has also in part been seen as a threat to established service delivery models as opposed to an opportunity for more creative and innovative models that could have a wider applicability across the District. It has ultimately led to a perception that 'new' East Devon households receive a lesser level of service delivery from the Council than established settlements.

3.3 These are difficult issues to grapple with given their inherent complexity and the need to engage a wide range of stakeholders. The key problem that needs to be solved is how best to deliver a mix and balance of high-quality public services that meets the changing needs of local residents in a cost-effective manner.

### **PAS review**

3.4 The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) were commissioned to undertake a review of how the Council supports the development of new communities. PAS is part of the Local Government Association and provides help, advice, support and training on planning and service delivery to councils in England. Two PAS members visited the District in early October 2023 and met with representatives of the District, County and Town Councils. The review focused on the Cranbrook New Community Team and the wider Planning Strategy and Development Management (PSDM) and Growth, Development & Prosperity (GDP) Services. It sought to assess the resources available across these services, examine how they work together to deliver new communities and understand the governance arrangements for overseeing this.

3.5 The subsequent report is contained at Appendix B. Cranbrook is described as in some ways a victim of its own success – there has been significant provision of affordable housing for families on the waiting list but this has led to concentrations of deprivation and particular pressure on family orientated services. Combined with the Covid pandemic and more recent cost of living crises facing the country, this has left communities like Cranbrook especially vulnerable.

3.6 The report makes a series of recommendations for improvements moving forward. These are set out below;

- 1) Consider a new staffing structure that has clearly defined roles for each officer and team. We would suggest that you need to focus this around three core functions - Planning, Infrastructure and Delivery and Monitoring and Compliance.
- 2) Review your processes in Development Management to make them more efficient and effective and release capacity for other work. For example, the PAS [Development Management Challenge Toolkit](#) provides one model for creating a more efficient and productive service.
- 3) Prioritise the progress of the Local Plan, recognising its clear role in determining the location and scale of any future development as well as setting a strong policy framework for a truly sustainable new community.
- 4) Create and/or communicate proper project management arrangements for the CBRE work across a wider range of staff. This must recognise the interdependency of this work and the local plan.
- 5) Establish a permanent chair for the Strategic Delivery Board and limit the attendance to those people that can make strategic decisions.
- 6) Ensure more operational matters for Cranbrook are addressed by the existing Partnership Board.
- 7) Create a high-level officer working group with responsibility for unblocking, stopping, and progressing issues across all key sites in the district.
- 8) Re-set and improve relationships with Cranbrook Town Council, establishing appropriate codes of conduct for meetings and integrating the Town Council into a wider forum for all parish and town councils in East Devon.
- 9) Work with other Council services to develop a more corporate approach to supporting the development of Cranbrook and the ongoing services that a community like Cranbrook needs as it develops.

3.7 This report specifically seeks to take forward recommendations 5) and 9). Work is also underway to progress the remaining recommendations in conjunction with the portfolio holder for Strategic Planning. This will include a further report to Strategic Planning Committee in relation to the current commission to develop both a masterplan and a business case for a delivery vehicle for the second new community. This relates to recommendations 3) and 4).

## **Governance**

### **Role of the Cranbrook Strategic Delivery Board**

3.8 The Cranbrook Strategic Delivery Board was established in 2020 to improve coordination between the Town, District and County Councils. The purpose of the Board was defined as follows;

- Provide a forum within which the three tiers of local government can promote coordinated and cohesive delivery of assets and services;
- Support the development of Cranbrook as a sustainable community by ensuring that there is a clear plan for the delivery of key community infrastructure, assets and services in the town in step with the growing population;
- Ensure that there is a strategic business case to support the delivery of assets and cost effective services on an ongoing basis.

3.9 Recommendation 5 from the PAS review concerns the chairing arrangements of the Board. These currently rotate on an annual basis between the three Councils with the recommendation that the group should be chaired permanently by an EDDC member going forward.

3.10 The PAS report has now been considered at a meeting of the Cranbrook Strategic Delivery Board. Subsequently a working group including representatives from the three organisations has met to agree revised Terms of Reference for the group going forward. These are set out in Appendix C and it is a specific recommendation of this report that these are endorsed. They draw substantially on the equivalent terms of reference for the Exmouth Placemaking Group.

### **Community Governance Review**

3.11 The parish of Cranbrook was created in 2014 following a community governance review. This led to the establishment of the Town Council in May 2015. The Cranbrook Plan anticipates the continued expansion of the town beyond the current 3,500 homes that currently have the benefit of planning permission to a total of circa 8,000 homes. This provides a prompt to consider whether the current boundary of the Cranbrook parish needs to be revisited.

3.12 Cabinet first considered this issue in March 2021. The community governance review process was then paused in November 2021 following the outcome of the consultation process. This was to enable the Cranbrook Plan to complete its preparation and adoption process, thereby giving a high degree of certainty as to the future extent of the town.

3.13 The Cranbrook Plan was adopted in October 2022. This forms the basis for determining the planning applications for the expansion of Cranbrook. Given that this framework is now in place this report recommends that the community governance review process is reactivated. Working with local communities and ward members, this will help to ensure that there is clarity as to the local civic/service delivery arrangements going forward.

3.14 Under the terms of the relevant legislation the District Council must aim to ensure that community governance in the area under review:-

- reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area
- is effective and convenient
- takes into account any other arrangements for the purpose of community representation or community engagement

When considering this, the Council should take into account a number of factors, including:

- the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- the size, population and boundaries of any new local community or parish

3.15 Subsequently the review will need to consider all options for setting administrative boundaries. These range from staying as is (i.e. no change) through to aligning the Cranbrook parish boundary with the Cranbrook Plan boundary with potential hybrid options between. The precise timing of the review will need to be confirmed with the expectation that this will take up to 12 months to complete.

## **4. Mix and balance of service delivery**

4.1 Recommendation 9 of the PAS report provides a prompt to revisit the mix and balance of service delivery including the role of the District Council. This needs to consider whether the Council would take on certain forms of service delivery that have a larger than local benefit going forward in order to bring greater convergence and equivalence with service delivery in established settlements. Clearly there would be potentially very significant financial implications arising from this approach that would not just be limited to Cranbrook but would extend to other major developments, both existing and forthcoming.

4.2 An alternative option would be to help bolster the role of the Town Council. Legal agreements to govern the delivery of infrastructure for the Cranbrook expansion areas are being negotiated

currently. These includes the following cascade for the management of a number of assets, including green space, play areas, sports pitches and sports pavilion;

- (i) The relevant Town or Parish Council (depending upon which Authority's jurisdiction the site falls within at the time of transfer)
- (ii) Another public body – such as the District Council
- (iii) A public holding organisation or community interest company
- (iv) A Management Company

4.3 Clearly this hierarchy anticipates the Town/Parish level continuing to perform an enhanced role going forward. There is a significant question of subsidiarity that needs to be considered – effectively what is the optimum at which certain services are best delivered? The existing direction of travel in terms of localism and decentralisation, set for example through the current Public Toilets Review, also needs to be considered.

4.4 It is a specific recommendation of this report that a strategic review of the Council's approach to supporting the delivery of services and community infrastructure in major new developments is undertaken. Careful consideration and assessment of the potential options is required, not least due to the potential financial implications. There is a potential opportunity for further innovation in service delivery which can build on some of the progress that has been made latterly, notably in relation to greater intervention from the Council to secure better outcomes than would be possible from a commercially-led approach alone.

4.5 Cranbrook has been part of national initiatives designed to develop new models of service delivery. This has included the NHS Healthy New Towns initiative and the current Sport England Local Delivery Pilot, aimed at tackling inactivity. This provides a potential platform from which to consider how services can be more closely tailored to meet local needs.

## **5. Resources**

5.1 This report recommends that both the Community Governance Review and the strategic review of the delivery of assets and services are undertaken. In order to move both of the reviews forward concurrently and with the requisite expertise, additional resource is required. The report recommends that a budget of up to £80k is made available. This will be used to ensure that additional administrative and consultancy support is in place to be able to expedite both reviews.

## **6. Conclusion**

6.1 The population of the District is growing rapidly. It is important to ensure that 'new' East Devon communities are supported by resilient and cost-effective service delivery that meets the needs of local residents. This is a complex and challenging area compounded by a prolonged period of austerity in relation to public finances. The Council faces a difficult balancing act in allocating limited resources across the entire district. There are also important considerations around subsidiarity and engagement with wider stakeholders.

6.2 This report takes stock of the current mix and balance of service delivery and the role played by the District Council. It also makes recommendations regarding future governance and administrative arrangement. The PAS report emphasises the importance of looking forward, working collaboratively and finding creative solutions. The recommendations in this report are intended to help provide a platform to achieve this.

**Financial implications:**

This is a direct request for an additional budget of £80k, because of the nature of the budget request being a one off amount and that it is in part to deliver financial options for funding local services going forward it is suggested that this sum is met from the Transformation Fund subject to Council approval of the budget. Although this is the direct financial implication the report does consider extremely important financial implications and how services can be funded particularly against a background of significantly reduced funding for Councils which is being flagged as a position that is likely to become more severe.

**Legal implications:**

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report.

## Appendix A

Extract from 'Options for Service Provision and Governance', Andrews, L. & Smith, W.R. (December 2003)

### Overview

'We are committed to thriving, vibrant, sustainable communities. The Sustainable Communities Plan ... is about people, helping them to live where they want with pride in their community' (ODPM website – statement to mark the launch of the Sustainable Communities Plan). This is the Government's policy aspiration for new communities like the one proposed for East Devon.

At the local level, these major new development are brought forward by developers in response to new building requirements set out in local and regional government planning guidance. These developer led proposals are likely to be site contained, will seek to minimise risk and are likely to be brought forward on terms which just comply with existing building and other legal or regulatory frameworks. Moreover, the holding of land ownership by a developer consortium weights the balance of power in their favour.

Local authorities have a broader perspective and remit and are likely to want to see new developments that are integrated into a wider socio economic context and geographical area and where all aspects of the development process reflect current best practice. This latter ambition is likely to mean standards and amenities that exceed current minimum requirements. Local authorities and other public service providers are likely to have a relatively poor appreciation of the risks involved in the development process and of the impact which effective risk management can have on the deliverability of an overall scheme and specific elements within it.

These differences in perspective are likely to be manifest in many aspects of the proposals for major development. They may have a disproportionately big impact on proposals for public service provision and governance structures. Public service provision requires major capital investment and in the present public policy framework this is likely to mean putting together relatively complex public-private partnership funding deals and partnering arrangements for project delivery and subsequent management. These are often time consuming and expensive processes which require a level of expertise and resourcing that is unlikely to be available to most local authorities.

At the same time developers, planners and public service providers have a strong interest in bringing to market a new community which is attractive to purchasers and renters in different income and age groups and which quickly acquires a positive reputation as a place to live, as a service focus for people living in the surrounding area and as a place to visit.

This shared interest means that there is the potential to bring developments forward in a way that meets the expectations of the different parties. This is however, likely to mean compromises all round. It also requires a public service strategic partnership capable of developing a strong business case for specific scheme elements and including within that firm commitments for ongoing income generation. It will also mean thinking creatively about how public service provision can be brought forward.

Appendix B

Planning Advisory Service Report



**East Devon District Council  
Governance and Resource Review  
Feedback Report: 6 December 2023**

**1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS**

1.1 East Devon District Council has a track record of bringing forward large-scale housing and economic development, the majority of which has been focused on the west of the district in an area known as the West End. As well as the new community of Cranbrook, the West End is the focus for several strategic employment sites and the Local Plan states that it will accommodate 40% of the district's strategic housing requirement with the potential for a second new community to enable continued growth.

1.2 Taken together, the Local Plan and the Council's ambition for the West End are key elements of delivering the Council Plan and its strategic priorities for:

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

1.3 Working within this strategic context, the aim of this review is to help the Council ensure that it is set up, structured, and resourced to support the delivery of further new communities into the future. Challenging the Council in a constructive and enabling way, this review focused on the Cranbrook New Community Team and the wider Planning Strategy and Development Management (PSDM) service as well as Growth, Development and Prosperity (GDP) Services. It sought to assess the resources available across these services, examine how they work together to deliver new communities and understand the governance arrangements for overseeing this.

1.4 The review was undertaken by Anna Rose and Garreth Bruff of the Planning Advisory Service (PAS). PAS is part of the Local Government Association (LGA) and provides high quality help, advice, support and training on planning and service delivery to councils in England. The PAS team reviewed a range of background information from the Council and spent two days in East Devon meeting Council officers, senior elected members, town councillors and a range of other key stakeholders. The recommendations are based on what we heard in these sessions and our analysis of the evidence provided. All those interviewed were friendly and welcoming and engaged fully with the process and are thanked for providing their honest opinions and feedback.

## 2. CONTEXT AND KEY MESSAGES

2.1 The successful development of Cranbrook as a new settlement is something that the Council should be proud of – it has delivered new homes at scale for local people, including most of the district's new affordable homes. The town has a unique age profile for the district, attracting younger people and families with many on lower-than-average incomes. There have also been massive achievements regarding the site's school, country park and rail provision and Cranbrook fulfils a strategically important need for East Devon as a whole. However, any development of this scale has a legacy which is both good and bad, with lessons learned as well as areas for improvement for the Council. In the long-term delivery of a new community, there will always be triumphs and disappointments; the key is learning and moving on.

2.2 Yet, PAS saw and heard a consistent theme of making up for lost time and a distinct tendency to focus on the negatives of the past – delays to developing the town centre, a “painful” S106 process, poor relationships between district and the town council, a lack of planning enforcement, the problem of on-street parking and the struggle to fund amenities like public toilets and open space provision, etc.

2.3 Organisations and professionals learn from experience, but we are keen to emphasise the importance of looking ahead - we can't change the past, so looking forward with the benefits of past experience is the only way to progress. Based on our review, we want to highlight a few key messages to help ensure that work continues to develop, and the Council continues to look forward positively to the next new settlement. These are:

- Some excellent people are investing their time and energy into Cranbrook; they are motivated by the need for better outcomes and working together despite the sub-optimal conditions. This should be starting point for any new proposals.
- There is a sense of people defending their positions in the delivery of Cranbrook, ie officers and councillors defending their role with regards to the historical development of Cranbrook, justifying actions in light of the recent history or in response to the behaviour of others. This leads to poor behaviours being displayed. It is affecting morale across the board and needs to be addressed.
- There needs to be more clarity around roles and responsibilities across the PSDM and GDP Services. Whilst we encourage flexibility and ambition, this must come with a foundation and vision for what the structure and roles are designed to achieve. This means that when changes are required, you know why and how you will implement them. A blurring of functions has created a system based on individual preferences and emerging needs rather than the agreed priorities, and this has happened organically over time.



- Related to the above point, there is a tendency towards mission creep as officers get drawn into work outside their immediate role. The Council has clear service plans which set out expectations and direct resources, these need to be applied more rigorously to avoid mission creep and reduce the risk of raising expectations with local communities that cannot be met by the Council.

### **3. STRUCTURES: EXISTING AND TRAJECTORY TOWARDS A NEW COMMUNITY**

3.1 The focus and priorities for Cranbrook are set out in the Cranbrook Plan and the associated Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Although the plan arrived relatively late in the development of Cranbrook, it is a major piece of work and strong basis for the future. There is the passion, commitment and ambition to deliver these plans and they should become the focal point for all Council services.

3.2 There are also strong relationships between the statutory layers of governance and their planning services, with both Devon County Council and East Devon District Council prioritising Cranbrook and wider growth ambitions in the West End. Within East Devon, we found that the relationships of officers in different council services are also working well with a shared commitment to the new settlement. For example, the Cranbrook New Community team in PSDM work very closely with the Delivery Team in GDP Services and there is a strong professional rapport between senior managers for both service areas.

3.3 Overall, therefore, we feel that the Council is adequately resourced and has an impressive range of skills to deliver their agenda for growth and a new settlement. However, there are challenges, and we feel that current arrangements could be improved to make better use of the capacity available for new settlements in the future.

3.4 The clarity of roles and responsibilities isn't always straightforward. The blurring of roles and responsibilities is seen most starkly between the Cranbrook New Community team in PSDM and the economic development and planning parts of the GDP Services. It is most likely that this has happened over time and fits with the skill sets of the current role holders. PAS was not convinced that this situation fitted the planning service's requirements or the delivery function. Of most significant concern was the tendency of planning to be the poor relation of delivery in decision making, with the focus on delivery sometimes overriding other planning matters. Planning officers always need to understand their role in helping to deliver development, but there needs to be clear distinctions between the development management responsibilities of the New Community team and the desire to deliver schemes in Cranbrook to avoid officers being placed in a compromising position.

3.5 There is a clear intention to "go above and beyond" their current role for many individual officers. This is laudable but needs to be better aligned with operational priorities and the

strategic plan of the Council to avoid to avoid the risk of activity falling outside of an agreed position. We were provided with Service Plans for both PDSM and GDP Services after the review took place. These need to be applied more rigorously by senior managers to ensure that the work of officers does not go beyond the scope of the plans. It is for the Council to decide on priorities and for sufficient resources and delegation to deliver them. We detected a need for clear direction to set good practices in place.

3.6 Whilst the two key services are adequately resourced, they are only sometimes in the right places and current structures appear to allow too much flexibility around some roles rather than focus on the needs of the Council to deliver on priorities. More widely, there is also a need for greater focus on the importance of infrastructure and infrastructure funding across all areas East Devon, but especially in the West End. At the time of the review, there was no dedicated team working on these issues and the most significant gaps appear to be in maximising the use of developer contributions through Community Infrastructure Levy or Section 106 funding as well as ensuring compliance and enforcement across Cranbrook and East Devon as a whole.

3.7 To service this and other current priorities, as well as address wider issues raised in this report, it may be necessary to consider where the Council can move resources in the existing structure to match such priorities, setting clearer objectives for teams and lines of accountability to their managers.

#### **4. GOVERNANCE: EXISTING AND TRAJECTORY FOR A NEW COMMUNITY**

4.1 We saw a real commitment from the political leadership of East Devon District Council to deliver Cranbrook and develop a further new community should the local plan determine that this is the most appropriate strategy. In this, the Council Leader and Portfolio Holder for planning clearly stated the need to maximise democratic engagement, and there was real ambition around a new delivery vehicle to enable development at pace and of real quality.

4.2 Learning from the experience of a developer-led approach to Cranbrook, the administration would like to see East Devon District Council take a much more active role in any new community coming forward. Although there was much criticism of the current Strategic Delivery Board, we were told that the absence of this level of meeting previously was a much worse situation and to be mindful of not returning to this.

4.3 Although there was clear political support for Cranbrook and the teams working on it, identifying a lead politician at either the County Council or the District Council was challenging. This needs remedying and a political champion for Cranbrook and further new communities needs to be agreed by the Council at Cabinet level. Building on this, we also feel that there is a lack of strategic discussion and response to Cranbrook at the current time. Although the Council's Cabinet has ultimate responsibility for decisions on new settlements, this was not always clear in the meetings we held and we did not

always know where the higher level, strategic discussions were being made prior to Cabinet decisions. The Strategic Delivery Board is not a decision-making body, and from recent agendas, it appears to be dealing with operational rather than strategic matters. This overlaps with a partnership board that is set up to deal with operational issues, e.g., highway maintenance, enforcement, local services, and there is a lack of a strategic overview for the continued development of the settlement.

4.4 Working relationships between the District Council, County Council and Town Council could also be better. The Strategic Delivery Board that brings these parties together is mainly valued by County Council officers. Officers of East Devon DC and members and officers of the Town Council describe a hostile atmosphere with little constructive discussion and an environment they can find negative or confrontational. Clearly this cannot continue and there is a need to preserve the positive elements of the Delivery Board and ensure it is a constructive environment for all participants.

4.5 For example, Cranbrook Town Council describe themselves as operating as the other town councils in the district but without the same level of service or investment from the District Council. In some ways this is an understandable position, as the management and maintenance of infrastructure and key local amenities like public toilets, community centres and open space are expected to be funded by developer contributions or an estate rent charge rather than East Devon District Council. Although this arrangement was established several years ago and is not unusual for new settlements, there is a feeling within the Town Council that priority is given to the more established coastal areas and that the decision of the District Council "to stop funding" the stewardship and provision of infrastructure on new developments has disproportionately affected the residents of Cranbrook.

4.6 In some ways Cranbrook is a victim of its own success, and this is driving some of these frustrations by the Town Council. The success of the new community in providing affordable housing for families on the waiting list has led to relatively high levels of deprivation concentrated in this area. Combined with the Covid pandemic and more recent cost of living crises facing the country, this has left communities like Cranbrook especially vulnerable. East Devon's decision to stop funding stewardship and infrastructure in new developments, while understandably motivated by budget limitations, has nevertheless compounded the challenges faced by this neighbourhood. The provision of affordable housing and community infrastructure received a lot of discussion during the preparation of the Cranbrook plan; although the actual proportion of affordable housing being delivered in Cranbrook through planning is now reduced there is an ongoing issue about the long-term maintenance of community infrastructure and other support services. This appears as a conflict area in planning, yet it is a wider issue regarding the council's broader role to support those most in need and so needs to be addressed by the Council corporately rather than just the planning service.

4.7 Moving forward, the council faces a difficult balancing act in allocating limited resources across the entire district. With open communication and creative solutions, the council and community can hopefully find common ground and collaborate on a path forward.

## **5.0 MAKING IMPROVEMENTS**

5.1 Based on our analysis, and the points made above, we believe that several improvements could be made by the Council in supporting arrangements for new communities in the future. Based on the brief we were given; these improvements are focused on the structure of the Council's services and local governance arrangements. We also feel that we need to extend our scope a little to look at how the Council is currently employing consultants to support their growth ambitions. These points are set out below.

### **Staffing structures**

5.2 The PSDM service and GDP Services need to be restructured to meet the Council's current needs and priorities to deliver new communities. We suggest you need to create this new structure around three clear functions –Planning; Infrastructure and Delivery; and Monitoring and Compliance which could form the basic building blocks for the future. Any teams focused around these three functions will clearly need to work closely, but each should have a distinct and complementary role in delivering new communities as well as the wider economic and planning ambitions of the Council.

5.3 The new local plan is critical to any future decision about development in East Devon and particularly for the West End area. Although its production and adoption are being prioritised by the Council, it still needs to be brought more centrally into the current thinking on new communities and to do so in a way that officers and stakeholders can understand. The new local plan will provide the vision and policy framework for a new settlement as well as ensure that the problems of Cranbrook are not repeated. For example, the local plan can set out the strategic role of a new settlement, the infrastructure it will require and a basis for delivering this through developer contributions. As the plan progresses, it will also be a critical vehicle for engaging existing communities and other key stakeholders, building a consensus for the approach as well as articulating this through policies on design, environmental standards, active travel, public transport and all the other ingredients that are needed to create a truly sustainable community.

5.4 To achieve this, though, will require focus, investment and a primacy of position for the local plan amongst both the political and officer leadership of the Council as a whole. We recommend that rather than focusing on making up for the past; you put your energy into creating a means of using your learning for the future, channelling this through the new local plan. Evaluation, monitoring, clear plans, and priorities will be a significant step forward.

5.5 We were also told that some of the wider development management processes in the Council are inefficient or could be improved. Several examples of this were sent to us whilst we were on site. For example, there is a need for a simplified process for managers to sign off officer reports (including conditions and Non-Material Amendment letters), utilising the Uniform software system rather than emails outside of this so that decisions can be easily tracked and recorded more accurately.

5.6 Similarly, lead in times for Chair's delegation and planning committee reports could also be improved. For a minor application, officers must be ready to make a recommendation on week three or four of the process to ensure it is determined on time by the planning committee. For decisions delegated to the Chair, officers need to be ready to recommend early as the report must be reviewed by managers before going to ward members for three working days and then to the Chair. The current scheme of delegation can also lead to a high proportion of applications being called into committee, increasing workloads for officers, and creating long planning committee meetings.

5.7 Although these may seem minor issues in the wider context of new communities, we believe that some quick wins would drive efficiencies in the service, releasing capacity for improving performance and meeting the broader council priorities.

#### Use of consultants

5.8 As part of the background documents, PAS was given the original September 2021 brief for a consultant to produce a business case for a delivery vehicle to support large scale delivery. We understand that this contract has been let to CBRE.

5.9 This is a critical piece of work for the Council, which will produce some significant pieces of evidence and enable key decisions on a new settlement that have wide implications for the planning service. However, the progress and outputs from the work seems to be poorly understood by many of the officers we met. Local teams know that consultants are working on a delivery vehicle but do not understand the scope of this work and when they could expect to hear about any findings. This, we suggest, could make it difficult to maximise the benefits of the work and, importantly, may compromise progress on the local plan.

5.10 Annex 1 summarises the key elements of the consultant brief. Much of the work outlined will be central to the content of the local plan – for example, the first four stages of the work summarised in Box 1 would be necessary evidence for any Local Plan. We don't know the details of the CBRE contract with East Devon District Council, but would emphasise the need for this work and the work on the local plan to remain very closely aligned to support their interdependency. For example, the planning policy team can play a more central role in shaping and responding to the work in order to ensure it meets their needs for the local plan.

## **Governance**

5.11 The Strategic Delivery Board needs to be discussing strategic issues. If it continues to be operational, it duplicates the Partnership Board and risks mixed messages and confusion between parties. If this board were also chaired and led by East Devon District Council, through the Leader or Chief Executive, this would create a greater sense of ownership by the Council and enable the Board to be properly focused on the long term needs of Cranbrook. In the short to medium term, we suggest limiting the membership of this group to senior officers and elected members to address current working practices, creating a more constructive dialogue between partners and properly focused programme of work. The partnership board appears to be valued and working well, so is more ideally placed to discuss and resolve operational issues as they arise.

5.12 Looking within East Devon District Council, we suggest a dedicated and high-level officer working group for district and county council officers is established. This should take on a programme management role, being used to unblock problems, stop unnecessary work, and focus efforts on progressing key sites across the whole of the West End area. Cranbrook is the most significant development, yet there are other schemes the Council is responsible for delivering. A six weekly meeting that addresses the issues, improves overall performance, and drives better working practices and consistency will benefit all of these.

5.13 Despite efforts to improve on both sides, East Devon District Council's relationship with Cranbrook Town Council has broken down. We heard about worrying behaviours and conduct from both East Devon officers and Town Council officials; this is inappropriate and needs addressing as a matter of urgency. This issue goes beyond the remit of this review and should be considered through the forthcoming Corporate Peer Challenge for East Devon District Council.

5.14 In the immediate future, though, we suggest that East Devon seeks to re-set and improve the way that Cranbrook Town Council is considered by officers and elected members. As noted above, the governance of Cranbrook can be revised so that the strategic and the operational bodies have clear roles and responsibilities. Senior officers should become the contact point for the Town Council and an appropriate code of conduct agreed for all meetings between the parties. More widely, Cranbrook Town Council needs to be treated alongside other town and parish councils in the district, part of a local town and parish forum or group which East Devon District Council meets on a timetabled basis to discuss significant planning schemes and other relevant development issues.

## 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Consider a new staffing structure that has clearly defined roles for each officer and team. We would suggest that you need to focus this around three core functions - Planning, Infrastructure and Delivery and Monitoring and Compliance.
- 2) Review your processes in Development Management to make them more efficient and effective and release capacity for other work. For example, the PAS [Development Management Challenge Toolkit](#) provides one model for creating a more efficient and productive service.
- 3) Prioritise the progress of the Local Plan, recognising its clear role in determining the location and scale of any future development as well as setting a strong policy framework for a truly sustainable new community.
- 4) Create and/or communicate proper project management arrangements for the CBRE work across a wider range of staff. This must recognise the interdependency of this work and the local plan.
- 5) Establish a permanent chair for the Strategic Delivery Board and limit the attendance to those people that can make strategic decisions.
- 6) Ensure more operational matters for Cranbrook are addressed by the existing Partnership Board.
- 7) Create a high-level officer working group with responsibility for unblocking, stopping, and progressing issues across all key sites in the district.
- 8) Re-set and improve relationships with Cranbrook Town Council, establishing appropriate codes of conduct for meetings and integrating the Town Council into a wider forum for all parish and town councils in East Devon.
- 9) Work with other Council services to develop a more corporate approach to supporting the development of Cranbrook and the ongoing services that a community like Cranbrook needs as it develops.

## **Annex One**

### **Box 1: Excerpt taken from tender brief dated September 2021**

The Council is looking to commission a multi-disciplinary team of consultants to help set an ambitious vision for such proposals and to ingrain high quality place making outcomes from the outset of the process. This includes focusing on the delivery issues and infrastructure requirements associated with each proposal which, due to the scale and extent of the proposals, is considered to require more detailed assessment. Subject to the progression of the Local Plan review it is expected that this will ultimately culminate in a business plan for the establishment of a delivery vehicle (up to and including the formation of a Development Corporation) to support such development.

It is anticipated that the following stages will be part of the commission:

1) Review of options for the choice, form, and location of new community proposals – a number of large-scale proposals have been promoted through the initial call for sites process. The commission will help to ensure that there is a robust evidence base to inform the selection of development proposals in terms of the ability to secure key outcomes in line with the NPPF considerations.

A full understanding of what infrastructure is needed, and the associated costs will be required to assess the viability and deliverability of each option. The review will also need to consider the parties involved in each option and the governance arrangements and delivery vehicles they propose.

2) Vision– to work with Council officers and members to develop a 30-year vision for a new community in the district which sets out the Council's requirements in the form of a set of criteria against which the options and their proposed delivery vehicles can be assessed.

3) Initial Options Appraisal – to use the vision and criteria developed at stage 2 to assess the major development options and make an initial recommendation to be considered alongside a draft Local Plan for consultation.

4) Masterplan – Following consultation on the draft Local Plan and consideration of responses to each of the options a proposed site for allocation will be identified and the consultant team will then be expected to undertake a master planning exercise for this site in consultation with key consultees and through a process of community engagement.

5) Preferred delivery option/model – this will include all necessary stakeholder engagement to help define the preferred option for the delivery vehicle to bring forward the preferred new community option.

6) Business case – to include final modelling of infrastructure costs, indicative viability assessment and long-term stewardship and legacy arrangements.



## Appendix C

## Cranbrook Placemaking Group – Proposed Terms of Reference

## **Terms of Reference for the Cranbrook Placemaking Group (hereafter referred to as the 'Group')**

### **Purpose**

To provide oversight of the development of Cranbrook on strategic matters that impact on the delivery of the town as a whole and to work to co-ordinate responses and unlock issues affecting delivery that are of concern to all three tiers of local government.

### **Objectives**

- To provide a reference group of County, District and Town Councillors with officer support to inform the ongoing growth and development of Cranbrook so as to achieve the aims and objectives of the Cranbrook Plan
- To liaise with and share information between the three tiers of local government and with relevant Stakeholder groups as appropriate
- To make recommendations to East Devon District Council's Cabinet on the development and management of place making in Cranbrook
- To receive briefings and reports from officers and to act as a point of reference for the successful delivery of place making in Cranbrook
- To monitor progress on achieving the delivery of the Cranbrook Plan and the masterplan for Cranbrook town centre
- To advise on and input to external expert and professional consultancy
- To support further engagement of public and stakeholders
- To promote best practice, help overcome barriers and promote optimal outcomes for the benefit of place making in Cranbrook recognising the commercially driven delivery model and the enhanced role for the Town Council
- To provide a forum for engaging with developers to address specific delivery challenges
- To promote continuous improvement, actively learning lessons from previous experience

The Group has been established to support the coordinated development of Cranbrook as a new community. It will act in an advisory capacity and will provide advice to each tier of local government. Executive decision making and financial decisions will remain the remit of each individual

Authority, but any views expressed by the Board will carry weight as a material consideration in any decisions taken by the respective authority.

## **Membership:**

*From Cranbrook Town Council*

Chair

*From Devon County Council*

Ward members

*From East Devon District Council;*

Ward Members, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning

*Support officers;*

Clerk of Cranbrook Town Council

Assistant Director - Planning Strategy and Development Management, EDDC

Assistant Director – Growth, Development & Prosperity, EDDC

Senior Planning Manager, DCC

**Chair:** The Chair will be an elected member from East Devon District Council

Meetings: A minimum of six times per year

Venue: Meetings will be held at a venue in Cranbrook.

## **External Partners**

Attendance will normally be limited to members of the Board from the three authorities. Other parties may be invited to join the meeting as

appropriate where the Board agrees that their involvement is beneficial. Agendas will be timetabled to facilitate this process.

### **Administrative Support**

The secretariat for the Board will be provided by East Devon District Council. The secretariat will minute all meetings and record any actions arising therefrom.

Agendas will include a standard item requiring declarations of interests to be made. Members with a disclosable financial or personal interest in respect of a particular matter being considered by the Board should act in accordance with the Councillor's Code of Conduct of the relevant organisation that they represent.

Meetings of the Group will be open to the public (Part A) but may have a private part to the meeting (Part B) to discuss confidential and sensitive matters.

To ensure that there is public awareness of the Group's activities, discussions and project progress, notes of meetings will be publicly available and published as part of the District Council's Cabinet agendas.

**Decision making:** Decision around advice will, as far as it possible, be by consensus. In the event that this is not possible areas of disagreement and the position of individual organisations will be recorded and recognised in the subsequent advice/recommendations.

**Review:** The group's terms of reference will be reviewed every two years.

Report to: Council



Date of Meeting 17 July 2024

Document classification: Part B Confidential

Exemption applied: Para 3 Schedule 12A Information relating to the finance or business affairs of any particular person

Review date for release N/A

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## **Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28 – Recommendation from Cabinet on 5 June 2024**

### **Report summary:**

This report sets out the Cabinet recommendation to Council arising from their consideration of a report Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2028 at their meeting on 5 June 2024.

Note: The references in this report to Paper A relate to the relevant report considered by the Cabinet with recommendations for Full Council to consider and are appended to this report for reference.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### **Recommendation:**

That Council adopt the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2028.

### **Reason for recommendation:**

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory obligation on local authorities to undertake a review of homelessness in their area and develop and publish a strategy to prevent homelessness based on the findings of the review.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk) )

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Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 5 June 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28

### Report summary:

To present the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28 for approval and adoption as required by the Homelessness Act 2002.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That Cabinet recommend to Council to adopt the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2028.

### Reason for recommendation:

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory obligation on local authorities to undertake a review of homelessness in their area and develop and publish a strategy to prevent homelessness based on the findings of the review.

Officer: Andrew Mitchell, Housing Solutions Manager [amitchell@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:amitchell@eastdevon.gov.uk)

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

**Links to background information** [Cabinet report 29 November 2023](#) item 89

**Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
- 

## Report in full

### 1. Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28

- 1.1 The previous Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy covered the financial year until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. A new strategy to cover the period from April 2024 to March 2029 has been composed following a comprehensive review of the current strategy and a period of consultation, all of which has helped to shape the new strategy and our approach to tackling homelessness over the next few years. We intend to publish the new strategy, subject to approval, in June 2024.
  - 1.2 Throughout the period from July 2023 to September 2023 we ran a series of focus groups with former service users, councillors, staff members and partner agencies and organisations concentrating on tackling homelessness to address what works well, what barriers we face and where we could adapt our practices to do better. The feedback and results of these sessions contributed towards the draft strategy which was put out for public consultation between November 2023 and January 2024.
  - 1.3 Feedback from the consultation exercise was reviewed and, in summary, there were some helpful comments and valid suggestions that will be added to our live action plan which includes specific actions aimed at achieving the objectives highlighted within the strategy.
  - 1.4 Our Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-28 is presented in full as Appendix 1. It explains why we have prepared this strategy, the strategic context and influences on homelessness locally and nationally, and our delivery plan.
  - 1.5 Our key priorities are, as identified through consultation with focus groups:
    - Maximising prevention activity and supporting people to sustain existing tenancies.
    - Increasing the range of accommodation solutions available.
    - Ending rough sleeping.
  - 1.6 Following adoption of the strategy we will:
    - Publish the strategy.
    - Continue to oversee implementation of the strategy through the Homelessness Strategy Review Group, made up of former service users, the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Homes & Communities, representatives from partner agencies and organisations and staff members. The group meet on a quarterly basis to review the ongoing, live homelessness action plan and progress in general.
    - Report progress to Cabinet against outcome and evaluation measurements.
- 

### Financial implications:

No financial implications have been included within the report. Currently the Renter's Reform Bill is being scrutinised by government once approved the changes made to the bill may have a financial implication for East Devon District Council but to date are unknown.

**Legal implications:**

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their district. The strategy must be renewed at least every 5 years. The social services authority must provide reasonable assistance. The strategy must set out the authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support are or will be available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so in its authority area.

# Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024–28

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[eastdevon.gov.uk/homelessness](https://eastdevon.gov.uk/homelessness)



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# Portfolio holder foreword



Councillor Dan Ledger  
Sustainable Homes and Communities

I am really pleased to be introducing you to East Devon District Council's new Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024–28. The strategy outlines how we will be preventing and tackling homelessness including rough sleeping through our three key strategic priorities that have been updated since the last strategy to reflect the review carried out.

The three key strategic priorities for East Devon District Council are:

- Maximising prevention activities and supporting people to sustain existing tenancies
- Increasing the range of accommodation solutions available
- Ending rough sleeping

This strategy offers exciting opportunities for collaborative working across the statutory and voluntary sectors, to maximise the delivery of homelessness prevention and support services across the district.

We will also continue to prioritise the prevention of homelessness in these challenging times and provide a refuge for households fleeing domestic abuse, whilst taking a sensitive approach to making some homes available for Ukrainian and wider refugees fleeing war and persecution.

Additionally, the team are actively engaged in ending rough sleeping and ensuring a suitable pathway approach is available for those individuals who have been rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping on our streets.

Photo: Kyle Baker Photography

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory obligation on local authorities to undertake a review of homelessness in their area and to develop and publish a strategy to prevent homelessness based on the findings of the review.

Homelessness can affect individuals and families and there is no typical 'homeless person'. The legal definition states that somebody is homeless if there is no accommodation that they are entitled to occupy or if they have accommodation, but it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy this accommodation. A person is also considered to be 'threatened with homelessness' if it is likely that they will become homeless within 56 days.

There is much focus on rough sleepers throughout this strategy although within East Devon rough sleepers form a relatively small proportion of the homelessness cases that we assist with. In East Devon the main causes of homelessness over the last five years have been the loss of accommodation in the private sector followed by family evictions.

As a local authority we acknowledge the need to work in partnership to ensure we reach those in need of support at the earliest possible stage. It is widely recognised that housing is not always the single solution and that services need to work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for households.

We will endeavour to not only work in partnership with agencies, but also expand on co-production opportunities, so that those with lived experience are given a voice and a place at the table to enable us to overcome local and national issues. There is no single reason why someone can end up without a home and we are committed to a person-centred approach with the right support to ensure positive outcomes.

Our starting point is prevention and early intervention, working to deliver the Council Plan commitment to providing better homes and communities for all. A key priority within our Housing Strategy is to provide a housing options service for all who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

## National and local challenges

The landscape we are working in has changed significantly in the last five years, with an increase in approaches for homelessness assistance. Our strategy will seek ways to address them to enable us to meet our priorities.



### **Help for people with support needs**

There has been an increase in people presenting as homeless (or at risk of homelessness) who have complex needs that require additional support, from 13% in 2021/22 to 17% in 2023/24.

There is only one supported accommodation project based in East Devon. At any one time, this project provides a suitable accommodation option for 23 vulnerable residents with support needs and works to enable people to move on to more settled accommodation. This project does not cover all support needs, so we rely on access to other services in neighbouring districts as well.

Due to Devon County Council's funding position, all this provision is at risk. The strategy action plan will need to consider how the potential loss of supported accommodation provision would impact on our residents, and what alternative options may be available.



### Cost of living crisis

The lack of affordable housing has been made worse by the cost-of-living crisis. This was triggered in part by the demand for fuel related to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Food prices have increased substantially. According to the Office of National Statistics, the overall price of food and non-alcoholic beverages rose by around 25% between January 2022 and January 2024.

In the previous ten years, overall prices rose by just 9%. This has left many households having to make difficult choices about how they prioritise food, housing and heating costs. This has led to rent arrears, evictions and then difficulties in finding alternative accommodation. As a social landlord, our strategy action plan needs to encompass our landlord responsibilities in addition to our statutory duties to prevent and relieve homelessness.



### Housing affordability and availability

There is huge demand for all types of housing, but particularly in the private rented sector. Changes to rules and regulations for landlords proposed by the Rent Reform Bill, which include banning 'no fault' evictions and increased energy efficiency requirements, have prompted a number of landlords to leave the market.

As demand for private sector housing outweighs the supply, rental costs have continued to rise. Between 2017/18 and 2021/22 the median monthly private rental figures have increased by at least 8%, with one and two bed properties being over 10% more expensive. This has made the sector unaffordable for many of our residents. Furthermore, the disparity between social tenures impacts on affordability, with affordable rents at around 80% of market rents as opposed to the traditional social rent which sits around 60% of market rents.

The strategy action plan will need to consider what action can be taken to increase the availability of truly affordable housing, both through new developments and existing housing options.



### Housing for refugees

East Devon District Council is committed to supporting the Home Office in the resettlement of refugees. This includes those from Ukraine and Afghanistan arriving through specific national schemes, but also refugees from other countries who may have arrived through alternative routes.

We have experienced an increase in homelessness applications from refugees owing to the closure of and eviction from bridging and asylum hotels. Whilst we continue to work with the government, our strategy action plan will need to consider this additional pressure on our housing supply and how best we can support vulnerable refugees.



73%   
owner-occupied homes

16% **private rented**  
20% national  
average

10% **social rented**  
17% national  
average

### Population and area overview

In 2021 the mid-year population estimates put East Devon's population at 152,120. This is a rise of 19,663 (6%) from the last census figure in 2011. East Devon has an older age profile with the median age of its residents being 50.9 years (the national equivalent is 40.7 years).

### Deprivation

Overall, the district is relatively well-off and is in the 40% least deprived districts nationally; it is also one of the lowest crime rate areas in Britain. However, there are pockets within the district where deprivation is high.

### Salaries in East Devon

The average salary in East Devon in 2023 was £32,799 compared with £35,536.80 for England as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

### Housing in East Devon

There is a shortage of rented accommodation in our district. The 2021 census figures show there were 66,786 dwellings listed in East Devon. 73% of these homes are owner-occupied, 10% are defined as social rented housing (17% national average), and 16% privately rented (20% nationally).

As at January 2024, East Devon District Council currently owns 4,172 properties. 2,825 of these are classified as general needs properties, and 1,347 are sheltered properties where residents have access to alarm and support services through Home Safeguard. Social housing is also provided by 11 housing associations with roughly 2,650 homes in East Devon.

East Devon District Council is signed up to Devon Home Choice, alongside several other councils and housing associations, to manage the allocation of social housing for local residents.

<sup>1</sup> Map data © Crown Copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023746

<sup>2</sup> Office of National Statistics: annual survey of hours and earnings 2023

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## How this strategy was formed

This strategy has been produced in consultation with both internal and external partners. It sets out our broad strategic aims for preventing homelessness and rough sleeping. A live and evolving action plan will sit alongside this, providing more detail on how we intend to meet our objectives. This plan will be published on our website.

We have developed the strategy through consideration of national and local policy, analysing our local need, reviewing our previous priorities, recognising our achievements and bench marking our statistical data against other local authorities. We have also aligned the new strategy with wider East Devon District Council strategies and policies to ensure that our approach to tackling homelessness links to broader council objectives.

In preparation for the development of this strategy we held six focus groups. We talked with councillors, council staff, and our external partners and charities who work with people in homeless situations. We also spoke with former service users to gain a clear perspective of experiencing homelessness.

These focus groups discussed what currently works well, and where we could do better. They also addressed barriers to preventing homelessness and rough sleeping and how we could adapt our approach to overcome them.

We used the findings of these discussions to produce a draft strategy document which we published as part of our six week public consultation. Opinions were sought on the strategic priorities, challenges and overall content of the strategy. We were grateful for the constructive responses we received – the majority reinforced the approach we planned to adopt. Suggestions for specific actions we could take to meet our priorities were also provided. These will be considered as we develop our action plan to support the delivery of this strategy.



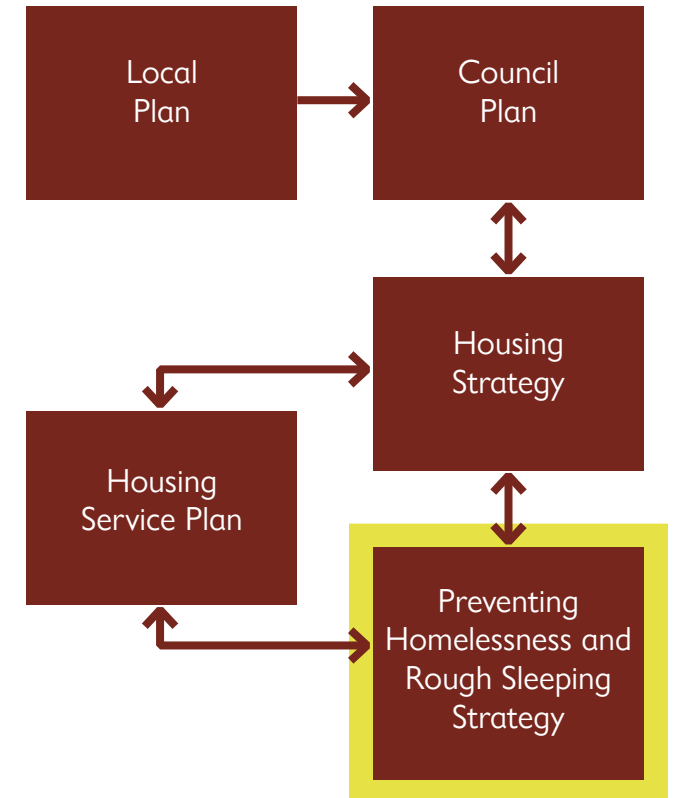
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## Strategic context

This strategy will set out how the council and its partners will work to reduce homelessness, end rough sleeping, and contribute towards the over-riding vision of the Housing Strategy to 'provide a decent home for all residents of East Devon'. It has been shaped to consider and address the changes to the housing environment and we will set out what our key priorities will be in tackling homelessness over the next five years.

Within East Devon, there are a number of policies and strategies that link either directly or indirectly with the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. It is important to map how the strategy feeds into overarching council strategies to ensure that the needs of people who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless are included and addressed.

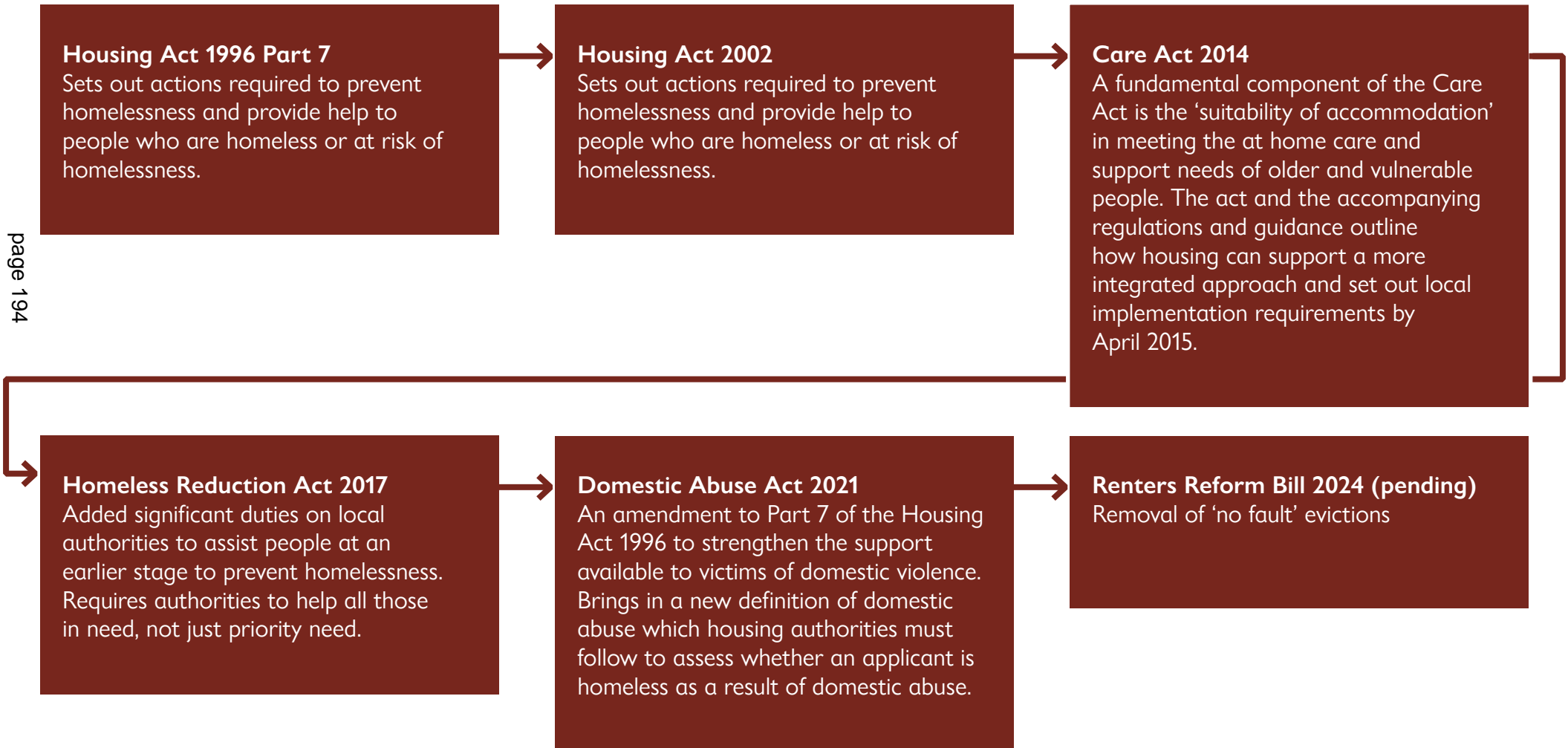
### How our plans and strategies fit together:



## National and local challenges

### Key legislation

Our strategy is also bound by legislation that has developed over the last 30 years:



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### **Maximising prevention activity and supporting people to sustain tenancies**

Preventing people from becoming homeless has always been a key priority for us and we have a successful record of accomplishment in this area. We work closely with our Financial Resilience team to help us give financial support to residents, as well as offering guidance through our Housing teams and signposting to other debt support agencies.

We have recruited Temporary Accommodation Officers who work with households to prepare them for their move into more stable accommodation options, and our Private Sector Liaison Officers not only help source housing in the private sector but also support both tenant and landlord to maintain tenancies. To build on this excellent work, we have increased our efforts to support households to sustain tenancies, in response to the increased demand for assistance and the pressure this places on existing services.

We will continue to jointly fund a Homelessness Prevention Worker who works specifically with young people at risk of homelessness, to either mediate with family or to help them into supported housing projects for young people. Internally, we will strengthen our protocols with the Housing Rental and Estate Management Teams to better support households in council homes to sustain their tenancies. In addition, we will bolster the initial support for council tenants when they begin their tenancies with us to set them up to succeed.



### **Increasing the range of accommodation solutions available**

There is a lack of affordable housing in East Devon and so alternative types of accommodation, for both temporary and permanent use, need to be explored. Supported housing options also require further consideration to ensure a sustainable option for those who are unable to live independently, due to a range of support needs. Over the last five years we have put a full time Empty Homes officer in place to assist in bringing empty homes back into use.

A refreshed Empty Homes Strategy will prioritise problematic empty homes and those homes in areas and of types in high housing demand across East Devon. We have a good understanding of what housing is needed in our district and have, where possible, sought to acquire suitable properties.

We have purchased two Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) to create temporary housing solutions for single households. We have introduced a Housing

First project which has provided a safe home for six rough sleepers, providing a platform from where intensive support can be provided by members of the team.

We have also successfully bid for government funding through the Local Authority Housing Fund which has provided six homes for a mix of general needs and refugee temporary accommodation. We will continue to explore opportunities to increase our permanent and temporary housing stock and seek funding to support this.

Over the next five years we will increase the number of council-owned properties set aside to be used as temporary accommodation as a cost-effective alternative to bed and breakfast and holiday accommodation. We will continue to bid for government funding to increase the amount of temporary accommodation in our district and meet our commitment to the national focus on refugee resettlement.



### **Ending rough sleeping**

We have always sought to minimise rough sleeping in the district and have achieved success in this area. However, we are proposing to elevate our ambition to end rough sleeping in East Devon.

We have four Rough Sleeper Navigators in place who provide outreach and support to existing rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping. Their work is supported by a Private Sector Liaison Officer who focuses on supporting single person households to obtain and maintain settled accommodation.

We will continue to bid for funding to continue and expand this resource to focus more on areas, including prison and hospital discharges, to prevent rough sleeping.

We have also sought to improve public awareness of what to do if they suspect that someone is sleeping rough and will work closely with partner agencies and other organisations who are actively working to support rough sleepers in the community.

This strategy has been developed in partnership, including with our service users, and sets out a five-year plan. We believe that each of the strategic themes will stand the test of time during the life of the strategy.

However, new priorities may emerge over the next five years. Whilst we can anticipate that key themes will remain relevant, the way we deliver them may need to change. The Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will remain under review to ensure it is up to date and a action plan will support us to evidence the progress against the priorities.

The action plan will be a live document which is continually updated and will be published on the council's website in spring each year. It will set out the achievements and the challenges of the preceding financial year, along with any significant recommended changes to the action plan that may arise from emerging demand, guidance, legislation, or policy.

The strategy and action plan will be monitored by the Homelessness Strategy Review Group. The group will act as a 'critical friend', partnering the council in the delivery of its strategic plans. The group is made up of former service users, parters, councillors and council staff.

The council's Housing Service will brief the Scrutiny Committee annually regarding the operations of the Housing Service, and this will include aspects of our work to prevent and relieve homelessness against the three priorities.

The strategy action plan will set out specific, measurable, achievable, and time-phased (SMART) actions that contribute to meeting the overarching aims.

The action plan will be developed around the key priorities and themes identified in the evidence base and through consultation.

## What are SMART goals?

<b>S</b>	Specific	What do you want to do?
<b>M</b>	Measurable	How will you know when you've reached it?
<b>A</b>	Achievable	Is it in your power to accomplish?
<b>R</b>	Realistic	Can you realistically achieve it?
<b>T</b>	Timely	When exactly do you want to accomplish it?

[eastdevon.gov.uk/homelessness](http://eastdevon.gov.uk/homelessness)



Report to: Council



Date of Meeting 17 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Revenue & Capital Outturn Report 2023 - 2024 – Recommendation from Cabinet on 10 July 2024

### Report summary:

This report sets out the Cabinet recommendation to Council arising from their consideration of a report Revenue & Capital Outturn Report 2023 – 2024 presented to Cabinet on 10 July 2024.

Note: The references in this report to Paper A relate to the relevant report considered by the Cabinet with recommendations for Full Council to consider and are appended to this report for reference.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

1. That Council approves the outturn position for 2023/24 including the implications and proposals relating to the Balances and Reserves held by the Council.
2. That Council approve the proposed reserve transfers contained within the report and give delegated authority to the Director Finance in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder for any amendments to these transfers as additional year end data becomes available

### Reason for recommendation:

To accord with the Council's financial regulations, this report presents the outturn position for the Council's approved budgets for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Expenditure. This financial position will align to the Council's Statement of Accounts but the position in this report is presented in a style that accords to the budget setting and monitoring reports that members receive. Members are asked to note the variations from the budgets identified within the report and consider the final position. It is appropriate at this stage to reflect on the reserves and balances held by the Council and determine if these are the right reserves at the right levels going forward.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk) )

Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 10 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Revenue and Capital Outturn Report 2023-2024

### Report summary:

This report sets out the revenue budget and capital outturn positions at the end of the financial year. The 2023/24 outturn position of the General Fund is a positive one with a surplus balance for reallocation of £0.648m.

The Council has again faced a challenging year with significant service demand and inflationary pressures in the supply of goods and services, such as temporary accommodation. Higher interest rates during 2023/24 have had a positive impact on our investment returns which have enabled the Council to mitigate against service pressures during 2023/24 but they will remain challenging for future years given the cost-of-living crisis and the impact this has on levels of demand and cost.

The report outlines the implications of these results on the Council's reserves and makes recommendations on reserve transfers.

The Council's General Fund balance at the end of the 2023/24 financial year is forecast to remain at £4.3m.

In respect of the capital programme, the report at section 5 reports capital expenditure of £13.973m against the approved budget of £27.198m.

The report also outlines the year end position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) at section 4. This includes variance analysis of the outturn deficit and the use of earmarked reserves (previous underspends) to fund this position and also confirm the 31 March 2024 reserve balance position.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

1. That Cabinet considers and recommends to Council the outturn position for 2023/24 including the implications and proposals relating to the Balances and Reserves held by the Council.
2. That Cabinet recommend to Council the proposed reserve transfers contained within the report and give delegated authority to the Director Finance in consultation with the Finance Portfolio for any amendments to these transfers as additional year end data becomes available.



**Reason for recommendation:**

To accord with the Council's financial regulations, this report presents the outturn position for the Council's approved budgets for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Expenditure. This financial position will align to the Council's Statement of Accounts but the position in this report is presented in a style that accords to the budget setting and monitoring reports that members receive.

Members are asked to note the variations from the budgets identified within the report and consider the final position.

It is appropriate at this stage to reflect on the reserves and balances held by the Council and determine if these are the right reserves at the right levels going forward.

Officer: John Symes – Finance Manager, [jsymes@eastdevn.gov.uk](mailto:jsymes@eastdevn.gov.uk), 01395 517413

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Medium Risk; Financial monitoring reports have kept members informed during the year of budget variations and the projected outturn position of the Council's finances. All predetermined Balance and Reserve levels were predicted to be maintained above the adopted minimum levels. The report also looks at the monies the Council holds in balances and reserves and considers these in the light of the Council's future financial position and future Government funding cuts and other emerging financial pressures e.g. inflationary pressures. Consideration is given to the Council's financial track record, internal and external audit reports on financial controls and is reflective of occurrences from external factors which affect the Council's finances. Two areas of risk to note from this report are the General Fund identified areas of service expenditure overspends/under achievement of income which will need careful monitoring in the current financial year and the HRA extremely high expenditure levels recorded in 2023/24, particularly the later part of the financial year, although this expenditure has been met from previous year underspends (reserves) this position cannot be repeated in 2024/25 and an additional report on the Cabinet Agenda addresses this point.

**Links to background information**

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

## Report in full

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report compares the outturn position (actual amount spent or income received for the year) against budgets set for the financial year 2023/24 for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Capital Programme.
- 1.2 During 2023/24 budget monitoring reports have informed members of budget variations. Budget managers, with support from finance officers, are responsible for keeping budgets under scrutiny and providing the anticipated year-end financial position. This report contains the final position for the year and compares this outturn position against the budgets set.
- 1.3 The report looks at the effect the outturn position has on the Council's balances and reserves and considers future policy for holding these sums.
- 1.4 The General Fund Balance remains at £4.3m. As part of the approved 2024/25 budget a further £0.5m has been budgeted to add to the balance (making £4.8m). No further change is proposed as at 2023/24 outturn.
- 1.5 Please be advised that all numbers are not finalised as we are still awaiting information from other third parties. Estimates have been made where appropriate therefore no significant items or material variances to the below are expected.
- 1.6 The report contains the following sections:
- Section 2 General Fund Position
  - Section 3 Reserves Position
  - Section 4 Housing Revenue Account
  - Section 5 Capital Outturn

### 2. General Fund Position

- 2.1 The Council's Revenue Account, known as the General Fund, bears the net cost of providing day-to-day services. These are the portfolio/service totals identified in the Council's Income & Expenditure Account.
- 2.2 **23/24 Set Budget & Opening General Fund Balance**  
The 2023/24 budget was set by Council with a Council Tax Requirement of £9.974m with the closing general fund balance in the 22/23 accounts of £4.3m. The following table shows the in year outturn variations versus set budgets with final General Fund surplus being **£0.648m**.

General Fund Position	£000	F/A
Original Budget Requirement	9,974	
Approved Budget Variations during reporting period	337	A

<b>Revised budget Requirement</b>	<b>10,311</b>	
Surplus in Year v Revised budget	(0.985)	F
<b>Final Outturn Position 31/3/2024</b>	<b>9,326</b>	
<b>Final General Fund Surplus to allocate</b>	<b>(0.648)</b>	<b>F</b>

2.3 The following table shows the breakdown of the surplus into variation categories and the amount of variation against the set budgets within the year.

<b>Surplus/Deficit in Year v Budget</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>F/A</b>
Cost of Service Variation	2.699	A
Investments and Financing Variation	(2.079)	F
Variations in Central Government Grants	(0.054)	F
Variations in Use of Earmarked Reserves	0.601	A
Business Rates Income Variation	(2.152)	F
<b>General Fund Surplus against original budget</b>	<b>(0.985)</b>	<b>F</b>

2.4 **Cost of Service Variation to Budget in 23/24 (£2.699m (A))**

The variation across the council's portfolio of services is show in Appendix 1, notes 1 to 8, with associated commentaries made on material items within each service.

There are specific areas of material service overspend/under achievement of income that although it is considered has been addressed in setting the 2024/25 budget this will need careful monitoring in the year.

2.5 **Investment & Financing Variation/Treasury Management Activities (£2.079m (F))**

The interest income the council received in 23/24 was £3.153mm versus a budget of £1.137m. The continued rise of base rates and the associated impact on term deposit and money market rates resulted in a significant surplus to budget. The prediction at the time of budget setting was for a gradual decline in rates over the period however rates remain high resulting in this favourable position. A separate annual treasury management report will be presented to committee.

2.6 **Central Government Grants (£0.054m (F))**

The timing difference between the final announcement of some of the central government grants and the councils budget setting process has resulted in a favourable variation in 2023 with the annual service grant greater than initially expected.

2.7 **Variations in the use of Earmarked Reserves (£0.601 (A))**

The two material variations against budget within earmarked reserve releases/contributions relate to a lower than anticipated release of Transformation reserve funding in the year to fulfil specific projects (£0.3m) and an expected release of Revs and Bens new burdens funding which wasn't required due to additional central government grant funding within the year (£0.3m).

2.8 **Business Rates Income (£2.152m (F))**

The business rates income before earmarked reserve contributions in year was £9.4m versus a budget of £7.3m. The figure included within the set budget for the year was £6.7m which was net of any contribution to the business rates volatility reserve. This budgeted figure can be broken down as £3.1m of baseline funding plus a £3.3m uplift and £0.3m of gain relating to the Devon Pool.

This year an additional £0.5m was provided for to cover East Devon's portion of the 23/24 collection fund adjustment account deficit balance which stands at £1.2m (due to the reserve already holding £0.65m). Additionally, £1.9m of business rates income relating to the designated Enterprise zone has been allocated directly to the Enterprise zone reserve. The associated budget lines of business rates income versus revenue financing have been adjusted to reflect these entries.

### 2.9 **Transfer of Final General Fund Surplus Balance to the Transformation Fund (£0.648 (A))**

It is proposed that the final surplus balance remaining in 23/24 be transferred to the Transformation fund (uncommitted revenue earmarked reserve).

This proposal leaves the General fund balance per the agreed upper limit of £4.3m at 2023/24 year end.

## 3. **Reserves Position**

3.1 The overall General Fund Balance position at year end is given below, this shows the effect of the budgeted outturn variation after the transfer to the Transformation fund of £0.648m.

<b>General Fund Balance Position</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Opening Balance 1/4/2023</b>	<b>(4,300)</b>
Budgeted Outturn variation 2023/24 after Transfers	0
<b>Closing Balance 31/3/2024</b>	<b>(4,300)</b>

3.2 The movement in General Fund Earmarked Reserves, in the year, can be seen in the below table with additional detail of movements provided in Appendix 2.

<b>General Fund Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Opening Balance 1/4/2023</b>	<b>(31,923)</b>
Budgeted Outturn variation 2023/24	<b>(4,549)</b>
<b>Closing Balance 31/3/2024</b>	<b>(36,472)</b>

## 4. **Housing Revenue Account**

### 4.1 **Annual Outturn & Proposed Contribution from Reserves for Consideration**

The summary tables of income and expenditure variations can be found at Appendix 3. For the 23/24 Outturn deficit for the year it is proposed to be cover from Earmarked reserves and borrowing, leaving the HRA Balance at the adopted level of £3.1m.

A summary by cost driver is as follows;

- **Supervision and Management +£1.39m**
  - £0.2m overspend in staff related costs with £0.68m in Agency staff costs only partially offset by savings in salaries and associated costs.
  - £0.3m overspend on temporary accommodation costs when decanting tenants for significant works
  - £0.4m overspend on Stock condition survey (this was a known overspend and was due to be reserve funded)
  - £0.3m on technical consultancy support within the Property and Asset team
  - £0.2m on non-rental void related charges
- **Income +£0.407m due to lost income from void properties**
- **Supplies, Services & Other Costs +£5.3m mainly due to responsive repairs**
  - A £3.7m overspend in exclusions to the Integrated Asset Management Contract
    - £3m of jobs excluded from the Price per property (PPP) framework either due to the cost or type of job
    - £0.7m of jobs on properties excluded from the PPP framework
  - £1.3m of planned works and decoration undertaken by Ian Williams
  - £0.3m of disrepair legal fees and settlements
- **Interest income & charges -£0.530m from improved returns on investments**
- **Expenditure on Premises +£0.49m**
  - £3.6m spent on voids versus an original budget of £1.8m with other major repairs budgets unspent to offset the significant increase in void volumes.

This position of significant increase in spend with a reduction in income, has been previously highlighted to members, is of concern. As stated previously this position can be funded from reserves attributable to underspends in previous years set aside to fund increased expenditure on what was believed to be catch up repairs and maintenance, however, the picture is that this level of spend is required going forward. There is a separate report on this agenda that considers the 2024/25 HRA budget position.

#### 4.2 Capital Expenditure and Associated Funding

- A total of 6 acquisitions were completed within the year (£1.6m) versus 11 right to buy sales reducing the stock.
- In 23/24 the council applied and received £0.9m of Government grant funding to be used on affordable housing investment. The conditions of the grant are;
  - £20k of the total grant to be allocated to each property
  - 40% of the residual balance to be funded by the grant
  - The residual balance to be funded by the HRA
 In 23/24 2 plots in Cranbrook were purchased and a 10% deposit was provided for a further 4 plots due to complete in 24/25 at a cost of £0.65m.
- During 23/24 there was £4.35m spent on capital related improvements to properties, blocks, major adaptations for disabilities and major voids works. The funding implications of this are;
  - £0.4m in non-ring fenced capital RTB receipts
  - £1.37m – the remaining HRA capital contribution after funding affordable housing
  - £2.5m in new borrowing

- The total revenue contribution to capital made from the Housing revenue account was £2.6m versus a budgeted figure of £0.88m.

HRA Capital Expenditure Financing Summary	£
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>10,452,729</b>
Financing:	
Major Repairs Reserve / Contribution from Revenue	(3,842,609)
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outturn	(2,617,628)
Local Authority Grant Funding (LAHF)	(300,000)
RTB 1-4-1	(637,332)
Other Capital Receipts	(469,627)
S106 Funding	(67,922)
Borrowing	(2,517,611)
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>(10,452,729)</b>

#### 4.3 23/24 Year End Reserve Levels

The below table shows the final reserve levels should the allocations proposed be approved.

#### HRA RESERVES

##### REVENUE

Reserve Name	2022 Year End	Movement	2023 Year End	Comment
HRA Balance	-3,100	0	-3,100	Adopted level of £500 per dwelling plus £1m buffer
HRA Volatility Reserve	-1,600	1,600	0	Earmarked reserve in case of events impacting rental income
Capital Development Fund	-2,925	2,925	0	Revenue reserve earmarked for new homes & climate change development
Landlord Services Reserve	-124	124	0	Revenue reserve earmarked for Future Landlord Services Projects & C19 Catch up works
Planned Maintenance Reserve	-3,255	3,255	0	Revenue reserve earmarked for Stock Condition and Catch Up Costs
Fire Risk Assessment Reserve	-1,468	1,468	0	Revenue reserve earmarked for FRA Building works and Lift replacement
<b>TOTAL USEABLE REVENUE RESERVES</b>	<b>-12,472</b>	<b>9,372</b>	<b>-3,100</b>	

##### CAPITAL

Reserve Name	2022 Year End	Movement	2023 Year End	Comment
HRA Capital Receipts	-5,731	-366	-6,097	To be used to fund the 40% Government RTB funding of replacements only
Hra Retained Capital Receipts - Grants	0	-609	-609	
<b>TOTAL USEABLE CAPITAL RESERVES</b>	<b>-5,731</b>	<b>-975</b>	<b>-6,706</b>	

## 5. Capital Budget

The revised net capital budget (after grants and contributions) for 2023/24 was £27.2m; the outturn position is lower at £14.0m. This often reflect total scheme budgets and the majority to be re-profiled into 2024/25, or later years as schemes come forward.

<b>Capital Programme Portfolio Summary 2023/24</b>				
	Portfolio	Budget after revisions	Actual	(Under)/ Overspend
		2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
Line		£	£	£
1	Corporate Services	1,227,732	214,376	(1,013,356)
2	Community - Housing General Fund	1,451,383	987,694	(463,689)
3	Economy and Regeneration	7,546,117	1,534,577	(6,011,540)
4	Environment	2,681,262	885,266	(1,795,996)
5	Street Scene	14,136,651	2,065,348	(12,071,303)
6	Strategic Development	1,250,000	0	(1,250,000)
7	<b>TOTAL GF GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>28,293,145</b>	<b>5,687,262</b>	<b>- 25,746,723</b>
8	Community - HRA	3,856,710	10,452,729	6,596,019
9	<b>TOTAL GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>32,149,855</b>	<b>16,139,991</b>	<b>(16,009,864)</b>
10	Corporate Services	-	0	0
11	Community - Housing General Fund	(1,342,796)	(1,094,688)	248,108
12	Economy and Regeneration	(2,249,000)	0	2,249,000
13	Environment	(531,449)	(14,645)	516,804
14	Street Scene	(828,630)	(157,384)	671,246
15	Strategic Development	-	0	0
16	<b>TOTAL GF EXTERNAL FUNDING</b>	<b>(4,951,875)</b>	<b>(1,266,717)</b>	<b>3,685,158</b>
17	Community - HRA	-	(900,216)	(900,216)
18	<b>TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING</b>	<b>(4,951,875)</b>	<b>(2,166,933)</b>	<b>2,784,942</b>
19	Corporate Services	1,227,732	214,376	(1,013,356)
20	Community - Housing General Fund	108,587	(106,994)	(215,581)
21	Economy and Regeneration	5,297,117	1,534,577	(3,762,540)
22	Environment	2,149,813	870,621	(1,279,192)
23	Street Scene	13,308,021	1,907,965	(11,400,056)
24	Strategic Development	1,250,000	0	(1,250,000)
25	<b>TOTAL GF NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>23,341,270</b>	<b>4,420,544.78</b>	<b>(18,920,725)</b>
26	Community - HRA	3,856,710	9,552,513	5,695,803
27	<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>27,197,980</b>	<b>13,973,058</b>	<b>(13,224,922)</b>

### Financial implications:

The financial details are included in the report.

**Legal implications:**

Any legal implications are identified in the report and no further comment is required.



**APPENDIX 1 – Cost of Services  
General Fund Revenue Budgets 2023/24**

<b>Portfolio Budget - Net Expenditure</b>	<b>Actuals 2023/24</b>	<b>Budget 2023/24</b>	<b>Variation</b>	<b>%age Var</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Corporate Business	171,228	169,520	1,708	1%	1
Corporate Services	3,330,817	2,677,565	653,252	20%	2
Economy And Regenrtn Portfolio	516,257	454,014	62,243	12%	3
Environment Portfolio	4,238,133	4,345,821	-107,688	-3%	4
Finance	-695,997	-1,200,085	504,088	-72%	5
Strategic Development & P'Ship	373,784	-166,297	540,082	144%	6
Street Scene Portfolio	12,163,186	11,262,529	900,657	7%	7
Sustainable Homes & Communitie	1,935,657	1,791,117	144,540	7%	8
<b>Portfolio Totals</b>	<b>22,033,065</b>	<b>19,334,184</b>	<b>2,698,882</b>	<b>12%</b>	
Interest Receipts (Net of investment management fees)	-3,153,162	-1,137,335	-2,015,827	64%	
Interest Payable	402	300	102	25%	9
PWLB Interest	79,761	94,990	-15,229	-19%	
Principal Repayments	369,000	417,000	-48,000	-13%	
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>19,329,067</b>	<b>18,709,139</b>	<b>619,928</b>	<b>3%</b>	
<b>Government Grants</b>					
New Homes Bonus Grant	-1,025,642	-1,025,642	0	0%	
Rural Services Delivery Grant	-264,583	-264,441	-142	0%	
Lower Tier Services Grant	-1,548,128	-1,530,145	-17,983	1%	10
New Services Grant	-89,895	-107,777	17,882	-20%	
Revenue Support Grant	-123,786	0	-123,786	100%	
Savings Target	0	-70,000	70,000	100%	
<b>Use of Reserves</b>					
Capital Reserve Transfers	83,684	0	83,684	100%	
Use of Collection fund surplus Income	-208,139	-207,814	-325	0%	
Use of Collection fund surplus MIRS	-150,996	-150,996	0	0%	11
Use of Accumulated Absence Reserve	-7,671	0	-7,671	100%	
Use of Other Earmarked Reserves	4,534,018	4,009,071	524,946	12%	
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>20,527,929</b>	<b>19,361,395</b>	<b>1,166,534</b>	<b>6%</b>	
Business Rates Income	-9,401,174	-7,249,166	-2,152,008	23%	12
Business Rates MIRs	-1,800,852	-1,800,852	0		
<b>Council Tax Requirement</b>	<b>9,325,903</b>	<b>10,311,377</b>	<b>-985,474</b>	<b>-11%</b>	

## Notes

### 1 No Material Variations

There is a budgeted £0.4m variation due to anticipated recoverable salary costs across the portfolio plus other unallocated staff related costs contributing 0.06m and an increase in the

2 corporate bad debt provision of £0.04m. Overall Employee costs across the whole portfolio were materially within the set budget of £20.2m with permanent salaries showing savings of £0.8m offset by overspends in Agency staff costs of £0.6m and other less material movements.

3 An overspend of £0.2m within Building control due to lower than anticipated fee levels has been partially offset by less material savings elsewhere.

4 The variation has been driven by underspends in staffing costs across the Environment service.

5 Variations relating to the Housing Benefit subsidy contributed an additional £0.3m and lower than expected Car Park operations costs/income (£0.29m) has driven the majority of the deficit within Finance. These were offset by less material savings across finance.

6 Lower than expected planning fees income despite the change in fee structure in the latter part of the year has provided a deficit contribution of £0.3m. A further £0.2m variation to budget is due to Enterprise zone expenditure which is equally offset by increases in business rates income and the associated contribution to Enterprise zone earmarked revenue reserves.

7 There are 3 material variations within the street scene service in 2023. A deficit within Refuse and Recycling of £0.6m driven by the revised cost plus fees structure with Suez has been partially offset by better than anticipated performance within Green Waste (£0.2m). A further £0.3m deficit is due to anticipated savings within Public conveniences not being realised, however this is offset with agreed/anticipated use of earmarked reserves.

8 Higher levels of Homelessness Accommodation expenditure than predicted (£0.2m).


9 Higher levels of returns than budgeted.

10 Additional central government grants announced after the councils budget setting process was completed

11 The two material variations within earmarked reserve releases/contributions relate to a lower than anticipated release of Transformation reserve funding in the year to fulfil specific projects (£0.3m) and an expected release of Revs and Bens new burdens funding (£0.3m).

12 Better than anticipated business rates income

**APPENDIX 2 – General Fund Earmarked Reserves**

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**APPENDIX 3 – HRA outturn Variances & Commentaries**

Year to Date			INCOME	23/24 Outturn		
Actuals	Budget	Diff		Actuals	Budget	Diff
-	-	-		-	-	-
19,498,769	19,911,900	413,131	Gross Property Rents	19,498,769	19,911,900	413,131
-209,149	-231,110	21,961	Garage Rents	-209,149	-231,110	21,961
-686,427	-658,510	-27,917	Other Income	-686,427	-658,510	-27,917
-	-	-		-	-	-
20,394,346	20,801,520	407,174		20,394,346	20,801,520	407,174

Year to Date			EXPENDITURE	23/24 Outturn		
Actuals	Budget	Diff		Actuals	Budget	Diff
11,097,257	5,763,318	5,333,939	Repairs & Maintenance	11,097,257	5,763,318	5,333,939
9,513,737	8,123,651	1,390,086	Supervision And Management	9,513,737	8,123,651	1,390,086
645,236	617,240	27,996	Other Expenditure	645,236	617,240	27,996
3,854,726	3,356,710	498,016	Capital Charges & Bad Debt	3,854,726	3,356,710	498,016
25,110,957	17,860,919	7,250,038	<i>(excl Depreciation)</i>	25,110,957	17,860,919	7,250,038

	23/24 Outturn		
	Actuals	Budget	Diff
<b>Net Interest Expense</b>	2,030,001	2,559,580	-529,579
<b>Earmarked Reserve Release</b>	-9,370,133	-40,000	9,330,133
<b>Revenue Contn to Capital Financing</b>	2,623,521	880,000	1,743,521
	-	-	-
<b>Total Financing</b>	-4,716,611	3,399,580	8,116,191

Report to: Council



Date of Meeting 17 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Housing Revenue Account (HRA): Financial Review, Revised Budget & Sustainability Plan

### Report summary:

This report sets out the Cabinet recommendation to Council arising from their consideration of a report Housing Revenue Account (HRA): Financial Review, Revised Budget & Sustainability Plan presented to Cabinet on 10 July 2024.

Note: The references in this report to Paper A relate to the relevant report considered by the Cabinet with recommendations for Full Council to consider and are appended to this report for reference.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That Council;

1. Approve £2.5m of additional borrowing to balance the HRA budget for the 2023/24 financial year.
2. Approve a revised HRA Budget for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 3, and a revised Capital Programme Budget as set out in Appendix 4.

The approval to include:

- a) That up to £1.75m be allocated from the HRA Balance Reserve to fund the 2024/25 forecast revenue budget shortfall.
  - b) That a target annual revenue saving of £250k per annum be sought over 3 years to replenish the HRA Balance Reserve.
  - c) That £4.4m of Voluntary Revenue Provision be used to reduce the level of additional borrowing required within the HRA.
  - d) That £7.3m of new borrowing be agreed to fund the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
3. Note that £2.415m of savings and/or new additional revenue is required in 2025/26. This is needed to achieve a balanced budget, meet the increased cost arising from new borrowing in 2024/25, contribute toward the replenishment of

the HRA Balance Reserve and fund additional new borrowing for Capital Programme investment in 2025/26.

4. Note the work currently underway to investigate options and establish a longerterm strategic plan to ensure the sustainable and effective management and maintenance of the Councils Housing stock.
5. Approve a £35k budget within the HRA to increase provision to a Full-Time HRA accountant to support the service.

**Reason for recommendation:**

To balance the budget and provide the necessary investment for regulatory compliance and for the provision of good quality safe, affordable and warm homes for our residents.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk) )

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Report to: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting 10 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



## **Housing Revenue Account (HRA): Financial Review, Revised Budget & Sustainability Plan**

### **Report summary:**

The report summarises the current financial pressures facing the HRA, highlights the need for additional new borrowing to meet budget shortfall in 2023/24 and for capital investment in 2024/25 to ensure regulatory compliance. It sets out plans to improve the short-term sustainability of the HRA and outlines work underway to consider longer term options for the effective management and maintenance of the Council's Housing stock.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### **Recommendation:**

That Cabinet Recommend that Council;

1. Approve £2.5m of additional borrowing to balance the HRA budget for the 2023/24 financial year.
2. Approve a revised HRA Budget for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 3, and a revised Capital Programme Budget as set out in Appendix 4.

The approval to include:

- a) That up to £1.75m be allocated from the HRA Balance Reserve to fund the 2024/25 forecast revenue budget shortfall.
  - b) That a target annual revenue saving of £250k per annum be sought over 3 years to replenish the HRA Balance Reserve.
  - c) That £4.4m of Voluntary Revenue Provision be used to reduce the level of additional borrowing required within the HRA.
  - d) That £7.3m of new borrowing be agreed to fund the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
3. Note that £2.415m of savings and/or new additional revenue is required in 2025/26. This is needed to achieve a balanced budget, meet the increased cost arising from new borrowing in 2024/25, contribute toward the replenishment of the



HRA Balance Reserve and fund additional new borrowing for Capital Programme investment in 2025/26.

4. Note the work currently underway to investigate options and establish a longer-term strategic plan to ensure the sustainable and effective management and maintenance of the Councils Housing stock.
5. Approve a £35k budget within the HRA to increase provision to a Full-Time HRA accountant to support the service.

**Reason for recommendation:**

To balance the budget and provide the necessary investment for regulatory compliance and for the provision of good quality safe, affordable and warm homes for our residents.

Officers: Housing Strategy, Enabling and Project Manager, Director for Finance & Director for Housing & Environment

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low impact

**Risk:** High Risk;

**Links to background information**

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

# Housing Revenue Account: Financial Review, Revised Budget & Sustainability Plan

## Executive Summary

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is facing significant financial pressure in the immediate and longer term. The current approved budget is insufficient to meet minimum standards and achieve regulatory compliance and therefore requires revision.

The current financial pressure arise from a range of factors including an historic underinvestment for the last decade, increased consumer and regulatory standards, general cost price inflation, restrictions in rent increases, net zero expectations, disrepair claims, high void and decant costs and other issues such as financial management. External advisors are stating that similar cost pressures are being seen in other stock holding local authorities.

A significant budget overspend in 2023/24 has required the allocation of the entire £9.3m 'useable' HRA reserves, part of which was set aside for 'catch up' repairs. In addition, a further £2.5m of new borrowing is now required to balance the books for 2023/24. In setting the 2023/24 budget the use of reserves was identified as being required in year to support additional expenditure, but it was envisaged a revised budget would come forward in year based on stock condition findings – this was not finalised in year.

The current (2024/25) HRA revenue budget is projected to be overspent by £1.71m in the current year. It is proposed, that up to £1.75m from the HRA Balance Reserve be used to fund this shortfall. With regard to the capital budget, the HRA requires an additional £7.3m of new borrowing to fund capital investment in order to achieve regulatory compliance and meet other existing capital commitments.

A Financial Sustainability Plan is in place to address and respond to the short-term financial pressures facing the HRA. This plan sets out a range of measures to increase income and deliver savings over the next 1 – 2 years and will include any recommendations from the Chartered Institute of Public Finances & Accounting (CIPFA), who have been appointed to undertake a Health Check of the HRA.

This report seeks to outline the immediate requirements for the HRA, however, it is important to note from the outset that there are multiple stages required to ascertain the full needs of the HRA moving forward

Looking ahead, further significant additional capital investment will be required over the medium and longer term to remain compliant and meet the investment requirements identified in the Stock Condition Survey. Savills have been appointed to provide specialist business and financial advice and to review longer term options for the effective management and maintenance of the housing stock. This is to ensure the Council

provides safe, high-quality, and regulatory compliant homes for our residents. An update on this work will be provided during the autumn.

<b>Report Content</b>	<b>Point Number</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	
<b>Section 1 – The Budget</b>	
• HRA Overview	• 1
• Key Financial Pressures	• 4
• Internal Financial Review 2024	• 5
• 2023/24 Budget Outturn	• 6
• 2024/25 Revised Budget	• 11
• Additional / New Borrowing	• 28
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• Service Improvements Update	• 61
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HRA Summary Outturn 2023/24	Appendix 1
Indicative 5 Year Capital Programme	Appendix 2
Revised HRA Revenue Budget 2024/25	Appendix 3
Revised HRA Capital Budget 2024/25	Appendix 4
Proposed Timeline	Appendix 5

## The Housing Revenue Account Overview

1. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is responsible for all income and expenditure related to the provision of council housing. The HRA is a ringfenced account within the General Fund with strict legal and accounting rules to maintain separation from General Fund expenditure.
2. The HRA consists of capital and revenue elements. Capital is typically physical items that add value to the property such as doors, windows and boilers etc. Revenue is typically low-level repairs, staff and labour costs etc. The Council is allowed to borrow to fund capital expenditure, but not revenue.
3. The following outlines the key budget areas and headline figures for the HRA.

### Revenue Budget

- **Income:** The primary sources of income for the HRA are Tenant's rents and service charges. The forecast income is expected to be circa £21m.
- **Repairs and Maintenance:** This includes all major expenditure which falls into the revenue category and includes equipment testing, decoration, minor works and the majority of our responsive repairs work. The budgeted spend is approximately £8m.
- **Supervision & Management:** Administrative and operational costs associated with managing the housing stock. This is budgeted at £9.75m
- **Financing / Debt Servicing:** Financing costs of the existing £84.6m borrowing amounts to an annual cost of £ 2.8m

- **The Capital Programme Budget**

The capital programme is part of the HRA but is recorded separately. The Capital programme provides for investment in major repairs and building upgrades, Right To Buy replacement acquisitions etc.

The Capital programme for the current year amounts to £13.2m, reducing to a net figure of £9.2m with grant funding, Right To Buy receipts and a 'depreciation' contribution from the revenue account. The capital programme includes an amount of £6.44m for major repairs, improvements and compliance works.

*(Depreciation: An amount set aside from income to invest toward capital works to maintain an asset i.e. for wear and tear)*

## HRA – Key Financial Pressures

4. The financial pressures facing the HRA have arisen due to a number of factors:
  - **Historic Under-investment**  
As members will be aware, a significant portion of the Council's housing stock is old and requires extensive and costly repair, maintenance and fabric upgrades. This includes meeting new standards for energy efficiency

and safety regulations to meet increased regulatory compliance standards. A lack of cyclical and planned maintenance appears to have contributed to general deterioration in our stock. This historic underinvestment may have exacerbated current repair costs in certain cases.

- **Void Rates**

Void turnaround times have a significant impact on revenue and the Council has experienced higher than average void times. The Council also has a significant number of long-term voids and properties requiring significant investment to be brought back into use. Underinvestment in our stock has, in some cases, resulted in voids requiring additional works once they have become void. This in turn has led to increased void turnaround times.

- **Inflation and Cost Increases**

General inflation and specific increases in construction and maintenance costs and materials and labour have made it more expensive to maintain and improve our housing stock. We are working with our contractors (Ian Williams in particular) to find cost savings across our portfolio through negotiation of different contractual terms and furthermore through efficient planning and issue of planned works.

- **Debt Levels**

The HRA carries £86.4m of debt from self-financing. Servicing this debt requires significant annual expenditure of approximately £2.6m p.a. Interest rate increases in recent years will affect the cost of new borrowing.

## **HRA Internal Financial Review 2024**

5. Following an internal review by the new senior housing team in early 2024, it became clear that the HRA was facing significant financial pressure. The key issues facing the HRA have arisen from an apparent underinvestment in both cyclical and planned maintenance. More recently, higher regulatory and consumer standards have placed further cost pressures on the budget along with cost price inflation and the impact of covid on our ability to undertake certain works.

## **2023/24 Budget Outturn Overview**

6. The final HRA outturn for 2023/24 shows a significant budget overspend in both Capital and Revenue. The Revenue budget was overspent by £7.1m, the Capital Programme budget was overspent by £5.1m.
7. The key areas of major overspend were Responsive Repairs, Programmed Maintenance and Supervision and Management. The Budget outturn positions are included at Appendix 1

Reserve Position

8. The opening Reserve position for last financial year (2023/24) showed £12.47m in reserves. This consisted of £9.37m in useable reserves, and £3.1m in the HRA Balance Reserve. The Balance Reserve is considered to be the minimum operational reserve for unexpected shocks and is set at a level considered prudent by the s.151 officer to maintain solvency.

Table 1: HRA Reserve Position

<b>Reserve Name</b>	<b>22/23 Year End Balance (£m)</b>	<b>Reserves Used in 23/24 (£m)</b>	<b>23/24 Year End Balance (£m)</b>
HRA Balance Reserve	3.1	0	3.1
HRA Volatility Reserve	1.6	1.6	0
Capital Development Fund	2.925	2.925	0
Landlord Services Reserve	0.124	0.124	0
Planned Maintenance Reserve	3.255	3.255	0
Fire Risk Assessment Reserve	1.468	1.468	0
	<b>12.472</b>	<b>9.372</b>	<b>3.1</b>

9. The entire useable reserve of £9.37m has been allocated to fund the revenue budget overspend as well as financing the capital programme expenditure.

Additional Borrowing Required

10. As highlighted above, the final outturn position for 2023/24 resulted in an HRA capital shortfall of £2.5m. This necessitates an additional new borrowing requirement. This additional £2.5m of borrowing, at indicative current rates of 5%, will add an additional £130k per annum to the interest burden i.e. a bottom line revenue expenditure/pressure on the revenue account.

**Revised Budget 2024/25**

11. The current year's budget 2024/25 was set as part of the annual budget setting process and was approved by Council alongside the General Fund Budget. This is published in the Council's Budget Book. A copy of the approved 2024/25 budget is shown alongside the proposed revised budget for 2024/25 at Appendix 3.

Revenue Budget

12. The full scale of the financial challenges facing the HRA became apparent early in 2024, with the full extent being established at the end of the financial year in April of this year.

13. The extent of cost pressures, budget overspends, and backlog repairs were not reflected in the budget for 2024/25. Members were advised in the budget setting report that the budget would be a rollover from the previous year. This was because we needed to establish the costs for new and existing vacant posts, were awaiting details from the stock condition survey and other spend priorities.
14. Budget pressures have not abated and forecasting clearly suggests that the current Revenue budget is insufficient and is likely to be significantly overspent in the current year. The budget also failed to provide sufficient resources for capital programme investment. For this reason, a revised budget has been prepared that more accurately reflects the forecast outturn and includes additional borrowing to provide sufficient capital investment to achieve regulatory compliance.
15. The revised budget provides for an increase in revenue expenditure for responsive repairs, maintenance and compliance works. There has been adjustment to how certain expenditure is accounted for in terms of Revenue or Capital, with a significant proportion of expenditure previously shown in the revenue budget now being shown in the capital programme. This is purely an accounting change and improves the way the HRA is structured to enable better understanding, management, and financing.
16. The forecast outturn position arising from the new budget amounts to a revenue budget shortfall of £1.34m. This figure includes the additional financing cost of the £2.5m new borrowing required to meet the 2023/24 budget shortfall.
17. The revenue budget shortfall in the current year is forecast to increase from £1.34m to approximately £1.71m allowing for the finance costs of £7.3m of additional borrowing required to fund the essential capital programme, as detailed below.
18. It is proposed, and included in the report recommendation, that the forecast revenue budget shortfall for the current year be met from an allocation of up to £1.75m from the £3.1m HRA Balance Reserve.
19. In summary, the HRA is facing a revenue budget shortfall of £1.71m and requires £7.4m of capital investment. The recommendation in this report is to fund the revenue element from reserves, and the capital element from new additional borrowing.
20. As stated, the HRA Balance Reserve currently stands at £3.1m, at its adopted level. The Balance is held to protect the Council against the risk of costs associated with unforeseen events along with appropriate insurance and to deal with uneven cash flows. The sum to be held is a recommendation to Council from the S151 Officer. There is no set formula in determining the appropriate level of the Balance, but a common approach is to allow a sum per property.
21. In our case this is £490 per property giving £2.1m as the minimum sum to hold with headroom added of £1m giving our £3.1m at the top of the range. This report recommends using up to £1.75m of the Balance in the current year to meet

revenue costs bringing the estimated HRA Balance Reserve down to £1.35m, this being £0.75m below the minimum level.

22. Under normal circumstance this would not be a position the S151 Officer would support, but having reviewed options and the need for the authority to meet compliance standards within its housing stock, this is seen as acceptable on the understanding that realistic budgets have now been reflected for the 2024/25 revised budget position and steps are to be taken to rebuild the reserve which will need careful monitoring by the Council.
23. A copy of the proposed revised budget for the current year 2024/25 is included at Appendix 3.

### Capital Budget

24. The capital programme consists of several areas of essential spend to ensure our housing stock complies with various regulatory standards such as fire, gas and electrical safety etc, and that our homes are of a decent standard. This includes tackling damp and mould, urgent structural repairs, fire safety works and a general requirement to ensure that kitchens and bathrooms meet an acceptable minimum standard.
25. A significant programme of investment is now required to meet regulatory standards. The following table provides a headline summary of the programme of investment required in the current year. This requires a total investment of £6.44m.

Table 2: Forecast Capital Programme 2024/25

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Units/ Measures</b>	<b>Cost - £</b>
Kitchens	100	750,000
Bathrooms	50	200,000
Roofs: Condition D (Risk of imminent failure)	6	132,000
Windows	24	150,000
Heating/ Boilers	100	500,000
Capital Major Works See Separate List		1,210,000
Decarbonisation Programme (Lad Mop Up).	35	750,000
Adaptations		400,000
Sew Treatment Plants	14	500,000
Fire Doors	300	450,000
CO2 & Detection	2700	400,000
Fire Risk Assessment Actions - Capital	0	1,000,000
		<b>£ 6,442,000</b>

26. In addition to the £6.44 m of planned works, the Capital Programme also includes capital expenditure on Voids, Responsive Repairs and RTB replacement



acquisitions. The total Capital Programme Budget amounts to £13.262m as summarised in the table below

Table 3: Proposed Capital Programme Budget 2024/25

<b>Capital Programme Budget 2024/25</b>	
Major repairs	£6.44m
RTB Replacement Acquisitions	£3.32m
Voids	£2.5m
Responsive repairs	£1m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£13.26m</b>

27. The £13.26m gross expenditure is offset by various income such as grant funding, RTB receipts and a depreciation contribution from the revenue account (money set aside from rents to fund major repairs). The **net** expenditure after allowing for this amounts to £9.2m

Table 4: Budget 2024/25 Funding Requirement

	<b>Expenditure (£m)</b>	<b>Funding Required (£m)</b>
Revenue Budget	20.5	1.71 (forecast overspend)
Capital Expenditure (Gross)	13.3	9.2 (net capital expenditure)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>33.8</b>	
<b>Total Funding Required</b>		<b>10.91</b>
HRA Balance Reserve Allocation		-1.71
<b>Balance to be Funded 2024/25</b>		<b>9.2m</b>

## **Additional Funding / New Borrowing**

28. The new funding requirement for the current year 24/25 amounts to £9.2m as outlined above. A further amount of £2.5m is also required to balance the budget shortfall for 23/24. This takes the total new additional funding required to a total of £11.7m
29. It is proposed, and included in the recommendation, that the £11.7m be partially reduced through the use of a one-time contribution of £4.4m of Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP) funding. This leaves a remaining balance of £7.3m to be funded through additional new borrowing.
30. VRP (Voluntary Revenue Provision) is where the Council has made an overpayment on existing debt, which can then be utilised to offset further borrowing. For example, over previous years we have made additional payments to the HRA to the amount of £4.4m which means that this amount is available for us to borrow this financial year. We are proposing that we utilise this in order to reduce the overall amount we need to borrow.

31. It should be noted that the annual cost to the HRA revenue account from £7.3m of new additional borrowing amounts to approximately £365k per annum. This increased cost will place additional revenue pressure on the HRA and will need to be met through a package of efficiency savings across the board, through budget control, a recruitment freeze on non-essential posts, income maximisation and a minimal level of strategic asset disposals.
32. Our calculations assume that monies will be borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board, however the Council Treasury Management Strategy will determine if internal borrowing is more beneficial thereby reducing overall costs.

#### Home Safeguard – Capital Investment

33. Home Safeguard is a community alarm service provided to residents of our older persons housing stock. The service requires specific hardware to be installed in each property. The existing hardware will shortly become obsolete and requires replacement across the stock, at capital cost of up to £1.2m.
34. This cost will require further additional borrowing and will add to the overall total HRA debt burden. It is however proposed that the capital investment cost be offset by an appropriate service charge in 2025/26 and future years. Service charging will cover the capital and borrowing costs and will have a net neutral impact on the revenue account. Details of the Home Safeguard scheme and associated capital requirement will be set out for approval in a subsequent report.

#### Social Housing Decarbonation Fund – Round 3 Bid

35. As members will be aware, we have been committed to decarbonising our stock and EDDC have previously applied for available funding. Unfortunately, due to the match funding element and budgetary constraints as outlined, it has been necessary to decline the latest round of funding. This does not mean that we will not apply for future funding however; it simply means that with a more robust, thorough and planned programme of works we can ensure that funding applications not only help improve home efficiency for our customers, but will also ensure that our most 'in need' stock is targeted with appropriate decarbonisation measures.

## Future HRA Business Plan

### Budget 2025/26

36. Detailed budget preparation for next year's budget will commence in September. This will link with work being undertaken by Savills to review and assist with our short-term financial plan and options for the longer-term management of the stock.
37. The 25/26 Budget will need to achieve the following.
- A significant reduction in revenue expenditure in the range of 10 %
  - A target revenue contribution of £250k to replenish the HRA Balance Reserve
  - A significant capital programme of circa £12m for continued capital investment.
  - Capital receipts from the disposal of non-performing assets to assist funding of the Capital Programme.
38. The required budget reductions and efficiency savings amount to an estimated £2.415m, although this is an early calculation and is highly likely to change. This has been calculated based on a requirement to reduce forecast budget overspends and cover the interest payment on new borrowing. This is summarised below.

Table 5: Indicative Revenue Savings Required

<b>Indicative Revenue Savings Required</b>	<b>Cost / Saving Required</b>
Revenue Budget Overspend 24/25 – To be reduced to 0 in 25/26	£1.3m
Replenish HRA Balance over 3 years	£250k
Revenue costs for £7.4m, additional borrowing 2024/25	£365k
Revenue costs for an estimated £10.m additional borrowing 2025/26	£500k
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2.415m</b>

### HRA - Short Term Sustainability Plan

39. Immediate action is necessary to stabilise the financial position of the HRA whilst work is undertaken to establish longer term options for the effective management and maintenance of the housing stock.
40. A short term 'Sustainability Plan' has been adopted and will ensure strategic management, prudential investment, budget control and will deliver a programme of income maximisation and cost reduction. This plan includes the following.

### Strategic Review of Expenditure

41. A mini budget review has taken place in the current year with a number of cost savings identified in the existing budget, this has included a decision to not recruit to a limited number of posts and small savings in areas of non-essential spend.
42. A further, more detailed exercise, including industry benchmarking, will be required prior to the 2025/26 budget setting process to identify opportunities where significant cost savings can be achieved, without compromising service quality. This may include renegotiating contracts, improving operational efficiencies, adopting new technologies and approaches to service delivery.

### Income Maximisation / Diversification

43. Maximising income will be a key priority in future years. This may include marginal rent increases above standard through a programme of 'rent flexibility' and the introduction of 'affordable rents' on a small number of Council properties. It will also include ensuring the effective management of service charging to ensure that costs are adequately recharged to tenants, leaseholders and freeholders where appropriate, including for sewage treatment plants etc
44. It will also be necessary to explore other opportunities to diversify income streams. This could include developing mixed-use properties, commercial leasing, or partnerships with private developers or service operators to generate additional revenue.
45. We will also continue to explore grant funding opportunities.

### 46. Enhanced Financial Planning & Budget Control

47. The recent internal Financial Review has identified a number of areas for improvement in the monitoring and management of the HRA budget. Following further reporting from CIPFA, Housing and Finance Departments will need to implement more robust financial planning and forecasting to better manage cash flows and anticipate future financial needs. Strict budget controls should also be adopted, which could include a moratorium on recruitment to non-essential posts authorised by ELT. Furthermore, additional training must be given to all managers with budget holding responsibility, and awareness of cost saving approaches to be employed across all areas of the Housing Department.
48. Historically, EDDC have completed works that do not fall under legal responsibility as social landlord which has resulted in increased costs and impact on the HRA. In order to improve budgetary spend and improve efficiencies, additional support from corporate communications is needed to communicate and outline appropriate responsibility of repair to tenants.

### Effective Asset Management

49. Effective asset management is a core activity for housing providers. This involves having a clear understanding of the value and investment requirements of the stock, and disposing of assets which don't perform against a set criteria. This

criteria is primarily financial, but also includes social value i.e. we may opt to retain an asset where it fails the financial test but meets a particular social or priority need.

50. Asset disposals are typically properties that are uneconomic to maintain and where the cost of repairs exceed the value of the asset. This assessment is typically undertaken through a formal valuation approach termed Net Present Value or NPV. A formal 'Acquisitions and Disposals Policy' will be presented to Members for approval in the autumn and will provide the framework for any disposals.

#### Advocate for Policy Change

51. The financial pressures facing the HRA are not unique to EDDC. Many stock holding authorities are experiencing similar pressures. This is partially due to the imposition of higher consumer and regulatory standards and net zero aspirations, but with limited additional investment to meet these increased cost burdens. EDDC should engage with policymakers at a national level to advocate for additional funding and greater flexibility in HRA financing.

#### Debt Restructuring

52. Evaluate the possibility of restructuring existing debt to achieve more favourable terms, reducing annual debt servicing costs and freeing up resources for other priorities.

#### Community Engagement

53. We will continue to engage with our tenants and seek their input on our plans for improving the housing stock and how resources are allocated. Community engagement is a top priority to ensure that we listen and understand our tenants, needs, views and priorities and that these are reflected in our plans and decisions.
54. We have listened to the responses given within the Tenant Survey and there has been a consistent level of dissatisfaction with EDDC repairs service for some time. Whilst figures have improved in the latest round of surveys, we have to consider how we keep tenants informed and engaged in their housing service; help them to understand their rights; make reporting repairs an easy and technologically advanced service and ensure that we provide prompt and accurate updates on the progress of works at their homes. This approach will require sufficient support from the Communications Department and other colleagues throughout EDDC

### **HRA Business Plan & Options Review**

55. The financial pressures facing the HRA are immediate but also likely to extend over the medium and longer term. As highlighted, the major cost pressure is the investment required to bring the stock up to a decent standard. This will require a long-term business plan, typically a 30-year plan.

56. The level of investment has yet to be determined and will follow from the recent Stock Condition Survey. The indicative 5-year Capital Programme investment requirement is estimated at approximately £60m with a longer-term investment requirement beyond 5 years expected to be in excess of £100m. These are initial estimates at this stage.
57. This level of expenditure can be met, in part, through a contribution from the revenue account to the Capital Programme, i.e. through rental income. The HRA is however likely to require additional borrowing in future years to provide the required additional capital.
58. The Council have recently engaged Savills to assist with a short-term financial plan and to provide high level advice on the options available to the Council for the most efficient and effective long-term management and investment in our stock.
59. The absolute priority for the Council must be our tenants, and to meet our obligation to provide safe, warm and decent homes which meet the required regulatory standards. All options should therefore be considered in order to achieve this. A full and thorough options appraisal will need to be completed within which there are many options for consideration, namely; a continued programme of income maximisation, effective asset management, cost reductions and efficiencies, partnering arrangements, shared services or the transfer of stock to a new or existing registered provider.
60. The headline review being undertaken by Savills will guide further work in this area and assist the Council in establishing a sustainable medium and longer-term strategy. An update report will be provided in the autumn.

## **Continuing Service Improvement**

61. Whilst we are responding to certain financial pressures, the Housing Service remains committed to a programme of continuous service improvement. Housing are pleased to report the following excellent performance results on rent collection and significant improvements in our repairs and voids performance.

### Repairs (Ian Williams(IWS))

- In the last six months we have reduced our outstanding Work In Progress data (WIP) from 1500 jobs to circa 830 (as of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024). This has been done by careful management of more complex work and improve triage at first point of contact
- We have significantly reduced the number of open damp and mould jobs (24 as of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024) by better triage, faster inspection by Surveyors and proactive advice.
- We are exploring humidity monitoring and damp and mould treatment kits this year to help with DMC issues.
- 97% of emergencies have been completed within target
- 95% of responsive repairs have been completed within target
- We have carried out a whole data reconciliation exercise to align our data and are bringing EDDC and IWS IT teams together for the first time in 5 years to look at interface issues

- Customer satisfaction with IWS is over 90% on responsive repairs
- Average time to complete a responsive repair is 11 days against a target of 28 days

### Voids

- We have identified 30 homes where major work is required and are putting together a plan to tackle these including the use of external grant funding
- We have streamlined our void processes and reporting mechanisms to ensure long term or strategic voids do not impact on turnaround data for 'general' voids
- We have weekly multi- agency progress meetings chaired by our new Void Manager
- We have now built better links with Liberty Gas who also hold an important part in the void process and are working with them to reduce the time they are in the void
- We are working with IWS to iron out inclusions and exclusions on the price per void delivery model with further meetings taking place next week to identify opportunities for efficiencies
- Pre inspections started taking place with the customer in situ during June which should further reduce our turnaround times with specs and contractors lined up to deliver on day one of the void

### Income Collection

- Income collection is currently at 99.18%, which is above target, and on track (target is 98%, and we are only 1% below the top quartile - last year our final income collection figure was 100.46%). This level of income collection means we are maximising our tenanted assets and strengthening our budget based on rental income. This, coupled with the improvement in Void times, should see a further increase in the HRA income generation this year.

## **Financial Challenges – Implications & Risks**

62. The council has a clear duty as a responsible landlord to ensure adequate investment in the housing stock. The current financial challenges have a number of implications and risks including.

### Implications

- **Regulatory Compliance:** This requires all housing to meet certain standards and for the testing, servicing, repair and replacement of equipment including gas, electricity and fire safety equipment. Failure to meet these standards would result in the intervention by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- **Tenant Satisfaction:** inadequate maintenance increases dissatisfaction among tenants, affecting community relations and increasing administrative burdens in terms of complaint handling.

- **Service Quality:** Inability to maintain or improve housing stock can lead to deteriorating living conditions for tenants, including conditions such as damp and mould which have serious health and safety implications.

### Risks

- **Rent Increase.** The expected rent increase for 2025/26 is calculated as CPI plus 1%. This is anticipated to amount to 3%. This formula can be factored into our short and medium term plans. However, any change in central government policy that sought to restrict or reduce rent increases, could have a significant impact on our overall income.
- **Cost inflation.** Current trends indicate a significant easing of inflationary pressure across the board. However, inflation can be affected by unforeseen global shock or events. A significant increase in materials and labour costs, without a corresponding increase in rental income, would have a significant impact on the Councils financial ability to maintain the stock.
- **Increased Regulatory Standards / Policy change.** Increasing consumer and regulatory standards have placed additional cost burdens on the Council. We believe that most of these pressures are understood and reflected within our plans. However, there is a risk that further changes to standards or obligations could place additional pressure on the HRA finances.
- **Disrepair claims.** A significant rise in claim for disrepair is a significant risk. The ability to claim compensation has been widely publicised on social media and elsewhere with some compensation firms cold calling and door knocking. A rise in claims is anticipated and is considered to be a medium to high risk.
- **Capital / Revenue Split miscalculation.** Responsive repairs budget has been estimated as £4m with 25% estimated to be capital. £3m therefore appears in the revenue budget and £1m in the capital budget. Should the position change and less than 25% be delivered as capital and instead be delivered as revenue, this may result in a revenue budget overspend. This risk is considered low to medium.



## Question & Answer

### **Q: How will the budget pressures affect our ability to meet our climate change objectives?**

A: A significant proportion of the proposed investment is to improve the fabric of our buildings and improve thermal efficiency. The programme also includes boiler replacements and other measures which contribute toward meeting our Net Zero targets. However, our climate change objectives will continue to be aspirational whilst we are needing to prioritise responsive repairs and compliance works within a restrictive budget.

### **Q: What happens if a provider doesn't meet regulatory compliance?**

A: The Regulator of Social Housing would be alerted and would conduct an investigation. Upon conclusion, they would issue a Regulatory Judgment which would then be published outlining the standards that were not met by the provider. The Regulator considers compliance within the areas of Governance, Financial Viability and Consumer Standards. Depending on the severity of the judgement, different steps would be put in place; this could be creating an action plan to address key issues, the downgrading of performance standards and/ or remedial action by way of formal interventions.

### **Q Will rents have to rise to pay for additional investment in the stock?**

A: There are no plans to increase rents for our existing tenants above the standard annual rent increases which are calculated with reference to a government formula and introduced in April each year. We will review options for 'flexible' or 'affordable rents' for some new tenancies. This is common practice amongst Registered Providers and will be an important source of additional income in future years. Any proposed change will be subject to Member approval.

### **Q Will we also be reviewing service charges.**

A: A review of service charges will be completed during this financial year to ensure costs are being appropriately recharged. A working group, including tenants will be formed to consider the approach taken within this, and a full communications and consultation process will be undertaken to ensure that we provide financial inclusion support to those tenants who may find the introduction of service charges financially challenging.

### **Q: Why was the revenue budget overspent by £6.3m in 2023/24 but only forecast to be overspent by £1.5 m in 2024/25?**

A: A review has identified that some capital expenditure was included in the Revenue budget. This type of expenditure now appears in the 24/25 Capital Programme, the cost of which will be met by the proposed borrowing.

### **Q: What will the new borrowing be spent on?**

A: Our programme of investment will ensure our homes are safe and of a decent standard. Our programme will include compliance works such as testing and replacing fire safety equipment and resolving outstanding fuel poverty issues, major structural repairs and other such actions.

### **Q - Are the Council considering selling the Housing Stock?**

A : Whilst this may be a potential option, Officers have no immediate recommendation for selling our stock. The Council have appointed Savills to review our financial position and establish options for the longer-term management of the Housing stock. This options appraisal may include delivering efficiency savings, partnering, shared services, disposing

of poorly performing assets or stock transfer. However, it is important to stress that **all** possible options will be considered as part of due diligence and a further report will be provided during the autumn.

**Q: Will budget pressure affect our ability to build new affordable homes on our garage sites?**

A: The Housing Task Force are continuing to progress multiple sites across the district. If the income from rents and grant funding covers the development and borrowing costs, development will proceed. Building new homes will not divert resources from improving the existing stock.

**Q: How much debt does the HRA have, and how will we repay additional borrowing?**

The Council borrowed around £86m under self-financing arrangements. This, and any new borrowing, is paid back from annual rental income. The current annual repayment is approximately £2.6m p.a. or around 13% of our income.

**Q: What improvement have been made to budgetary management?**

A: The new management team have identified a number of areas for improvement in budget setting, financial management and budgetary control. The Council has also commissioned Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to undertake review our budget management and accountancy practices. The outcome of this will be reported to Members in due course.

**Q Are we disposing of any assets?**

A: Potentially. Disposing of non-performing assets is standard practice amongst registered providers and is routinely carried out as a matter of good asset management. This process allows for capital receipts from poorly performing assets to be re-invested into our stock and toward the development or acquisition of new homes. An options appraisal will be undertaken for each potential disposal

**Q. Will staff be affected by the budget pressures?**

A: We are not currently anticipating a planned reduction in staff numbers. A reduction in staff costs will be sought but it is anticipated that any reductions will be achieved through natural wastage, i.e not recruiting to non-essential vacant posts. Longer term options will be reported in due course.

**Q: Are we tackling damp and mould and other hazards?**

A: Damp and mould is one of the key areas for investment, alongside other areas of compliance such as fire, gas and electrical safety. The revised budget has been developed to ensure we address these issues and maintain regulatory compliance.

**Q: Can saving be made to the revenue budget in the current year 2024/25?**

A: Budget savings will require a detailed 'Zero Budget' exercise which is a lengthy process. This is scheduled for later in the year with savings applied to future budgets. In the meantime, a new system of budgetary control has been introduced, alongside a number of process and system changes. It is anticipated that these will assist in controlling the budget and avoid overspending the revised budget.

**Q; Are the budget pressures affecting our tenants?**

A: Our stock has experienced underinvestment in previous years but the revised budget and capital programme aim to address a backlog of major repairs issues. We are also

achieving significant improvements in the delivery of tenant services such as responsive repairs.

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### **Financial implications:**

The financial details and implications are set out within the report. There are significant financial risks identified; the reduction in the HRA Balance to below the adopted level, the significant savings that are required from the HRA in 2025/26 going forwards, a reduction in the order of 10% of the gross budget, and an increase in borrowing. The implications in borrowing will have to be updated and reflected in the Council prudential indicators. Because of the level of savings required close monitoring and reporting on progress will be required to give Council assurance.

As stated in the report this addresses immediate concerns, but further reports will be presented on the longer implications and options in managing the HRA.

### **Legal implications:**

The legal implications of being unable to maintain our housing stock to the required level are outlined in the body of the report, including the risk of regulator intervention and a potential increase in disrepair cases which can generate significant costs and mean that tenants are living in substandard properties. Local authority housing revenue accounts operate within a framework that considers both reserves and balances. While there isn't a universally applicable minimum level of reserves, authorities should maintain general reserves appropriate for the risks they face. The S151 Officer has advised that it is not appropriate to lower our minimum levels, so the reserves will need to be built back up to the adopted level over a period of time. It is important therefore that Members receive regular reports (as is proposed) as to the progress that is being made and that due regard is taken to the advice of the S151 Officer.

Legal services will continue to offer advice and support as needed whilst options for the future are considered and brought to members.

## Appendix 1: HRA Outturn Summary - 2023/24

<b>HRA Outturn Summary - 2023/24</b>			
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>Actuals</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Diff</b>
Gross Property Rents	-19,498,769	-19,911,900	<b>413,131</b>
Garage Rents	-209,149	-231,110	<b>21,961</b>
Other Income	-686,427	-658,510	-27,917
	-20,394,346	-20,801,520	<b>407,174</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Repairs & Maintenance	11,097,257	5,763,318	<b>5,333,939</b>
Supervision And Management	9,513,737	8,123,651	<b>1,390,086</b>
Other Expenditure	645,236	617,240	<b>27,996</b>
Capital Charges & Bad Debt	3,854,726	3,356,710	498,016
<i>(excl Depreciation)</i>	25,110,957	17,860,919	<b>7,250,038</b>
<b>FINANCING</b>			
Net Interest Expense	2,030,001	2,559,580	<b>-529,579</b>
Earmarked Reserve Release	-9,370,133	-40,000	<b>-9,330,133</b>
Revenue Contribution to Capital Financing	2,623,521	880,000	<b>1,743,521</b>
Total Financing	-4,716,611	3,399,580	<b>-8,116,191</b>
	Actuals	Budget	Diff
Surplus/ Deficit	<b>0</b>	458,979	-458,979

## Appendix 2: Indicative 5 Year Capital Programme

Capital Programme Investment	Measures / Items Completed by Year							Total Est. Cost £
	2024/25	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Total	
Kitchens	100	251	256	200	200	200	1207	9,802,500
Bathrooms	50	150	150	150	150	150	800	3,000,000
Roofs: Condition D	6	6	107	107	107	107	440	9,636,000
Windows	24	65	65	65	65	65	349	2,230,000
Heating/ Boilers	100	280	280	280	280	280	1500	7,000,000
Capital Major Works	NB.1							4,670,000
LAD Mop Up	35	109					144	2,250,000
Adaptations (Major)	NB.2							2,400,000
Sewage- Treat-Plants	14	0	0	0	0	0	14	500,000
Fire Doors	300	600	400	400	400	400	2500	3,900,000
Damp /Mould:CAT1&2	500	500	500	500	500	500	3000	600,000
CO2 & Detection	2700	2700	0	0	0	0	5400	800,000
Fire Risk Actions	NB.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,500,000
<b>Total</b>								<b>£ 59,981,500</b>

- NB1 – Capital / Major works include major projects such as reroofing large blocks or major structural repairs etc. These are included in the Capital Programme as a single figure but listed separately. A copy of the planned Major Works is available on request.
- NB2 – An amount of £400k pa has been budgeted. The number of adaptations varies but the current programme has 3 significant adaptations to meet the particular needs of households with disabilities etc.
- NB3 – FRA actions are anticipated to be a one-off Capital Programme activity to address any outstanding works.

## Appendix 3: Revised Revenue Budget 2024/25

Revised Revenue Budget 2024/25			- Proposed Budget 2024/25		
			Existing Budget 2024/25	Revised Budget 2024/25	Variance
1 INCOME	1 Gross Property Rent inc Garages	1 Gross Property Rents	-21,088,320	-21,088,320	0
		2 Garage Rents	-220,150	-155,293	64,857
	2 Other Income	1 Other Income	-738,070	-692,645	45,425
<b>1 INCOME Total</b>			<b>-22,0346,540</b>	<b>-21,936,258</b>	110,282
2 EXPENDITURE	1 Repairs & Maintenance - General	1 Responsive Maintenance	2,945,390	3,900,000	954,610
		2 Annual Programmed Maintenance	1,520,920	2,027,000	506,080
	2 Repairs & Maintenance - Special	1 Compliance	650,050	1,033,401	383,351
		2 Other Works	710,160	1,018,958	308,798
		3 Supervision & Management	9,303,501	9,745,313	441,812
	4 Other Expenditure	1 Other Exp non-Sewerage	686,070	723,999	37,929
		2 Sewerage	45,740	8,866	-36,874
	5 Capital Charges & Bad Debt	1 Adjustment to Bad Debt Provision			0
		2 Reval Deprn and Impair	950,420	2,028,300	1,077,880
	3 Major Repairs Expenditure	2,800,900		-2,800,900	
<b>2 EXPENDITURE Total</b>			<b>19,613,151</b>	<b>20,485,836</b>	872,686
3 FINANCING	1 Interest on Balances		-458,600	0	458,600
	2 Loan Principal & Interest repayments		2,663,160	2,787,280	124,120
	3 Other	1 Gain on Disposal	-3,161,910	-3,161,910	0
		2 Loss on Disposal	2,001,980	2,001,980	0
		4 Other	-10	0	10
	4 MIRS	1 Rev Gain on Disposal	3,161,910	3,161,910	0
		2 Rev Loss on Disposal	-2,001,980	-2,001,980	0
		3 Rev Rev, Dep & Impair	-950,420	0	950,420
		4 TFR to EARRES	0	0	0
		5 Cont to Capital	1,179,259	0	-1,179,259
	6 Other			0	
<b>3 FINANCING Total</b>			<b>2,433,389</b>	<b>2,787,280</b>	353,891
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>1,336,858</b>	1,336,859

## Appendix 4 - Revised Capital Programme 2024/25

<b>Project</b>	<b>Revised 2024/25</b>
	<b>£</b>
2024/25 RTB Replacement Acquisitions	3,320,310
Sewerage Plants	500,000
Fire Doors	450,000
CO2 & Detection	400,000
FRA Actions	1,000,000
LAD Mop-up	750,000
Social Service Adaptations	400,000
WNDW RENEWAL	150,000
Replacement Bathrooms	200,000
Roofing Renewal	132,000
Replacement Kitchens	750,000
Gas Boiler Replacement	500,000
Capital Major Works	1,210,000
Capitalised Responsive Repairs	1,000,000
PPV Voids	2,500,000
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>13,262,310</b>
Major Repairs Reserve / Contribution from Revenue	-2,028,300
Local Authority Grant Funding (LAHF)	-600,000
RTB 1-4-1	-975,155
Other Capital Receipts	-468,000
S106 Funding	
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>-9,190,855</b>

Appendix 5- Outline of projected timeline (subject to change due to matters beyond our control)

#### Headline HRA Roadmap

#### **Completed**

- HRA – Internal Financial Review
- Capital programme – Internal review.
- CIPFA Appointed for HRA Health check
- 2023 Outturn Budget Review
- 2024 Budget revision exercise

- Savills Appointed for financial plan and longer terms options appraisal.

## **July**

- Revised Budget to Council

## **August**

- Major works / capital programme implementation (Subject to budget approval)

## **September – November**

- HRA update Report to Members – CIPFA Savills, Stock Condition reports etc
- HRA Zero based budget/ Efficiency savings exercise
- Disposals Policy approval
- Income maximisation review
- HRA Capital and Revenue expenditure Benchmarking exercise
- Budget / medium term financial plan formulation

## **2025**

- Efficiency programme implementation
- Income maximisation programme implementation
- Medium term financial plan / Budget approval



## Full Council

Report to: Full Council

Date 17 July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



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### Political Proportionality and Allocation of Committee places and appointments to Panels, Forums and Joint Bodies

#### Report summary:

In accordance with legislation and the Council's Constitution, this is a report to notify a change to the allocation and appointments of members for seats on the Council's committees for the remainder of the 2024/2025 municipal year following the notification in changes to group membership and the formation of a new grouping Cranbrook Voice.

The report also includes appointments to Panels, Forums and Joint Bodies for 2024/2025 which was deferred from the Annual Council meeting on 8 May 2024.

#### Recommendation:

1. That the Council notes the revised political balance of the Council and agree the proposed allocation of committee places as set out in this report and its appendices.
2. That the Council agrees the proposed allocation of places to Panels, Forums and Joint Bodies for 2024/2025 as set out in Appendix 4.

#### Reason for recommendation:

To meet the requirements of legislation and the Council's Constitution following a change in the membership and a new political grouping on the Council.

#### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

#### Consultation carried out:

Consultation with Political Group Leaders

Officer: Andrew Melhuish (Democratic Services Manager) [andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk)

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## **Financial implications:**

There are no financial implications relating to the change in members from the Independent Group to the Democratic Alliance Group or the creation of the Cranbrook Voice Group as no Special Responsibility Allowance Payments are affected.

## **Legal implications:**

The rules governing the allocation of seats on Committees and Sub-Committees to political groups are set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and regulations made thereunder including the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. The provisions of the 1989 Act include the requirement that, where Members of the Council are divided into political groups, then the membership of its committees and sub-committees must reflect the political balance of the Council as a whole. The proposals set out in this report comply with the Council's Constitution.

## **Equalities impact** Low Impact

The Council's duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 is to have "due regard" to the matters set out in relation to equalities when considering and making decisions on the provision of services. There are no direct impacts of these recommendations on the provision of services. There are no direct impacts on sustainability, health and safety, community safety or privacy aspects as a result of this proposal.

## **Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk; This report ensures that the political balance of the committee allocations is in line with the relevant legislation and guidance.

**Links to background information** None.

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 Where membership of East Devon District Council is divided into political groups the Council is required to review and allocate the total number of seats on committees in accordance with the strength of each political group.
- 1.2 The report reflects changes to the membership of political groupings and the formation of a new group, Cranbrook Voice Group, since the allocations were approved at Annual Council in May 2024. This results in members of each political group on the Council having the following political balance:
  - Democratic Alliance Group = 31 members
  - Conservative = 15 members
  - Independent Group = 8 members
  - Cranbrook Voice = 3 members
  - Independent Councillor Group = 2 members
  - Un grouped councillor = 1 member

The Democratic Alliance form the majority administration from 2024 to 2025. This report has been prepared on the basis of the political groups reflecting the revised position set out above.

- 1.3 The revised political balance results in the following entitlement to seats for committees where political balance rules apply:

<b>Total Number of Seats</b>			
Democratic Alliance Group	31 members (30 members)	53% (51%)	59 seats 59 seats
Conservative Group	15 members (15 members)	25% (25%)	28 seats (28 seats)
The Independent Group	8 members (12 members)	14% (20%)	15 seats (22 seats)
Cranbrook Voice	3 members	5%	7 seats
Independent Councillor Group	2 members (2 members)	3% (3%)	2 seats (2 seats)
Un grouped	1 member	0%	0 seats
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>60 members</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>111 seats</b>

Figures in brackets reflect the allocations agreed at Annual Council on 8 May 2024.

## **2. Appointments / Allocation of places**

- 2.1 The Council's committee places (also known as seats) to be allocated to the political groups has been calculated and the political group leaders informed.
- 2.2 Appendix 1 sets out guidance regarding the method of allocation of seats / places on committees and comments on the application of this in relation to Appendix 2. Appendix 2 sets out the calculation of aggregate entitlement to places on Committees on the basis that the Council continues to agree the recommendation of the political group leaders.
- 2.3 Appendix 3 sets out the political group leaders proposed nominations to the committee places to reflect the change in the committee seat allocations. When approving Appendix 3 the Council will meet the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 which requires the application of certain rules to the appointment of council committees. The Schedule provides for:
- (a) The appointment of members to the committees of the Council.
  - (b) The appointment of substitute members to the Personnel Committee and Standards Committee.

- 2.4 Full Council may waive the political balance rules for any committee(s) where the Council wishes to appoint an alternative number of members from political groups. In order for political balance to be waived no member must vote against this motion, an objection by a single member would make it necessary to apply political balance rules.
- 2.6 This report also includes details of the political groups' nominations to be appointed to Panels, Forums and Joint Bodies for 2024/2025 set out in Appendix 4.

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1 Members are invited to approve the recommendations as set out in the report. To ensure that the Council's governance framework is up to date and reflects the current political balance within the Council and to enable the required appointments to be agreed for the remainder of the civic year 2024/25.

### **4. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Method of allocation guidance

Appendix 2 – Membership of Committees – Seats and Proportional Balance

Appendix 3 – Schedule of Committee Appointments

Appendix 4 – Schedule of appointments Panels, Forums and Joint Bodies

## **Appendix 1: Allocation of places on committees**

### **1 Method of allocation of places on committees to elected members**

- 1.1 The rules governing the allocation of places (also known as seats) on committee and sub-committees to political groups are set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (the Act) and regulations made thereunder. The provisions of the Act include the requirement that, where members of the council are divided into political groups, then the membership of its committees and sub committees must reflect the political balance of the council as a whole.
- 1.2 The number of seats on committees are therefore allocated to each political group in the same proportion as the overall strength of each political group as far as practicable. This excludes the Cabinet as those appointments are made by the Leader of Council and also any other committee where political balance is not required i.e. Licensing and Enforcement sub committee and Standards Hearing sub committee.
- 1.3 The council is bound to have regards to the wishes of the political groups in allocating committee places to individual councillors.
- 1.4 The Act sets out the principles to be used in agreeing the size of and allocation of places to committees and sub committees of the council and this process is repeated annually at the Council's Annual General Meeting or when changes to political group composition are made. The principles must be followed so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 1.5 Principles for allocating places from the Act together with a commentary where appropriate, must be applied to the allocation of seats on committees.
  1. Preventing domination by a single group: All the seats should not be allocated to the same political group.
  2. Ensuring a majority group enjoys a majority on all committees: If one political group has a majority in the full council, that political group should have a majority on each committee.
  3. Aggregating all committee places and allocating fair shares: Subject to the above principles 1 and 2, the total number of seats on all the committees of the council allocated to each political group should be in the same proportion as that political group's seats on the full Council.
  4. Ensuring as far as practicable fairness on each committee: Subject to the above principles 1, 2 and 3 the number of seats on each committee of the Council allocated to each political group should be in the same proportion as that political group's seats on the full council.
- 1.6 Application of the principles: when the council considers appointments to its committees it needs to be in accordance with the principles set out above. Each political group should state the names of the members it wishes to take its allocated places on committees, and when those wishes are known, the council is under a duty to make the appointment of those councillors as soon as practicable.
- 1.7 Method of calculating the allocation of places to political groups. The principles set out above can be applied in the following sequence:

- i. Calculate the total number of seats with votes on all the committees.
  - ii. Calculate the proportion that each political group forms of the total membership of the council. Reserve an appropriate number of seats for any members not in a political group.
  - iii. Apply those proportions to the total number of committee seats to give the aggregate entitlement of each group; the requirement to apply the proportions 'so far as reasonably practicable' can be met by rounding down fractional entitlements of less than half, and rounding up entitlements of a half or more; if this results in a greater aggregate than the number of seats available, the fractional entitlement(s) closest to half should be rounded in the other direction until entitlements balance the available seats.
  - iv. Apply the proportions to the number of members on each committee to give provisional entitlement to seats on that committee.
  - v. If the provisional entitlement gives only one group seats on the committee, adjust the entitlement so that the next largest group has a seat.
  - vi. Finally, adjust the seats on each committee so that the total allocated to each group is as near as possible to their aggregate entitlement, whilst preserving the results reached at steps (iv) and (v) thus applying principle 3 as set out above.
- 1.8 This means that the committees are set out as proportionately balanced, but the numbers across the committees are then altered, whilst trying to ensure the committees keep to this proportionality as far as is possible, to ensure that the total number of all the committee places when taken together are politically balanced.
- 1.9 The council is free to adopt any aggregate number of places on committees as long as it follows the principles set out above and the sequence outlined in steps (i) to (vi). The proposed allocation of committee places to political groups in order to seek their nominations is set out at Appendix 2. This has been developed in line with the recommendations of the political group leaders.
- 1.10 Members not in a political group: In the case of members who are not members of a political group, a proportion of seats on committees equal to the proportion of council members who do not belong to a political group, has been reserved, with appointments to these seats being made by the Council at its discretion.

## **2. Calculation of the political group's entitlement on committees**

- 2.1 Appendix 2 sets out there are a total of 111 seats to be allocated by the Council where political balance applies, resulting in a balance of total seats of Democratic Alliance 59 seats, Conservative 28 seats, Independent Group 15 seats, Cranbrook Voice 7 seats and Independent Councillor Group 2 seats.

**Appendix 2 – Membership of Committees – Seats and Proportional Balance 2024/2025 Proposed committee places**

Committee Seats ÷ 59	Number in Group (% of Council membership)					
	31 Democratic Alliance Group 53%	15 Conservative 25%	8 The Independent Group 14%	3 Cranbrook Voice Group 5%	2 Independent Councillor Group 3%	1 Un-grouped 2%
Scrutiny (15 seats)	8	4	2	1	0	0
Overview (13 seats)	7	3	2	1	0	0
Housing Review Board (5 seats)	3	1	1	0	0	0
Strategic Planning (15 seats)	8	4	2	1	0	0
Planning Committee (16 seats)	8	4	2	1	1	0
Audit and Governance (10 seats)	5	2	1	1	1	0
Standards Committee (7 seats)	4	2	1	0	0	0
Personnel Committee (15 seats)	8	4	2	1	0	0
Licensing and Enforcement (15 seats)	8	4	2	1	0	0
<b>Total Seats 111</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

Please note that the Cabinet is not shown on the above table as political proportionality rules do not apply. Some figures have been rounded up or down to ensure total number of seats in accordance with the guidance set out in Appendix 1.

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**SCHEDULE OF COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS – 2024 - 2025**

**Audit and Governance Committee (10 seats)**

**(Democratic Alliance Group 5, Conservative 2, Independent Group 1, Cranbrook Voice 1 and Independent Councillor Group 1)**

**Quorum 3**

Co-opted non-voting Independent Member who shall be suitably qualified to support elected representatives in scrutinising local authority finances.

<b>Chair: Cllr Chris Burhop</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
<b>Vice Chair: Cllr Olly Davey</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Joe Whibley	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Steve Gazzard	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Charlotte Fitzgerald	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Colin Brown	Conservative
Cllr Mike Goodman	Conservative
Cllr Ian Barlow	Independent Group
Cllr Kim Bloxham	Cranbrook Voice
Cllr Roy Collins	Independent Councillor Group

**Housing Review Board (5 seats)**

**(Democratic Alliance Group 3, Conservative 1, Independent Group 1)**

**Quorum 4**

5 tenant and leaseholder representatives; and 2 independent community representatives. The non-councillor members will be co-opted members and shall have the right to vote. Council shall appoint the Chair. The Board will elect its own vice Chair.

<b>Chair: Cllr Sarah Chamberlain</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Chris Burhop	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Simon Smith	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Aurora Bailey	Conservative
Cllr Tony McCollum	Independent Group

**Licensing and Enforcement Committee (15 seats)**

**(Democratic Alliance Group 8, Conservative 4, Independent Group 2 and Cranbrook Voice 1)**

**Quorum 4**

Serving members of Cabinet are not eligible for appointment to this committee.

<b>Chair: Cllr Joe Whibley</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
<b>Vice Chair: Cllr Kim Bloxham</b>	Cranbrook Voice
Cllr Tim Dumper	Democratic Alliance Group
Steve Gazzard	Democratic Alliance Group



### Appendix 3 - Schedule of Committee Appointments

Cllr Richard Jefferies	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Sue Westerman	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr John Heath	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Yehudi Levine	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Olly Davey	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Brian Bailey	Conservative
Cllr Maddy Chapman	Conservative
Cllr Cherry Nicholas	Conservative
Cllr John O'Leary	Conservative
Cllr Ian Barlow	Independent Group
Cllr Tony McCollum	Independent Group

#### Overview Committee (13 seats)

**(Democratic Alliance Group 7, Conservative 3, Independent Group 2 and Cranbrook Voice 1)**

#### Quorum 5

The Chair of the Committee shall be a Councillor from the majority party.

<b>Chair: Cllr Anne Hall</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
<b>Vice Chair: Cllr Tim Dumper</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Yehudi Levine	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr John Heath	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Paula Fernley	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Olly Davey	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Del Haggerty	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Aurora Bailey	Conservative
Cllr Brian Bailey	Conservative
Cllr Henry Riddell	Conservative
Cllr Vicky Johns	Independent Group
Cllr Melanie Martin	Independent Group
Cllr Kevin Blakey	Cranbrook Voice

#### Personnel Committee (15 seats)

**(Democratic Alliance Group 8, Conservative 4, Independent Group 2 and Cranbrook Voice 1)**

#### Quorum 4

The Leader, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder with Human Resources responsibilities shall be members. There shall be substitute members for each political group of the Council entitled to a seat to ensure flexibility in case of any conflict of interest and to ensure political balance and that the Sub Committees can be constituted.

<b>Chair: Cllr Eleanor Rylance</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
<b>Vice Chair: Cllr John Loudoun</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Paul Arnott	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Paul Hayward	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Tim Dumper	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Nick Hookway	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Eileen Wragg	Democratic Alliance Group

### Appendix 3 - Schedule of Committee Appointments

Cllr Del Haggerty	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Jenny Brown	Conservative
Cllr Maddy Chapman	Conservative
Cllr Aurora Bailey	Conservative
Cllr Brian Bailey	Conservative
Cllr Tony McCollum	Independent Group
Cllr Melanie Martin	Independent Group
Cllr Kevin Blakey	Cranbrook Voice
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Sarah Jackson	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr John Heath	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Alasdair Bruce	Independent Group
Cllr Sam Hawkins	Cranbrook Voice

#### **Interviewing (Chief Officers) Sub Committee**

Membership: 7 Councillors drawn from the membership of the Personnel Committee which shall include at least one member of the Cabinet (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality). Substitute members can be used when necessary. Quorum: 7

#### **Investigating and Disciplinary Sub Committee.**

Membership: 5 Councillors drawn from the membership of the Personnel Committee (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality) none of whom shall have sat on any Grievance Sub Committee relating to the same matter and which shall include at least one member of the Cabinet (which may not be the Leader). Substitute members can be used when necessary. Quorum: 5

#### **Employment Appeals Sub Committee.**

Membership: 5 Councillors drawn from the membership of the Personnel Committee (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality) none of whom shall have sat on any Investigating and Disciplinary Committee relating to the same matter and which shall include at least one member of the Cabinet (which may not be the Leader). Substitute members can be used when necessary. Quorum: 5

#### **Grievance Sub Committee.**

Membership: 5 Councillors drawn from the membership of the Personnel Committee (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality). Quorum: 3

#### **Planning Committee (16 seats))**

**(Democratic Alliance Group 8, Conservative 4, Independent Group 2, Cranbrook Voice 1 and Independent Councillor Group 1)**

#### **Quorum 4**

The Chair and Vice Chair shall not be from the same Ward and serving members of Cabinet are not eligible for appointment to this committee.

<b>Chair: Cllr Olly Davey</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
<b>Vice Chair: Cllr Matt Hall</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Eileen Wragg	Democratic Alliance Group

### Appendix 3 - Schedule of Committee Appointments

Cllr Anne Hall	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Sarah Chamberlain	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Steve Gazzard	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Simon Smith	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Del Haggerty	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Maddy Chapman	Conservative
Cllr Brian Bailey	Conservative
Cllr Colin Brown	Conservative
Cllr Jenny Brown	Conservative
Cllr Ian Barlow	Independent Group
Cllr Mike Howe	Independent Group
Cllr Kim Bloxham	Cranbrook Voice
Cllr Peter Faithfull	Independent Councillor Group

#### Scrutiny Committee (15 seats)

**(Democratic Alliance Group 8, Conservative 4, Independent Group 2 and Cranbrook Voice 1)**

#### Quorum 5

The Chair shall be a Councillor from the opposition party / group agreed at Annual Council but in the event that no Councillor is proposed by the opposition then the Leader shall retain the right to nominate the Chair.

<b>Chair: Cllr Mike Goodman</b>	Conservative
<b>Vice Chair – Cllr Duncan Mackinder</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Matt Hall	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr John Heath	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Andrew Toye	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Anne Hall	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Joe Whibley	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Olly Davey	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Yehudi Levine	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Maddy Chapman	Conservative
Cllr Marcus Hartnell	Conservative
Cllr Jenny Brown	Conservative
Cllr Ian Barlow	Independent Group
Cllr Vicky Johns	Independent Group
Cllr Kim Bloxham	Cranbrook Voice

#### Standards Committee (7 seats)

**(Democratic Alliance Group 4, Conservative 2 and Independent Group 1)**

#### Quorum 4

Chair of Council will be the Chair. 3 non-voting Parish Councillor representatives and 3 non-voting independent members. There shall be substitute members for each political group of the Council entitled to a seat to ensure flexibility in case of any conflict of interest and to ensure political balance.

<b>Chair: Cllr Eleanor Rylance</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Joe Whibley	Democratic Alliance Group

### Appendix 3 - Schedule of Committee Appointments

Cllr Tim Dumper	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr John Loudoun	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Iain Chubb	Conservative
Cllr Stuart Hughes	Conservative
Cllr Jess Bailey	Independent Group
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr John Heath	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Alasdair Bruce	Independent Group

#### Strategic Planning Committee (15 seats)

(Democratic Alliance Group 8, Conservative 4 and Independent Group 2 and Cranbrook Voice 1)

#### Quorum 5

No more than 4 may be from the Cabinet

<b>Chair: Cllr Todd Olive</b>	Democratic Alliance Group
<b>Vice Chair: Cllr Mike Howe</b>	Independent Group
Cllr Paul Hayward	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Dan Ledger	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Olly Davey	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Yeuhdi Levine	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Paula Fernley	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Bethany Collins	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Geoff Jung	Democratic Alliance Group
Cllr Ben Ingham	Conservative
Cllr Brian Bailey	Conservative
Cllr Helen Parr	Conservative
Cllr Colin Brown	Conservative
Cllr Jess Bailey	Independent Group
Cllr Kevin Blakey	Cranbrook Voice

## Appendix 4

### SCHEDULE OF PANELS, FORUM AND JOINT BODIES 2024/2025

#### 1. Asset Management Forum

Cabinet members (PFH Finance & Assets, PFH Economy, PFH Strategic Planning) 3, Assistant Portfolio Holders (APFH Coast, Country & Environment, APFH Economy & Assets) 2 and one ex officio councillor (Leader of Council).

Chair – Portfolio Holder Economy & Assets

**Refer back to Asset Management Forum to review Terms of Reference.**

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Paul Hayward</b>	Portfolio Holder Economy & Assets
b)	Cllr Sam Hawkins	Portfolio Holder Finance
c)	Cllr Todd Olive	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning
d)	Cllr Geoff Jung	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country & Environment
e)		Assistant Portfolio Holder Economy & Assets
f)	Leader of Council	Ex-officio councillor

#### 2. Budget Setting and Capital Allocations Panel

The Cabinet, Assistant Portfolio Holders, councillors 5

Chair – Portfolio Holder Finance

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair: Cllr Sam Hawkins</b>	Portfolio Holder Finance
b)	Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader of Council
c)	Cllr Geoff Jung	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
d)	Cllr Marianne Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action and Emergency Response
e)	Cllr Sarah Jackson	Portfolio Holder Communications and Democracy
f)	Cllr John Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co ordination
g)	Cllr Nick Hookway	Portfolio Holder Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
h)	Cllr Paul Hayward	Portfolio Holder Economy & Assets
i)	Cllr Todd Olive	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning
j)	Cllr Dan Ledger	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities
k)	Cllr Paula Fernley	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
l)	Cllr Charlotte Fitzgerald	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
m)	Cllr Richard Jefferies	Assistant Portfolio Holder Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
n)	Cllr John Heath	Councillor
o)	Cllr Charlotte Fitzgerald	Councillor
p)	Cllr Mike Goodman	Councillor
q)	Cllr Ian Barlow	Councillor
r)	Cllr Matt Hall	Councillor

### 3. Community Grant Panel

Cabinet member (PFH Finance & Assets) 1 and councillors 6

Chair – Portfolio Holder Finance

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Sam Hawkins</b>	Portfolio Holder Finance
b)	Cllr John Loudoun	Councillor
c)	Cllr Sarah Jackson	Councillor
d)	Cllr John Heath	Councillor
e)	Cllr Jessica Bailey	Councillor
f)	Cllr Stuart Hughes	Councillor
g)	Cllr Helen Parr	Councillor

### 4. Community Infrastructure Levy Working Group

Cabinet members 3 (PFH Strategic Planning, Sustainable Homes & Communities an PFH Economy), Vice Chair of Strategic Planning Committee, Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee, Councillors 4

Chair – Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Todd Olive</b>	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning
	Cllr Dan Ledger	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes & Communities
b)	Cllr Paul Hayward	Portfolio Holder Economy & Assets
c)	Cllr Mike Howe	Vice Chair Strategic Planning Committee
d)	Cllr Olly Davey	Chair Planning Committee
e)	Cllr Matt Hall	Vice Chair Planning Committee
f)	Cllr Sarah Chamberlain	Councillor
g)	Cllr Ian Barlow	Councillor
h)	Cllr Tony McCollum	Councillor
i)	Cllr Chris Burhop	Councillor

### 5. Constitution Working Group

Cabinet member 1 (PFH Communications & Democracy), Democratic Alliance Group 3, Conservative 2, Independent Group 1, Cranbrook Voice 1 and Independent Councillor Group 1)

Chair – PFH Communications & Democracy

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Sarah Jackson</b>	Portfolio Holder Communications & Democracy
b)	Cllr John Loudoun	Councillor (Democratic Alliance Group)
c)	Cllr Tim Dumper	Councillor (Democratic Alliance Group)
d)	Cllr Dan Ledger	Councillor (Democratic Alliance Group)
e)	Cllr Jenny Brown	Councillor (Conservative Group)
f)	Cllr Mike Goodman	Councillor (Conservative Group)
g)	Cllr Tony McCollum	Councillor (Independent Group)
h)	Cllr Kim Bloxham	Councillor (Cranbrook Voice)
i)	Cllr Peter Faithfull	Councillor (Independent Councillor Group)

## 6. Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum (formerly LED Monitoring Group)

Cabinet members 5 (Leader of Council, PFH Finance, PFH Council & Corporate Coordination, PFH Economy & Assets, PFH Culture Leisure, Sport & Tourism), Councillors 5

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Sam Hawkins</b>	Portfolio Holder Finance
b)	Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader of Council
c)	Cllr John Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co ordination
d)	Cllr Paul Hayward	Portfolio Holder Economy and Assets
e)	Cllr Nick Hookway	Portfolio Holder Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
f)	Cllr Andrew Toye	Councillor
g)	Cllr Joe Whibley	Councillor
h)	Cllr Simon Smith	Councillor
i)	Cllr Mike Goodman	Councillor
j)	Cllr Kim Bloxham	Councillor

## 7. Local Plan Member Working Group

Leader of Council, Chair and Vice Chair of Strategic Planning Committee, councillors 4 (members of the Strategic Planning Committee)

### Refer appointment of councillors to Strategic Planning Committee

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Cllr Paul Arnott</b>	Leader of Council
b)	Cllr Todd Olive	Chair of Strategic Planning Committee
c)	Cllr Mike Howe	Vice Chair of Strategic Planning Committee
d)	Vacancy	Councillor (Democratic Alliance Group)
e)	Vacancy	Councillor (Democratic Alliance Group)
f)	Vacancy	Councillor (Conservative)
g)	Vacancy	Councillor (Independent)

## 8. Member Development Working Party

Cabinet members 3 (PFH Communications & Democracy, PFH Council & Corporate Coordination, Leader of Council), Member Champion for Mental Health, councillors 5

Chair – Portfolio Holder Communications and Democracy

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Sarah Jackson</b>	Portfolio Holder Communications and Democracy
b)	Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader of Council
c)	Cllr John Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co ordination
d)	Cllr Sue Westerman	Member Champion for Mental Health
e)	Cllr John Heath	Councillor
f)	Cllr Tim Dumper	Councillor
g)	Cllr Yehudi Levine	Councillor
h)	Cllr Ian Barlow	Councillor
i)	Cllr Mike Goodman	Councillor

## 9. Placemaking and Prosperity Investment Board (sub-committee of Cabinet)

Leader of Council, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Finance (voting members), Chair of Overview Committee (non voting) and ward councillors as required.

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair: Cllr Paul Arnott</b>	Leader of Council
b)	Cllr Paul Hayward	Deputy Leader
c)	Cllr Sam Hawkins	Portfolio Holder Finance
d)	Cllr Anne Hall	Chair of Overview Committee (non-voting)

## 10. Poverty Working Panel

Cabinet member 1 (PFH Sustainable Homes & Communities), councillors 9

Chair – Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Dan Ledger</b>	Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities
b)	Cllr Maddy Chapman	Councillor
c)	Cllr Mike Goodman	Councillor
d)	Cllr Melanie Martin	Councillor
e)	Cllr John Heath	Councillor
f)	Cllr Paul Arnott	Councillor
g)	Cllr Marianne Rixson	Councillor
h)	Cllr Simon Smith	Councillor
i)	Cllr Bethany Collins	Councillor
j)	Vacancy	Councillor



## Joint Bodies

### 1. Arts and Culture Forum (appointment of town representatives to be deferred to allow consultation with relevant councillors and town councils)

Cabinet member 1 (PFH Tourism, Sport & Leisure), Assistant Portfolio Holder 1 (Coast, Country & Environment), councillors 4 (1 is Member Champion Arts & Culture) and town representatives 7 (A district or town councillor representing each of the towns of Axminster, Budleigh Salterton, Cranbrook, Exmouth, Honiton, Ottery St Mary, Seaton and Sidmouth)

Chair – Member Champion (Arts & Culture)

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair: Cllr Joe Whibley</b>	Councillor (Member Champion Arts & Culture)
b)	Cllr Nick Hookway	Portfolio Holder Tourism, Sport, Leisure and Culture
c)	Cllr Paula Fernley	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
d)		Councillor
e)		Councillor
f)		Councillor
g)	Jenny Bull	Axminster representative
h)	Richard Doormarr	Budleigh Salterton representative
i)	Colin Buchan	Cranbrook
j)	Steve Gazzard	Exmouth representative
k)	Jenny Brown	Honiton representative
l)	Nick Sneller	Ottery St Mary representative
m)	Amrik Singh	Seaton representative
n)	Ian Barlow	Sidmouth representative

**Nominations received: Cllrs Paul Arnott, Olly Davey, Peter Faithfull & Vicky Johns**

### 2. East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee

Councillors 3

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Chris Burhop	Councillor
b)	Cllr Tim Dumper	Councillor
c)	Cllr Ian Barlow	Councillor

## County Committees

### 3. Cranbrook Placemaking Group

Cabinet member 1 (PFH Strategic Planning) and ward members 3

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Todd Olive	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning
b)	Cllr Kim Bloxham	Councillor (Cranbrook Ward)
c)	Cllr Kevin Blakey	Councillor (Cranbrook Ward)
d)	Cllr Sam Hawkins	Councillor (Cranbrook Ward)

#### 4. East Devon Gypsy & Traveller Forum

Cabinet member 1 (PFH Sustainable Homes & Communities), ward councillor 1 and councillor 1

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Dan Ledger	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities
b)	Vacancy	Councillor (Cranbrook Ward)
c)	Cllr John Heath	Councillor

#### 5. East and Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership

Councillor 1

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Paul Arnott	Councillor

#### 6. Exeter and East Devon Enterprise Zone Board

Cabinet member 1 (Leader of Council)

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader of Council

#### 7. Exmouth Beach Management Plan Steering Group

Cabinet members 3 (PFH Coast, Country & Environment, PFH Climate Action & Emergency Response, PFH Tourism, Sport, Leisure & Culture), Assistant Portfolio Holder (APFH Coast, Country & Environment), Exmouth Ward members 7

Chair – Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Geoff Jung</b>	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
b)	Cllr Marianne Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action and Emergency Response
c)	Cllr Nick Hookway	Portfolio Holder Tourism, Sport, Leisure and Culture
d)	Cllr Paula Fernley	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
e)	Cllr Charlotte Fitzgerald	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
f)	Cllr Maddy Chapman	Councillor (Exmouth Brixington Ward)
g)	Cllr Tim Dumper	Councillor (Exmouth Halsdon Ward)
h)	Cllr Anne Hall	Councillor (Exmouth Littleham Ward)
i)	Cllr Brian Bailey	Councillor (Exmouth Littleham Ward)
j)	Cllr Olly Davey	Councillor (Exmouth Town Ward)
k)	Cllr Eileen Wragg	Councillor (Exmouth Town Ward)
l)	Cllr Matt Hall	Councillor (Exmouth Withycombe Raleigh Ward)

## 8. Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group

Cabinet members 3 (PFH Economy & Assets, PFH Strategic Planning & Leader of Council) and Exmouth Ward members 7

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Nick Hookway</b>	Councillor (Exmouth Littleham Ward)
b)	Vice Chair Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader of Council
c)	Cllr Paul Hayward	Portfolio Holder Economy and Assets
d)	Cllr Todd Olive	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning
e)	Cllr Aurora Bailey	Councillor (Exmouth Brixington Ward)
f)	Cllr Tim Dumper	Councillor (Exmouth Halsdon Ward)
g)		Councillor (Exmouth Littleham Ward)
h)	Cllr Olly Davey	Councillor (Exmouth Town Ward)
i)	Cllr Joe Whibley	Councillor (Exmouth Town Ward)
j)	Cllr Matt Hall	Councillor (Exmouth Withycombe Raleigh Ward)

### Nominations from Cllr Brian Bailey & Cllr Anne Hall

## 9. Lower Exe Mooring Authority Management Committee

Councillors 2 plus substitute

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Geoff Jung	Councillor
b)	Cllr Nick Hookway	Councillor
c)	Substitute member Vacancy	Councillor

## 10. Recycling and Waste Partnership Board

Cabinet members 2 (PFH Coast, Country & Environment, PFH Climate Action & Emergency Response), Assistant Portfolio Holders 2 (APFH Coast, Country & Environment) and councillors 2

Chair – Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Geoff Jung</b>	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
b)	Cllr Marianne Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action and Emergency Response
c)	Cllr Paula Fernley	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
d)	Cllr Charlotte Fitzgerald	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
e)	Cllr Todd Olive	Councillor
f)		Councillor

### Nominations received Cllr Mike Goodman & Cllr Peter Faithfull

## 11. Seaton Beach Management Steering Group

Cabinet members 2 (PFH Coast, Country & Environment, PFH Climate Action & Emergency Response), Assistant Portfolio Holder 2 (APFH Coast, Country & Environment) and Seaton ward members 3. Also includes representatives from Bournemouth, Christchurch Poole Council (Project management), Contractor, Seaton Town Council, Seaton Town Improvement Team, Chamber of Commerce,, Axmouth Parish Council, Axe Yacht Club, Sea Anglers, West Seaton Residents Association, East Devon Fishermans Association, Seaton Beach Hut owners, Parkrun, Jurassic Coast, AONB and National Trust.

Chair – Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Geoff Jung</b>	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
b)	Cllr Marianne Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action and Emergency Response
c)	Cllr Paula Fernley	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
d)	Cllr Charlotte Fitzgerald	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
e)	Cllr Dan Ledger	Councillor (Seaton ward)
f)	Cllr Del Haggerty	Councillor (Seaton ward)
g)	Cllr Marcus Hartnell	Councillor (Seaton ward)

## 12. Sidmouth Beach Management Plan Steering Group

Cabinet members 2 (PFH Coast, Country & Environment, PFH Climate Action & Emergency Response), Assistant Portfolio Holders 2 (APFH Coast, Country & Environment) and Sidmouth ward members 4

Chair – Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	<b>Chair Cllr Geoff Jung</b>	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
b)	Cllr Marianne Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action and Emergency Response
c)	Cllr Paula Fernley	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
d)	Cllr Charlotte Fitzgerald	Assistant Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
e)	Cllr Ian Barlow	Councillor (Sidmouth Town Ward)
f)	Cllr Sophie Richards	Councillor (Sidmouth Town Ward)
g)	Cllr John Loudoun	Councillor (Sidmouth Rural Ward)
h)	Cllr Stuart Hughes	Councillor (Sidmouth Sidford Ward)

### 13. South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

Cabinet member 1 (PFH Coast, Country & Environment) and substitute member – Vice Chair of Strategic Planning Committee

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Geoff Jung	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
b)	Substitute member Cllr Mike Howe	Vice Chair Strategic Planning Committee

### 14. STRATA Joint Executive Committee (EDDC, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council)

Leader of Council and Chief Executive (substitute member Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co ordination)

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader of Council
b)	Substitute member Cllr John Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co ordination
c)	<b>Chief Executive</b>	Chief Executive

### 15. STRATA Joint Scrutiny Committee (EDDC, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council)

Councillors 3 (substitute councillors 3)

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Sue Westerman	Councillor
b)	Cllr Yehudi Levine	Councillor
c)	Cllr Todd Olive	Councillor
d)	Substitute member Cllr Duncan Mackinder	Councillor
e)	Substitute member Vacancy	Councillor
f)	Substitute member Vacancy	Councillor

### 16. Woodbury, Exmouth and Budleigh (WEB) Community Health and Wellbeing Board

Cabinet member 1 (PFH Sustainable Homes & Communities) and substitute member Ward member from Budleigh and Raleigh, Exmouth or Woodbury and Lypstone

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Dan Ledger	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities
b)	Substitute member Cllr Charlotte Fitzgerald	Councillor

## 17. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) Programme Management Panel

Cabinet member 3 (Leader of Council, PFH Finance & Assets, PFH Climate Action & Emergency Response) and councillors 4

	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Composition</b>
a)	Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader of Council
b)	Cllr Paul Hayward	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Economy and Assets
c)	Cllr Marianne Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action and Emergency Response
d)	Cllr Todd Olive	Councillor
e)	Cllr Tim Dumper	Councillor
f)	Cllr Ian Barlow	Councillor
g)	Cllr Matt Hall	Councillor

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