

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Strategic Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 9 October 2024

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.05 am and ended at 12.10 pm. A short break took place at 10.45 am reconvening at 10.57 am.

In the absence of the Vice Chair, Councillor Mike Howe, the Committee agreed to Councillor Jess Bailey being the Vice Chair for the meeting.

32 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee held on 3 September and 11 September 2024 were confirmed as true records.

33 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

34 Public speaking

There were no public speakers.

35 Matters of urgency

There were none.

36 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There were none.

37 East Devon Local Plan - redrafting of Local Plan chapters

In view of the comments received to the Regulation 18 draft Local Plan consultation the committee considered the first redraft of the wording and policies to the following chapters.

Committee noted that there was a need for further refinement in readiness for the proposed Regulation 19 draft of the Plan which would be brought back for members consideration in December 2024.

Chapter 10 Designing beautiful and healthy spaces and buildings

In addition to the proposed minor changes the committee proposed the following additions to be included:

- Rural character should be included in policy DSO1 sub-section 3 as this needs to be valued alongside the historic and architectural character of the area;
- A set approach on distances is required for policy DSO1 3(c) to avoid having to rely on officers' general assessments on the impacts to adjoining residential properties. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that this could be included in the district design guide but

was too detailed for the Local Plan. Inclusion in a design guide would give members clearer guidance and reference to the guide could be added to justification for inclusion of policy on page 45;

The chair proposed the endorsement of the revised wording to Chapter 10 subject to the amendments discussed.

RESOLVED:

The revised wording to Chapter 10 be endorsed subject to the amendments discussed.

Chapter 11 Prioritising sustainable travel and providing the transport and communications facilities we need

In addition to key changes detailed in paragraph 4.3 in the report, the deletion of two policies in Chapter 11 to avoid the repetition of national policy and the amended wording removing the reference to 20-minute neighbourhoods, the Committee proposed the following additions to be included:

- To change the words 'where appropriate' to 'where possible' in Policy TR01 (first paragraph, second sentence) as shared footways and cycleways do not work and should be segregated. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management did agree in principle but suggested the implications would affect families with young children wanting to use the shared spaces. He advised that the wording of the policy would need to be considered further to make a distinction between commuter and leisure routes and be brought back at the Regulation 19 stage for committee's consideration.
- The Otter Trail needs to be included in TR02 under a) strategic cycle network schemes;
- Policy TR03 is too general and vague and specific detail is needed to determine when transport assessments are required. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised the committee that such detail was best dealt with through validation checklist where it could be more readily updated;
- Secure battery charging for bikes should be considered;
- Cycle routes for new development sites need to be connected to existing cycle routes;
- Cycleways should not specifically be named in the policy as this will limit any new cycleways coming forward in the future. It was suggested to include the wording 'and any further strategic cycleways coming forward in the future'. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he would discuss with DCC about which routes to safeguard and would reword the policy appropriately to encourage the delivery of future cycleways.
- The Clyst Valley cycle trail should be included in the list of strategic cycle network schemes;
- Policy TRO2 b(1) clarification as to why the words 'as necessary' was included in relation to railway passing loops as all the land needs to be safeguarded. It was advised that the specific wording was included as passing loops would not be needed at all the locations. It was acknowledged the wording for Policy TRO2 b(1) should be revised.
- Policy TR06 – it was questioned whether access to superfast broadband would be provided to rural areas. Committee were advised it would be the council's intention to ensure that all new developments would have access to superfast broadband.

The chair proposed the endorsement of the revised wording to Chapter 11 subject to the amendments discussed.

RESOLVED:

The revised wording to Chapter 11 be endorsed subject to the amendments discussed.

Chapter 12 Caring for our outstanding landscape

In addition to the key changes detailed on pages 39 and 40 of the report the committee discussed the following:

- Amend the wording to the map on page 150 replacing AONB with National Landscape;
- It was suggested that the policy for Coastal Preservation Areas was not strong enough and reference was made to Teignbridge District Council's policy. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management did not agree that Teignbridge District Council's policy was better but supported the comment that the wording for the chapter needed to be stronger and advised this would be given further consideration;
- Need to be mindful to the relevance of our heritage coastline;
- Policy OL1 b) – need to include trees and woodland;
- Policy OL6 d) – this sentence needs rewording as it does not make sense;
- Policy OL5 – the justification for inclusion of policy undermines the policy as coalescence or encroachment into our Green Wedges should not be encouraged. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he was happy to look at the wording to avoid contradiction.
- The wording for Policy OL5 was not supported, specifically the second paragraph. Committee considered and supported the current wording for this policy as it was a stronger worded policy. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he was happy to carry over the existing policy wording excluding the examples.
- The Chair recommended some minor wording changes to the existing Green Wedge policy so that it would now read 'Within green wedges, as defined on the proposals map, development will not be permitted if it would add to existing sporadic or isolated development, damage the individual character or identity of a settlement, or could lead to or encourage settlement coalescence, whether physical, visual or intrinsic.'
- Policy OL9 a) – need to include 'environment' in the sentence as pollution of untreated sewage is a significant problem in the district. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he was happy to add sewage as an example.
- Policy OL10 – clarification was sought about how grades of land was determined. Committee were referred to the DEFRA 1988 assessments.
- The Chair read out an email from Cllr Culhane from Lymptstone Parish Council who pointed out that Devon hedgerows, trees and woodland which are important landscape features of East Devon were not currently included in the chapter 12. In response committee were advised that a specific tree policy would be included elsewhere in the plan.

The chair proposed the endorsement of the revised wording to Chapter 12 subject to the amendments discussed.

RESOLVED:

The revised wording to Chapter 12 be endorsed subject to the amendments discussed.

Chapter 14 Open space and sports and recreation facilities

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised committee of the proposed amendments detailed on page 40 of the report.

The chair proposed the endorsement of the revised wording to Chapter 14.

RESOLVED:

The revised wording to Chapter 14 be endorsed.

Chapter 16 Ensuring we have community buildings and facilities

In addition to the minor amendments detailed on page 40 of the report the committee proposed the following:

- Policy CF02 - Local shops, community pubs and post offices are key to communities and should be included.

The chair proposed the endorsement of the revised wording to Chapter 16 subject to the amendments discussed.

RESOLVED:

The revised wording to Chapter 16 be endorsed subject to the amendments discussed.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

J Bailey
K Blakey
C Brown
B Ingham
G Jung
T Olive (Chair)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

R Collins
P Faithfull

Officers in attendance:

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

Councillor apologies:

B Bailey
O Davey
P Fernley
M Howe
Y Levine
H Parr
I Barlow (Non-Committee Member)

Chairman

Date: