

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Online via the Zoom app. on 25 November 2020

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.54 pm

249 **Public speaking**

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

250 **Minutes of the previous meetings held on 28 October and 11 November 2020**

The minutes of Cabinet held on 28 October 2020 and 11 November 2020 were confirmed as a true record.

251 **Declarations of interest**

Min 263 Seaton Tram Halt access boardwalk and footbridges.
Councillor Jack Rowland, Personal, Ward Member for Seaton.

Min 263 Seaton Tram Halt access boardwalk and footbridges.
Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Ward Member for Coly Valley which covers part of the land in question.

Min 263 Seaton Tram Halt access boardwalk and footbridges.
Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Life-long member of Seaton tramway.

252 **Matters of urgency**

None

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

None

254 **Forward Plan**

Members agreed the contents of the Forward Plan for key decisions for the period 1 December 2020 to 31 March 2021.

255 **Minutes of the Poverty Working Panel held on 12 October 2020**

Members received and noted the Minutes of the Poverty Working Panel held on 12 October 2020.

256 **Minutes of the Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group held on 15 October 2020**

Members received and noted the Minutes of the Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group held on 15 October 2020.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations be agreed:

Minute 6 Way forward

Cabinet be requested to include the development of the Ocean building within the remit of the Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group and that the Terms of Reference be amended accordingly.

257 **Minutes of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 21 October 2020**

Members received and noted the Minutes of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 21 October 2020.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations be agreed:

Members received and noted the Minutes of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 21 October 2020.

RESOLVED that;

- (1) the following recommendation be noted and a further report be brought to Cabinet identifying the full costs:

Minute 39 SUEZ Covid-19 costs

the extraordinary additional cost claim submitted by SUEZ for costs incurred in responding to the coronavirus pandemic conditions are met by EDDC.

- (2) Should additional costs be identified, Cabinet agrees to ask local MPs to lobby government on this Council's behalf to meet some, or preferably all, additional Covid-19 related costs associated with the Recycling and Waste contract.

- (3) Cabinet led by the Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment wished to thank Suez for the wonderful support, dedication and fantastic service they had provided throughout this emergency.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations be agreed:

Minute 40 Green waste – quarterly accounts update

1. no deposit charge be made for the green waste bins, and
2. the annual subscription charge for the green waste service during 2021/22 remain at £48.

Minute 42 Tipping point 2 negotiation

the tipping point negotiations begin now with SUEZ regarding collection tonnages to establish what are and aren't Covid-19 costs and that a report be brought back to the next Board meeting.

258 **Recommendations from the minutes of Strategic Planning Committee held on 20 October 2020**

Members received and noted the Minutes of Strategic Planning Committee held on 20 October 2020

RESOLVED that the following recommendations be agreed:

Minute 69: Proposed approach to planning the production of a new Local Plan

1. the staffing budget for the Planning Policy Team be increased to enable the recruitment of two additional Planning Officers be approved, and
2. support in-principle the production of a joint non-statutory plan to include a joint strategy and infrastructure plan for the Greater Exeter area in partnership with Exeter, Mid Devon, Teignbridge and Devon County Councils be approved subject to agreement of details of the scope of the plan, a timetable for its production, the resources required and government arrangements etc.

RECOMMENDED to Council;

To approve the budget to fund the two additional Planning Officers in the Planning Policy Team.

RESOLVED that the following recommendation be taken into account when considering the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document item (Minute 261 refers):

Minute 74: Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document and Mortgagee Exemption Clauses

the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document attached at Appendix A be considered and adopted.

259 **Recommendations from the minutes of Strategic Planning Committee held on 22 October 2020**

Members received and noted the Minutes of Strategic Planning Committee held on 22 October 2020.

RESOLVED that the following amended recommendation be agreed:

Minute 81: Cranbrook Town Centre

That in-principle funding be made available to support the pro-active delivery of the town centre, based on the draft SPD Masterplan.

260 **Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 5 November 2020**

Members received and noted the Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 5 November 2020.

261 **Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document**

The Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management outlined the responses received during the second round of public consultation on the Draft

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (January to February 2020) and showed how these comments had been taken into account in revising the SPD. The proposed final version of the Affordable Housing SPD had been considered at Strategic Planning Committee who recommended its adoption at Cabinet.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

adopted the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document attached at Appendix A.

REASON:

To ensure the council follows proper legal processes in adopting the Affordable Housing SPD. The intention of the SPD is to give greater clarity to developers and communities about our expectations for affordable housing delivery, assisting councillors and officers when considering affordable housing issues for new development.

262 **Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2021/22**

The Service Lead Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services presented the report which asked members to consider and approve the Council Tax Reduction (CTR) Scheme for 2021/22 which was proposing to remain unchanged from the current scheme. The report also provides some background data on how Covid-19 has changed the scheme caseload profile.

During discussions members expressed concern over the rise in caseloads for CTR as well as homelessness and economic hardship. East Devon had particularly suffered due to its unique affiliation and reliance on the tourist/hospitality industry. It was pointed out that getting credit became more difficult when individual's finances had decreased. It was suggested the data collected be shared with the Poverty Working Panel.

Cabinet thanked Libby Jarrett for this important work and for showing the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic had had on its residents.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

noted the changes to the caseload profile due to the impact of Covid19 (see appendix 1)

RECOMMENDED to Council:

to approve the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age residents for 2021/22 (unchanged from 2020/21)

REASON:

Each year the Council was required by law to decide whether to revise or replace its scheme. As there had been a significant number of changes to the scheme for 2020/21 it was too early to be able to assess whether there was a need to make any subsequent changes to the scheme. The impact of COVID-19 had meant that there was now a much higher number of working age households so making comparisons between the existing scheme and current scheme would be difficult to assess. However, as maximum support was increased from 80% to 85% then this has meant that those households on the lowest incomes would have benefitted.

263 **Seaton Tram Halt access boardwalk and footbridges**

The Service Lead Countryside and Leisure explained that Seaton Tram Company was successful in applying for a Heritage Lottery Fund bid to develop the heritage and

educational features of their tourist attraction, which included funds to cover the costs of a tram halt and associated wooden boardwalk. The project was part of the planned programme of visitor infrastructure improvements known as the Seaton Wetlands link projects which had been presented to both Scrutiny and Cabinet Committees in 2020.

The project would help provide an important physical link between the two attractions and so help further develop Seaton's visitor economy. It was intended that the structure to be erected by the Tramway on not just their land, but also the Council's land and land owned by the Burgesses of Colyford would be (save for the part erected on their land) transferred to the Council.

The Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment wished to thank the Countryside team for their great work and to continue doing a splendid job.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1. Approve entering into any necessary agreements with Seaton Tramway (Enterprises) Ltd and the Burgesses of Colyford to enable the construction, retention and use of a boardwalk across Colyford Common,
2. upon completion, for the Council to take responsibility for the boardwalk on both the Council's land and on the land owned by the Burgesses of Colyford that is managed by EDDC Countryside as an infrastructure asset of the Colyford Common Local Nature Reserve for a period into perpetuity,
3. if needed, to enter into a 5-year management agreement with the Tramway for EDDC Countryside to recover the agreed annual fee for a five year period only, and
4. delegates authority to the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation to agree the detailed terms of agreements for 1 & 3 above in consultation with Service Lead - Countryside & Leisure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment.

REASON:

To enable the Council to enter into the required legal agreements to facilitate the construction of the boardwalk and footbridge across Colyford Common which was managed by the Countryside Team under a management agreement with the Burgesses of Colyford as part of the Seaton Wetlands, so linking with the proposed tram halt construction.

264 **Covid-19 Economic Response and Recovery - Resources**

The Service Lead Growth, Development and Prosperity presented this follow-up report regarding the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and how best to support recovery. The report sought to take stock of the current situation and put forward recommendations regarding deploying the funds being made available through the Additional Restrictions Grant as well as the recruitment of additional economic development capacity. It was also recommended that Cabinet receive a further report setting out an assessment of the programme level resources that could be made marshalled to support economic recovery. He updated members saying the date the scheme would go live was now 9 December 2020.

During discussions concern was raised for taxi drivers and the impact the pandemic had had on their business due to considerably reduced trade. The Service Lead Growth, Development and Prosperity stated that the policy was aimed at businesses who could show a significant impact on their turnover during the period of the national restrictions.

Taxi drivers were potentially eligible and the policy could be updated to make this more explicit. It was requested that this information on funding support be made available to taxi drivers.

Cabinet endorsed the letter that the Licensing & Enforcement Committee had agreed to send to Government in relation to the taxi trade.

The Vice-chair thanked officers for getting the scheme together. He emphasised the need to nurture innovation and supported utilising some of the funding to support business adaptation and new business opportunities that could benefit the economy and reduce unemployment.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1. endorsed the proposed spend framework for the deployment of monies that have been made available under the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)
2. approved the proposed discretionary grants policy to deploy £1m of these funds including the eligibility criteria, local priorities and grant payment levels as set out at Appendix A,
3. grant delegated authority to the Service Lead Growth, Development and Prosperity in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Chief Finance Officer to agree such further changes to this policy as may be required,
4. grant delegated authority to the Chief Finance Officer to make any required technical changes to the Scheme,
5. agreed that prior to the Service Lead Growth, Development and Prosperity taking a decision under the scheme that there was consultation with a group of members comprising the Leader, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holders for Finance and Corporate Services & Covid-19 Response and Recovery and two Conservative members, one of the Independent members and one Cranbrook Voice member to be nominated by the respective Groups,
6. endorsed the proposal to recruit two additional Senior Economic Development Officer posts for a fixed term of two years,
7. receives a further report on the programme level resources needed to support and sustain economic recovery including the balance of the ARG funds, and
8. grant delegated authority to the Service Lead Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Chief Finance Officer to approve the scheme policy for the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) Scheme.

RECOMMENDED to Council:

to fund the two Senior Economic Development Officer roles for a two year fixed term through the business rate retention pilot reserve.

REASON:

To help to mitigate the impact of the second national lockdown on businesses in the District and ensure that sufficient capacity was in place to deliver a programme of measures and initiatives to support economic recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

265 **Towards Zero Carbon Development in the West End**

The Service Lead Growth, Development & Prosperity's report was to seek authority for the use of an Exemption from Contract Standing Orders to enable the appointment of

consultants WSP to support the development of a bid to the Government's Heat Network Investment Programme (HNIP). This followed the completion of the initial feasibility study in relation to supporting the delivery of low carbon development in the West End of the District that was reported to Cabinet in September 2020.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

approved the Exemption from Contract Standing Orders to enable the appointment of WSP to undertake further technical work in support of an application to the Heat Networks Investment Programme.

REASON:

Having undertaken the initial feasibility study, WSP were considered to be uniquely placed to support the development of a bid to the HNIP programme. This would be of a substantial scale; seeking in excess of £5m, and it was vital, in order to maximise the chances of success, that it was supported by a robust evidence base. The exemption would also enable demanding timescales and deadlines to be met.

266 **Resourcing in Democratic Services Team**

The Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing explained the work pressures within Democratic Services requested additional resource in the form of one Grade 6 post.

Cabinet recognised the additional workload for Democratic Services as a result of the pandemic as well as members adding to this with further panels, working groups and TaFFs.

Councillor Steve Gazzard wished to personally acknowledge the team stating they were fantastic servants to the council and exceeded in every request that was asked of them. He claimed he could not do his job without the help and support of Democratic Services.

Councillor Dan Ledger stated that without Democratic Services council functions would not be performed, the team were the reason the council could fulfil its business over this testing period.

Through the Chair, Cabinet wished to thank Democratic Services for their outstanding work since March with the smooth running of virtual meetings which would have been unthinkable at the beginning of the year. The Chair gave his deep personal thanks to Democratic Services for the way they had adapted to this new way of working with all the multiple complexities that came with it; they had made an incredible difficult job achievable.

The Vice-chair wished to give additional thanks on behalf of all Town and Parish Councils in East Devon for the support the team provided to them. He stated that since the pandemic every meeting notice held by town and parish councils had to be posted on to this council's website creating additional work for the team.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

to agree to an additional Grade 6 post (one FTE) within Democratic Services

RECOMMENDED to Council:

to approve the budget to fund the additional Grade 6 post within Democratic Services

REASON:

To ensure that Democratic Services are able to fulfil their function in relation to the Council's governance arrangements.

Attendance List

Present:

Portfolio Holders

M Armstrong	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities
P Arnott	Leader
P Hayward	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Economy and Assets
J Bailey	Portfolio Holder Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
G Jung	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
D Ledger	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning
M Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action
J Rowland	Portfolio Holder Finance
J Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Policy Co-ordination and Regional Engagement
S Jackson	Portfolio Holder Democracy and Transparency

Also present (for some or all the meeting)

Councillor Kevin Blakey
Councillor Kim Bloxham
Councillor Fred Caygill
Councillor Maddy Chapman
Councillor Bruce De Saram
Councillor Peter Faithfull
Councillor Steve Gazzard
Councillor Paul Jarvis
Councillor Vicky Johns
Councillor Fabian King
Councillor Kathy McLauchlan
Councillor Paul Millar
Councillor Andrew Moulding
Councillor Helen Parr
Councillor Geoff Pratt
Councillor Eleanor Rylance
Councillor Philip Skinner
Councillor Brenda Taylor
Councillor Joe Whibley
Councillor Eileen Wragg

Also present:

Officers:

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
Ed Freeman, Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing
Libby Jarrett, Service Lead Revenues and Benefits

Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Charles Plowden, Service Lead Countryside and Leisure
Andrew Wood, Service Lead - Growth Development and Prosperity
Mark Williams, Chief Executive

Chairman

Date: