

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House and online via the Zoom app. on 9 June 2021

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.05 pm and ended at 6.52 pm

1 Public speaking

There were no public speakers.

2 Minutes of the previous meetings held on 5 May and 12 May 2021

The minutes of Cabinet held on 5 May and 12 May 2021 were confirmed as a true record.

3 Declarations of interest

None

4 Matters of urgency

None

5 Confidential/exempt item(s)

None

6 Forward Plan

Members agreed the contents of the Forward Plan for key decisions for the period 1 July to 31 October 2021.

7 Minutes of Poverty Working Panel held on 26 April 2021

Members received and noted the Minutes of Poverty Working Panel held on 26 April 2021.

8 Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 27 April 2021

Members received and noted the Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 27 April 2021.

9 Minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 28 April 2021

Members received and noted the Minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 28 April 2021.

10 Minutes of Housing Review Board held on 29 April 2021

Members received and noted the Minutes of Housing Review Board held on 29 April 2021.

RESOLVED (1) that the following recommendations be agreed:

Minute 112 Grounds maintenance additional costs

the Housing Review Board acknowledge that StreetScene are undertaking a larger review of the housing contract and recommend to Cabinet and then on to Council for resolution, the interim funding of two grounds maintenance season staff at a cost of c£30,000 from the Housing Revenue Account to help maintain continuity of service through the coming season.

Minute 113 Draft Housing Revenue Account and Capital Budgets 2020-2021

Cabinet approve the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Finance report.

Minute 117 Annual report of the achievements of the Housing Review Board

Cabinet note the annual report and achievements of the Housing Review Board.

Minute 118 Renewal of Advantage South West subscription

Cabinet approve the continued payment of the annual subscription fee to maintain the membership of Advantage South West.

Minute 121 stock condition survey report

1. Cabinet recommends to Council that sufficient budget (as detailed in the Part B report) be set aside to complete the full stock condition survey as described in this report. Additionally that budget be set aside to support the recruitment of a dedicated Project Management Team to oversee this complex and pivotal work as outlined in the Part A report.
2. delegated authority be given to the Housing Service Lead in consultation with the Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing, Housing Review Board Chair and Portfolio Holder for Homes and Communities to finalise the contract documents and commence the work in accordance with the Council's constitution.

11 **Minutes of South and East Devon Habitats Regulations Executive Committee held on 29 April 2021**

Members received and noted the Minutes of South and East Devon Habitats Regulations Executive Committee held on 29 April 2021.

12 **Equality Policy and Objectives 2021-2025**

The Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment introduced the updated Equality Policy and Objectives 2021-2025. This was a key corporate policy setting out how EDDC will meet our legal duties under the equality legislation and how to promote equality and diversity as a community leader, service provider and employer.

The Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination stated he supported the principal behind the policy and asked how this was monitored and implemented. In response the Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment explained there were equality impact assessments on all key policies and decisions made. There was

engagement with equality groups alongside external scrutiny and the council would satisfy itself with any potential partners' equality policies when tendering contracts and undertaking procurement. Service Plans also included equalities statements.

RESOLVED:

that the refreshed version of the Equality Policy and Objectives 2021-2025, be agreed.

REASON:

The Equality policy was an important document which had been reviewed and updated in line with all of the relevant legal obligations. The policy was recommended for approval.

13 **Exemption to Contract Standing Orders for Exmouth skate park**

Members were asked to note the agreed Exemption to Contract Standing Orders for Exmouth skate park.

RESOLVED:

that the agreed Exemption to Contract Standing Orders for Exmouth skate park, be noted.

REASON:

Value of works contract exceeded £20,000 and therefore required notification to Cabinet.

14 **Farringdon Neighbourhood Plan ('the Plan') to be formally 'made'**

The Farringdon Neighbourhood Plan had now successfully passed referendum and must be formally 'made' (adopted) by East Devon District Council in order to form part of the development plan.

RESOLVED that Cabinet;

1. 'make' the Farringdon Neighbourhood Plan,
2. noted that once made the Plan will carry full weight in the planning decision making process as part of the statutory development plan for the Farringdon Neighbourhood Plan Area (the parish of Farringdon), and
3. congratulated the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and all involved in developing the Plan and all their hard work.

REASON:

The Plan received a majority 'yes' vote in the neighbourhood area referendum, as required by the Regulations and there is no substantive reason not to make the Plan. In addition, to recognise the significant work over a number of years by Farringdon Parish Council and dedicated volunteers to prepare the Plan.

15 **Newton Poppleford & Harpford Neighbourhood Plan ('the Plan') to be formally 'made'**

The Newton Poppleford & Harpford Neighbourhood Plan had now successfully passed referendum and must be formally 'made' (adopted) by East Devon District Council in order to form part of the development plan.

RESOLVED that Cabinet;

1. 'make' the Newton Poppleford & Harpford Neighbourhood Plan,

2. noted that once made the Plan will carry full weight in the planning decision making process as part of the statutory development plan for the Newton Poppleford & Harpford Neighbourhood Plan Area (the parish of Newton Poppleford & Harpford), and
3. congratulated the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and all involved in developing the Plan and all their hard work.

REASON:

The Plan received a majority 'yes' vote in the neighbourhood area referendum, as required by the Regulations and there is no substantive reason not to make the Plan. In addition, to recognise the significant work over a number of years by Newton Poppleford & Harpford Parish Council and dedicated volunteers to prepare the Plan.

16 **Otterton Neighbourhood Plan ('the Plan') to be formally 'made'**

The Otterton Neighbourhood Plan had now successfully passed referendum and must be formally 'made' (adopted) by East Devon District Council in order to form part of the development plan.

RESOLVED that Cabinet;

1. 'make' the Otterton Neighbourhood Plan,
2. noted that once made the Plan will carry full weight in the planning decision making process as part of the statutory development plan for the Otterton Neighbourhood Plan Area (the parish of Otterton), and
3. congratulated the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and all involved in developing the Plan and all their hard work.

REASON:

The Plan received a majority 'yes' vote in the neighbourhood area referendum, as required by the Regulations and there is no substantive reason not to make the Plan. In addition, to recognise the significant work over a number of years by Otterton Parish Council and dedicated volunteers to prepare the Plan.

17 **Public Health Implementation plan 2021/22**

The Public Health Project Officer stated that each year the Public Health Implementation Plan summarised how EDDC intended to meet the targets and aspirations of the Public Health Strategic Plan. The Implementation Plan showed the commitment to activities across council service plans, all aiming to make a positive difference to people's physical health and mental wellbeing across East Devon.

RESOLVED:

that the contribution made by the council's services through activities identified annually which underpin the Public Health Strategic Plan, be recognised.

REASON:

To help ensure that staff and members across the council were aware of the annual Implementation Plan, helping them to make the best possible use of resources to enable activities which support health and wellbeing across East Devon.

18 **Proposed New Council Plan update**

The Chief Executive gave an update to the proposed new council plan. Following on from the completion of the 4 all-member workshops, Cabinet was to note that a refined draft of the Council Plan was under consideration. In particular the proposed Implementation/Action spreadsheet was now being reviewed by officers and would be further discussed with Portfolio Holders. It was currently proposed that the spreadsheet would be ready for wider Council consideration by the middle of June.

Thereafter it was proposed that there would be a joint meeting of the Overview and the Scrutiny Committees where the updated spreadsheet and proposed prioritisation of the draft Council Plan would be further considered. The matter would then come before Cabinet for final view and prioritisation with the final version of the Council Plan being presented to Full Council in September 2021.

The Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination wished to thank Jo Avery, Management Information Officer and Anne Reed for their hard efforts in bringing this swiftly to this point. He thanked officers for the time they had taken in engaging in the process.

RESOLVED:

that the proposed council plan update be noted.

REASON:

To update members on how any future proposals would be considered before coming back to Cabinet for final view and prioritisation, with the final version of the Council Plan being presented to Full Council in September 2021.

Developing Member and staff relationships

The Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination made the following statement.

‘Two sets of internal relationships should be in the forefront of the minds and actions of Members – those between Members, and those between Members and staff. Both sets of relationships have been matters that have highlighted the need for individual and collective introspection over the past 24 months.

The relationships between Members have not always shown themselves to be conducted respectfully, even taking account of the political differences between groups, as well as the challenging political environment that this council finds itself in when there is no majority overall control by one group. Sometimes Member behaviours have fallen below what should pass as respectfully acceptable. This has led to an increase in Code of Conduct complaints and subjected staff to observing these poor behaviours playing themselves out either in meetings and/or through emails and social media. These poor behaviours reflect upon us all negatively.

The relationships between Members and staff have very much been a concern, particularly in light of the staff survey conducted earlier in the year. We all, as Members, have a responsibility to show respect to all staff at all times. As we are aware not all Members have acted in a responsible and reasonable way in their engagements with some staff.

As the largest group within this council the Democratic Alliance has reflected upon both of these issues and has asked me, as the respective Portfolio Holder, to bring forward some proposals to address these matters. I have drafted a set of broad proposals which I

have discussed with the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer and which have also to be discussed with the new Chair of the Standards Committee.

I therefore am working on the assumption that in conjunction with these colleagues a report, containing proposals for developing Member and staff relationships will be presented to the next Cabinet meeting.

As regards the matters raised through the staff survey, the Democratic Alliance has discussed and reflected upon these and I wish to say directly to the Chief Executive and all staff that any inappropriate actions or behaviours directed at him or his staff by any group Members are deeply regretted and I apologise on the group's behalf.

That in itself is not sufficient and the Democratic Alliance has created a group internal standards process which would allow it to in future hold its Members to account should their behaviour fall below the required standards. This is a separate set of processes to the Council's Code of Conduct and is not a substitute for it.

The Democratic Alliance would invite all groups within this council to create their own group internal standards processes to assist in each group being able to regulate their Members' behaviours. I hope too that each group has reflected upon the implications of the staff survey results as it is important that we all look to our own actions and those of our group colleagues.

I hope that as we move into the third year of this council term, we can all create a more mature and respectful environment within which we can do politics and deliver, through our resourceful and dedicated staff, the quality services that our residents deserve.'

Attendance List

Present:

Portfolio Holders

M Armstrong	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities
P Arnott	Leader
G Jung	Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment
M Rixson	Portfolio Holder Climate Action and Emergency Response
J Loudoun	Portfolio Holder Council and Corporate Co-ordination
N Hookway	Portfolio Holder Tourism, Sport, Leisure and Culture

Cabinet apologies:

D Ledger	Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning
J Rowland	Portfolio Holder Finance
S Jackson	Portfolio Holder Democracy, Transparency and Communications

Also present (for some or all the meeting)

Councillor Paul Hayward
Councillor Jess Bailey
Councillor Kevin Blakey
Councillor Colin Brown
Councillor Fred Caygill
Councillor Maddy Chapman

Councillor Bruce De Saram
Councillor Peter Faithfull
Councillor Steve Gazzard
Councillor Paul Millar
Councillor Eleanor Rylance
Councillor Ian Thomas
Councillor Eileen Wragg

Also present:

Officers:

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
Jo Garfoot, Acting Housing Service Lead
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing (and Monitoring Officer)
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Mark Williams, Chief Executive

Chair

Date: