

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Strategic Planning Committee held at Council Chamber Blackdown House and online via zoom on 22 June 2021**

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

The meeting started at 10.03 am and ended at 4.18 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 11.38am and reconvened at 11.50am, 1.10pm and reconvened at 1.50pm and 3.25pm and reconvened at 3.35pm.

#### **1 Public speaking**

There were no members of the public present.

#### **2 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee held on 27 April 2021 were confirmed as a true record.

#### **3 Declarations of interest**

Minute 7. Initial feedback report - local plan issues and options consultation.  
Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor.

Minute 7. Initial feedback report - local plan issues and options consultation.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, West Hill Parish Councillor and Devon County Councillor.

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Councillor Kevin Blakey, Personal, Cranbrook Town Councillor.

Minute 7. Initial feedback report - local plan issues and options consultation.  
Councillor Olly Davey, Personal, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Minute 9. Initial feedback report - local plan issues and options consultation.  
Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Colyton Parish Councillor.

Minute 9. Initial feedback report - local plan issues and options consultation.  
Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Employed as Clerk to All Saints, Chardstock and Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Councils. All are consultees to the Local Plan.

Minute 9. Initial feedback report - local plan issues and options consultation.  
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst Station.

Minute 10. HELAA call for site submissions.  
Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor.

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Minute 10. HELAA call for site submissions.  
Councillor Philip Skinner, Personal, Made a submission on land owned and also known to FWS Carter & Sons who potentially could have submitted land owned.

Minute 10. HELAA call for site submissions.  
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst Station.

Minute 11. Approach to employment provision.  
Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor.

Minute 11. Approach to employment provision.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, West Hill Parish Councillor and Devon County Councillor.

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Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst Station.

Minute 12. Housing Policy Matters.  
Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor.

Minute 12. Housing Policy Matters.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, West Hill Parish Councillor and Devon County Councillor.

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Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst Station.

Minute 13. Strategy for the distribution of development - initial overview.  
Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor.

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Minute 13. Strategy for the distribution of development - initial overview.  
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst Station.

Minute 14. The emerging new local plan and the relationship with neighbourhood plans.  
Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor.

Minute 14. The emerging new local plan and the relationship with neighbourhood plans.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, West Hill Parish Councillor and Devon County Councillor.

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Minute 14. The emerging new local plan and the relationship with neighbourhood plans.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Employed as Clerk to All Saints, Chardstock and Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Councils. All are consultees to the Local Plan. Also a member of the Axminster Neighbourhood Steering Group.

Minute 14. The emerging new local plan and the relationship with neighbourhood plans. Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst Station.

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

There were no matters of urgency discussed.

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

There were no items that officers recommended should be dealt with requiring exclusion of the press and public.

#### 6 **Joint Strategy for East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge**

The Committee considered the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management’s report which sought Members agreement to the scope, resourcing timetable and governance arrangements for the preparation of a non-statutory Joint Strategy for East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Councils to ensure a collaborative and co-ordinated approach to meeting development needs in a timely manner.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management gave an overview of the progress made so far and outlined the resourcing required for the Joint Strategy. He specified the five options available and advised Members’ he considered the best option would be to engage a consultant to prepare the Joint Strategy on behalf of the authorities, supported in a limited capacity by a group of officers. He also outlined the proposed timetable which sought formal agreement and adoption of the Joint Strategy in September/October 2022. Members noted that there were sufficient funds in the GESP budget that would cover the cost of recruiting a consultant and the public consultation.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to Appendix B appended to the report that summarised a range of governance groups that would need to be involved in the preparation of the plan. Members were made aware that key decisions for the plan were held with each of the four councils and their committees and not with the governance groups.

Comments made by non-Committee Members included:

- Reference was made to the recognisable brand and the importance to keep the Greater Exeter branding and a question was raised about whether there had been discussions amongst the other authorities on what the branding might be. In response the Leader advised that all the Leaders of the four councils had agreed that they did not want to call it GESP and said he was not aware of the new brand name.
- Clarification sought on the public consultation and dealing with issues received from the responses. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised it was expected the public consultation would commence next summer to assist in finalising the plan quite quickly. However, if there are issues following the consultation then the timetable may need to be

extended to accommodate those concerns. He advised it may be a challenge to engage with the public due to it being a high level strategic plan.

Questions raised by Committee Members included:

- Clarification and assurance was sought that this council was working closely with neighbouring authorities outside of the GESP area to avoid potential impact on East Devon. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised in terms of the non-statutory plan the council was not required to fulfil the duty to co-operate but was engaging with them through the duty to co-operate on the local plan.
- Clarification sought on the key differences between option 3 and option 5. It was advised the main difference was that option 3 would require the employment of an internal Project Manager to lead the project or a group of external consultants to prepare the joint strategy on behalf of the councils using all the evidence that had been gathered already for the GESP. The Leader emphasised the need to progress with option 5 as previously GESP had been led by one internal officer who had left which had taken away the rationale of one person leading it.
- In response to a question raised about whether a formal decision was required to repurpose the GESP budget the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he was not aware of any issues as the budget had been set aside at the start for joint working and joint planning but said he was happy to look into this.
- Clarification sought on the duty to co-operate and the White Paper changes. It was advised there was a need to progress on the current legislative requirements until those changes had been passed through Parliament.
- Clarifications sought on what qualifications were needed for a consultant. It was advised fundamentally it would be planning expertise and knowledge as well as experience in public consultations and engagement.
- Concerns raised about each authority absorbing its own housing need and for assurance it was suggested that it be made as a formal proposal.
- Clarification sought on which officers would sit on the Project Assurance Group. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised it would be the Planning Leads from each authority.
- The need to bring the reports back to Cabinet and Full Council when taking them to a recommendation. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised it would be going back to Cabinet and confirmed he would refine the recommendations to clarify the points that had been raised. The Planning Barrister advised Members' that if they wished option 5 could be incorporated into the recommendation as the approved option.

It was proposed by Councillor Mike Allen, seconded by Councillor Paul Arnott that the recommendation be amended to read:

That Strategic Planning Committee recommends that Council approve option 5 as set out in the report and the scope, resourcing, timetable and governance arrangements set out in this report for preparing a non-statutory joint strategy for East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge councils and as part of engaging the consultant and their brief includes the statement that each authority will consume its own housing numbers.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That option 5 as set out in the report be recommended to Cabinet and Council for approval**

2. That the scope, resourcing, timetable and governance arrangements set out in this report for preparing a non-statutory Joint Strategy for East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Councils be recommended to Cabinet and Council and that as part of engaging the consultant and their brief each authority will consume its own housing numbers.

**RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:**

1. That option 5 as set out in the report be agreed.
2. That the scope, resourcing, timetable and governance arrangements set out in this report for preparing a non-statutory Joint Strategy for East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Councils be agreed and that as part of engaging the consultant and their brief each authority will consume its own housing numbers be agreed.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

1. That option 5 as set out in the report be approved.
2. That the scope, resourcing, timetable and governance arrangements set out in this report for preparing a non-statutory Joint Strategy for East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Councils be agreed and that as part of engaging the consultant and their brief each authority will consume its own housing numbers be approved.

7 **Initial feedback report - local plan issues and options consultation**

The Service Lead – Planning Strategic and Development Management presented the report which updated Members on consultation feedback. The report provided an update on the 150 responses received that did not respond online and Members' attention was drawn to the final issues and options feedback report appended to this report.

Comments made by Committee Members included:

- Clarification sought on the comment made on page 24 of the report that read: Meeting unmet need from neighbouring areas (Duty to Cooperate) that went against the Service Lead – Planning Strategic and Development Management advice about not picking up neighbouring authorities requirements. In response the Chair advised the council was still bound through the local plan process to the duty to co-operate until any new legislation comes through.
- The report is biased by excluding responses from landowners and rigid key questions.
- The report is massively skewed to the older population. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised it was an open consultation for anyone to comment on and recognised the lack of engagement from the younger generation despite efforts through social media and other avenues. This would be addressed in future consultations and work would be done with the Communications Team to address that and engage with the full age range within the district.
- It was suggested to amend the recommendation so that the neighbourhood plan was given greater weight than the ORS and the consultation report.
- The need to engage with younger people and working families.
- Although we are not reaching the younger demographic that does not mean they do not deserve the houses built for them. Their needs need to be incorporated into our decision making.

It was proposed by Councillor Mike Allen, seconded by Councillor Philip Skinner that the recommendation be amended to read:

That the neighbourhood planning results should be given greater weight than other consultation reports.

Councillor Allen advised the reason being that they are voted on a much bigger number and in some cases it was a high majority of the local population voted

In response the Planning Barrister advised that the recommendation as written in the report recommends that the Strategic Planning Committee to note the feedback report and the consultation responses and to not form any view. She advised Members that Councillor Allen's comments gave weight to the neighbourhood plan and it may be more appropriate for Councillor Allen to raise that point in agenda item 13.

It was proposed by Councillor Mike Allen, seconded by Councillor Ben Ingham that the recommendation be amended to read:

That Strategic Planning Committee note the feedback report and the consultation responses received to the local plan issues and options report be noted and the lack of response in the under 40's age group which needs to be addressed in future be noted.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the feedback report and the consultation responses received to the local plan issues and options report be noted and the lack of response in the under 40's age group that needs to be addressed in future be noted.**

**8 HELAA call for site submissions**

The report presented to Members' provided an update on site submissions into the East Devon call for sites process. There had been a total of 359 site submissions received which included 194 new sites and 165 sites already received summarised in paragraph 2.2 in the report. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised a lot of work was currently underway in assessing the new sites and reviewing the other sites.

Members' noted a series of plans of the district appended to the report which showed the sites that had come forward. The sites in blue represented the new sites that had come forward in 2021 and the sites in red represented those that previously come forward in 2017.

Members' agreement was sought to a number of minor amendments to be made to the HELAA methodology to bring it in line with recent updates to Government guidance. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to paragraph 4.2 which detailed a summary of the proposed main changes.

Comments made by Non-Committee Members included:

- The need to resist any change from employment land to housing land.
- It was noted under paragraph 4.2 – amended guidance to clarify how to consider flood zones in stage A assessment where no data on functional floodplains exist. Concerns raised about the floodplain in Sidford and the consequences for local residents as the brook was being widened to pass the water further downstream.

In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management assured Members that flooding as a constraint was considered throughout the process in terms of which sites are to come forward for development and Government guidance is clear that housing development should not be allocated on land liable to flood.

Comments and questions raised by Committee Members included:

- Comment made that there was not enough information about who would be sitting on the HELAA panel. It was advised the panel would be a group of key stakeholders who would give advice on the achievability of sites.
- Clarification sought on the balance between developers, landowners and community representatives on the panel. A suggestion was made to include a recommendation that requires further information on the panel be brought back to committee before the panel starts work.
- Concerns raised about Devon County Highways being unable to commit to providing feedback by a particular date and that the proposed solution was to ask Devon County Highways to prioritise on the larger sites. This would be difficult bearing in mind how many sites there are and all the work that had to be done. It was questioned whether there was another way to get their feedback more quickly. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management emphasised that Devon County Council and other consultees' had limited resources that were overly stretched and to be mindful that may delay the process.
- Clarification sought on whether brownfield sites were considered. In response it was advised it was government policy that brownfield sites should be considered first but emphasised that there are few brownfield sites in East Devon with the majority in urban areas and these were picked up in the urban capacity study previously reported to committee and would only make a small contribution.
- Concerns raised that a lot of commercial sites may become redundant due to Covid-19 and clarification sought on whether these sites could be used for housing.
- Reference was made to the membership of the panel which consisted of builders, social landlords, estate agents and other related professionals, community representatives and concerns raised about the need for more detail. In response the Chair clarified the role of the panel is only advisory to offer their expert opinion on the sites that have come forward.
- The need for greater openness and transparency on the makeup of the panel. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management could not confirm who the panel members at this time but guided Members' to the former GESP website for the published HELAA methodology and previous panel report which includes the constitution and terms of reference of the last panel which would hopefully provide some reassurance.
- The need to look at taking an overview of where we build rather than what we build. In response the Chair advised that East Devon Members would get the final decision on what is built and where.
- The need for specific guidance to the constitution of the HELAA panel to make sure a properly balanced membership from this council is involved.

It was proposed by Councillor Jess Bailey, seconded by Councillor Philip Skinner to include a fourth recommendation to read:

That further information on the composition of the HELAA panel is brought back to Committee before the HELAA panel's first meeting to be set out including the role of the local members on the panel.



**RESOLVED:**

1. That the detail of the report be noted.
2. That the proposed next steps and amendments to the HELAA methodology detailed in sections 3 and 4 of the report be agreed.
3. That delegated authority be granted to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning to make any further minor changes that might arise from a review of the methodology by the panel.
4. That further information on the composition of the HELAA panel is brought back to Committee before the HELAA panel's first meeting to be set out including the role of local members on the panel.

9 **Approach to employment provision**

The committee considered the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management's report detailing a number of matters on the provision of employment land in the local plan and setting out the existing position of employment in the district which was in the region of 78,500 residents of working age, the third lowest proportion of working age people in the UK and 64,000 jobs in East Devon with a ratio of working age people to jobs of 0.82. 41% of East Devon residents had to travel outside the district to work with Exeter being the most popular location to commute.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to a report to the Strategic Planning Committee in September 2018 and asked Members to consider the relevance of those principles for future growth in East Devon to the key objectives detailed in the report.

Principles for future growth in East Devon as discussed in September 2018 included:

- Accommodating growth in locations that would not prejudice the future growth and operation of Exeter Airport
- Ensure adequate employment spaces provided to meet the needs of all types of business in sustainable and accessible locations
- Promote new and emerging high technology industries
- Encourage greater connectivity across the district
- Ensuring high quality broadband infrastructure is incorporated into new development and existing infrastructure

Members were reminded about the key objectives in the current adopted plan which included:

- Improving average income levels
- Diversifying the sectors within the local economy
- Improving local job opportunities
- Reducing the need to travel by car to secure works and jobs

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to the economic development needs assessment and advised although it predated the pandemic and brexit and would need updating in due course it was still useful in demonstrating issues, such as the average wage levels and the need for more micro businesses in the district.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management also referred to the employment land study and highlighted a number of key findings relating to the availability of sites which included:

- The willingness of landowners to bring sites forward
- The infrastructure costs
- Viability of sites

Reference was made to paragraph 6.2 on page 132 and Members were asked to consider these key concepts in progressing the new local plan.

Non-Committee Members discussion included:

- Concerns raised about access to properly connected broadband to enable and encourage more people to work from home
- Support was shown that the population was rising in technical competence
- The need to consider what happens to allocated employment sites when employment opportunities do not come forward
- There is a need to encourage people to work from home to reduce carbon emissions and traffic congestion
- Concerns raised about the inward migration of elderly retired people and the need to include something in the local plan that would limit the scale of residential development aimed at that specific age group. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised it would be difficult to have a policy specifically limiting care homes and retirees because there was a need for them and suggested having policies that ensure delivery of housing that meets the needs of the communities so that this makes up a greater proportion of the new homes delivered.

Points raised by Committee Members during discussion included:

- Applaud the report as it supports robust opportunities. There is a need to make every town in the district sustainable by creating local jobs and better quality jobs.
- Support for bullet point 3 in paragraph 6.2 on page 132 and support for reason for recommendation.
- It is exciting that our local communities have employment opportunities at Sky Park and Science Park and links with Exeter University to encourage the younger population to live in East Devon to balance the demography.
- The need for self-sustaining towns across East Devon that deliver for the people of East Devon.
- The need to provide the opportunity for live/work units to allow people to work from home or have small workshop units at their home as there is an abundance of need for it which this council does not catered for. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management agreed that the council needs to take a more active role in the delivery of small spaces for micro businesses.
- There are gaps, especially in the east of the district for skills provision and training.
- Concerns raised about the income level in East Devon and the need to increase the average wage.
- Cluster development should not be excluded in our market towns, especially in the coastal and rural areas as we are encouraging a disproportionate number of retirees which means the only jobs left are either in hospitality and tourism or in care and those jobs simply do not pay enough. In response the Chair put a question to committee members to think about the towns which were highly constrained and to consider how to inject employment opportunities into these towns.

- The need to understand the difference between housing development, driven by areas of land and existing housing and business development which can grow within small sites.
- Live/work units make common sense approach.
- The need to facilitate broadband. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised it was not a planning issue and was in the hands of Openreach and government investments in infrastructure to facilitate better broadband.
- The need to re-energise our existing employment sites.
- The need to alter the pattern of employment and allow people to work from home to help tackle the environmental crisis.
- Concur with the all the points in paragraph 6.2 emphasising the last bullet point on page 132 for acquiring additional sites for development.
- The need to encourage landlords in larger businesses to think about how they can repurpose their buildings for the future. Partitioning of larger businesses to create smaller spaces to allow new and small businesses to grow.
- The need to look at the entire economy and at the reality of our demography. East Devon has a huge retired population which reflects in our increasing tourist economy and the difficulty that those wages are not high enough to sustain young people.
- A lot of families depend upon the income from care work and from tourism.
- The need to focus on employment right across the district including small and medium enterprises, not just on the west end of Exeter.
- Cycle routes are essential when looking at new developments.
- Clarification sought on the final bullet point in paragraph 6.2 on page 132 about the number of allocated sites owned by the Council. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he did not have the figures to hand but the report referred to publically owned sites which includes large sites such as Sky Park and Science Park, few are owned by East Devon District Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. The detail of the report be noted and the existing evidence that will inform the broad strategic approach to employment provision in the new local plan be considered.**
- 2. The commissioning/collecting further evidence as needed to ensure that there is sufficient robust evidence on employment need and supply to justify strategic policy on employment requirement provision in include in the local plan be agreed in principle.**
- 3. The key concepts highlighted in paragraph 6.2 of the report be considered and to incorporate these into the employment strategy for the new local plan be agreed.**

10 **Housing Policy Matters**

The report presented to the committee sought an early steer from Members on housing policy matters for the new local plan and provided Members with an introduction to housing need options, housing supply and policy requirement.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management drew Members attention to section 3 of the report that detailed the responses to the issues and options consultation and outlined the three options for consideration.

Members' attention was drawn to Section 6 of the report that raised a number of issues for debate and consideration.

Comments made by Non-Committee Members included:

- Devon faces significant problems with insufficient truly affordable housing.
- Growth in second homes is eroding our housing stock and according to an article in the Sidmouth Herald Sidmouth is the second home capital in East Devon.
- Holiday lets also affects the viability of villages and small town.

Points raised by Committee Members during discussion included:

- Our affordable housing need requirements should be led by our need for houses. Can we look at the needs first and proceed on that basis rather than pandering to developers. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that developers make their profit on delivering market housing in order to deliver 25% as affordable housing. It may not be viable to deliver a higher proportion and so if we are led by meeting affordable housing needs then the total number of homes needed to deliver to the affordable housing need would have to be substantially higher.
- The need for more social housing.
- The need to make sure the infrastructure is in place first.
- In response to paragraph 6.3 a) no b) no - it is hard to accept the premise of this question, if we want more affordable and social housing then there should not need to be a higher housing figure. c) yes – but need to prove the jobs are there first before the houses are built d) – yes further training would be gratefully received.
- Support for option one.
- In response to paragraph 6.3 a) yes - it is our duty to challenge because it impacts directly on the lives of residents b) yes – developers make promises that are not always kept c) yes – prove the jobs first d) yes – it is our duty to welcome further training.
- In two minds between option one and two and a suggestion to work into a buffer just in case sites were to stall so the council does not meet its five year land supply. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he was only seeking Members views on eliminating option 3 of going for a lower figure than the standard method at this stage. Further evidence would need to be produced and presented to Members to reach a sound conclusion on the other options but Members' views were sought on the principal.
- In response to paragraph 6.3 a) no – choose battles that we can win b) yes – if there is evidence as suggested that proves higher housing numbers are necessary c) yes d) no – it is something for the officers to appraisal and advise the Members.
- In response to paragraph 6.3 a) yes – reluctantly I would accept the government's standard method b) no – I do not want to accept a higher housing figure as it makes the council a hostage to fortune c) no – we will end up with more housing and not jobs d) yes – more training would be appreciated.

In response to the comments received to paragraph 6.3 the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management welcomed a resolution to dictate the way forward with regard to option 3. He took the consensus that Members were open minded about b) and c) and was happy to provide further training if enough Members were interested. He advised he would bring further reports to Committee in due course with evidence and firm recommendations.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the need for robust evidence on housing need and supply to justify strategic policy on housing requirement provision to include in the local plan be endorsed in principle.
2. That the transparent and timely use of that evidence through the plan-making process to justify local plan policy on housing requirement provision be endorsed.
3. That the questions raised in paragraph 6.3 of the report were considered and commented on and the consideration to not challenge government standard methodology at this time to help to inform officers' work in developing a housing strategy for the new local plan was agreed.

## 11 **Strategy for the distribution of development - initial overview**

The Committee considered the report which provided an initial overview of potential issues with a strategy for the distribution of development for inclusion in the emerging local plan and highlighted the responses received on the local plan issues and options consultation.

Points raised during discussions included:

- Comment made that the fields between villages in the West End of East Devon were in tier one and actual villages themselves were in tier three or even lower if their broadband provision was not up to speed.
- Concerns raised about adding broadband into the mix of what makes a village sustainable. Do we really want to be telling villages they cannot develop because they have poor broadband? In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that broadband speeds were simply being considered as a further criteria and it was not intended to make decisions based on broadband speed alone
- Exmouth as a whole within the built up boundary is considered sustainable but there is a huge amount of traffic going in and out of Exmouth and there are parts of Exmouth that are further away from the town centre or from a school than some villages. We need to be more subtle about the way we treat sustainability when looking at a location of development.
- If developments are not allowed in some villages then the villages would wither on the vine.
- There are a lot of villages that would like to see a little more housing, not large developments as that would change the diversity but smaller growth to help maintain the village schools.

It was proposed by Councillor Ben Ingham, seconded by Councillor Paul Arnott that recommendation one be amended to read:

That Strategic Planning Committee to note the various issues and options relating to the strategy for the distribution of development in the emerging local plan.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the various issues and options relating to the strategy for the distribution of development in the emerging local plan be noted.
2. That the intention for a further report refining the strategy for the distribution of development to be presented at a future Strategic Planning Committee be noted.

## 12 **The emerging new local plan and the relationship with**

## **neighbourhood plans**

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management presented the report which sought Member endorsement of the undertaking of a detailed analysis of existing neighbourhood plans to inform the preparation of the local plan. It also sought endorsement of the development of a communications plan for liaison with neighbourhood planning communities throughout the local plan production.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that neighbourhood plans carry more weight as a material planning consideration further they are progressed, although the new local plan when adopted will take precedence over any neighbourhood plan made prior to the adoption.

Members' noted that further material modifications would require further consultation which would be supported by government funding and that that the emerging neighbourhood plans would be tested against conformity with the adopted local plan. Members' were mindful that advice would be given to parish councils.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management summarised the feedback received from the issues and options consultation in section 3 of the report and drew Members' attention to the practical suggestions detailed in figure 2.

The report also summarised discussion points from a webinar hosted by officers from the Planning Department which was well attended by 21 neighbourhood plan areas that covered both those with made and emerging plans.

The committee considered paragraph 4.4 of the report which detailed the key considerations. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management sought Members views on these key considerations going forward and also sought Members' endorsement to the undertaking of a detailed analysis of existing neighbourhood plans.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised both reports would be brought back to a future meeting for Member approval.

Points raised by Committee Members during discussion included:

- Support was shown for the comprehensive report.
- As Clerk to two parishes that have neighbourhood plans and a member of a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group I am heartened by the report as the support and communication by the District Council for those parishes will be critical
- Reference was made to d) conflicts in paragraph 4.4. It is the duty of the district council to resolve conflicts as some parishes are disenchanted with the neighbourhood process.
- Many of the parish councils view neighbourhood plans as part of the planning process which would enable them to have a say in the outcome of development.
- There is a need to understand each village in terms of understanding what housing is in the village, the people that live in the village, the age concept and what type of houses those people need.
- Suggestion that neighbourhood plans should detail what type of employment is in the village. The neighbourhood plan should encourage employment growth.
- Support was shown for Recommendation 3 in order to address the needs and aspirations of our communities.

- It helps to maintain a good dialogue with the Planning Authority as it is a gruelling process to put together a neighbourhood plan that accords with the local plan and national planning framework.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the role, coverage and state of play of neighbourhood planning in the district and the relationship with the local plan (adopted and emerging) be noted.
2. That the discussion points set out in section 4 of the report be considered.
3. That the undertaking of a detailed analysis of existing neighbourhood plans to inform the preparation of the local plan, the findings of which to be reported to a future meeting be endorsed.
4. That the development of a communications plan for liaison with neighbourhood planning communities throughout the local plan production to be brought back to a future meeting for member approval be endorsed.

13 **Duty to co-operate**

The Committee considered the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management’s report detailing the legal requirement to work with certain bodies in respect of strategic cross boundary issues and sought Members’ views on the a number of strategic matters identified in the report which included:

- Transport
- Water quality
- Climate change
- Habitat mitigation
- Green infrastructure

The report to Members also considered the broad range of bodies that were subject to the duty to co-operate as detailed in paragraph 2.1 and table 3 on page 173 that highlighted the key topic areas.

Points raised by Committee Members during discussion included:

- Clarification sought on whether all the bodies listed embrace the duty to co-operate.
- Support was shown for the recommendations.
- Reference was made to table 3 and whether climate change should be put at the top of the list as the most important issue that the council needs to address in the next few years.
- Reference to page 18. Leisure – proposals for sporting venues serving wider area than an East Devon need was supported.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the initial work on cross-boundary strategic issues be focussed around the topics set out in table 3 of this report be agreed.
2. That the requirement to maintain and publish a statement (or statements) of common ground be noted.

**Attendance List**

Committee Members present at Blackdown House (for some or all of the meeting)  
D Ledger (Chair)

O Davey (Vice-Chair)  
M Allen  
P Arnott  
J Bailey  
K Blakey  
S Chamberlain  
P Hayward  
B Ingham  
A Moulding  
G Pratt  
E Rylance  
P Skinner

**Committee Members present virtually (for some or all of the meeting)**

S Chamberlain

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

D Bickley  
B De Saram  
P Faithfull  
S Jackson  
G Jung  
P Millar  
H Parr  
M Rixson  
E Wragg

**Officers in attendance:**

Ed Freeman, Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management  
Shirley Shaw, Planning Barrister  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

M Howe  
G Pook

Chairman .....

Date: .....