

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the consultative meeting of Cabinet held at Online via the Zoom app. on 2 March 2022

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.06 pm

172 Public speaking

Mr Mike Goodman made comments around a number of questions that he wanted Cabinet to answer, those questions being;

1. When Cabinet review recommendations which potentially affect residents, what criteria do they use in deciding if an Equalities and Diversity report should be completed before making a decision?
2. When Cabinet propose making changes affecting the residents, what criteria do they use in deciding if they should consult residents first?
3. At the Council meeting on 21 February 2022 the Chief Financial officer said not to implement the Car Parking increase from £1.20 to £2.00 would mean there was a shortfall of £1m. Could he please provide the details on how this was calculated and if the 20% risk factor was taken into account?
4. Would Cabinet, when making decisions consider making it clearer to residents exactly what decisions had been made? I refer to the confusion as to what car parks were or were not included at the £2 rate.

The Chair thanked Mr Goodman for his questions and said that officers would respond to him in writing when they had the opportunity to do so.

Cllr Steve Gazzard asked for further clarification to when Exmouth Town Hall would be fully open for residents to access services as it was before the pandemic. He asked when Clayton House community centre would be reopened pending the end of Covid-19 restrictions. He asked that the council clearly communicate to residents when these buildings would be fully open as well as how residents could access their services.

173 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the consultative meeting of Cabinet held on 2 February 2022 were agreed.

174 Declarations of interest

Min 179. Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 25 January 2022.
Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Member of LED.

Min 184. Axe Valley Feasibility Report (Placemaking projects) and potential Levelling Up bid.
Councillor Dan Ledger, Personal, Chair and Mayor of Seaton Town Council.

Min 184. Axe Valley Feasibility Report (Placemaking projects) and potential Levelling Up bid.
Councillor Jack Rowland, Personal, Seaton Ward Member.

Min 184. Axe Valley Feasibility Report (Placemaking projects) and potential Levelling Up bid.

Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Lives in the Axe Valley and Ward Member for Coly Valley which was part of the study area.

Min 187. Contract with PPP (Night Owl) update.

Councillor Steve Gazzard, Personal, Trade Union member.

Min 188. Team Devon's Recovery Group (Devon Place Board) Coastal and Market Towns Urban Renewal Phase.

Councillor Dan Ledger, Personal, Chair and Mayor of Seaton Town Council.

Min 188. Team Devon's Recovery Group (Devon Place Board) Coastal and Market Towns Urban Renewal Phase.

Councillor Jack Rowland, Personal, Seaton Ward Member.

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Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Lives in the Axe Valley and Ward Member for Coly Valley.

175 **Matters of urgency**

The Chair informed members of the outcome of a Team Devon meeting he had attended during the day concerning the situation of the Ukraine refugee crisis. They agreed to the shared position to six responses which the Chair read out.

1. A shared Team Devon statement would be prepared condemning Russia's actions and committing to work together on coordinating local actions across councils including offers of accommodation to highlight existing leadership in refugee support
2. A nominated point of contact for each council to determine responses in line with learning from existing refugee support arrangements
3. To develop a template for use on councils' websites signposting to key guidance and points of information relating to offers of support
4. Promote financial donations to specific international aid appeals to support the crisis
5. Hold offers of accommodation via district councils depending clarity of requirement from the UK Government
6. Explore inviting contact to the county council from Devon's Ukrainian residents to explore if they have family likely to travel and what their accommodation and wider needs would be.

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

None

177 **Forward Plan**

Members agreed to recommend the contents of the Forward Plan for key decision for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 July 2022 for approval.

178 **Minutes of Strata Joint Executive Committee held on 19 January 2022**

Members noted that the minutes of the Strata Joint Executive Committee held on 19 January 2022 had already been recommended for approval by Council.

179 **Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 25 January 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 25 January 2022.

180 **Minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 26 January 2022**

Members agreed to defer the minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 26 January 2022 until a further report comes to Cabinet in relation to the specific recommendation from the Board.

181 **Minutes of Poverty Working Panel held on 31 January 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes of the Poverty Working Panel held on 31 January 2022.

182 **Minutes of Community Grant Panel held on 2 February 2022**

Members agreed to note and recommend the minutes and recommendations of the Community Grant Panel held on 2 February 2022 for approval. During discussions it was highlighted the need to review the 50% part funding requirement that community groups had to achieve in order to access grants. It was pointed out the Panel were meeting soon where a report on this subject would be presented.

Minute 81 Grants options

that a Medium Community Grants fund scheme be set up, using criteria similar to those in place for the Small Community Grant fund scheme, whereby applications can be made for grants in the region of £500 to £5,000 as a one-off scheme to award the £74,000 Crowdfund East Devon underspend. This would be on the basis of applicants raising a minimum of 50% of their total project costs from elsewhere.

183 **Levelling Up White Paper**

The Service Lead Growth, Development & Prosperity informed members that the Levelling Up White Paper was published on the 2 February 2022. The report provided an overview of its main provisions as they apply to the Council. Two particular aspects were highlighted – the selection of Devon, Plymouth and Torbay as one of nine areas in an initial wave to negotiate a County Deal and the forthcoming deployment of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Discussions included the following:

- Issues around the potential transferring of taxi licensing to the County Council
- the importance of the Dinan Way extension scheme with residents having traffic/travel issues concerns to the north of Exmouth
- the importance of regenerating Exmouth's high street
- the need to follow up on previous Levelling Up Fund bids

RECOMMENDED that;
Senior Officers

- note publication of the Levelling Up White Paper and its key provisions
- acknowledge the importance of influencing the development of a County Deal for the Devon, Plymouth and Torbay area
- considers and advises on the potential list of programmes and investments set out in paragraph 4.5 that might find expression within the County Deal
- receives a further report on the County Deal as it progresses and on the development of an Investment Plan in relation to the Shared Prosperity Fund

REASON:

To ensure that members were aware of the key provisions of the Levelling Up White Paper.

To ensure that key Council priorities were identified in relation to the development of a County Deal.

To ensure that the Council was prepared for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

184 **Axe Valley Feasibility Report (Placemaking projects) and potential Levelling Up bid.**

The Project Manager Place, Assets & Commercialisation informed members about a project that will consider the potential for placemaking and redevelopment projects for sites within the Axe Valley, from Axminster south to Seaton. The report made a number of recommendations in relation to the funding of the Axe Valley project and how the council might approach managing a bid process to Levelling Up Fund Round 2.

Consultants had now been appointed to undertake feasibility studies of placemaking projects in the Axe Valley and prepare a report on the options available for a number of sites, within public or private ownership.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers approve

- a) £30,000 is provided from the agreed £100,000 allocated from Business Rates Reserve Pilot Fund (Cabinet 31st March 2021) in order to prepare a bid for Axe Valley Levelling Up Fund Round 2 (should it be considered appropriate to bid, once details of the bidding prospectus are known).
- b) A future report to Cabinet will set out a recommendation regarding whether to submit a Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid and if so, will recommend which projects to include within that bid.

REASON:

Informing members of the use of the WBF and Business Rates Reserve Pilot Fund (as previously approved and if required for a bid submission), to identify in a timely manner, placemaking opportunities for the Axe Valley. This information would inform a decision on whether to pursue the development and submission of a Levelling Up Fund bid.

185 **Energy Services Company for the Cranbrook Expansion Areas**

The Service Lead Growth, Development and Prosperity presented his report which detailed the outcome of a bid to the government's Heat Network Development Unit. This was to secure funding for consultancy support to undertake a procurement exercise to enable the establishment of an Energy Services Company to serve the Cranbrook

expansion areas. This would enable the continued roll out of a district heating network in the town which in turn would make a major contribution to meeting the zero carbon development policy objective.

Discussions included the following:

- The heating system was essential to the town and it's ambition to be zero carbon
- Although this had many benefits to residents it was still a monopoly as residents had no other alternative to sign up to
- advantage of the district heating system was that it could be easily converted economically and practically to a low carbon energy source compared to retrofitting individual homes.

RECOMMENDED that:

Senior Officers approve

- £50k is provided from the Climate Action budget to match fund the HNDU award
- the Service Lead Growth, Development and Prosperity and Section 151 officer sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Council

REASON:

To secure funding from the Heat Network Development Unit programme. To support the delivery of zero carbon development in the Cranbrook expansion areas.

186 Annual Review of Public Health priority actions 2020-21

The report presented by the Public Health Project Officer reviewed the annual work and summarise how the targets and aspirations of the Public Health Strategic Plan were met. This covered the Covid-19 pandemic which highlighted health inequalities and their impact and the close connections between health and the economy.

The Review summarised how teams from across the council worked together in a joined-up approach over a difficult year, in many cases taking on new roles to support residents during the pandemic. It commended officers' efforts during this exceptional time and the commitment to activities which aimed to make a positive difference to people's physical health and mental wellbeing across East Devon.

The Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities thanked Helen Wharam for her valuable research on many issues concerning people's physical health and mental wellbeing.

Having received the report members reviewed and noted the contribution made by the council's services through activities reviewed annually, that underpin the Public Health Strategic Plan.

187 Contract with PPP (Night Owl) update

The Service Lead Housing Task Force reminded members that at its meeting in September 2021 Cabinet approved to grant Home Safeguard to continue using PPP Night Owl to cover the overnight emergency, pendant and out of hours service for a 4 month period. The update report explained the recruitment challenge that led to the bringing of PPP online had not altered. In fact it had got worse and there were now 6 overnight call handler posts vacant.

Following the need for to use PPP, EDDC intended to carry out further recruitment campaigns. However, it quickly became clear that it was unlikely to successfully recruit in the current climate. A search of similar posts advertised online revealed that a number of Telecare providers were seeking night staff on a rolling basis, indicating that they too were struggling to recruit.

Discussions included the following:

- Concern tenants were not being consulted
- Opposed to out-sourcing as this could lead to privatising the service
- This was a vital service; this was an emergency situation and would only be short-term
- The need to look at wages for operatives
- Grateful Night Owls were giving a good service
- 6 posts were a lot to fill

RECOMMENDED that:

Senior Officers approve

- a 1 year contract be put in place between Home Safeguard and PPP Night Owl, to ensure the continued delivery of the vital overnight element of this 24 hour service,
- the Contract Standing Orders Exemption report.

REASON:

Home Safeguard provided a vital 24/7 monitoring / support service to many residents of East Devon, in both the private sector and within EDDC's sheltered housing stock. It provided support and guidance at point of need at all hours of the day and night to 1000s of people across the district.

Due to the consistent inability to recruit to the night posts the council needed to secure a contract with PPP to ensure continuation of the service 24/7 with no disruption or delivery impact to service users.

188 Team Devon's Recovery Group (Devon Place Board) Coastal and Market Towns Urban Renewal Phase

The Project Manager Place, Assets & Commercialisation informed members about a project that is being progressed by Devon County Council that would benefit both Axminster and Seaton.

Devon County Council's Team Devon Recovery Group (Devon Place Board) had commenced work on a Coastal and Market towns project. This work was aimed at tackling the long-term and immediate decline in some of Devon's underperforming towns. It had identified 8 towns that would form part of a pilot project for future investment and both Axminster and Seaton were included within these.

Following a study undertaken last year by consultants, DCC were now ready to commence phase 2 of the project. This would involve working with the towns to prepare a Regeneration Strategy and prepare business cases for project interventions. There was no funding requirement for the council to support the DCC work. The council would offer in-kind support through staff resources and provide match funding through the use of the Welcome Back Fund (WBF) on the Axe Valley Feasibility project.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers approve

- a) East Devon District Council accepts the offer of support to pursue Devon Place Board's Coastal and Market Towns Urban Renewal Phase 2 project for Axminster and Seaton as set out in paragraph 1 in the report.

- b) A future report will set out a recommendation for the format of the Project Groups for Seaton and Axminster and their governance structure, following the advice from the consultants appointed by DCC to lead on the Devon Place Board Urban Renewal Phase 2 project.

- c) East Devon District Council offers a level of match funding to the Devon Place Board contribution that includes in-kind contribution (officer resource), and the use of the WBF for the Stage 1 feasibility work on Axe Valley reported on separately.

REASON:

To take up the offer to work with Devon Place Board to pursue the Coastal and Market Towns Urban Renewal Phase 2 project for Axminster and Seaton. To inform members of the use of the WBF as match funding from this council for the Devon Place Board project.

Attendance List

Present:

Portfolio Holders

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

Cabinet apologies:

P Hayward	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Economy and Assets
S Jackson	Portfolio Holder Democracy, Transparency and Communications

Also present (for some or all the meeting)

Councillor Kevin Blakey
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain
Councillor Maddy Chapman
Councillor Olly Davey
Councillor Bruce De Saram
Councillor Peter Faithfull
Councillor Steve Gazzard
Councillor Dawn Manley
Councillor Paul Millar
Councillor Andrew Moulding
Councillor Helen Parr
Councillor Geoff Pook

Councillor Eleanor Rylance
Councillor Brenda Taylor
Councillor Joe Whibley
Councillor Eileen Wragg
Councillor Tom Wright

Also present:

Officers:

Tim Child, Service Lead - Place, Assets & Commercialisation
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
Andrew Ennis, Service Lead Environmental Health and Car Parks
Jo Garfoot, Service Lead Housing Task Force
Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Service Lead Housing
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing (and Monitoring Officer)
Alison Hayward, Project Manager Place & Prosperity
Andrew Hopkins, Communications Consultant
Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Mark Williams, Chief Executive
Andrew Wood, Service Lead - Growth Development and Prosperity

Chair

Date: