

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the consultative meeting of Cabinet held at Online via the Zoom app. on 30 March 2022

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.49 pm

189 Public speaking

Mr Trevor Leahong from the Ottery Refugee Response Group stated he understood that Ukrainian refugees would have access to employment and the benefits system, schooling, medical and social services. In addition, EDDC would be receiving from central government £10,500 per individual Ukrainian refugee. He asked what 'direct political solutions' had been implemented locally so far and the Council's response to the government 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme. He asked what additional special systems and facilities were being developed and implemented for meeting the practical needs of refugees and their care and support within East Devon communities.

In response the Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment stated; Whilst the council was still awaiting much of the detailed guidance needed from Government, it was readying itself to take on the request from Government under the national scheme. The council was preparing to inspect the properties of sponsor households to ensure that they were suitable for occupation by refugees. DCC would be undertaking the required safeguarding checks to be performed on sponsoring households. The Benefits staff were preparing to administer subsistence grants and monthly payments to sponsoring households and were liaising with the DWP.

EDDC was still awaiting access to data. TeamDevon was also considering arrangements for welcome, integration into the community, welfare support and 'safety net' arrangements if relations with host families ceased and/or breakdown in some way. The council had encouraged financial donations to the Disasters Emergency Committee and recognised charities and directed residents who wish to make physical donations, to the excellent range of local voluntary and community groups via social media. There was a webpage on the website that was being kept up to date during the rapidly changing situation.

Mr David Gurney from the Ottery Refugee Response Group, asked about the arrangements to check the suitability of sponsors and accommodation being offered and how EDDC would find out which of its constituents had offered to Sponsor Ukrainian refugees. He asked which department would carry out suitability checks on people and property and would this be done before a match had been agreed.

In response the Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment stated; The Government supplied data to DCC on sponsor/host offers of accommodation, and EDDC was given access to the data on Tuesday 29 March 2022.

He acknowledged that 37 host families had offered accommodation in East Devon to date. EDDC's Private Sector Housing Team were undertaking the property inspections and DCC are undertaking the host safeguarding checks. He said that now the council had the property data and inspection guidelines, the Private Sector Housing Team would commence the inspections immediately and complete these as quickly as resources permit and in accordance with Government guidance.

Helen Collinson from the Ottery Refugee Response Group stated that it was wholly appropriate that EDDC and other district councils in Devon should take urgent action in response to the refugee crisis resulting from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However she was concerned about the ongoing refugee crisis resulting from the Taliban's seizure of power in Afghanistan eight months ago. She understood from DCC and EDDC press releases and local media articles that 67 Afghan refugees; 15 families, were placed in temporary hotel accommodation in Exmouth last autumn by the Home Office and that EDDC had been entrusted with finding more permanent accommodation for these families. She asked how many Afghan refugees in East Devon were still in temporary accommodation and the number of Afghan refugees for whom permanent housing had been found in East Devon since August 2021. She inquired to the current measures being taken to ensure that Afghan refugees still in temporary accommodation could move into more permanent accommodation as soon as possible.

In response the Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment stated; The Afghan evacuee scheme was a Home Office project and one in which EDDC had no say and little warning in the booking of the 'bridging' hotel in Exmouth. The Home Office was also responsible for the 'matching' scheme to resettle afghan households into more permanent housing. The housing responsibilities as a district council were limited to providing a 'safety net' should Home Office commissioned arrangements fail. EDDC worked closely with DCC, Exmouth Town Council and local voluntary and community groups to support the settlement of families in Exmouth and ensure that their immediate needs were met. DCC as the welfare authority had been providing ongoing support.

It was known from DCC that the numbers of people within the hotel remains fluid with a family of 10 and a family of 5 arriving on Friday last week, at short notice. There were 55 people within the hotel at the moment, following a number of families having moved on (1 locally and 4 to other areas in the UK). We anticipate a further 9 people to arrive on Thursday. The availability of properties for resettlement (locally and nationally) remained limited and EDDC understood that the longer term response from Home Office was still in development. He suggested that for a more detailed response the questions should be directed to the Home Office.

Mr Mike Goodman read a statement following up to his previous questions to Cabinet on the Climate Change Strategy and car parks charges. In response the Monitoring Officer said that Mr Goodman would receive a written statement in due course addressing the many questions he had asked.

190 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

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

191 **Declarations of interest**

Min 196. Minutes of Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group held on 17 February 2022 and 8 March 2022.

Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Vice Chair of Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group.

Min 199. Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 1 March 2022.

Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Sits on the LED Monitoring Forum and had just cancelled his LED membership due to little use.

Min 200. Exeter & East Devon Enterprise Zone.

Councillor Dan Ledger, Personal, Chair of Exeter & East Devon Enterprise Zone Board.

Min 201. Enterprise Zone Grant Funding Variation Request - for Exeter Science Park Limited.

Councillor Dan Ledger, Personal, Chair of Exeter & East Devon Enterprise Zone Board.

Min 201. Enterprise Zone Grant Funding Variation Request - for Exeter Science Park Limited.

Councillor Jack Rowland, Personal, Council appointed shareholder representative for Exeter Science Park.

Min 201. Enterprise Zone Grant Funding Variation Request - for Exeter Science Park Limited.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Council appointed Director of Exeter Science Park.

Min 203. East Devon Thriving Towns Programme - One Public Estate (OPE) Feasibility Study and next steps.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Has close relatives living in Cranbrook and acting as locum clerk to Axminster Town Council.

Min 204. Public Health Implementation Plan 2022/23.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Wife and daughter work for the RD&E NHS Foundation Trust.

Min 205. Digital Strategy.

Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Council appointed shareholder representative for the Strata Joint Executive.

Min 209. Unlocking the delivery of Cranbrook Town Centre.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Has close relatives living in Cranbrook.

192 **Matters of urgency**

None

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

There were three items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way. These are recorded at minutes 208 – 210.

194 **Forward Plan**

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

DECISION:

The recommendation(s) was/were approved by a Senior Officer. The Senior Officer Decision Notice is listed above under Additional Documents.

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

Members agreed to note the minutes and take into account the recommendations of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 26 January 2022 for approval at minute 210 Recycling & Waste - Bridging Solution.

Minute 33 Bridging solution proposal

that the Partnership Board recommend that Cabinet recommend the bridging solution to Council for approval.

196 **Minutes of Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group held on 17 February 2022 and 8 March 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes of Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group held on 17 February 2022 and 8 March 2022.

197 **Minutes of Community Grant Panel held on 9 March 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes of Community Grant Panel held on 9 March 2022.

198 **Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 3 March 2022**

Members agreed to note the minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 3 March 2022.

199 **Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 1 March 2022**

Members agreed to note and recommend the minutes and recommendations of LED Monitoring Forum held on 1 March 2022.

Recommended to Council;

Minute 111 Capital Bids Update Report

That the installation of pool water treatment energy management systems at the Exmouth and Honiton LED managed swimming pool sites be included in the capital programme, with a capital budget in 2022/23 of £62,500.

Recommended to Senior Officers;

Minute 112 LED Management Fee 2022-23

That the process for allocating the £100k contingency in the 2022/23 budget be specifically aimed at coping with the increased utility costs, with the applications made in arrears by LED to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture, Sport and Tourism in consultation with the Chair of the LED Monitoring Forum and the Strategic Lead Finance.

200 **Exeter & East Devon Enterprise Zone**

The Enterprise Zone Programme Manager provided an update on the financial position with regard to the Enterprise Zone (EZ) programme and sought approval for staffing and budget to be used to support its delivery.

The Chair thanked and wished to share the credit with the present administration and previous Conservative administration for getting the council to this positive position.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers

1. Note the progress made within the Enterprise Zone designation.
2. Approve that the Project Manager (Simplified Planning) role is adjusted from fixed term to permanent status.
3. Approve 0.2FTE dedicated Communication Officer support for the programme, £15k ring fenced budget (from the existing revenue budget).

REASON:

Cabinet had received regular updates on the financial position of the Enterprise Zone. The proposals set up would support the continued success of the programme, providing dedicated staff resources.

201 **Enterprise Zone Grant Funding Variation Request - for Exeter Science Park Limited**

The Enterprise Zone Programme Manager's report sought approval to vary the existing funding agreement for the Ada Lovelace Building at Exeter Science Park. The project was originally considered by Cabinet at the January 2019 meeting, with the funding requested approved. A paper to vary the funding request was considered by Cabinet in January 2021, seeking approval to vary the funding agreement in light of cost savings made through the construction process. The report sought a further variation to the funding agreement within the existing £660,000 grant.

The funding for the project was in the form of a grant, borrowed against future ring fenced business rate income in the designated Enterprise Zone.

During discussions members asked for the opportunity to tour the area to see for themselves the progress made. The Enterprise Zone Programme Manager was in favour of this and suggested early Autumn when further construction had taken place.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers

- Approve the variation of the grant funding agreement with Exeter Science Park, within the existing £660,000 funding allocation, to fund the construction retention of the Ada Lovelace Building and produce design codes and install foul drainage for the Anning Cluster.
- Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make payments in respect of the project, subject to the completion of appropriate legal documentation in consultation with the Strategic Lead (Governance & Licencing).

REASON:

Cabinet last received a paper on this project in January 2021, which sought a reduction to the overall grant funding request and a variation to the funding agreement, this reflected the substantial savings made through the construction process and provided added value to the project.

The proposed variation, within the current £660,000 grant funding agreement, will provide further added value and support the development of the Science Park.

202 **Chemical Review Audit (Herbicides) - Streetscene**

The Streetscene Operations Manager presented his report detailing how the scrutiny around the use of pesticides and herbicides had increased massively in recent years and

that there was more scientific evidence to prove that they were harmful to both human health and the environment.

During discussions it was agreed that this was a positive stance being taken by the council. It was important that this was communicated to residents, town and parish councils to encourage their uptake of non-harmful chemical usage. A strong communication campaign would pre-empt any adversity to this decision.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers

1. approve the ban of glyphosate based herbicides by September 2022 as set out in the report recommendation section along with banning the use of woody weed killers.
2. endorse the replacement of glyphosate and other chemicals with an integrated weed management approach which included the use of the RHS vinegar based weed control and manual control methods.
3. endorse bids being placed in the 2023/24 capital programme for 2 x Hotfoam machines (circa £67k investment), required to supplement other integrated weed control methods.

REASON:

One of Streetscene's objectives this year included as part of its service plan (2021/22) was to undertake a review of chemical usage across its service. Specifically herbicides that were used across the public realm and in the council's green spaces.

Streetscene Service Plan Objective 5 – Review of chemical usage

- Investigate and trial more sustainable alternatives to herbicides for weed control.
- Reduce the use of glyphosate and other chemicals across sports pitches, green spaces and public realm areas.
- Produce a report to Cabinet on alternatives – to include withdrawing from weed spraying in some areas, including Highways around town centres, which we do although it is not in our remit.
- Cost physical alternatives and project resourcing requirements.

203 **East Devon Thriving Towns Programme - One Public Estate (OPE) Feasibility Study and next steps**

The Project Manager Place Assets and Commercialisation provided an overview of the background and the work undertaken on the One Public Estate (OPE) project to date. This includes details of the consultants' report findings and recommendations. These included a list of immediate and short/ medium term projects as well as a longer term pipeline of opportunities.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers

1. Note the East Devon Thriving Towns Programme – One Public Estate Feasibility Study final report, next steps report and recommendations prepared by Avison Young.
2. Approve the project proposal for the Cranbrook Health and Wellbeing Centre be taken forward into the next stage of the OPE programme as it was the most likely route to delivering outputs through the OPE programme.

REASON:

- The report recorded the extent of the East Devon public estate and identified needs and opportunities; it has practical use for future projects/ programmes and the information and recommendations should not be lost because of the changing OPE process and priorities.
- The Cranbrook Health and Wellbeing Centre proposal was taken forward in order to progress the opportunity and avoid further delay.

204 **Public Health Implementation Plan 2022/23**

The Public Health Project Officer Each updated Members to the Public Health Implementation Plan and how it summarised the intention 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.

During the debate and vote Cllr Paul Hayward left the meeting due to a personal interest.

Having received the report members reviewed and noted the Public Health Implementation Plan 2022/23.

205 **Digital Strategy**

The Strategic Lead Finance presented a joint Digital Strategy that had been developed with Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council and was being presented for consideration.

During discussions the importance of face to face interactions was highlighted with emphasis on the strategy covering simple processes that could be easily automated through the website and different media channels, therefore residents having access 24/7. These efficiencies would free up time being spent on these simple processes allowing more time for the important face to face interactions on complex issues.

RECOMMENDED to Senior Officers;
that the Digital Strategy be adopted.

REASON:

To give focus and ensure resources were deployed in the areas that members agree.

206 **Dalwood Neighbourhood Plan ('the Plan') to be formally 'made'**

The Dalwood 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.

The Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management updated members to guidance recently received from Natural England to how developments within the catchment of the River Axe should be considered, in the relation to nutrient levels running into the river. As this neighbourhood plan did not apply for specific sites for housing this would not be a hindrance to the plan being made.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers

1. recommend that the Dalwood Neighbourhood Plan be 'made',

2. note that once made the Plan will carry full weight in the planning decision making process as part of the statutory development plan for this Neighbourhood Plan Area (the parish of Dalwood).
3. that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and all involved in developing the Plan be congratulated on all their hard work.

REASON:

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

207 **Response to Kilmington Neighbourhood Plan Submission**

The purpose of the report was to formally agree the response by the Council to the submission consultation for the Kilmington Neighbourhood Plan. Kilmington Parish Council had formally submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to the Council. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (Regulation 16) required the Council to formally consult on the Plan for a minimum of 6 weeks.

The Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management updated members to guidance recently received from Natural England to how developments within the catchment of the River Axe should be considered, in the relation to nutrient levels running into the river. This neighbourhood plan was within the catchment area stated.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers

1. Note the formal submission of the Kilmington Neighbourhood Plan and congratulate the producers of the plan on their dedicated hard work and commitment in producing the document.
2. Note the proposed representation set out at paragraph 1.19 in the report was made in response to the consultation.

REASON:

To ensure that the view of the Council was formally recorded and informed the consideration of the Neighbourhood Plan by the independent Examiner.

208 **Acquisition of Green Space in the Clyst Valley Regional Park**

The paper provided an update on the delivery of new green space within the Clyst Valley Regional Park and sought approval for acquisition.

Cabinet wished to congratulate Naomi Harnett, Simon Bates and officers for their enormous work undertaken over the years to get to this stage.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers

1. Approve the acquisition of the 10.24ha site, subject to approval of the CIL budget by Strategic Planning Committee in April 2022.
2. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to finalise the acquisition of the land, subject to the completion of appropriate legal documentation in consultation with the Strategic Lead Governance & Licencing.
3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to finalise an establishment plan for the site, in consultation with the Service Lead Planning Strategy & Development Management.

4. That a further paper which provides options for the long term management of the site be received.

REASON:

The project supported the delivery of new green space in East Devon, along with delivery of the Clyst Valley Regional Park. This would provide an additional area of public access land for residents.

209 **Unlocking the delivery of Cranbrook Town Centre**

The report represented the culmination of over two years of work, coordinated through the Cranbrook Strategic Delivery Board, to secure the delivery of the town centre. Approval was sought for two specific investment proposals to both acquire land in the town centre and to support the ongoing roll out of the district heating network to underpin the achievement of low carbon development. The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for his significant role in negotiations to the delivery of this Cranbrook town centre.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers approve

1. The acquisition of town centre land parcels TC4 d & e for £4.8375m with an allowance of £0.6625m for associated costs.
2. The roll out of the district heating network is supported with a budget of £1m in line with the detail of the report.
3. Delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Strategic Lead (Governance & Licensing) to finalise and complete the appropriate legal documentation for the acquisition of the land and support for the district heating network as appropriate.

RECOMMENDED to Council;

4. That the sum of £6.5m is met from the Enterprise Zone programme for the acquisition of town centre land parcels (and associated costs) and support of the district heating network with the investment to be implemented through EDDC borrowing against future ring fenced business rate income.

REASON:

To support the delivery of Cranbrook Town Centre.

210 **Recycling & Waste - Bridging Solution**

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager gave a presentation outlining the Suez Bridging Solution contract resources increase and why it was required, along with the due diligence that had been undertaken to assure that the level of resource requested and cost was appropriate.

During discussions it was suggested that all councillors see the presentation in order to be fully informed when getting the message across to the public.

Members agreed to note and recommend the minutes and recommendations of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 26 January 2022 for approval as recorded at minute 195.

RECOMMENDED that;

Senior Officers

1. agree to the additional resources for the Recycling & Waste service required to meet the growth pressures by implementing the 'Bridging Solution' as outlined in the report.
2. agree to extend the contract with SUEZ to its full term to 2026 to provide the consistency and stability needed to implement the Bridging Solution and prepare for the outcomes of the Environment Act 2021.

RECOMMENDED to Council;

3. that the additional budget required is approved; a revenue budget increase of £1.25 million per year (£734,928 pro-rata for 2022/23) and estimated capital expenditure of £1.11million to fund the changes to the service.

REASON:

A comprehensive business case was included in the Bridging Solution document providing the rationale and supporting data to explain the case for the expansion of the Recycling & Waste service and gives the revenue and capital budget provisions required to deliver the changes. The business case had been compiled jointly by the EDDC/SUEZ Partnership Team.

Attendance List

Present:

Portfolio Holders

P Arnott	Leader
P Hayward	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Economy and Assets
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
S Jackson	Portfolio Holder Democracy, Transparency and Communications
N Hookway	Portfolio Holder Tourism, Sport, Leisure and Culture

Cabinet apologies:

M Armstrong	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities
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Also present (for some or all the meeting)

Councillor Denise Bickley
Councillor Kevin Blakey
Councillor Kim Bloxham
Councillor Colin Brown
Councillor Fred Caygill
Councillor Maddy Chapman
Councillor Bruce De Saram
Councillor Alan Dent
Councillor Peter Faithfull
Councillor Steve Gazzard
Councillor Ian Hall
Councillor Sam Hawkins
Councillor Vicky Johns

Councillor Jamie Kemp
Councillor Richard Lawrence
Councillor Andrew Moulding
Councillor Helen Parr
Councillor Geoff Pratt
Councillor Val Ranger
Councillor Eleanor Rylance
Councillor Eileen Wragg

Also present:

Officers:

Thea Billeter, Cranbrook New Community Manager
Gareth Bourton, Recycling and Waste Contract Manager
Tim Child, Service Lead - Place, Assets & Commercialisation
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 (and Monitoring Officer)
Andrew Hancock, Service Lead StreetScene
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
Tom Wood, StreetScene Operations Manager
Naomi Harnett, Enterprise Zone Programme Manager

Chair

Date: