

Report to: **Strategic Planning Committee**



Date of Meeting: 9 January 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## **East Devon Local Plan – A revised new vision**

### **Report summary:**

On the 31 October 2023 Strategic Planning Committee received a report setting out a proposed new vision for the local plan. Committee made various suggestions to improve on the proposed vision and asked for these to be considered and a revised vision to come to the January 2024 committee meeting. This report sets out a revised new draft vision.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### **Recommendation:**

That committee endorse the proposed vision as set out in this report and agree to its inclusion in the East Devon Local Plan.

### **Reason for recommendation:**

To replace the vision in the existing draft local plan with a more locally relevant, forward looking and spatially defined vision that is more directly relevant to East Devon and its future.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

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**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

## **Links to background information**

The consultation draft local plan from November 2022 and other local plan papers can be viewed at:

[Draft Local Plan Consultation - East Devon](#)

Links to other background documents, if identified, are contained in the body of this report.

## **Link to Council Plan**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
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## **1. Background information**

- 1.1 This report follows on from a report considered at Strategic Planning Committee on the 31 October 2023 which considered a new vision for the local plan. The October committee report should be reviewed for full background information, see: [Local Plan Vision report.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)
- 1.2 At the committee meeting members highlighted several matters they felt could usefully be incorporated into the vision and changes they would endorse. The minutes of the meeting record the following suggestions and comments:
- It was suggested that a section should be included about the concerns raised about the oversubscribed schools and hospitals.
  - There is a need to include the Clyst Valley Regional Park.
  - It had been suggested that further work was needed before it could be endorsed.
  - There was a need to look at the punctuation.
  - It was suggested that each town should have its own vision.
  - The vision needs to acknowledge the east and west district divide – urban and rural communities need to be defined.
  - Greater emphasis on climate change.
  - There is a need to address affordable housing and the protection of local residents to avoid inward migration.
  - Infrastructure and transport should be included.
  - Support was expressed to include a vision for each of the towns.
  - As some villages need small scale development this should also be mentioned.
  - It was suggested that the sixth paragraph should be expanded to include what to expect from new development and what it delivers.
- 1.3 In response to the comments made, seeking to pick up on key themes raised, the vision has been reworked and new proposed text for inclusion in the plan is set out below in highlighted text.

**By 2040 and beyond** East Devon will be a diverse, inclusive and thriving place to live and work and a pleasure to visit and enjoy.

In responding to the climate emergency we will continue to play our part in what will be an increasingly net zero carbon world. At a local level we will be fully decarbonised; minimising energy consumption and maximising renewable energy generation. Communities in East Devon will be adapting to changes brought about by a warming climate.

We will ensure our urban areas and towns and villages, as they grow to meet future needs, continue to be great places to live and they will have improved access to the surrounding countryside. Looking beyond our boundaries we will continue to sustain strong relationships with the adjacent city of Exeter and our other neighbours.

The western side of East Devon will remain a focal point for growth with Cranbrook now well established and thriving. Our second new town will be expanding rapidly to meet the needs of a growing population. Alongside additional housing new high technology green businesses will continue to invest in the western side of the district securing high quality jobs and training. This development will come forward in an outstanding environment with the expanded and expansive Clyst Valley Regional Park wrapping around new developments.

Our less constrained towns and villages will see higher levels of growth and at these and in other settlements there will be a focus on provision of housing to meet local and affordable needs. We will, however, still recognise East Devon to be a place that others will want to move into. New and improved housing will give greater choice of tenure and locations with adaptable housing supporting local communities.

Our town centres will form a focal point for business, social and community activity serving residents and visitors alike. We will secure well-paid jobs in both traditional and emerging sectors closing the gap between average earnings and house prices. We will enhance self-containment of our communities by creating more job opportunities close to where people live.

Rural East Devon will retain its outstanding charm and character with modest sensitively planned development to meet the needs of the local communities. Farming and traditional rural activities will still dominate the use of land. Where possible we will retain high quality land in agricultural production as we move towards more environmentally sustainable farming practices into the middle decades of the 21st century.

Across East Devon new development will draw on our outstanding heritage legacy but will also be innovative in design and forward looking to incorporate net zero carbon technologies in new buildings and built spaces. Working with partner bodies we will strive to secure better facilities, especially where there may be current deficits in provision, including for schools and medical services. This will include in locations where past housing development has occurred without adequate services.

New, expanded and improved physical, social and community facilities and infrastructure will be delivered alongside development. This will ensure that people live healthier and happier lives with greater access to services and facilities in a cleaner and greener setting. Sustainable transport links and active travel and infrastructure connecting communities will be

enhanced and provided alongside development. High quality urban spaces, and our existing towns and built development, will link in with enhanced Green Infrastructure, open space and recreational facilities.

Our beautiful and diverse countryside, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, world class Jurassic coast, nature reserves and built heritage assets will remain and be enhanced. We will ensure that alongside new development there is greater care of the natural world with biodiversity improvements and a far richer and more nature friendly tapestry of green spaces in the future. These will support both biodiversity and the health and well-being of our communities.

## **2 A vision for towns and areas of higher development levels.**

- 2.1 Strategic Planning Committee of the 31 October 2023 also resolved that “... *the new local plan should include a vision for each of the towns to act as a focus for the plans approach for each of these locations.*”
- 2.2 Over the coming months, as redrafted plan chapters come to committee, we will bring proposed location specific vision text to committee seeking approval.

### **Financial implications:**

There are no direct financial implication resulting from the report.

### **Legal implications:**

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report

