

Recommendations for Cabinet that will resolve in an action being taken:

Overview Committee 29 August 2019

Minute 24 Council Plan draft

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet to accept the draft Council Plan, subject to revision taking into account the comments made during the debate by the Overview Committee; specifically that that there is reference both to the playing pitch strategy, and to providing opportunities for sport, culture and leisure as part of preparations for the next Local Plan and the GESP.

Minute 25 East Devon Policies on Poverty

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:

that in the preparation of the Council Plan, and subsequent service plans and related budgets, the following proposals on dealing with poverty are taken into account:

1. Council should have two basic aims, that:-
 - 1.1. No one in East Devon is destitute without immediate help, and
 - 1.2. Nobody is in poverty for more than two years duration.
2. To achieve this we should address the following key issues:
 - 2.1. Boost incomes and reduce relative housing costs;
 - 2.2. Work with partners to deliver an effective benefit system;
 - 2.3. Deliver actions with Business and Public Sector to improve education standards, raise skills and improve work placements;
 - 2.4. Strengthen families and communities to help those at risk of poverty; and
 - 2.5. Promote long-term economic growth to reduce dependency on agriculture, tourism and catering industries
3. Cabinet should organise lobbying of Government Policymakers by the Council and with Partners Aimed to improve Welfare, Housing Policy and Employment Law using this report as a basis.
4. There is now a general power to give financial assistance for home repairs, providing the Council has a published policy for providing such assistance. Council should develop a clear Private Sector Housing strategy which plays a key part in delivering the various duties and powers the Council has regarding housing, such as:
 - 4.1. assessing the quality, condition and management of the housing stock in the private sector
 - 4.2. tackling poor housing conditions and take action where the meet the requirements of the Decent Homes Standard is not met
 - 4.3. developing measures to bring empty properties back into use
 - 4.4. helping to drive up standards of property management in the private sector
 - 4.5. helping to improve homes through grant assistance in respect of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)
 - 4.6. preventing and reducing homelessness
 - 4.7. improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions from housing. From April 2018, it is unlawful for a landlord to rent out a residential property that does not reach a minimum energy efficiency standard. The intention is for the minimum standard to be set at EPC rating E.;
 - 4.8. administering and enforcing mandatory HMO (house in multiple occupation) licensing

We cannot deliver the aims of such a strategy alone and it will only be achieved with the assistance of partners and with Devon Home Choice

5. Devon Strategic Partnership should report on poverty mapping and should include actions regarding:
 - 5.1. Welfare Benefit Policies
 - 5.2. Homelessness
 - 5.3. Exeter and Heart of Devon local Economy actions on jobs
 - 5.4. Health and wellbeing integrated developments
 - 5.5. Broadband
 - 5.6. Food Banks
 - 5.7. Discretionary funding and match-funding with grants
 - 5.8. Review of Priorities
6. Action with DCC and Skills Agency Can improve skills and employment career advice to schools and links with SMEs through coordination with Jobcentres:-
7. Work with EHOD Partners including Skills Agency to enhance skills in Admin. Food Supply, Wholesale/Retail and Agriculture especially to counter Brexit damage
8. Work with Partners to support low-income residents into higher paid employment and raise skills, attainment and life chances.
9. Encourage Clinical Commissioning Group and County Council focus on poverty alleviation through coordination with the District Council
10. Work with partners to improve health outcomes for people on low incomes, including physical and mental health.
11. Apply rigour with transport licensing to improve rural and town access

Potential key areas of focus for the Council's own action going forward:

12. All relevant services and policies to be subject to "poverty proofing" by a report to Overview when each Service Plans and budget is being developed
13. Economic Development to prioritise Business support for Technology, Professional Services and Manufacturing businesses.
14. Economic Development to counter stereotypes of age in employment practises by suitable fact-based engagement with employers
15. Planning to be supportive in Planning applications for Technology, Professional Services and Manufacturing businesses.
16. Contract to AED or similar entity to crowdfund (and raise donations and legacies) and then administer an emergency help fund to help with catastrophic life events. Find grant funds for emergency bridging loans and signpost help
17. Specific EDDC local action integrated with volunteers to focus on key families based on the success of the Troubled Families Programme including creche, early years and childcare facilities; food clubs to improve nutrition; mums and dads clubs to improve parenting and homework and food facilities for children
18. A specific EDDC action research project to focus on disability and chronic ill health:
 - 18.1. Evaluation by Housing Department of disability affects in our social housing stock
 - 18.2. Research by Policy Planning Department on design standards which inform policies to address poverty amongst disabled people.
 - 18.3. Advisory help on home adaptations grants and methods for the disabled and elderly using Disabled facilities grants, Warm Home grants etc.
19. Mechanisms for mapping and enabling key volunteer agencies with committed 3-year funding support based on performance goals
20. Strengthening Community team action to build self-help among community volunteers
21. A Grant fund contributing to revenue funding of Foodbanks for the next 3 years

22. EDDC Community team to engage the Faith and Voluntary sector in an audit of what help exists in East Devon and plan how to help this sector can efficiently harmonise with statutory bodies
23. Support residents to access benefits and respond to the impacts of welfare reform and Brexit.
24. Work with voluntary sector partners to provide debt advice and financial advice - For example UC claimants are able to access the Jobcentre Plus Flexible Support Fund (FSF)—a discretionary fund, controlled by Work Coaches—to cover the up-front costs of childcare, if these would otherwise present a barrier to work. Universal Credit claimants are required to pay for childcare upfront, and claim the money back from DWP. Initial costs, including deposits, can run to hundreds of pounds: costs that may be prohibitive for people with no savings or immediate income. The Flexible Support Fund can be used to meet these costs.
25. Promote and signpost residents to sources of affordable finance.
26. Support residents in fuel and water poverty to reduce their energy and water bills.
27. Continue to promote the Living Wage to employers through Economic Development.
28. Work with local businesses to identify ways that they might use their skills, capacity and resources to support the achievement of shared objectives around poverty and disadvantage.
29. Continue to promote digital access for residents on low incomes with a PC loan fund.
30. Continue to promote volunteering as a means to develop skills and employability and build communities.
31. Promote community pride and cohesion through supporting a range of community events and celebrations to raise funds to alleviate immediate poverty.
32. Construct new Council homes, working with social landlords and developers to deliver more affordable homes.
33. Provide housing, employment and skills support for homeless people.
34. Deliver a range of projects to support groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty, including women, children and substance abuser.