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All Members

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27 October 2023

Dear Member

Full Council – 1 November 2023

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the next meeting of the **Council**, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda. No. Item 8

To add to your agenda for the meeting on **1 November 2023**.

8 **Reports** (*Pages 3 - 20*)

Minutes, Environment PDG, 10 October 2023
Minutes, Community PDG, 24 October 2023
Minutes, Audit Committee, 24 October 2023

Yours sincerely

Sarah Lees
Democratic Services Officer & PA to the Chairman of the Council

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**
held on 10 October 2023 at 5.30 pm

Present

Councillors

M Fletcher (Chairman)
B Fish (Vice Chairman), C Adcock, C Harrower,
B Holdman, L Knight, J Poynton, S Robinson and
G Westcott

Councillors on Line

Cllrs. E Buczkowski, J. Buczkowski, N. Bradshaw,
A Glover, L Taylor & D Wulff.

Apologies

Councillor(s)

G Czapiewski

Also Present

Councillor(s)

J Wright and R Gilmour

Present

Officer(s):

Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and
Climate Change), Jason Ball (Climate and Sustainability
Specialist), Darren Beer (Operations Manager for Street
Scene), David Parker (Democratic Services & Policy
Research Officer) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services
Officer)

23 **Apologies and substitute Members (0:03:04)**

Apologies were received from Cllr G Czapiewski who was substituted by Cllr Lloyd Knight.

24 **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct (0:03:38)**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations of interest where appropriate.

None were declared.

25 **Public Question Time (0:03:56)**

There were no Questions from members of the Public

26 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting (0:04:17)**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on Tuesday 15 August 2023, were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

27 **Chairman's Announcements (0:04:48)**

The Chairman encouraged all Councillors to share any ideas for this Policy Development Group to address/look into where possible.

28 **Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change Update (0:5:22)**

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change addressed the PDG. She thought that the Council were making good progress. Mid Devon were working with the Devon Energy Planning Group, were bidding for Green Grants and making available more Electric Vehicle Charging points. There was ongoing engagement and support with local groups.

The Climate and Environmental Sustainability Statements Guidance* was brought to the meeting and was ready to be recommended to the Cabinet for adoption.

With regard to the costs of reaching Net Zero, the value for money provided by our officer capacity was very high and the aspirations of the Council's Climate Action Plan were also very high and could only be met by the Council working in partnership to attract external partnership for finance.

Consideration was given to:

- Scope 3 Emission Factors take inflation into account but the figures were an estimate / difficult to be accurate. The Council should identify areas of spend where they can achieve savings, engage with major suppliers and ask them what they were doing to reduce their carbon footprint and set them goals.
- Scope 1 – static fuel use in buildings and transport would start to fall as the Council had decarbonised two Leisure Centres.
- The Climate and Sustainability Officer was happy to support all teams in all Policy Development Groups, he already tried to bring the Environmental good news to the Environment PDG but would be very happy to support e.g. the Homes Strategy and the Community PDG through Leisure.
- Devon County Council was about to issue its consultation with Town and Parish Councils with regard to £7m of Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding about where they want Electric Vehicle Chargers. There were three areas of focus: (i) Street Level, (ii) Amenity or Community Car Parks, and (iii) Strategic Hubs (high volume turnover sites). Councillors should try to assist their Towns and Parishes to get as much of the LEVI funding as was possible spent within Mid Devon.
- Consideration could be given to village halls that have solar panels to offer EV charging, so that the energy used for the EV charging was renewable and generated locally.
- The Z-Pod installations in Cullompton were all net-zero with solar panels, electric heating, cooling and no gas.
- Councillor B Fish was asked to cross check the Net Zero Advisory Group membership against the membership of all PDG's, in order to get Climate Change awareness across the Council.
- The State of the District debate in March would include a discussion on Net Zero and the Council were about to consult with Towns and Parishes on the subjects that they wanted included in the debate.
- Consideration was given to what the Council could do about climate change without putting the burden on the tax payer. Climate change was coming

through in all reports in that every report had to consider climate change and be signed off. Councillors asked whether the climate change impact should move to the front of reports for Members of the public to see how the Council were tracking against objectives.

- What could the Council do to get climate and sustainability into planning and development? The Environment PDG did not have the remit for such matters but all the Members could attend the Planning Policy Advisory Group. It was on the Cabinet Member for Climate Change's radar to make Climate and Sustainability a part of planning and development.
- Members of the PDG commented that it would be helpful to know with Anaerobic Digesters what their carbon emissions were and what carbon emissions they save. The Climate and Sustainability Officer said that he was unable to obtain such information (each enterprise is different).
- The Council could reach out to Town and Parish Councils to get their local perspective about climate change.
- EV charging points and solar panels could be a revenue driver for the Council.
- Silverton Parish Council had been investigating EV Charging Points and were looking at the community hosting its own charging points. Once the pricing was available the information would be fed back in to the Environment PDG.

The report was **NOTED**.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that the "Guidance: climate and environmental sustainability statements" for officers and Members regarding climate and sustainability statements be adopted. The guidance related to business cases and committee reports and should be used and maintained to help shape decisions and delivery in line with policy and statutory obligations.
(Proposed by the Chairman.)

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes.

29 **MDDC draft Budget 2024 - 2025 - First Review (0:42:11)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which covered the period 2024/25 to 2028/29 for the General Fund (GF) and considered initial savings options.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- This was a 5 year plan with figures in relation to years 2 – 4 being best guesses.
- Inflation was likely to continue.
- The previous budget gap for 2024/25 of £1.5m had now increased to £2.1m partly as a result of stubborn inflation and the Government's indicative increase in planning fees not transpiring.
- Assumptions had been made in terms of not using any reserves and the need to revise the capital programme.

The Group considered the savings options outlined in Appendix 2 and discussion took place regarding:

- The Council was not intending to achieve savings by imposing compulsory redundancies but rather it would consider not replacing people automatically when they left and undertake a thorough review of the risks involved in each case.
- What the green, amber and red risk categories meant. –
GREEN : – a saving which did not significantly impact upon service delivery.
AMBER: - savings would impact on service delivery but that impact would be manageable.
RED: - savings would impact upon service delivery and would require changes to the levels of services offered.
- How staff sickness could best be managed and what the Council was already doing regarding this.
- The savings did not add up to £2.1m and there would need to be a further round of cuts.

The shortfall covered two aspects;

- £1m in year savings targets – a £400,000 staffing saving and £625k to avoid drawing from General Reserves. Hopeful if not confident that the Council would be able to absorb this - recommendations will be fed back to the Cabinet.
- £1m inflationary pressure across pay, utilities, supplies and services.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

- i. Pool Cars be removed.
- ii. The Cross Council Shared Saving Scheme be continued and that the savings reflect the figure likely to be received rather than the prudent previous budget forecast.
- iii. Garden Waste Fees be increased in line or just above inflation. (Councillor B Holdman abstained from this vote).
- iv. Increase trade waste charges above 3% base.
- v. Staff – de-scoping or down-sizing activity, should turnover allow for natural wastage approach, managing workforce resource effectively through targeted vacancy and turnover management.
- vi. Reduction in Agency spend.
- vii. Reduction in cost of sickness.
- viii. The Council's own Business Rates – possibility of reduction following appeals.
- ix. Energy costs – possible movement depending on new unit price. There was a need to reduce usage.
- x. Fuel costs – possible movement depending on how prices move.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes.

30 **Himalayan Balsam (01:34:10)**

Concern had been raised in Oakford Parish, as the sewage treatment plant there was full of this invasive species. It grew up to 2 – 3m high and then the seed pods explode, covering an area of seven square metres and continuing down the water courses. The only way to stop it was to cut it before its seeds disperse. Consideration was given to:

- Environment Agency and South West Water not responding
- Upper Culm had a very good Himalayan Balsam Action Group where volunteers cut the weed down.
- Cullompton being flooded because the leats and streams were clogged with Himalayan Balsam and other invasive species.
- Lobbying Regional Director of the Environment Agency to see whether they had a strategy to clear Himalayan Balsam.
- Service Level Agreements with Voluntary Groups that receive funding from Mid Devon District Council.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change would work with Cllr R Gilmour to raise this matter with the Environment Agency and perhaps also bring in Lucy Jefferson the Co-ordinator from Connecting the Culm. The member also suggested that other members of this PDG also attend the Sustainable Tiverton AGM which would be taking place soon.

The Chairman agreed to take forward an action to invite the Environment Agency and relevant authorities to appear before this Group.

31 **Work Programme (01:52:40)**

It was mentioned that tours of the Exeter Energy from Waste Centre could be arranged and that dates were available from April for all Members.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Services asked for coffee pod recycling and the recycling of pots and pans to be added to the work plan.

The Environment PDG Chairman would liaise with Planning Policy Advisory Group relating to Housing Energy Efficiency.

The Bereavement Services Fees and Charges item would be broadened more widely to Fees and Charges.

Note: * Work Programme previously circulated

(The meeting ended at 7.29 pm)

CHAIRMAN

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**
held on 24 October 2023 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors B Holdman (Chairman), D Broom,
G Cochran, A Cuddy, C Harrower,
S Robinson and J Cairney

Apologies

Councillor(s) C Connor

Also Present Councillor(s)

J Buczkowski, G Czapiewski, G DuChesne, R Gilmour,
J Lock, D Wulff

**Also Present
Councillor(s)
online** E Buczkowski, A Glover, H Tuffin

Also Present Officer(s):

Dean Emery (Corporate Manager for Revenues, Benefits and Recovery), Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and Climate Change), Lisa Lewis (Corporate Manager for Business Transformation and Customer Engagement), Kelly Lee (Leisure Business Manager), Haley Walker (Leisure Business Manager), Angie Howell (Democratic Services Officer) and David Parker (Democratic Services & Policy Research Officer)

23 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (00:06:06)**

Apologies were received from Cllr C Connor - Cllr Jim Cairney attended as her substitute.

24 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00:06:27)**

There were no members of the public present.

25 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00:06:39)**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations of interest where appropriate.

There were no declarations of interest.

26 **MEETING MANAGEMENT (00:07:15)**

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman that Cllr J Cairney be elected as Vice-Chairman for this meeting only.

This was **AGREED**.

27 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00:08:09)**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 August 2023 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

28 **CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS (00:08:37)**

The Chairman made the following announcements:-

- Due to the success of the Members visiting the three Mid Devon Leisure Centres we would look to arrange another in the new year.
- Mid Devon Leisure were runners up, out of 27 academies, in the STAR Swim Academy of the Year. The award reflected how the Leisure Service implemented innovative learn to swim strategies that have expanded the opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to learn a key life skill. The judges also looked at how best practices in swimming teaching through training, education and career development were delivered.
- The Open Day on 14 November 2023 held at each Leisure Centre was a great success with 45 new members joining on the day.
- Reminded Members that the meeting must finish by 4.30pm today due to Audit Committee starting at 5pm.

29 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (GENERAL FUND) (00:10:32)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which covered the period 2024/25 to 2028/29 for the General Fund (GF) and considered initial savings options.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- This was a 5 year plan with figures in relation to years 2 – 4 being best guesses.
- The previous budget gap for 2024/25 of £1.5m had now increased to over £2m partly as a result of stubborn inflation and the Government's indicative increase in planning fees not transpiring.
- Assumptions had been made in terms of not using any reserves and the need to revise the capital programme.

The Group considered the savings options outlined in Appendix 2 and discussion took place regarding:-

- The Council was not intending to achieve savings by imposing compulsory redundancies but rather it would consider not replacing people automatically when they left and would undertake a thorough review of the risks involved in each case.
- What the green, amber and red risk categories meant. –
GREEN : – a saving which did not significantly impact upon service delivery.
AMBER: - savings would impact on service delivery but that impact would be manageable.
RED: - savings would impact upon service delivery and would require changes to the levels of services offered.
- How staff sickness could best be managed and what the Council was already doing regarding this.
- The savings did not add up to £2.1m and there would need to be a further round of cuts.

The shortfall covered two aspects;

- £1m in year savings targets – a £400,000 staffing saving and £625k to avoid drawing from General Reserves.
- Hopeful if not confident that the Council would be able to absorb this - recommendations would be fed back to the Cabinet.
- £1m inflationary pressure across pay, utilities and supplies and services.

Consideration was given to:

- The impact on planning advice and planning applications.
- Training and development for staff to encourage staff retention.
- Setting up a Community PDG working group to invite organisations to present a business case for grant support.
- The costs of agency staff particularly in Waste and how this can be reduced by increasing the establishment budget to reduce reliance on agency support.
- Energy costs and where savings can be made to Leisure Centres.
- Fuel saving costs with introduction of electric vehicles.
- Staff savings and the welfare of staff when posts were not replaced.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet:-

- Items rag rated as green were APPROVED.
- Items rag rated as amber were further broken down into:-
 - a) Community grants were APPROVED with Cllr B Holdman and Cllr D Broom abstaining.
 - b) All other items were APPROVED with Cllr C Harrower and Cllr S Robinson abstaining.
- Items rag rated as red were APPROVED

It was **NOTED** that there could be possible cost reductions in relation to Business Rates, energy costs and fuel costs during 2024/25

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision

By undertaking an annual review of the MTFP the Council could ensure that its Corporate Plan priorities were affordable. The implications of the revised budget gap were set out within the paper. Many areas require greater clarity, particularly around national funding and the possibility of additional funding to offset the implications of the Cost of Living Crisis. Therefore a number of key assumptions underpinned the reported position, which would be refined as greater clarity was received through the budget setting process.

Notes

- (i) * Report previously circulated.
- (ii) Cllr S Robinson declared an interest.

30 **LEISURE POLICY AND PRICING STRATEGY (01:01:54)**

The Chairman indicated that discussion with regard to the next item, may require the Committee to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 12 12.02(d) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution. This decision may be required because consideration of this matter in public may disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Committee would need to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the next item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

(Proposed by the Chairman)

The Corporate Manager for Council Tax, Business Rate, Benefits, Corporate Recovery, Planning and Leisure outlined the report of the Leisure Policy and Pricing Strategy and informed the Community Policy Development Group of proposals to change the Leisure fees and charges strategy and recommended that the Community PDG recommends that Cabinet approve the strategy to change fees and charges as proposed in this report.

Having returned to the open session the Community Policy Development Group:-

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that the strategy to change fees and charges as proposed in the report be approved.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

31 **PUBLIC ACCESS TO PHOENIX HOUSE (PART B - 00:00:39)**

The Corporate Manager for Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement updated the Members as follows:-

- A working group was set up to address public access to Phoenix House for vulnerable residents.
- The working group met on 18 September to look at the impact of the reduced opening hours for vulnerable residents.
- Cllr Connor also requested to join the working group – which was agreed by all Members present.
- The Terms of Reference had been agreed with specific reference made to homeless people accessing services when the building was closed.
- The provision of telephone numbers and an intercom were also being looked into – however after speaking to the Property Services Manager there was an agreement to delay this for the moment as the door security system for the building was also currently being looked into.
- Customer Surveys would be sent out to vulnerable customers or residents to identify any issues they may have – this would also include partner agencies such as CHAT, Citizens Advice Bureau to look at the impact the opening times of Phoenix House had on them when sign posting people to us.
- The next meeting of the working group would take place in November 2023 where work on the survey would begin with the hope that by Christmas a survey would be sent out.
- The next update to be presented to Community PDG would be on 23 January 2024.

32 **WORK PROGRAMME (PART B 00:05:13)**

The Chairman wished to add the following items to the Community PDG Work Programme:-

- To invite the local Police to give the Community PDG an update on anti-social behaviour.
- To invite Devon Energy Partnership to the next meeting on 5 December 2023 to give a briefing and advice to the Community PDG on how to help residents during the winter and where to signpost them for advice and support.

The group **AGREED** to add both items to the Work Programme.

(The meeting ended at 4.09 pm)

CHAIRMAN

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **AUDIT COMMITTEE** held on 24 October 2023 at 5.00 pm

Present

Councillors

L G J Kennedy (Chairman)
E Buczkowski, G Duchesne, B Holdman,
L Knight (Vice Chairman), R Roberts and
S Robinson

Apology

Councillor

C Connor

Also Present

Online

J Downes

Also Present

Councillors

D Broom, J Buczkowski and D Wulff

Also Present

Officers

Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and Climate Change), Angie Howell (Democratic Services Officer) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer)

33. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr C Connor who was substituted by Cllr B Holdman.

34. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Mr Nick Quinn

Regarding Agenda Item 8 – Grant Thornton Audit Findings for 2021/2022.

On page 272 of your papers, that is Appendix D of these Audit findings, Grant Thornton state that they are charging the Council an extra £17,500 to cover: *“Additional procedures in respect of the impact of the 3 Rivers Developments Ltd qualified opinion on the Council financial statements”*.

Will the Council bear this additional cost, or will the £17,500 be recharged to 3 Rivers and added to their losses?

It was confirmed that this was a Council cost which had been incurred as a result of providing an audit opinion by Grant Thornton. It would not be charged to 3 Rivers.

35. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

No interests were declared under this item.

36. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 August 2023 were confirmed as a true and accurate record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

37. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

38. DAP INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT (00:09:00)

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Devon Audit Partnership providing a progress update report for the year to date.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) continued to provide a 'Reasonable Assurance' opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's internal control framework.
- Regarding the Waste and Recycling audit it was confirmed that there had been a reduction in residual waste and that the Council were exceeding their target.
- The steps being taken to recover unpaid Council Tax were comparable to those undertaken by other local authorities.
- The Travel and Subsistence policy needed to be reviewed and updated.
- Regarding 'Performance Management', there were opportunities to improve the framework which was recognised by the Council and a review paper had been drawn up by the officer with responsibility for that area.
- The number of internal audit 'High' priority recommendations had reduced to two and the number of 'Medium' recommendations had reduced to 18. A lot of work had been undertaken by officers to reduce these numbers.
- A review had been undertaken of the single person's discount and some error had been identified.
- A review of the Council's cyber security arrangements would be undertaken in the near future.

Consideration was given to:

- A request was made that the Committee receive quarterly updates from now on in relation to the debtor's position and whilst specific details could not be provided, general trends could be reported upon.
- Some work needed to be undertaken to ensure all officers, where necessary, had provided valid insurance certificates when claiming for mileage. The IT system in relation to this area was being reviewed and updated to take in account a number of changes, for example, in relation to carbon emissions and climate change impacts.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

39. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2021/22 (00:23:00)

It was requested, and subsequently **AGREED**, that this item and Grant Thornton's Audit Findings Report for 2021/2022 be taken as one item.

The Committee had before it the final Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement for 2021/2022.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- The accounts had been updated since January 2023 when they were 'provisionally' approved by the Committee to reflect changes in relation to the Pension Liability and 3 Rivers.
- There had also been a need to review the 'going concern' statement as at March 2022.

Grant Thornton provided the following highlights from their audit:

- An indicative findings report had been presented to the Committee in January 2023 which had found no material errors, however, at the time it had been clear that they were still waiting for the 3 Rivers audit and a re-running of the figures had been needed as a result of the Pension Liability.
- A 3 Rivers opinion issued in May 2023 had included a qualification in relation to uncertainty around land and progress. It had been wholly appropriate to reflect those observations properly within the accounts.
- A key issue had been around 'going concern' both as a single entity and as a set of group accounts.
- Grant Thornton had been happy with the conclusions made by the auditors of 3 Rivers in relation to this.
- There had been an important update to the 'post balance sheet event' note at number 59 which had noted the full Council's decision in September 2023 to 'soft close' 3 Rivers.
- An opinion on the 2021/2022 accounts would be issued imminently which would be unqualified but which would include an 'emphasis of matter'.
- Audit fees had increased as a result of having to undertake wider consultation.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Where the Council stood in relation to 'Corporate Risk'. It was explained that income streams were slowly being recovered, however, there were still some serious concerns in relation to homelessness, a continuing need to avoid B&B costs and funding in relation to transport infrastructure being unforthcoming.
- A Business Continuity event would be held in the near future to deliberately test some key systems to ascertain whether any weaknesses existed and what lessons could be learnt in the event of a complete outage. Any concerns would be fed back to this Committee.

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement for 2021/2022 be approved and the Letter of Representation be signed by the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Note: * Report previously circulated.

40. **GRANT THORNTON AUDIT FINDINGS FOR 2021/2022 (00:23:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from Grant Thornton providing their findings having audited the Councils Statement of Accounts for 2021/2022.

Discussion in relation to this report had taken place under the previous item.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

41. **GRANT THORNTON PROGRESS UPDATE FOR 2022/2023 (00:54:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from Grant Thornton providing a progress update on work undertaken in the year to date regarding the 2022/2023 audit.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- This would be Peter Barber's last Audit Committee, he would be handing over to Julie Masci for future meetings. The Committee wished him well.
- Grant Thornton had commenced their audit of the 2022/2023 accounts in July and the audit and substantive testing was going well. They were focussing exclusively on a single entity audit.
- There was some way to go yet before reaching an 'opinion'.
- As at 31/3/23 the future of 3 Rivers was confirmed as being very different to that 12 months previously.
- Only one IT query was outstanding, however, there had been some resource issues within that team.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

42. **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (01:00:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, the items identified in the work programme for the next meeting. It was also requested that the following come to a future meeting of the Committee:

- An update on the Travel and Subsistence Policy in March 2024.
- Fully costed reports in relation to Bin-It 123 and Net Zero to the January 2024 meeting to provide information as what these initiatives were costing the residents of Mid Devon. It was explained that the Environment PDG received regular monitoring reports in relation to costs but the Audit Committee had a role to play in checking and challenging this information.
- An update in relation to appointing an 'Independent Member' to the Audit Committee to be provided to the next meeting.

- If appropriate, an introduction to Bishop Fleming (the Council's future auditors) at the next meeting.

(The meeting ended at 6.17 pm)

CHAIRMAN

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