

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**
held on 17 November 2020 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors

Mrs C P Daw (Chairman)
Mrs E M Andrews, Mrs C Collis, E J Berry,
W Burke, L J Cruwys, J M Downes,
B Holdman and Mrs M E Squires

Also Present

Councillor(s)

R M Deed, R J Dolley, R Evans, D J Knowles,
Ms E J Wainwright and B G J Warren

Also Present

Officer(s):

Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Jill May (Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation), Andrew Busby (Group Manager for Corporate Property and Commercial Assets), Lisa Lewis (Group Manager for Business Transformation and Customer Engagement), Catherine Yandle (Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security), Sally Gabriel (Member Services Manager) and Carole Oliphant (Member Services Officer)

38 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (0.03.19)**

There were no apologies or substitute members

39 **REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL (0.03.28)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the *Remote Meetings Protocol.

Note: *Remote Meetings Protocol previously circulated and attached to the minutes

40 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (0.03.39)**

Members were reminded of the requirement to make declarations where appropriate

41 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0.04.01)**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd September 2020 were approved as a correct record

42 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0.04.23)**

There were no questions asked by members of the public present.

43 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (0.04.32)**

The Chairman reminded the Group of a special meeting on 8th December 2020 and that she had recently attended a Chairmans Skills training session.

44 **DRAFT BUDGET (0.05.17)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a *report of the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting the initial draft 2021/2022 Budget and options available in order for the Council to set a balanced budget and agree a future strategy for further budget reductions for 2022/23 onwards.

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that this was the first iteration of the General Fund Budget and that it was set against very challenging times. He explained that the Council was looking at a budget gap of £3m and that the draft budget had been based on assumptions around income flows and Government funding. He informed Members that the Medium Term Financial Plan was due to go to the Cabinet on 3rd December 2020.

He explained the main income flows were council tax and business rates receipts but these were not expected to return to pre Covid levels for at least 12 months.

He explained that the Council was currently contacting the Town and Parish Council's with a request that they calculate their precept levels.

In response to a question asked about the viability of District Councils due to decreasing levels of funding from Central Government he stated that every council of every size was lobbying the Government for additional funding. He explained that the Council was lobbying the district MPs for additional funding, not because the Authority was failing but funding had been reduced in real terms by 50% over the last decade and that there was now a threat that services could be affected.

The Leader stated that there had been only one major failure of a Council in recent times but that there were many Authorities who were now in dire financial straits. That being said he did not feel that the Government was looking to introduce unitary councils at this point in time and that the white paper on local government reform had been put on the back burner for now.

In response to a question asked about the leisure centres the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that the Council had dealt proactively with it's customer base and that they would reopen as soon as national guidance allowed. He stated that the Council could claim back 75% of lost income whilst the centres were closed through the Governments Income Support Scheme and that they had made use of the furlough scheme.

45 **FINANCIAL MONITORING (0.36.06)**

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) provided the meeting with a verbal report with regard to income and expenditure to date. He stated that September reporting

showed a forecast deficit of £50k as more details had been received on income streams from the Government re Covid. He stated that this was very close to budget.

He explained that the Council had made it's first claim of £600k from the Governments Income Support Scheme to cover 75% of the lost income from the leisure centres, car parks and building control.

46 **USE OF CCTV POLICY AND GUIDANCE (0.42.36)**

The Group had before it a *report of the Group Manager for Corporate Property and Commercial Assets setting out the CCTV Code of Practice, the CCTV Policy and the Action Plan.

The officer outlined the contents of the report and explained that the Tiverton CCTV system was funded, in part, by financial contributions from Tiverton Town Council and that the other funding came from operational budgets.

He explained that there were ongoing financial pressures which were detailed in the action plan and that a capital bid was ongoing with the Police Commissioner to address shortfalls with the Tiverton Town CCTV system.

Consideration was given to:

- Members requests that CCTV cameras be installed in the stairwells of the multi storey car park;
- Mobile cameras could only be installed if there was a pressing need and their deployment would be subject to a risk assessment which included a specific set of criteria;
- The single point of contact (SPOC) and the Governance Manager would complete a risk assessment before mobile cameras could be deployed;
- The CCTV camera's in the multi storey car park were at end of life and did not produce good quality pictures and would be replaced with high quality alternatives;
- The code of practice did not include the automatic use of body cams for District Officers and that any proposed use of these would need a data protection impact assessment. The ICO guidance stated that use of any cameras had to be proportionate and reasonable. This was especially hard to justify if they were fitted with an audio recording facility.

Therefore it was **RECOMMENDED** to the Cabinet that it recommends to Council that:

- a) The CCTV Code of Practice be adopted; and
- b) The CCTV Policy be adopted; and
- c) The CCTV Action Plan be adopted.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the Decision – To ensure that the principles, purposes, operation and management adopted by the main public space CCTV system is mirrored across the whole of MDDC's service delivery operational area's.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

47 **WORKING GROUP - COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (INCLUDING ACTION PLAN) (1.09.41)**

The Group had before it a *working group proposal form which proposed to establish a small working group to look at the Communications and Engagement Strategy before it was formally presented to the PDG.

The Chairman explained that the proposal had originally been suggested by the previous chairman and that she was now proposing the creation of the working group.

Consideration was given to:

- A key priority in the Corporate Plan was to 'promote community involvement in Council activity'. The Council had a duty to consult and engage effectively with residents, partners, employees and other stakeholders when deciding about future changes to services and new developments.
- The Council must be encouraging two way communication. A review of the strategy would consider the progress made over the last two years and any further initiatives needed to increase community engagement.
- A review would also help pick up the request in Motion 564 brought to the Council meeting on 28 October which asked that the Community PDG identify and discuss approaches to reaching hard-to-reach communities in Mid Devon.
- Cllr Wainwright would also like to be involved as this fitted in with some of the Climate Change work she was doing, and that she also had experience of community engagement in her day job.

The Group **AGREED** to set up the Working Group.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

The Membership of the Working Group was agreed as: Cllrs Mrs E Andrews, E J Berry and B Holdman. Cllr Ms E Wainwright would be invited to contribute to the Working Group and Cllr Mrs C P Daw would observe.

Reason for the Decision – To consider new and innovative ideas for engaging residents in the development of services and informing customers and stakeholders on the work of the Council.

Note: *proposal form previously circulated and attached to the minutes

48 **PERFORMANCE AND RISK (1.15.13)**

The Group had before it a *report of the Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security providing updated information on the performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for 2020-21.

The officer outlined the contents of the report stating that the report detailed new performance measures which were to be included in the Corporate Plan

Performance Framework and offered Members the opportunity to express their views on the proposals.

Consideration was given to:

- The ongoing measures to look at complaints which included the recommendations from the Scrutiny Working Group and the Customer Care Policy would be reviewed in 2021 so the measures could be reviewed.

It was therefore **RECOMMENDED** to the Cabinet that:

- The Corporate Plan Performance Framework be approved

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the Decision – To ensure that the Corporate Plan priorities and targets are effectively monitored so that key business risks can be mitigated effectively

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

49 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (1.23.00)**

There were no items identified.

(The meeting ended at 3.39 pm)

CHAIRMAN