

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**
held on 2 November 2021 at 5.30 pm

Present

Councillors

J Wright (Chairman)
E J Berry, D R Coren, Miss J Norton,
R F Radford, R L Stanley and B G J Warren

Apologies

Councillor(s)

W Burke

Also Present

Councillor(s)

L D Taylor, S J Clist, Mrs C P Daw, R M Deed, R Evans,
Mrs E J Lloyd, C R Slade and R J Dolley

Also Present

Officer(s):

Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Jill May (Director of Business Improvement and Operations), Andrew Busby (Corporate Manager for Property, Leisure and Climate Change), Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Darren Beer (Operations Manager for Street Scene), Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance), Jason Ball (Climate and Sustainability Specialist), Deborah Sharpley (Solicitor), Philip Langdon (Solicitor), Clare Robathan (Policy and Research Officer) and Carole Oliphant (Member Services Officer)

28 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (0.02.55)**

Apologies were received from Cllr W Burke who was substituted by Cllr R J Dolley and Cllr L Taylor who attended via ZOOM.

29 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (0.03.23)**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations when appropriate.

30 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0.03.43)**

There were no members of the public present.

31 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0.04.05)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th September 2021 were agreed as a true record and were **SIGNED** by the Chairman

32 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (0.04.40)**

The Chairman announced that the MDDC Litter Strategy would come before the Group in January after further amendments had been made.

33 **CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (0.05.20)**

The Cabinet Member for the Environment and Climate Change gave an update on his portfolio and stated that he was pleased to announce that all waste collection rounds had been completed and continued to stay on track.

He stated that the 3 weekly bin trial was ongoing and that no decisions had been made on rolling this out across the district as analysis was required on the success of the trial.

He confirmed that the Litter Strategy would be further developed with input from the PDG.

In response to questions he confirmed that the Contracted Out Enforcement report would be presented to the PDG at the January meeting and that the PSPO signs would start to be put up this week by the Building Maintenance Team.

34 **CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORT (0.09.52)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the *Climate and Sustainability report from the Climate and Sustainability Specialist.

The Officer outlined the highlights of the Action Plan which included:

- Costings had been included and there was a further update on costs this month
- Over 600 trees had been planted on MDDC owned land
- A Community Orchard would be planted in December
- In talks with the Council's energy supplier to move to 100% renewable energy
- Bidding was underway for additional funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme
- The Council's CO2 emissions had dropped from 20372 (tCO2-e) to 19122 (tCO2-e)

Consideration was given to:

- Increasing collections of pots and pans
- The membership of the project board for hydro-electric power
- The electricity network capacity ability to receive power from hydro-electric power
- Farmers not receiving funding for keeping woodland
- The timeframes for offsetting carbon through tree planting
- Digital connectivity in rural areas
- How the community was being supported with the Council's climate change ambitions

Note: *Report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

35 **PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER - HEMYOCK (0.57.23)**

The Group had before it a *report from the Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces providing a proposed variation to the Mid Devon (Public Spaces Protection)(Dog Control) Order (PSPO) 2021 adding two additional locations.

The Officer explained the PSPO had been sealed on 7th October 2021 and the variation was to add two additional locations in Hemyock.

Therefore the PDG **RESOLVED** that the Cabinet:

Authorise for consultation on the proposed variation order to the PSPO which would designate the locations in Hemyock, as shown on the plans attached to the report at Appendix A and Appendix C, as areas where dogs were only allowed if on leads.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision: To include the two areas in Hemyock known as Millhayes and Longmead within the Mid Devon (Public Spaces Protection)(Dog Control) Order 2021

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

36 **DRAFT BUDGET - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN - GENERAL FUN (GF), HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME (1.04.48)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the *Medium Term Financial Plan from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) which covered the period 2022/2023-2026/2027 and provided options available in order for the Council to set a balanced budget.

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that the report had made some assumptions before the budget was announced and that a better settlement had been confirmed with a 3.8% increase to Local Authorities. He explained that this increase was likely to be wiped out if significant pay increases were announced. The business rate relief announcements for hospitality and leisure sectors did not apply to the Council's own leisure centres as legislation would not allow it.

The Corporate Manager for Finance explained that the Council was currently looking at a budget shortfall of £1.06m in the next financial year and he asked Members for their feedback on the proposals in front of them. He confirmed that a public survey had been launched regarding the budget and he encouraged Members to promote this to their constituents.

Consideration was given to:

- Potential savings from the trial 3 weekly bin collections had not been included and no assumptions had been made at this stage that the Council would move to 3 weekly collections
- The Climate Change commitment was a best guess at what would be required and what potential grant funding was available

- The underspend on recruitment for the previous financial year was down to various factors including turn over and issues with recruiting staff
- The last claim for Covid relief had been submitted to Government
- The Government was winding down the new homes bonus and the last payments would be received in 2022-2023

Note: *Plan previously circulated and attached to the minutes

37 **WORK PLAN (1.42.31)**

The Group had before it the *Work Plan.

The Group agreed that the following item could be removed from the work plan:

- Fly Tipping by the MDDC Grounds Maintenance Teams

The Group agreed the following:

- Electricity Distribution Network capacity for increased renewable energy – A report to be brought to the January meeting by the Climate & Sustainability Specialist giving details of the current and future capacity of the electricity network to support various initiatives such as increased electric vehicle charging and installation of heat source pumps
- Recycling Issues – A report to be brought to the January meeting by the Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces providing details of what can currently be recycled, current recycling points, costs of providing more recycling teams to accommodate collections of pots and pans and what other authorities were able to recycle that MDDC could not and reasons for this
- Sustainable Farming – A report to be brought to the January meeting by the Climate & Sustainability Specialist providing general research. (The role of sustainable farming and land use in Mid Devon. Examine the potential to learn from, and connect with, what has been done thus far on sustainable farming in Devon by existing and recent networks, studies and trials (e.g. ELMS pilot schemes).

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

(The meeting ended at 7.45 pm)

CHAIRMAN