

**A MEETING** of the **MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton on Wednesday, 20 December 2023 at 6.00 pm

**ALL MEMBERS** of the **COUNCIL** are summoned to attend for the purposes of transacting the business specified in the Agenda which is set out below:

**[The next meeting is scheduled to be held in Tiverton on Wednesday, 21 February 2024 at 6.00 pm]**

**Please Note:** this meeting will take place at Phoenix House and members of the Public and Press are able to attend via Teams. If you are intending to attend in person please contact the committee clerk in advance, in order that numbers of people can be appropriately managed in physical meeting rooms.

**The meeting will be Hybrid and an audio recording made and published on the website after the meeting**

[To join the meeting online, CLICK HERE](#)

Meeting ID: 364 438 969 999

Passcode: Yawos5

**STEPHEN WALFORD**

Chief Executive

12 December 2023

**Members are reminded of the need to make declarations of interest prior to any discussion which may take place**

## AGENDA

### 1 **Apologies**

To receive any apologies for absence.

### 2 **Public Question Time**

To receive any questions relating to items on the agenda from members of the public and replies thereto.

### 3 **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct**

To record any interests on agenda matters.

### 4 **Minutes** (*Pages 9 - 30*)

To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2023 and the extraordinary meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November 2023.

### 5 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements which the Chairman of the Council may wish to make.

### 6 **Petitions**

To receive any petitions from members of the public.

### 7 **Notices of Motions**

#### **1. Motion 600 (Cllr James Buczkowski- 23rd October 2023)**

The Council has before it a **MOTION** submitted for the first time:

Motion on the Poverty Premium

This council notes that:

- Lower income households are affected by the 'poverty premium' by being forced to pay more than those on higher incomes to use essential services such as energy, credit and insurance.
- Expert assessment indicates 23% of Households in the Tiverton and Honiton Constituency and 20% of Households in the Central Devon Constituency are being penalised by this - costing local residents in the two constituencies £7.2 million a year to simply do the same basic things as those on higher incomes.
- On average the poverty premium costs those households affected around £400 a year: equivalent to three weeks of

food bills for a family of four.

- Lack of government action to properly regulate the commercial practices of national and international companies is the primary cause of these costs.
- Access to local banking and insurance services has significantly worsened in recent times.

This council:

- Opposes this as a penalty for lower income households which exacerbates the difficulties of those managing on low incomes.
- Condemns the government for doing too little to tackle the poverty premium.
- Believes that tackling the poverty premium is an essential part of levelling up.
- Calls upon the Government to act urgently to address these additional costs to our lowest income residents.

Therefore, the council resolves to:

- Endorse the Fair By Design Roadmap for tackling the Poverty Premium (Attached)
- Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the relevant government minister demanding:
  - Urgent action to tackle all forms of poverty premium including those imposed by energy suppliers, insurers, credit sources, banks and other bodies.
  - A broadening of the Financial Conduct Authority regulation of credit costs to cover those not currently covered.
  - A partnership between the relevant regulators to tackle all forms of poverty premium.
  - Beyond immediate action, an inquiry into the scourge of the poverty premium and a strategy to prevent recurrence.
- Take action locally by:
  - Taking a lead on creating a Vulnerable Citizens Strategy, which should include making sure people on low incomes don't end up paying more for their essential services and products.
  - Investigating local mechanisms for reducing the poverty premium caused by financial services, for example working with ATM providers and exploring local alternative Insurance, credit and banking options including the merits of a community mutual bank.
  - Working with other local agencies, community groups and charities to promote take up of available benefits and grants.
  - Encouraging local business to commit to Poverty Premium Proofing.

- Working with social and private landlords in Mid Devon to ensure every tenant is automatically placed on the cheapest energy tariff for their needs, minimising the cost of moving into a social housing home and that tenants are provided poverty premium avoidance advice and support.
- Working with other local employers to support low-income employees to avoid the Poverty Premium.
- Working across the Council to identify further measures it can take.

Further Reading and Supporting Information  
 Mapping the poverty premium in Britain (bristol.ac.uk)  
 Ending the poverty premium – Fair By Design

(In accordance with Procedure Rule 14.4, the Chairman of the Council has decided that this Motion (if moved and seconded) be dealt with at this meeting.)

## **2. Motion 601 (Cllr Gill Westcott- 6th November 2023)**

The Council has before it a **MOTION** submitted for the first time:

Motion: Conflict in Gaza: call for a ceasefire and community safety for religious and ethnic minorities in Mid Devon.

This Council

- Expresses deep sympathy for all those affected by the conflict in Israel and Palestine. To those in the Mid Devon area who have been affected by this conflict we offer our support in this difficult time.
- Calls on the UK government to do everything possible to encourage an immediate further release of all hostages and an immediate ceasefire to allow more medical aid and essential supplies into Gaza; and the possibility of a peaceful long term resolution.
- Believes Muslims, Jews and people of all faiths and none should feel safe and supported throughout the world and condemns the increase in antisemitic and Islamophobic violence and abuse in the UK.
- Condemns the use of all dehumanising language and calls on our communities to treat each other with respect and refrain from inflammatory terms to describe either the Palestinian or Israeli populations, especially in a time of crisis.

The Council resolves to fly the UN flag as a symbol of peace outside Phoenix House until a ceasefire is agreed.

(In accordance with Procedure Rule 14.4, the Chairman of the Council has decided that this Motion (if moved and seconded) be dealt with at this meeting.)

8 **Report of minutes held between 18th October to 5th December**  
(Pages 31 - 150)

To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

**1. Cabinet**

14<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
(Recommended to Council the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review Report 2023/2024, Tax Base Calculation 2024/2025 report and Schedule of Meetings)

**2. Scrutiny Committee**

30<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**3. Audit**

5<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**4. Community Policy Development Group**

28<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
5<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**5. Environment Policy Development Group**

7<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**6. Homes Policy Development Group**

21<sup>st</sup> November 2023

**7. Economy Policy PDG**

16<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**8. Planning Committee**

8<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023

**9. Licensing Committee**

1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

**10. Regulations Committee**

1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

## **11. Standards Committee**

18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 (Recommended to Council Motion 577)

9      **Treasury management Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2023/24**  
(Pages 151 - 160)

To receive a report on the Treasury management Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2023/24 from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer.

10     **Tax Base Calculation 2024/25** (Pages 161 - 166)

To receive a report on the Tax Base Calculation 2024/25 from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer.

11     **Member Allowance- Independent Remuneration Panel Report**  
(Pages 167 - 184)

To receive a report on Member Allowances report of the Independent Remuneration Panel from the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer.

12     **Schedule of Meetings** (Pages 185 - 186)

To receive a report on Schedule of meeting 2024/2025 from the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer.

13     **Questions in accordance with Procedure Rule 13**

To deal with any questions raised pursuant to Procedure Rule 13 not already dealt with during the relevant Committee reports.

14     **Special Urgency Decisions**

To note any decisions taken under Rule 16 (of the Constitution) Special Urgency.

15     **Questions to Cabinet Members**

To receive answers from the Cabinet Members to questions on their portfolios from other Members.

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16     **Members Business**

To receive any statements made and notice of future questions by Members.

Note: the time allowed for this item is limited to 15 minutes.

### **Meeting Information**

From 7 May 2021, the law requires all councils to hold formal meetings in person. The Council will enable all people to continue to participate in meetings via Teams.

If you want to ask a question or speak, email your full name to [Committee@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:Committee@middevon.gov.uk) by no later than 4pm on the day before the meeting. This will ensure that your name is on the list to speak and will help us ensure that you are not missed. Notification in this way will ensure the meeting runs as smoothly as possible.

Please note that a reasonable amount of hardcopies at the meeting will be available, however this is a limited number. If you are attending the meeting and would like a hardcopy of the agenda we encourage that you notify Democratic Services in advance of the meeting to ensure that a hardcopy is available. Otherwise, copies of the agenda can be found on our website.

If you would like a copy of the Agenda in another format (for example in large print) please contact Laura Woon on: [lwoon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:lwoon@middevon.gov.uk)

Public Wi-Fi is available in all meeting rooms.