

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

A MEETING of the **MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton on Wednesday, 31 August 2016 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 Thursday, 22 September 2016 at 6.00 pm]

STEPHEN WALFORD

Chief Executive

22 August 2016

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

Father Paul Rea, Priest in Charge of St James Catholic Church, Tiverton will lead the Council in prayer.

AGENDA

1 Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 Minutes (Pages 7 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Council on 29 June 2016 and the Extraordinary meeting of Council of the same day

The Council is reminded that only those Members present at the previous meeting should vote and, in doing so, should be influenced only by seeking to ensure that the minutes are an accurate record.

3 Chairman's Announcements

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

4 Public Question Time

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

5 Petitions

To receive any petitions from members of the public.

Notices of Motions

(1) Motion 526 (Councillors Mrs J Roach and Mrs N Woollatt – 13 July 2016)

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

The Council calls upon the Government to make fair transitional state pension arrangements for all women born on or after 6th April 1951, who have unfairly borne the burden of the increase to the State Pension Age (SPA) with lack of appropriate notification.

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

(2) Motion 527 (Councillors Mrs J B Binks, Mrs J Roach, Mrs N Woollatt and R Wright 21 July 2016)

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

“That this Council supports the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Scheme as detailed below and commits to working with the private sector to achieve placements.”

The Scheme has been developed since September 2015 having evolved from a number of earlier Gateway Scheme. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will refer people to the scheme, based on a criteria set by the UK. This currently prioritises those who cannot be supported effectively in their region of origin: women, children and young people at risk, people in severe need of medical care and survivors of torture and violence, refugees with legal and/or physical protection needs; refugees with medical needs or disabilities; persons at risk due to their sexual orientation or gender identity; and refugees with family links in resettlement countries. Most beneficiaries of the scheme will currently be living in Turkey, Jordan and Syria, though not all in designated refugee camps.

The UNHCR conducts a series of checks including a robust identification process prior to referring a refugee to the UK Scheme. Referrals are then further screened and considered by the Home Office for suitability for entry to the UK. The Home Office checks that they meet eligibility criteria and carries out medical and security checks.

By the time a UNHCR referred refugee arrives in the UK they have been through a thorough two stage vetting process to ensure government knows who is entering the country. This includes the taking of biometrics, documentary evidence and interviews.

What this means in practice – Local authorities can choose whether to participate in the scheme. Participating Local Authorities pass offers of suitable accommodation to the Home Office who then match available accommodation to a refugee family. Case information is exchanged including details of family make up, age and specific needs. The Local

Authority is asked to confirm whether it can accommodate and support those specific cases, having consulted key local agencies.

On accepting to arrange resettlement, local authorities then need to co-ordinate activity to ensure that provision and support needed under the terms of the scheme is available and ready to access. Refugees will be granted a five year humanitarian protection visa. Refugees will have a National Insurance number, access to UK benefits and the right to work. Housing benefit will fund accommodation costs initially.

We would expect that in the vast majority of cases refugees will want to stay in the area of the UK in which they have been resettled. However refugees are free to move elsewhere in the UK if they choose. If a refugee and their family wish to move to another part of the UK after their initial arrival, under the terms of the scheme, they will no longer be entitled to accommodation that had been allocated and they will no longer have resettlement support in the authority in which they were first placed. The scheme will continue to run alongside other resettlement schemes and other asylum procedures.

The scheme depends on finding suitable accommodation that is aligned to the current requirements of local housing authorities and that can be paid for initially through existing housing benefit allocation. The scheme sets out to resettle refugees not simply to shelter them. Accommodation must be suitable for families to live safe, independent and productive lives, just as local authorities would aim to provide for any homeless family.

Clearly housing costs and availability varies considerably across the County and whilst there is capacity in most parts of the County to support resettlement, this has to be aligned to affordable and available accommodation. Whilst some very rural parts of Devon may provide suitable accommodation opportunities, this needs to be balanced with meeting the anticipated wider needs of resettled refugees, i.e. access to schools, healthcare, cultural, religious and support networks as required alongside opportunities for employment.

The County Council recognises that expertise of supporting refugees (alongside those seeking asylum and dealing with wider migration issues) largely sits in other organisations, largely within the voluntary and community sector. It is therefore the intention to support a number of voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver much of the Syrian Scheme on behalf of the wider partnership. Refugee Support Devon will be playing a leading and significant part in this, but it is anticipated that other groups may also be able to take a role at a community level as resettlement develops across the County.

Until families have begun to be safely and successfully resettled, we do not intend to make public announcements with regards to the arrival date or destination of refugee families.

Accommodation continues to be difficult to source locally and there are concerns that commitments from local Housing Authorities (currently to resettle up to 70 families over the course of the scheme) will not be met as a result. We will soon commission a short film and publicity aimed at local current and potential landlords to highlight the Scheme and its opportunities for them and the wider community.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 14.4, the Chairman of the Council

has decided that this Motion (if moved and seconded) will be referred without discussion to the Decent and Affordable Homes Policy Development Group.

(3) Motion 528 (Councillor P J Heal - 10 August 2016)

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

That the council investigates the provision of an elasticated net system for use on recycling boxes to prevent light materials such as plastics and cardboard being blown out and causing litter.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 14.4, the Chairman of the Council has decided that this Motion (if moved and seconded) will be referred without discussion to the Managing the Environment Policy Development Group.

(4) Motion 529 (Councillor Mrs C A Collis - 17 August 2016)

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

That the Council investigates joint working with other Councils to recycle soft plastics such as polythene and film and to avoid putting these non-degradable items into landfill. This will benefit the environment for future generations and expand on the recycling that Mid Devon is already doing so well.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 14.4, the Chairman of the Council has decided that this Motion (if moved and seconded) will be referred without discussion to the Managing the Environment Policy Development Group.

7 Committee Reports (Pages 15 - 218)

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

- (1) Cabinet
 - 7 July 2016
 - 4 August 2016
- (2) Scrutiny Committee
 - 18 July
 - 19 August 2016 (to follow)
- (3) Audit Committee
 - 28 June 2016

- 15 July 2016
- (4) Managing the Environment Policy Development Group
 - 12 July 2016
- (5) Decent and Affordable Homes Policy Development Group
 - 19 July 2016
- (6) Economy Policy Development Group
 - 21 July 2016
- (7) Community Well-Being Policy Development Group
 - 8 July 2016
 - 2 August 2016
- (8) Planning Committee
 - 6 July 2016
 - 3 August 2016
- (9) Standards Committee
 - 20 July 2016
- (10) Licensing Committee
 - 18 July 2016
- (11) Regulatory Committee
 - 18 July 2016

8 **Questions**

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

9 **Independent Remuneration Panel Report - August 2016** *(Pages 219 - 242)*

To receive a report of the Head of Communities and Governance informing Members of recommendations from the review undertaken by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

10 **Questions to Cabinet Members**

Cabinet Members will answer questions from members on their Portfolios.

11 **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.

Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chairman. Any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairman or the Member Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.

Members of the public may also use other forms of social media to report on proceedings at this meeting.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to discussion. Lift access to the first floor of the building is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available. There is time set aside at the beginning of the meeting to allow the public to ask questions.

An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. If you require any further information, or

If you would like a copy of the Agenda in another format (for example in large print) please contact Sally Gabriel on:

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Public Wi-Fi is available in all meeting rooms.