

Prior to the meeting, at 5.30pm, the Chairman will host a reception for Members and will make presentations to Mrs Karen Sparkes (Systems Administrator, Culm Valley Sports Centre) and Mr Richard Burt (IT Business Analyst/Developer) who have both completed 25 years service with the District Council.

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

A MEETING of the **MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton on Wednesday, 26 October 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:

[An Extraordinary meeting of the Council is scheduled to be held in Tiverton on Thursday, 1 December 2016 at 6.00 pm]

The next ordinary meeting will take place on Wednesday 14 December 2016 at 6.00pm

STEPHEN WALFORD

Chief Executive

18 October 2016

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

Reverend Peter Daw, Bethel Pentecostal Church, Tiverton, will lead the Council in prayer.

AGENDA

1 **Apologies**

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 **Minutes** (*Pages 7 - 44*)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Council on 31 August 2016 and the Extraordinary Meeting of 22 September 2016.

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.

6 **Notices of Motions**

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

The following motion had been referred to the Homes Policy Development Group for consideration and report:

“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.

The Policy Development Group at its meeting on 13 September had considered the proposal and recommended that this Council supports the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Scheme and commits to working with the private sector to achieve placements. Following Council approval, the

details regarding the practicalities involved be brought back to the Homes Policy Development Group for further detailed consideration.

2) Motion 530 (Councillor R L Stanley and R J Chesterton- 19 September 2016)

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

In order to allow a new, productive future for certain agricultural buildings, permitted development rights have been extended allowing for their use to change without planning permission in certain instances. Procedures allow for local consultation but do not currently recognise a need to consult with Parish Councils. Local communities as represented through Parish Councils, are well placed to identify the likely impacts of proposals and could be identified as a required consultee. Impacts may be cumulative where there is a concentration of proposals within a small area and it is considered that the permitted development right could be worded to recognise cumulative effects. It is requested that Council write to the Minister to bring these issues to his attention and request that he amend the General Permitted Development Order accordingly.

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 Cabinet.

7 Committee Reports (Pages 45 - 228)

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

- (1) Cabinet
 - 29 September 2016
- (2) Scrutiny Committee
 - 12 September 2016
 - 10 October 2016
- (3) Audit Committee
 - 20 September 2016
- (4) Environment Policy Development Group
 - 6 September 2016
- (5) Homes Policy Development Group
 - 13 September 2016

- (6) Economy Policy Development Group
 - 15 September 2016
- (7) Community Policy Development Group
 - 27 September 2016
- (8) Planning Committee
 - 7 September 2016
 - 5 October 2016
- (9) Standards Committee
 - 6 October 2016

8 **Questions**

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

9 **Appointment of a new Monitoring Officer**

The Chief Executive will recommend that Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

10 **Appointment of Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer**

Following the recent restructure it is recommended that the Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation be appointed as Electoral Registration Officer (from 1 December 2016) and Returning Officer (from 2 December 2016) in accordance with Sections 8 and 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

Note: the 2017 Electoral Register will be published on 1 December 2016 and there is a possibility that there will be Parish Elections on 1 December 2016 in which the current Returning Officer is already involved).

11 **Six Monthly Briefing from the Leader**

The Leader, Councillor C J Eginton, will address the Council.

12 **Questions to Cabinet Members**

Cabinet Members will answer questions from Members on their Portfolios.

13 **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:

Tel: 01884 234229

Fax:

E-Mail: sgabriel@middevon.gov.uk

Public Wi-Fi is available in all meeting rooms.