

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on 18 March 2019 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors

F J Rosamond (Chairman)
Mrs H Bainbridge, Mrs F J Colthorpe,
Mrs C P Daw, R M Deed, Mrs G Doe,
Mrs S Griggs, T G Hughes, Mrs B M Hull,
F W Letch, T W Snow and N A Way

Also Present

Councillor(s)

R J Chesterton and R L Stanley

Also Present

Officer(s):

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Jill May (Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation), Adrian Welsh (Group Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery), Catherine Yandle (Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security), Tristan Peat (Forward Planning Team Leader), John Bodley-Scott (Economic Development Team Leader), Lisa Lewis (Group Manager for Business Transformation and Customer Engagement), Jane Lewis (Communications and Engagement Manager), Kevin Swift (Public Health Officer), Aarron Beecham (Forward Planning Assistant) and Carole Oliphant (Member Services Officer)

144 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (00.00.48)

There were no apologies

145 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00.01.00)

There were no declarations

146 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00.01.28)

There were no questions from members of the public present.

147 MEMBER FORUM (00.01.37)

There were no issues raised under this item.

148 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00.01.46)

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2019 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

149 **DECISIONS OF THE CABINET (00.04.15)**

The Committee **NOTED** that none of the decisions made by the Cabinet on 7th March 2019 had been called in.

150 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00.04.21)**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

151 **CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & ECONOMIC REGENERATION (00.04.33)**

The Committee received and **NOTED** a *report from the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Regeneration

He outlined the contents of the report and stated that it reflected the wide area of the teams remit which was far greater than 10 years ago.

Discussion took place regarding;

- Rural productivity and the effect of the issues with broadband provision across the district
- Provision of wireless broadband in the rural areas
- Congratulations to officers who ensured the Council entered the Local Government Chronicle awards
- The successful occupation of business units as they became available
- If there was a demand for new homes in the district and the conclusions of the Local Plan
- The initial conclusions of the Inspector after the examination hearings for the Local Plan review
- The success of the Building Control Partnership with North Devon Council

In response to Members questions he confirmed that he would send details of action taken by officers with regard to scaffolding in Cullompton High Street and he would seek to provide the figures for the Housing Delivery Test broken down into the 3 main towns.

Note: *Report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

152 **PERFORMANCE AND RISK (00.50.43)**

The Committee had before it and **NOTED** a *report from the Group Manager for Performance Governance and Data Security providing an update on performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for 2018-2019 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.

She outlined the contents of the report highlighting the targets against the corporate plan aims and providing information from queries raised.

There was a general discussion on waste collections and Members were encouraged to get residents to report any issues to Street Scene so that they could be resolved.

Members discussed the formatting of the material provided.

Note: *Report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

153 CREDITON TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN (01.12.33)

The Committee received a *report of the Head of Planning Economy and Regeneration, presented to Cabinet on 7th March 2019, defining the scope for the commissioning of consultants to assist in the preparation of a Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document and Delivery Plan (SPD) for Crediton Town Centre in the budget year 20/21.

Members discussed the scope of the delivery plan and were broadly in favour of the plan.

There was a general discussion on the transport strategy and the Group Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery confirmed that the proposed train station was incorporated in the plan.

Note: *Report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

154 SUPPORTING THE FORMATION OF SOUTH WEST MUTUAL (01.21.36)

The Committee received a *report of the Chief Executive on supporting the formation of South West Mutual previously presented to Cabinet on 7th March 2019.

The Chief Executive outlined the content of the report and explained that the first stage of the process was to obtain a bankers licence. He explained that Cabinet had recommended to Council that the scheme be supported and that it was felt that it brought community benefit.

There was a general discussion on the disappearance of high street banks in the district and that the Post Office had recognised a need for rural banking by opening up previously closed branches.

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that across the country there were a number of mutuals exploring the potential of opening local branches. He explained that at this stage it was too early to predict where the branches would be situated, but if the mutual bank were to be successful clearly the council would be seeking to highlight those communities where access to banking facilities was now severely limited in order to try and influence branch location

Note: *Report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

155 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP UPDATE (01.40.13)

The Committee received a verbal report from the Group Manager for Business Transformation and Customer Engagement providing an update on the customer service projects recommended by the work of the Scrutiny Committee Community Engagement Working Group.

She explained that a Town and Parish Council Survey was completed in 2018 and the results had been fed back to the Town and Parish Councils in September.

She further explained that officers had looked into the effectiveness of the Citizens Panel and had found that it was not an effective way of communicating with the public. A decision had been made not to pursue another panel but to look into a more targeted approach.

One of the recommendations from the Working Group was to introduce mobile units which would travel around the district but she explained that the costs were found to be prohibitive for the introduction of this service.

156 **SCRUTINY OFFICER UPDATE (01.45.02)**

The Committee received and **NOTED** a *report from the Scrutiny Officer.

He explained that he had circulated a Connecting Devon and Somerset briefing paper to Members which outlined the issues with progress of broadband roll out across the district.

He explained that Keri Denton, Head of Enterprise and Skills had not been able to attend the meeting and this would be re-arranged for a later date. Members felt that this should be delayed for some months until additional information on the roll out of broadband was more forthcoming.

He confirmed that the Trim Trail had been completed in Amory Park and encouraged Members to go and try it out. He confirmed that talks were taking place with Cullompton and Crediton Town Councils regarding provision of Trim Trails in the towns.

Note: *Report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

157 **FORWARD PLAN (01.51.48)**

The Group had before it and **NOTED** the Cabinet Forward Plan *.

Note: - *Forward Plan previously circulated and attached to the minutes

158 **ACCESS TO INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (01.52.38)**

Prior to considering the following item on the agenda, discussion took place as to whether it was necessary to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 15 15.02(d) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution. The Committee decided that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

It was therefore:

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the next item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely

disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

(Proposed by the Chairman)

159 3 RIVERS DEVELOPMENT LTD BUSINESS PLAN

The Committee had before it and discussed a *report of the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presented to the Cabinet on 7th March 2019 and the 3 Rivers Development Limited Acting Managing Director requesting approval of the draft 5 year (21 February 2019) business plan for 3 Rivers Developments Limited.

Following the discussion the meeting returned into open session.

Note: *Report previously circulated

160 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (01.53.39)

There were no items identified

(The meeting ended at 4.26 pm)

CHAIRMAN