

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**
held on 4 September 2018 at 2.00 pm

Present

Councillors

R F Radford (Chairman)
D R Coren, R M Deed, R Evans, F W Letch,
Mrs E J Slade and J D Squire

Apologies

Councillor(s)

Mrs C P Daw, D J Knowles and R Wright

Also Present

Councillor(s)

C J Eginton, R J Chesterton, R J Dolley and Mrs J Roach

Also Present

Officer(s):

Andrew Pritchard (Director of Operations), Catherine Yandle (Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security), Adrian Welsh (Group Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery), Joanne Nacey (Group Manager for Finance), John Bodley-Scott (Economic Development Team Leader), Carole Oliphant (Member Services Officer) and Kevin Swift (Public Health Officer)

22 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (00.01.35)

Cllr Mrs C P Daw and Cllr D J Knowles gave apologies. Cllr R Wright gave apologies and was substituted by Cllr F W Letch.

23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00.02.01)

There were no members of the public present

24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00.02.07)

There were no declarations of interest given.

25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00.02.22)

The minutes of the meeting of 10 July 2018 were approved as a true record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman

26 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00.03.15)

There were no Chairman's announcements

27 UPDATE ON THE USE OF SINGLE USE PLASTICS (00.03.36)

The Committee received and **NOTED** a verbal report providing an update from the Director of Operations on the reduction in use of Single Use Plastics (SUP).

The Director of Operations explained that the motion had seen a slight amendment at Full Council on 29th August which was supported by Members.

He explained that the Public Health Officer would be the single point of contact for the project to reduce the amount of SUP's and he would be working alongside other Officers to achieve the spirit of the Motion. He stated that the project would include working with suppliers to source alternative arrangements for products that the Council required but he had hoped to make some changes quickly like stopping the ordering of plastic cups in Phoenix House and replacing them with alternatives.

Members were pleased that the Motion had been accepted at Full Council and were looking forward to progress being made.

It was **RESOLVED** that Officers provide a detailed report to the March 2019 meeting of the PDG which explained the progress to date.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

28 **EXE VALLEY AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (00.07.12)**

The Committee had before it a *report from the Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration presented by the Economic Team Leader regarding the feasibility of obtaining Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) status for the Exe Valley.

He explained the content of the report and that it was recognised that Members wanted to pursue this and that it would bring benefits in terms of tourism but may have a negative effect on farming.

The Chairman read out a letter of support from Cllr Mrs F J Colthorpe.

Members discussed their disappointment that the public consultation exercise that had been conducted by Members, which showed overwhelming support from the local Towns and Parishes, had not been included within the report. It was felt that the report concentrated too much on the negative aspects of pursuing AONB status rather than the positives.

The Committee discussed the current Blackdown Hills AONB and the management structure which had been set up and that a different arrangement would need to be made for an Exe Valley AONB. They also discussed the difficulties that it may have on future infrastructure requirements.

Members acknowledged that there would be a cost of pursuing the AONB status but they felt that this would not outweigh the benefits.

With regard to the concept map of the AONB, the Committee felt that it should be amended further to the south and include Brampford Speke, Upton Pyne, Rewe and Stoke Canon.

Members acknowledged that there was a Government Review of AONB's due in 2019 but they felt that this should not delay the pursuit of the Exe Valley AONB despite uncertainties about what the Government Review would actually mean.

Officers confirmed that if AONB was achieved it would have the same effect on planning as National Parks but the difference being that National Parks had their own planning committees but MDDC would still be the planning authority in an AONB.

The Committee felt that the time was right to pursue full AONB Designation for the Exe Valley even if this came at a financial cost to the Council.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that the Council consider option 1 to seek full AONB Designation.

(Proposed by Cllr R M Deed and seconded by Cllr Mrs E J Slade)

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

29 **PERFORMANCE AND RISK (00.44.50)**

The Committee had before it and **NOTED** a *report from the Group Manager of Performance Governance and Data Security providing Members with 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.

Members asked for information on the numbers of people using the electric car chargers in the district and the Officer stated she would confirm this to Members.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the minutes.

30 **FINANCIAL MONITORING (00.46.10)**

The Committee **NOTED** a verbal report from the Group Manager for Finance presenting a financial update in respect of the income and expenditure so far in the year.

She explained that current forecasts showed that the Council was looking at an overspend of £242k for 2018-2019 but the figures were constantly being updated. The figures included a £52k overspend in the Environment portfolio and this could be attributed as follows:

- Additional staff costs
- Reduction in the income received from recycled cardboard
- Vehicle hire costs

The Committee discussed the costs of kerbside sorting of recyclable waste and the Group Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces stated that it was still better value for money for the Council than going to mixed collection and then having to sort.

31 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (00.56.10)**

No other items were identified for the next meeting others than those already listed in the work programme.

(The meeting ended at 3.00 pm)

CHAIRMAN