

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of the SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held on 28 October 2019 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors F W Letch (Chairman)
W Burke, R J Chesterton,
L J Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw,
R Evans, B Holdman,
B A Moore, R L Stanley,
Ms E J Wainwright,
B G J Warren and A Wilce

Apology

Councillor Mrs I Hill

Also

Present

Councillors G Barnell, R M Deed and
C R Slade

Also

Present

Officers Stephen Walford (Chief Executive),
Jill May (Director of Corporate
Affairs and Business
Transformation), Catherine Yandle
(Group Manager for Performance,
Governance and Data Security),

Adrian Welsh (Group Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery), Maria De Leburne (Solicitor), John Bodley-Scott (Economic Development Team Leader), Clare Robathan (Scrutiny Officer) and Carole Oliphant (Member Services Officer)

71 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs I Hill who was substituted by Cllr L Cruwys.

72 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no declarations made.

73 MEETING MANAGEMENT (00.01.50)

The Chairman informed the Committee (with their agreement) that he would move item 7, Chairman's announcements, to the next item on the agenda

74 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00.02.16)

The Chairman informed the Committee that Matt Barrow from DCC was unable to attend the

meeting and therefore the Broadband update would be rescheduled for a later meeting.

75 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00.03.55)**

There were no members of the public present.

76 **MEMBER FORUM (00.04.00)**

Members discussed a recent planning appeal which the applicant had won and that costs had been awarded against the Council. Members wanted to express a view that the planning policy DM22 was reviewed to include tighter criteria.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration explained that changes to planning policies could only be achieved by modifications to the Local Plan. He informed the Committee that the main modifications to the Local Plan were being reviewed by the Planning Policy Advisory Group in the next few weeks.

Members requested that the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration seek advice from Planning Officers on reviewing the planning policy DM22.

(Proposed by the Chairman).

77 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00.09.56)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2019 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

78 **DECISIONS OF THE CABINET (00.11.12)**

The Committee **NOTED** that none of the decisions made by the Cabinet on 17th October 2019 had been called in.

79 **BROADBAND PROVISION**

Matt Barrow gave apologies and therefore this item was deferred to a future meeting of the Committee.

80 **PERFORMANCE AND RISK (00.11.25)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, the Performance and Risk *report from the Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security who stated that this was the second report detailing the 2019/2020 performance.

She informed the Committee that the reports had been presented to all the Policy Development Groups, Audit Committee and the Cabinet.

Members asked if the Cabinet had decided how many council houses were going to be built as part of the Corporate Plan.

In response, the Chief Executive explained that the Corporate Plan was being taken to all the Policy Development Groups (PDG's) and at that point Members could take a view of what should be included in the plan but no decisions had been made on the content yet. He explained that once the proposed Corporate Plan had been through the PDG's and the Cabinet it was due to be signed off by Council by the end of February.

In response to questions about the Corporate Plan Aim to 'reduce our carbon footprint' the Chief Executive explained that the Climate Change Declaration stated that the Council would produce its baseline footprint by the end of December.

Members discussed the GED team working to bring forward strategic developments.

Members discussed the definition of 'council houses' and the issues that right to buy had on the Council's housing stock.

Members discussed the Cabinet's recent decision to defer the Tiverton Town Centre regeneration tender and to seek the opinion of the Planning

Committee of Tiverton Town Council on the overall plan.

Consideration was given to:

- Recent press reports
- Opinions of Market Traders in Tiverton
- Views of District Councillors who also sat on Tiverton Town Council
- Previous Cabinet Members views on the regeneration project

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration explained that the procurement process had not been cancelled it had been paused in order for the Cabinet to seek the views of the Town Council and to decide if the project in its current form offered the best solution for the people of Tiverton.

In response to a question asked about S106 Agreements the Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security explained that progress was currently reported in the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan on a regular basis but software was being developed to monitor this better.

Notes:

- *Report previously circulated and attached to the minutes.

- Cllr R L Stanley declared a personal interest as he was involved with the Tiverton Town Centre Regeneration Tender procurement process.

81 **COST RECOVERY & COMMERCIALISATION IN GROWTH, ECONOMY & DELIVERY (00.47.55)**

The Committee had before it and **NOTED** a *report from the Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration on cost recovery and commercialisation in Growth, Economy and Delivery.

The Economic Development Team Leader outlined the contents of the report and explained that it detailed proposed income generation by the team. He explained that opportunities had been looked at through commercial activity studies in other local authorities which had shown different ranges of services offered and management of work space. He informed the Committee that the Council was seeking a small LGA grant to help explore the options for commercialisation and the appropriate vehicle to take it forward.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regenerations explained that the Council were considering a more strategic role and that the LGA grant, along with the Economy PDG, would allow

the Council to scope out some options and take a more active role in Mid Devon regeneration.

Note: *Report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

82 **FORWARD PLAN (01.00.18)**

The Committee **NOTED** the *Forward Plan

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

83 **SCRUTINY OFFICER UPDATE (01.00.27)**

The Scrutiny Officer introduced Work Programme Planning by way of a *presentation.

She explained that she had visited the DCC Scrutiny team and introduced Members to work programme planning by thinking about the value that Scrutiny could bring and the prioritisation of issues.

She explained to Members how to give the public a stake in the work programme by having conversations with parishioners on the issues which most concerned them about the Council and bringing those issues back to the Committee to investigate.

Members discussed the following:

- Adding Value – does not need to be financial
- Spotlight reviews
- Raising the profile of the Scrutiny Committee
- Engaging the public

Members commented that the Scrutiny Committee in its current form received numerous reports for 'noting' and that it should be scrutinising and debating real issues which affected the local population like the Tiverton Town Centre Regeneration project.

Members requested that the Scrutiny Officer give an overview of the work and the remit of all of the PDG's to the next meeting of the Committee.

Members **AGREED** to have an informal meeting in November to discuss and agree a Work Programme.

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

84 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (01.24.05)**

No items were identified.

(The meeting ended at 3.41 pm) **CHAIRMAN**