

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**
held on 7 June 2022 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors

Mrs M E Squires (Chairman)
Mrs C Collis, W Burke, L J Cruwys,
R J Dolley, R Evans, B Holdman, S Pugh
and Mrs E J Slade

Also Present

Councillor(s)

B A Moore

Also Present

Officer(s):

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Karen Trickey (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Andrew Busby (Corporate Manager for Property, Leisure and Climate Change), Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance), Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Carole Oliphant (Member Services Officer) and Jessica Watts (Member Services Apprentice)

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN (CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL IN THE CHAIR)

Cllr Mrs M E Squires was duly elected Chairman for the municipal year.

2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN (0.04.51)

Cllr Mrs E Slade was duly elected Vice Chairman for the municipal year

3 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (0.06.09)

There were no apologies or substitute members

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (0.06.20)

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations where appropriate

5 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0.06.35)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd March 2022 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

6 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0.08.10)

There were no questions from members of the public present.

7 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS (0.08.23)

The Chairman advised that the Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group were finalising their recommendations which would be presented to the Group.

8 **START TIME OF MEETINGS (0.09.15)**

The start time of meetings was agreed as 2.15pm for the remainder of the municipal year

9 **THE CREDITON AREA HISTORY & MUSEUM SOCIETY (0.10.05)**

The Group had before it a *business case requesting funding for a summer 2023 exhibition by the Crediton Area History and Museum Society.

Tony Gale addressed the Group and outlined the project aims and objectives. He confirmed that the exhibition would initially run for 6 months and would then be supported by a book and on line resources. He confirmed that the project was seeking funding from Mid Devon District Council and would be grateful for any funds awarded.

The Chief Executive explained that the PDG had previously allocated funding for Community Grants for a period of two years which was within the current budget. If the PDG wanted to adjust the set budget 'in year' to award an additional amount to the project then they would need to have the change agreed through the Cabinet and Council. He explained that there was no surplus funds available through the Community Grant Scheme in the current budget.

The PDG advised the Society that although direct funding was not available the Council could assist by promoting the exhibition and they were advised to approach Crediton Town Council and Tiverton Museum for financial support.

The PDG wished the Society every success for the exhibition.

Note: *business case previously circulated and attached to the minutes

10 **REVENUE AND OUTTURN REPORT (0.32.15)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the Revenue and Capital Outturn *report from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151).

The Corporate Manager for Finance outlined the contents of the report and explained that it provided a summary of the net service costs of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account and was subject to audit.

He explained that the General Fund underspend of £29k was an excellent return and showed a good degree of financial forecasting.

Consideration was given to:

- Reduced levels of income due to the pandemic including car parks and business rates
- The reduction in levels of Government support received
- Higher contract staffing levels due to sickness and unfulfilled vacancies

- The significant grants provided by the Government which were passed onto residents
- The General Fund was circa 10% above minimum requirements
- Members concerns with reduced opening hours of Phoenix House having an effect on customers' ability to pay any monies owed to the council
- Members request that the Cabinet seek clarification that capital projects would be completed within the timeframes stated

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

11 **UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENT POLICY (0.46.26)**

The Group had before it a *report from the Corporate Manager for Property, Leisure and Climate Change presenting the 3 yearly review of the Unauthorised Encampment Policy.

The officer outlined the contents of the report and stated that the Policy ensured that the Council acted lawfully.

Consideration was given to:

- There had been 4 unauthorised encampments in the past 3 years which had a cost to the Council circa £3k
- Legal Services had reviewed the policy and had updated the Equality Act, sections 77-78
- A minimum of 13 permanent sites would be delivered in the District within the next 2-3 years
- The location of pitches had been determined during the initial planning process
- The Council had a duty to provide both permanent and transit pitches and Members would be provided with an update on the current situation

It was therefore **RECOMMENDED** to the Cabinet that the updated Unauthorised Encampment Policy and procedure for managing and enforcing unauthorised encampments as detailed in annex A be adopted

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Note: *Policy previously circulated and attached to the minutes

12 **CORPORATE PLAN MID POINT REVIEW (0.58.40)**

The Group had before it a *report from the Chief Executive presenting the Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Mid-Point Review.

The Chief Executive explained that the report had previously been presented to the Cabinet and that it was now being shared with the PDG's in order that they could feed back any priorities that they felt needed to be highlighted.

He explained that the Corporate Plan had been agreed just prior to the pandemic and therefore it was not as far along as originally hoped but that some progress had been

made. He informed Members that it was now prudent to revisit the plan to establish what could be realistically completed in the timeframe to 2024.

He stated that he would listen to any viewpoints that Members had and he would encourage them to contact either him directly or via the PDG Chairman within the next 10 days in order that these could be fed back to the Cabinet.

Members highlighted the following priorities:

- Council to continue to influence the provision of post 16 education in the District
- Members would like to see a cycleway between Tiverton and Exeter and the Council should work with partners to promote this

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

13 PDG WORK PROGRAMME AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT FOR 2022/23 (1.20.15)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a *report from the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer outlining the PDG's work programme for 2022/2023.

The officer outlined the contents of the report and invited the PDG to consider what it wished to focus on for the forthcoming year, taking account of its Corporate Plan priorities and residents' feedback. The report also provided Members with suggestions on items that they could investigate during the year.

Members discussed the possible projects and agreed that an examination of effective community integration would be of interest and would be a worthwhile project. Members agreed that they wished to broaden the scope of the project to include refugees, asylum seekers and new residents in new housing estates. The PDG wanted to investigate how new communities were formed in practical terms.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Forward Planning had undertaken some new residents' surveys and that the results of the last survey could feed into the project.

The Group agreed that the District Solicitor would produce a terms of reference which would be presented back to the PDG for agreement on how the project should be structured and conducted.

The Group discussed the current work programme and agreed that reports for noting should be replaced by information sheets which were to be sent informally to Members. If the information sheets required additional discussion these would be brought to the next formal meeting of the Group.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

(The meeting ended at 4.20 pm)

CHAIRMAN