

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**
held on 10 January 2023 at 5.30 pm

Present

Councillors

J Wright (Chairman)
W Burke, R F Radford, L D Taylor and
B G J Warren

Apologies

Councillor(s)

E J Berry and R L Stanley

Also Present

Councillor(s)

D R Coren, Miss J Norton, C R Slade, S J Clist, L J Cruwys
and Mrs E J Lloyd

Also Present

Officer(s):

Jill May (Director of Business Improvement and Operations), Andrew Busby (Corporate Manager for Property, Leisure and Climate Change), Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance), Dean Emery (Corporate Manager for Revenues, Benefits and Recovery), Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager), Jan Moreland (Accountant), Carole Oliphant (Member Services Officer) and Jessica Rowe (Member Services Apprentice)

47 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (0.02.34)**

Apologies were received from Cllrs E J Berry and R L Stanley

Cllr D R Coren and Miss J Norton attended via ZOOM.

48 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (0.02.50)**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations where appropriate

49 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0.03.03)**

There were no members of the public present

50 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0.03.14)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2022 were agreed as a true record and duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman

51 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (0.03.40)**

The Chairman had no announcements to make

52 CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN UPDATE (0.03.45)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a *report from the Climate and Sustainability Specialist providing an update on the Climate Change Action Plan.

The Corporate Manager for Property, Leisure and Climate Change explained that the plan aligned with the Council's climate emergency declarations.

Consideration was given to:

- Energy prices had increased dramatically but the installation of Air Source Heat pumps at the leisure centres would help
- There was a live bid in place to obtain funding to install Air Source Heat Pumps at Cullompton sports centre
- There was a detailed program in place to install modular housing
- Location of tree planting should be better considered and Parish Council's consulted
- A planning application for the Hydro scheme had been submitted and objections were being worked through
- Funding opportunities for the installation of solar panels on commercial buildings not owned by the council would be provided on the Council's sustainable website

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

53 BUDGET UPDATE (0.24.57)

The Group had before it a *report from the Deputy Chief Executive providing the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Corporate Manager for Finance explained the current position by way of a presentation and advised Members that he was looking for a steer on higher and lower priorities.

Consideration was given to:

- Members were asked to consider any savings were district wide and not confined to individual parishes
- The figures for fuel costs were based on real time values
- Some savings would be found in Vacancy Management but that the Council were not expecting to make any redundancies
- Some Members found it difficult to make decisions on priorities when they were unsure of what each cost centre covered
- The suggestions put forward by officers on where and how savings could be achieved
- Members felt the letter sent to the Parishes asking for funding for some services was not clear on what was being requested
- The residents survey results
- Some Members would support a review into the number of grass cuts a year

It was therefore **RECOMMENDED** to the Cabinet that:

1. The Weed Team should not be reinstated

(Proposed by Cllr B G J Warren and seconded by Cllr R F Radford)

2. Waste Collection/Recycling/Open Spaces should be protected from budget and service provision reductions

(Proposed by Cllr R F Radford and seconded by Cllr W Burke)

3. Property Service Staff Unit and Administration Buildings could be considered for budget and service provision reductions

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decisions: As per the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

54 **WORK PLAN (1.35.44)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the *Environment PDG Work Plan for 2022-2023.

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

(The meeting ended at 7.18 pm)

CHAIRMAN