

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **CABINET** held on 5 August 2025 at 5.15 pm

**Present
Councillors**

L Taylor, D Wulff , J M Downes,
G Duchesne, M Fletcher, S Keable and J
Lock

**Apologies
Councillors**

N Bradshaw and J Wright

**Also Present
Councillors**

E Buczkowski, J Buczkowski and S Clist

**Also Present
Officers:**

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Andrew Jarrett (Deputy
Chief Executive (S151)), Maria De Leburne (Director of
Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)), Richard
Marsh (Director of Place & Economy), Paul Deal (Head of
Finance, Property & Climate Resilience), Matthew Page
(Head of People, Performance & Waste), Darren Beer
(Operations Manager for Street Scene), Jason Ball
(Climate and Sustainability Specialist) and Laura Woon
(Democratic Services Manager)

**Councillors
Online**

J Cairney, G Czapiewski, M Farrell, M Jenkins,
L G J Kennedy and L Knight

Officers Online

Dean Emery (Head of Revenue, Benefits and Leisure) and
Tristan Peat (Forward Planning Team Leader)

26. APOLOGIES (05:27)

Apologies were received from Councillors: N Bradshaw and J Wright.

27. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (05:30)

None received.

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (05:37)

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations of interest where appropriate.

29. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (06:00)**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 July 2025 were **APPROVED** as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Leader.

30. **WASTE AND RECYCLING OPTION- POTS AND PANS TRIAL (06:25)**

Cabinet had before it a report * from the Head of People, Performance and Waste and the Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces on the Waste and Recycling options.

The Leader of the Council outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- Following on from the recommendation that was made from the Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group (PDG) in December 2024 and subsequent decision made by Cabinet in January 2025, a trial was conducted between 28 February 2025 and 23 May 2025 to assess both the feasibility of collecting unusable pots and pans (made of aluminium, stainless steel) and their subsequent collection rates from households as part of the Council's routine recycling collections.
- Two separate trials were conducted: one in an urban area (Willand) involving 453 properties and one in a rural area (Uffculme) involving 346 properties.
- The results of the trial were presented in section 2 with preliminary analysis and conclusions drawn together in section 3.
- The results of the trial confirmed that collecting unusable pots and pans via household recycling routes was operationally feasible and added strategic value to the Council's services. While engagement was limited, especially over time, small volumes were collected efficiently. This initiative, if permanently introduced as a collection service, could further enhance the Council's recycling capabilities and environmental reputation; however there would be a minimal effect on the recycling rate if the low tonnage collected during the trial was to continue.
- The trial was useful to understand potential participation rates across the district. It had shown that residents initially used the service actively, primarily to dispose of old items. However, usage dropped significantly after the first few collections. This suggested that long-term use may be lower than the initial uptake, making it difficult to predict future usage levels across the district. This also highlighted the importance of communication and the need to regularly remind residents of the services and how they could use those services.
- It was important to emphasise that, in line with the waste hierarchy, residents were encouraged to consider what materials they reused and reduced as well as recycled. However, given the ease with which the additional pots and pans could be collected during the trial, the Street Scene Service could collect residents' pots and pans as an additional collection service if required with very limited or minimal extra associated cost to the Council.
- The trial had given useful operational insight and demonstrated that there was not a consistent demand pattern for the collection of unusable pots and pans

across the district. Therefore, it was envisaged that rolling out this provision should be delivered within the current capacity and budget. However, future additional collection materials would need to be appraised based on the understanding that adding pots and pans into the recycling activity would place slight additional pressure on the operation.

- To recommend an additional waste collection material into an already highly effective recycling programme and to look forward to further exploring other additional material over the coming months.

Discussion took place with regards to:

- The specific start date for the permanent future collection of pots and pans to commence. It was suggested that we look to start the collection during the autumn of 2025 (October) to allow the necessary communication and awareness to be carried out in September.
- Whether metal stainless steel mixing bowls without handles would be included within the collection? This would be clarified in the pre-launch communication.
- Similarly, the pre-launch communication would also clarify whether different types of pots and pans e.g. those with non-stick coating would be collected.
- The communication would also stipulate that Teflon pots and pans would not be collected.

RESOLVED that:

1. The contents of this report was reviewed and **NOTED**.
2. The permanent future collection of unwanted metal pots and pans across the district from a specific date in October supported by an effective communications plan and resident correspondence as recommended by the Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group (PDG) be **APPROVED**.

(Proposed by Cllr L Taylor and seconded Cllr S Keable)

Reason for Decision:

Based on the findings of the trial, pots and pans being included in the portfolio of materials collected at the kerbside would not incur additional operational costs. There would be minimal financial gain in the form of recycling credits or sales income due to the low tonnage collected.

Note: * report previously circulated.

31. 2025/26 QUARTER 1 BUDGET MONITORING (16:00)

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer and the Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience on the 2025/2026 Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring.

The Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The report presented the first Budget Monitoring for the year 2025/26 covering the period April – June 2025. This gave a forecast of the potential year end position.
- Based on Quarter 1 data the projected outturn position for the General Fund was a £232k over-spend. This was in-line with the previous year's trend where initial forecasts indicated an over-spend. However the position had improved during the remainder of the previous year and it was expected that this would be the case again this year. The main cause for the over-spend was the need for specialist agency staff which had exceeded the vacancy saving.
- It was worth highlighting that the current assumption was to earmark the significant increase in the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) grant recently announced (£450k), which if recognised would mean the Council had a small financial surplus. However, it was more prudent to earmark it at this point in the year and to continually assess this action throughout the remainder of the financial year as greater clarity on the likely year-end position became known.
- The Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) forecast was for a £118k under-spend, which although a little lower, was again similar to the previous year's initial forecasts. Salary underspends were the main driver of this under-spend. The Capital Programme forecast a variance of £16.7m against the 2025/26 Deliverable Budget. This was largely due to the slippage of £15.2m, of which £4m related to the Cullompton Town centre Relief Road although the project was now well underway. There were other notable slippage variances in relation to 4 specific HRA development projects. There were a few forecasted over-spends where projects had broadened, for example with leisure and waste. This was more than offset by under-spends, particularly the Waste Depot Remodelling Project which was recently approved by the Cabinet. Finally, there was a small amount of expenditure no longer required as it had been encompassed into the larger Waste Depot Project.
- Also included within the report were sections that provided updates on the latest Treasury Management position, Collection Fund forecast and Procurement.
- The fundamental changes in funding mechanisms had been mooted for a while and were seeing hints of what this might mean for the Council. Specifically as this Council appeared to belong to a small group of less than 50 councils who were targeted for larger funding reductions. While most of the 300+ Councils were likely to have a cash freeze, it was indicated that the Council would receive a cut of between -5% to -7%.
- However, the real concern was the impact of resetting the business rates, with the loss of all of the growth generated since the scheme was implemented in 2013/14. If there was no transitional relief, this would have a significant impact on the Council's finances (£2m+).
- This Council would continue to challenge the rationale for being treated differently and lobby for effective transitional support and early notification of the final position.

Discussion took place with regards to:

- For the Business Rates was this just affecting this Council, Districts or other Local authorities? It was explained that it affects all Council's.

- The shortage with regards to the Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) that was a significant amount, what were the reasons for this? There were a number of factors that contributed to the shortage.
- Who or what was (DMO) and did they borrow money for three days? It was explained that it was the Debt Management Office who we lent money to at an interest rate on a short term let.

RESOLVED that:

1. The financial monitoring information for the income and expenditure for the 3 months to 30 June 2025 and the projected outturn position be **NOTED**;
2. The use of Waivers and Direct Awards for the procurement of goods and services as included in Section 8 be **NOTED**;
3. The update on future funding given in paragraphs 9.2 and 9.3 be **NOTED**.

(Proposed by Cllr J Downes and seconded by Cllr J Lock)

Reason for Decision:

Good financial management and administration underpin the entire document. A surplus or deficit on the Revenue Budget would impact on the Council's General Fund balances. The Council's financial position was constantly reviewed to ensure its continued financial health.

Note: * report previously circulated.

32. ACCESS TO INFORMATION- EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC (27:30)

The Leader indicated that discussion with regard to the following items, may require the Cabinet to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 12 12.02 (d) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution. This decision was required because consideration of this matter in public would disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Cabinet decided, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption interest in disclosing the information, outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

It was **RESOLVED** that the meeting remain in Part 1 and therefore open to the press and public.

33. LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY (28:10)

Cabinet had before it a report * from the Director of Place and Economy and the Climate and Sustainability Specialist on the Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) would inform nature recovery at a local level, by mapping habitats, features and key species to

identify opportunities, priorities and actions to boost ecological connectivity, diversity and abundance.

- The Strategy would take the form of a formidable online resource, a website and a mapping viewer that aimed to help everyone to play a role, by being easy to explore and use.
- Devon County Council (DCC) was the Responsible Authority for the Devon LNRS.
- DCC had been developing the Strategy through the Devon Local Nature Partnership, which involved a broad array of stakeholders such as farmers and this Council had been consulted as part of that.
- This Council was a supporting Authority for the Devon LNRS, along with other local authorities and Natural England.
- All public authorities had a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity and must have regard to the relevant LNRS.
- The wider co-benefits to nature recovery included: climate change adaptation and mitigation, water quality, natural capital and ecosystem services and wellbeing.
- The Strategy Team aimed to complete the Strategy and put it out to public consultation in September 2025.

The Climate and Sustainability Specialist outlined the contents of the presentation with particular reference to the following:

- The website was interactive, exciting, interesting and offered inspiration. It provided information such as: Important species and approximate areas where you could locate them such as dragonflies etc.
- The location of schools and the local community centres showing 500-metre zones, to help illustrate where the nearest area of nature or green space would be accessible to communities.
- Different layers of information that could be used depending on need and perspective.
- Powerful tools and resources for the viewer to use.
- Funding decisions and the direction and prioritization of funding would be influenced by the LNRS.

Discussion took place with regards to:

- Whether some of the creatures would look different in real life.
- Could the website be used in a negative way such as a tracking tool and put the protected species and or habitats at risk of being hunted?
- Concerns with regard to the decline in the level of nature in England.
- Would there be a grant of permissions through the “search me” engine on the website. For example the “search near me” would the information returned show that information?
- What were the next steps and when would the website go live?
- The website had specific areas to view and it would be a crucial tool.
- The work that landowners had contributed for years to help towards preserving nature.
- On the Government website stated that they had a goal to raise at least £500 million per year of private finance for nature recovery by 2027 and more than £1 billion by 2030. Concerns were raised around the term ‘Private Finance’.

- The term wildlife and hedgerow, did the website indicate when to cut hedgerows?

RESOLVED that:

1. Approval be given to Devon County Council (DCC) that the draft Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) be published and that it goes out for public consultation.
2. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Place and Economy, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration, and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, to make or approve any minor amendments to the consultation materials.

(Proposed by Cllr S Keable and seconded by Cllr G DuChesne)

Reason for Decision:

The purpose of the Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy was to inform and support nature recovery, and relevant co-benefits included: actions for climate change adaptation (e.g. natural flood management) and mitigation (e.g. restoration of habitats that are important for carbon storage and sequestration).

Note: * report previously circulated.

34. NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS (50:52)

The Clerk identified the changes that had been made to the list since it was published with the agenda.

This included the following:

- The purchase of waste bins and containers had been removed from September 2025- as this would be included as part of the Budget Report.

Note: * Key Decision report previously circulated.

(The meeting ended at Time Not Specified)

CHAIRMAN