

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of the COMMUNITY WELL BEING POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on 2 August 2016 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors B A Moore (Chairman)
Mrs A R Berry, Mrs H Bainbridge,
Mrs C P Daw, R J Dolley, R Evans,
F W Letch and Mrs E J Slade

Apologies

Councillor(s) Mrs E M Andrews and Mrs G Doe

Also Present

Councillor(s) C J Eginton, Miss C E L Slade, C R Slade and
Mrs M E Squires

Also Present

Officer(s): Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Lee Chester (Leisure Centre Manager), Julia Ryder (Community Safety & Emergency Planning Officer), Jeremy Pritchard (Environmental Health Team Leader) and Julia Stuckey (Member Services Officer)

23 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs E M Andrews and from Cllr Mrs G Doe who was substituted by Cllr R Evans.

24 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Subject to the removal of Cllr Mrs J B Binks from the attendance list the Minutes of the last meeting of the Group were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

26 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman informed the group that as this was a Policy Development Group he would like it to develop some policy in the coming year. He had invited senior officers to attend the next meeting and had asked them to come prepared with some ideas that they considered could be developed into policy. This would be progressed with the support of Cabinet Members and he asked that Members forward any ideas they had to the clerk.

Members were informed that the briefing regarding Mental Health would be held in November.

27 MODERNDAY SLAVERY (00:04:00)

The Chairman introduced PSCO Melanie Smith to the Group, who was the Migrant Worker Officer attached to Tiverton Police Station, covering Devon. The Chairman highlighted a news article in which the Prime Minister stated that Britain would be leading the fight on modern day slavery.

The officer gave a presentation in which she highlighted the following:

- Leading drug traffickers had diversified into trading in human beings
- Globally it was the 2nd most lucrative criminality only to firearms
- The Home Office estimated that in 2013 there were 13,000 potential victims of modern day slavery within the U.K (they now believe that this had doubled)
- Slavery meant the movement of people by means such as force, fraud, coercion, deception and exploitation
- There were more slaves now than in 1833
- Not every person who was exploited through slavery, servitude & forced or compulsory labour had been trafficked
- In 2014 a total of 671 potential child victims were referred to the National Referral Mechanism (29% of the total referrals)
- The top 5 countries of origin of potential child victims were Albania, Vietnam, UK, Slovakia & Nigeria
- There were 75 referrals where the country of origin was the UK (represented 11% of all child referrals)

The officer explained that trafficking victims were often lured into another country by false promises and so may not easily trust others, may be fearful of police/authorities, be fearful of the trafficker, believing their lives or family members' lives were at risk if they escaped, exhibit signs of physical and psychological trauma, be fearful of telling others about their situation, have limited freedom of movement, be unpaid or paid very little, have limited access to medical care, seem to be in debt to someone, have no passport or mention that someone else was holding their passport, be regularly moved to avoid detection.

The Environmental Health Team Leader explained that the Environmental Health Service was responsible for health and safety in the workplace and that when looking into areas such as agriculture, car washes, nail bars and warehousing they came across migrant workers and were therefore aware of the indicators of modern day slavery.

The Community Safety and Emergency Planning Officer informed the Group of some recent operations in the local area where modern day slavery had been identified and the support that was given to victims.

PCSO Smith informed the Group that they could help by 'getting the word out' so that people were aware that it was happening and to make sure that everyone knew the signs to look for.

The Chairman thanked the officer for her presentation.

28 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FEES AND CHARGES

The Group had before it a report * from the Head of Human Resources and Development providing Members with the revised fees and charges for statutory and discretionary functions within the Environmental Health team.

The Environmental Health Team Leader informed the Group that the Environmental Health team within Public Health Services carried out duties to ensure that private water supplies were safe and drinking water quality was acceptable to consumers under the Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016. This included the risk assessment of water supplies, the taking of and the analysis of water samples, and the investigation into the reasons why the results of some tests breached the regulatory standards.

Environmental Health was also responsible for issuing food export certification where a food business wished to commercially export food outside the European Union. Food export certificates were issued to satisfy the particular requirements of each importing country that may require a detailed inspection of the consignment and processing requirements or simple documentation that the premises were subject to inspection by the local authority.

A food condemnation certificate may be issued where a food business had food that was no longer fit for purpose (for example freezer breakdown, out of date food, damaged stock). Environmental Health Officers would visit and certify the quantity of unfit food (often required for insurance purposes) and ensure that it was appropriately disposed of.

The officer explained that there were no legal obligations on the part of the local authority to issue health certificates or food condemnation certificates and there was no requirement to make a particular charge for them or charge for any copy of entry in the food register.

Environmental Health also enforced the standards at exhumations to ensure that respect for the deceased person was maintained, public health was protected and the conditions of the licence from the Ministry of Justice were met. There was currently no charge levied for this service.

The officer informed the Group that a review of fees and charges had been necessary to offset or cover the costs incurred by this authority in carrying out the above duties. Local Authorities could make reasonable charges to cover the costs of carrying out the duties in relation to private water supplies, subject to the maximum amounts set out in the Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016. Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 contained powers for all local authorities to levy charges for 'discretionary services' i.e. where the authority had a choice whether or not to undertake the service such as the food related activities.

Discussion took place regarding the need to keep fees as low as possible to support local businesses and that exports should be encouraged.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet approve the revised fees and charges for Environmental Health as set out in appendix 1 of the report.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Note: - Report * previously circulated and attached to the Minutes.

29 LEISURE SERVICES

The Group had before it a report * from the Leisure Manager (Development and Performance) which had been requested following a report at the Scrutiny Committee on 23 May 2016 in which multiple queries and items of recommendation were raised regarding the impact of increases to leisure centre charges.

The officer highlighted key points from the report, informing the Group that the consistent theme for comments received had been regarding changes to pricing for those on means tested benefits and those aged 60 plus. He explained that the pricing structure had been changed to a two tier system, full price and concessionary rates for those on means tested benefits.

The officer informed the Group that although the pricing structure had changed prices they were still cheaper than in neighbouring authorities, such as £2.50 for swimming which was priced at £3.30 in East Devon. Prices had been heavily discounted for a number years which made the recent increases seem significant although they were still competitive.

Officers had been able to identify that there were now 140 less Zest members paying a concessionary fee. Systems to check entitlement had significantly improved and some concessionary members had elected to become full Zest members in order to be able to use the centres in the evenings. Participation overall had increased.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The timetable for future reviews;
- Cancellation of classes and systems that had been put in place to try to relieve this issue;
- Increased income in quarter 1;
- Auto renewal and the risk of losing customers if their membership did not automatically renew;

It was **AGREED** that a further update would be brought to the next meeting of the Group.

Note: - Report * previously circulated and attached to Minutes.

30 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

Public Health Plan for Mid Devon
Partnership Working in Environmental Health
RIPA Annual Review
Health and Safety Policy
Financial Monitoring
Performance and Risk
Future Policy Development
Leisure

(The meeting ended at 3.15 pm)

CHAIRMAN