

## **MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of a **MEETING** of the **CABINET** held on 3 August 2017 at 2.15 pm

### **Present**

#### **Councillors**

C J Eginton (Leader)  
R J Chesterton, K Busch, C R Slade,  
Mrs M E Squires and R L Stanley

### **Apologies**

#### **Councillor(s)**

P H D Hare-Scott

### **Also Present**

#### **Councillor(s)**

F J Rosamond

### **Also Present**

#### **Officer(s):**

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Andrew Jarrett (Director of Finance, Assets and Resources), Andrew Pritchard (Director of Operations), Jill May (Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation), Kathryn Tebbey (Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer), Catherine Yandle (Internal Audit Team Leader) and Sally Gabriel (Member Services Manager)

## **30. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr P H D Hare-Scott.

## **31. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present.

## **32. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00-00-49)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **33. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING FEES AND CHARGES - CIVIL PENALTIES (00-01-42)**

Arising from a report of the Public Health and Professional Services Manager, the Homes Policy Development Group had recommended that the proposed civil penalties approach and the fines with regard to private sector housing as set out in the report be approved.

The Cabinet Member for Housing outlined the contents of the report stating that Section 126 and Schedule 9 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 came into force on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The provisions gave the Council as the local housing authority the power to issue a financial penalty for certain Housing Act 2004 offences after the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017 as an alternative to prosecution.

The offences included failing to comply with an improvement notice, offences in relation to the licensing of houses of multiple occupation, offences with regard to the licensing of houses, contravention of an overcrowding notice and failure to comply with management regulations in respect of houses in multiple occupation. He outlined the level of fines as set out in the report and informed the meeting that a civil penalty could only be imposed as an alternative to prosecution.

Discussion took place regarding proposed communication of the new procedures with landlords

**RESOLVED** that the recommendation of the Policy Development Group be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr R L Stanley and seconded by Cllr C R Slade)

Note: \* Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

34. **REVIEW OF THE HOUSING SERVICE FIRE RISK IN COMMUNAL AREA POLICY (00-05-06)**

Arising from a report of the Housing Services Manager, the Homes Policy Development Group had recommended that the revised Fire Risk in Communal Areas Policy be amended to include a reference to the fact that the Private Sector Housing lead officer had been consulted and that the revised policy as amended be approved.

The Cabinet Member for Housing outlined the contents of the report stating that the policy had been approved in the summer of 2016 however a further review had taken place following some recent incidents with our own housing stock and following the horrific fire at Grenfell Tower in North Kensington. It had been decided that a zero tolerance policy should be implemented relating to the storage of personal belongings in communal areas so that access was unfettered in the event of fire.

He outlined the proposed changes within the report following discussions that had taken place with the Fire Service and highlighted the Council's obligations to the tenants, tenants' obligations and the storage of scooters.

**RESOLVED** that the recommendation of the Policy Development Group be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr R L Stanley and seconded by Cllr Mrs M E Squires)

Note: \* Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

35. **FINANCIAL MONITORING (00-07-52)**

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED** a \* report of the Director of Finance, Assets and Resources presenting financial monitoring information for the income and expenditure for the financial year 2017/18.

The officer outlined the contents of the report stating that it was very early in the financial year but at the present time the General Fund forecast was showing a deficit of £130k mainly due to shortfalls in the Leisure Service and the Building Control Partnership. Capital Receipts were showing a healthy balance due to the sale of Station Yard and 11 Right to Buy Council Houses, although it was noted that the receipts from Right to Buy were not sufficient to replace the council houses lost. The Housing Revenue Account was showing an anticipated forecast of £175k surplus which would increase the budgeted transfer into the Housing Maintenance Fund.

Consideration was given to the income from the solar panel investments.

Note: \*Report previously circulated copy attached to minutes.

### 36. **PERFORMANCE AND RISK (00-12-18)**

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED** a \* report of the Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation providing Members with an update on the performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets.

The Internal Audit Team Leader outlined the contents of the report highlighting the corporate aims and the actions that had taken place against the targets set out in the plan. She informed the meeting of the empty shop figure (8) for Crediton that had been missing from the economy priority

Consideration was given to:

- The corporate risk report specifically the mitigating controls within the plant rooms at the leisure centres
- The economy portfolio and whether the commercial portfolio should sit within the corporate targets

Note: \*Report previously circulated copy attached to minutes.

### 37. **CABINET MEMBER DECISION (00-15-59)**

The Cabinet **NOTED** the following decision made by the Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being:

As part of the Service Level Agreement Grant Programme, to commission the Onion Collective to provide initial feasibility advice for Crediton Town Team on its Community Hub project

#### REASON FOR DECISION:

At its meeting held on 30 March 2017, the Council approved a £6,000 allocation for each of the 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 financial years for an external consultancy, the Onion Collective to advise on 'flagship' community/social enterprise projects in the district. Crediton Town Team has approached the Council for consultancy advice from the Onion Collective to help scope and refine its plans to establish a Community Hub in Crediton. Support from the Onion Collective, if approved, would consist of an initial diagnostic session with the Crediton Town Team with representatives of MDDC in attendance. The diagnostic session would establish the means by which and level of consultancy support to be provided. This is unlikely to

exceed three days in the first instance (but may be extended following a review of progress), as the Onion Collective's time is expected to be allocated to key projects across the district. There are currently no other requests for Onion Collective support in the district. In line with its Service Level Agreement with the district, the Onion Collective will report on progress at the end of the second quarter.

38. **NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS (00-16-58)**

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED**, its rolling plan\* for August/September 2017.

Note: \*Plan previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

(The meeting ended at 2.35 pm)

**CHAIRMAN**