

WEST DEVON HUB COMMITTEE



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Hub Committee** held
on
Tuesday, 19th March, 2019 at **2.00 pm** at the **Chamber -
Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Sanders
Vice Chairman Cllr Samuel

Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Oxborough
Cllr Leech

Cllr Jory
Cllr Mott
Cllr Roberts

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Baldwin
Cllr Lamb
Cllr Musgrave
Cllr Pearce
Cllr Yelland

Cllr Cheadle
Cllr Moyse
Cllr Parker
Cllr Sheldon

Officers:

Chief Executive
Commissioning Manager
Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits Practice
Head of Place Making
Head of Environment Services Practice
Interim Head of HR Practice

75. **Apologies for absence**

*HC 75

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R F D Sampson.

76. **Declarations of Interest**

*HC 76

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be discussed but none were made.

77. **Confirmation of Minutes**
*HC 77
The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 29 January 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to a correction to the minute numbering being made.
78. **Hub Committee Forward Plan**
*HC 78
Members were presented with the Hub Committee Forward Plan setting out items on the agenda for Hub Committee meetings for the next four months.
79. **It's Time for a Rural Strategy - Cllr Edmonds**
*HC 79
Members were presented with a report that detailed work undertaken by the Rural Services Network on a Rural Strategy, and sought the Council's support of such an approach.

The Lead Member for Performance and Resources introduced the report.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Rural Services Network's Rural Strategy be supported and that support demonstrated by following the approach outlined in Section 5 of the report.
80. **Review of Enterprise Strategy - Cllr Oxborough**
*HC 80
Members were presented with a report that set out the key objectives, actions and associated officer resourcing of the draft Enterprise Strategy for West Devon Borough Council.

The Lead Member for Economy introduced the report. In doing so, he stressed the importance dialogue with town and parish councils and stakeholders in taking the Strategy forward.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the draft Enterprise Strategy be noted and supported.
81. **Draft Corporate Strategy Delivery Plans - Cllr Sanders**
*HC 81
Members were presented with a report that reviewed the progress in refining the Council's service offering under each of the six corporate themes, namely: Efficient and Effective Council, Communities, Enterprise, Environment, Homes and Wellbeing.

The Leader introduced the report, and stated that the Strategy would ensure the Council was outward facing. Other Members agreed that the Strategy would ensure collaboration. Finally, Members welcomed the flexibility within the report that enabled slight differences, whilst

understanding that the corporate strategy themes remained the same as those for South Hams District Council.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. The progress made to date on refining the Council's service offering under each of the Council's six corporate themes be acknowledged; and
2. The approach as detailed in section 5 of the report be supported, to further embed, promote and share the Council's corporate Strategy with newly elected Members and their communities.

82. **Syrian Vulnerable Persons Scheme Update -Cllr Leech**

*HC 82

Members were presented with a report that outlined how four families had been supported through the scheme so far, how widespread community support for the plight of refugees had been realised in West Devon and, as a result, the Safe Haven charity group had asked the Council to expand the pledge to take more refugees.

The Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing introduced the report and the Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits Practice responded to questions.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Progress on West Devon Borough Council's pledge to voluntarily participate in the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Scheme be noted; and
- (ii) Authority be delegated to the Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits Practice, in consultation with the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing, to extend the pledge to help Syrian Refugee Families in the circumstances set out in paragraph 5.1 of the presented report.

83. **Customer Satisfaction - Cllr Roberts**

*HC 83

Members were presented with a report that detailed progress made to date in improving customer satisfaction.

The Lead Member for Customer First introduced the report. Some Members were concerned particularly in light of a recent report that stated 10% of the population did not have access to a computer. In addition, West Devon had poor connectivity to mobile and internet signals. The Lead Member for Customer First responded that measures were in place to support those without online access, and the Chief Executive confirmed that the adopted default position for the Council was for customers to access services online.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the progress made to date in improving customer satisfaction as detailed in section 3 of the report be noted; and
- (ii) the next steps outlined in section 5 of the report be supported.

84. **Peer Review Action Plan - Cllr Sanders**

HC 84

Members were presented with a report and proposed Action Plan, following the Peer Challenge of West Devon Borough Council, jointly with South Hams District Council. The Action Plan reflected the recommendations in the Peer Challenge Report.

The Leader introduced the report. Members discussed the options presented in paragraph three of the report and agreed that progress with the Action Plan should not be delayed pending appointment to a Joint Working Group, as it was important to keep the momentum and continue with the work that had already taken place.

One Member asked that consideration be given to Members being able to Skype into meetings when Joint Briefing Sessions were held.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the Peer Challenge Action Plan as set out in Appendix A be implemented;
- (ii) the Local Government Association be asked to undertake a visit by the end of 2020 to follow up on progress in delivering the action plan; and
- (iii) Council be **RECOMMENDED** that a Joint Working Group be convened and the draft Terms of Reference for that group be approved as set out in Appendix B.

85. **Northern Outreach - Cllr Roberts**

HC 85

Members were presented with a report that set out the Hub Committee's preferred option for the Northern Outreach Service from a selection of options that were set out in paragraph 4 of the report. The report included an analysis of the current service, and a report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee was presented as an appendix to the report.

The Lead Member for Customer First introduced the report. Members discussed this matter at length in trying to attain the balance between equitable service provision across the Borough and available resources. Whilst some Members considered Option 3 within the report to withdraw the service from 1 April 2019 to be the favoured option, they were minded to take the views of the Okehampton Ward Members into account and therefore favour Option 2. Members were advised that, in choosing Option 2, they would need to be confident of the direction after the monitoring period. Members also requested that monitoring take place at Tavistock, to enable understanding of the needs of the service users as a whole.

Finally, the majority of Members agreed that Option 2 would be the preferred way forward, amended to enable a report to be brought back to the Hub Committee with the results of the monitoring after a three month period.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** that the Hub Committee preferred option for the Northern Outreach Service was to reduce the service to a single day per week and monitored for a three month period and a report presented back to the Hub Committee meeting on 16 July 2019 that include the results of the monitoring, along with results of the monitoring at Tavistock, to enable a decision on the future provision of the service.

86. **Car Parking Strategy - Cllr Sampson**

*HC 86

Members were presented with a report that considered the future of the Parking Strategy Group in order to ensure that appropriate place-based solutions could be offered to communities when considering the forward planning of community services, including car parks, and town and village economies.

The Leader introduced the report, as the Lead Member for Commercial Services had given apologies for the meeting.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the work of the Parking Strategy Group to date be recognised and commended;
2. the Parking Strategy Group, in its current format is not appointed to at the Annual Council Meeting on 21 May 2019 but that its work be included within the remit of future Place Based engagement groups; and
3. in the interim period, the aims of the Strategy continue to be delivered with appropriate engagement with individual community stakeholders.

87. **Employee Terms and Conditions - Cllr Edmonds**

*HC 87

Members were presented with a report that presented the outcome of a review of options for reducing staff costs by varying terms from the Green Book from 2020/21. The report focused on two main aspects. Firstly, the current contractual situation, the presence of the national joint collective bargaining machinery and the legal considerations to be taken into account if changes in terms and conditions were proposed. Secondly, a number of options pursued by other local authorities.

The Lead Member for Resources and Performance introduced the report. The Interim Head of Human Resources Practice and the Leader responded to a number of questions of clarity.

Members noted that Terms and Conditions could be an agenda item for discussion once the Joint Group is convened, as set out Agenda Item 12: Peer Challenge Action Plan, Minute HC84 refers.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the options available in respect of employee terms and conditions as set out in the report be noted;
- (ii) the Head of HR Practice, in consultation with the Chief Executive and Trade Union representatives –
 - a. Develop a policy for unpaid career breaks;
 - b. Review the Managing Attendance Policy and present recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team by September 2019;
 - c. Review the Essential User Car Allowance Scheme and eligibility by September 2019; and
 - d. Review the Councils Redundancy Scheme by March 2020.

88. **Exempt -Public and Press excluded**

* HC 88

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act is involved.

89. **Accommodation Strategy -Cllr Jory**

HC 89

Members were presented with a report that set out a number of recommendations regarding the future accommodation strategy at Kilworthy Park.

The Lead Member for Assets introduced the report.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED:**

- 1. To agree a future accommodation strategy which will consider all alternative accommodation options and get best value for the site;
- 2. To form a Member Working Group of six Members, to be selected by the Group Leaders, to determine their terms of reference and work through options and to make recommendations to Hub Committee in July 2019; and
- 3. For the group to give consideration to each of the options outlined at paragraph 4.1 of the presented agenda report.

90. **Readmittance of Public and Press**

*HC 90

It was then **RESOLVED** that the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting.

91.

Internal Audit Review of Commercial Property process

HC 91

Members were presented with a report that had been produced by the Internal Audit Manager, to review the commercial property process for West Devon Borough Council. He introduced the report and provided a summary, and then took Members through his recommendations.

A number of Members wished to record their sincere thanks to the Internal Audit Manager, and noted that he had achieved a great deal of work within a challenging timeframe.

Subject to minor comments, the recommendations were accepted by the Hub Committee. The report would also be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and full Council meeting, both to be held on 26 March 2019.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the contents and recommendations of the report and their onward consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and full Council be noted.

(NOTE: THESE DECISIONS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HC 84 (3), HC 85 and HC 89 WHICH ARE RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL ON 26 MARCH 2019, WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH, 2019 UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 18).

The Meeting concluded at 5.20 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
