

# WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



**Minutes** of a meeting of the **West Devon Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday, 25th February, 2020** at **2.00 pm** at the **Chamber - Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

**Chairman** Cllr Ewings  
**Vice Chairman**

Cllr Ball  
Cllr Heyworth  
Cllr Ratcliffe  
Cllr Spettigue

Cllr Daniel  
Cllr Musgrave  
Cllr Southcott  
Cllr Wood

**In attendance:**

Councillors:

Cllr Crozier  
Cllr Hipsey  
Cllr Leech

Cllr Edmonds  
Cllr Jory  
Cllr Renders

Officers:

Director of Governance and Assurance  
Senior Specialist – Democratic Services  
Customer Service Improvement Manager  
Fusion Lifestyle Representatives  
Specialist (Leisure)

78. **Apologies for Absence**

\*O&S 78

Apologies for absence for this meeting were received from Cllrs T Bolton, A Coulson, C Kemp, P Kimber, D Moyse and P Ridgers.

79. **Confirmation of Minutes**

\*O&S 79

The minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 January 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

Whilst not related to the accuracy of the minutes, the Chairman made reference to Minute \*O&S 69 (A386 / Rail Project) and gave a personal commitment that the Committee would not lose sight of this matter. Specifically regarding the potential for Devon County Council to support the cost of submitting a planning application for a cycle route, it was agreed that an update should be sought from the Head of Place Making Practice.

80. **Declarations of Interest**

\*O&S 80

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of this meeting but there were none made.

81. **Public Forum**

\*O&S 81

The Chairman informed that no formal requests had been received in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

82. **Hub Committee Forward Plan**

\*O&S 82

It was noted that no prior requests had been received for updates on any future Hub Committee agenda items at this meeting.

83. **Fusion Lifestyle - Annual Report and Presentation**

\*O&S 83

The Committee considered a report that presented an introduction to the Annual Report from Fusion Lifestyle on the management of all six Leisure Centres across the West Devon Borough and South Hams District.

In their ensuing presentation, the Fusion representatives focused on the following areas:

- Capital Developments;
- Cashless Implementation;
- Key Performance Indicators;
- Performance Update for 2019; and
- 2020 Vision and Continued Investment.

During the subsequent debate, the following points were raised:-

- (a) In line with the national trend, there was a recognition that the leisure centres in the Borough were aging buildings that would soon require some investment works to be carried out;
- (b) A Member questioned whether the proposals to instil a Concierge Reception would result in a reduction in staff. In reply, the representatives informed that, whilst the proposals would not result in a net reduction of employees, it was likely to result in fewer staff being based in the Reception area. The Committee was

also assured that the existing disabled and pushchair access provision in the Reception areas would still be retained;

- (c) By way of an update on the moveable floor at Parklands Leisure Centre, the representatives informed that it had now been fully operational since November 2019 and an options paper had been drafted for future consideration. In welcoming the update, local Ward Members asked to be kept informed on this matter;
- (d) With regard to comparable participation numbers between 2018 and 2019, Members welcomed the significant increase at Meadowlands Leisure Centre, but did question why there was only a minimal increase at Parklands Leisure Centre. As an assurance, the representatives replied that the initial trends in 2020 were already suggesting an increase in the usage of the Gym and Studio facilities. Furthermore, greater focus was now being given by Fusion to its programmes during school holidays and there was also added emphasis being applied to the promotion of the Centre Swim School;
- (e) The Committee was advised that its GP Exercise Referral Scheme was a particular priority area for Fusion. Members welcomed this emphasis and requested a further Member Briefing be arranged to provide an opportunity for further consideration to be given to this matter;
- (f) As a general point, in the event of any Members having specific leisure service related issues or queries, then they were reminded to contact the Council's Assets Specialist in the first instance;
- (g) A number of tributes were paid to the work of the Task and Finish Group in its recent review into the relationship between Fusion and its local communities. Specifically in respect of the recommendations related to the cleanliness of the Centres, the representatives recognised that this was a challenge that required addressing. By way of an update, the cleaning contractual arrangements were being reviewed and it was hoped that by 1 March 2020 an ongoing TUPE issue would be resolved thereby enabling this project to be progressed;
- (h) The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group wished to thank those Fusion staff who had been involved in the review. The Member proceeded to make specific reference to the Council's recently adopted Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan (Minute CM 51 refers) and her wish to see a detailed Plan on how Fusion envisaged reducing its reliance on the use of Fossil Fuels. In response, the representatives advised of their intention to develop such a Plan during this year with a view to reporting it back to the Committee at its next Annual Update. In addition, the representatives highlighted their organisational commitment to reduce their proportion of waste that was going to landfill and confirmed that they would provide further details outside of this Committee meeting;

- (i) In reply to some Member concerns over the Air Handling Unit at Meadowlands, the representatives provided an update and expressed their confidence that the two phases of work would result in the problem being resolved.

It was then:

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee welcome the contents of the 2019 Annual Report and the proposals for 2020 and has made a number of comments as recorded in the minutes above.

84.

**Verbal Update on the work of the Climate Change & Biodiversity Working Group**

\*O&S 84

In his capacity as lead officer, the Director – Governance and Assurance provided an update on the work of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group. In so doing, he made particular reference to:

- the Council having now established its own Carbon Footprint and the target to have a net zero Footprint by 2030, which was acknowledged to be an ambitious target;
- the flooding responsibilities for local authorities;
- the differences between Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 Emissions. Whilst informing the Committee of the main differences, Members noted that Scope 1 Emissions (i.e. those that were within the direct control of the Council) were more straightforward to quantify than the Scope 2 and Scope 3 equivalents;
- there being a need to now engage more with the local community. In so doing, the officer recognised that there were a number of experts living within the West Devon Borough area and the Working Group had agreed in principle to set up a Community Board. A meeting with some local experts had already been set up at Tavistock Town Council and was to be held during the week commencing 2 March 2020 and it was hoped that a similar meeting could be arranged in the northern area of the Borough; and
- the progress that had already been made by the Council. In outlining some of the progress, the lead officer emphasised that the Working Group had already identified transport and housing as being two key areas of focus for the Council.

During the ensuing debate, the following points were raised:-

- (a) When questioned, the lead officer confirmed that the Council's Leisure Centres would be a key element in evaluating the Scope 3 Emissions;
- (b) It was agreed that copies of the documents that had been referred to by the lead officer in his presentation would be circulated to all Members;

- (c) A number of Members welcomed the increased emphasis on community engagement, but did recognise that it would present the Council with a number of challenges;
- (d) The Committee acknowledged that the Council was one of only a few to have included Biodiversity in its Climate Change Emergency Declaration. To help the Council to build up a Borough wide picture of Biodiversity related information, Members were encouraged to promote within their local communities the use of the Council's Climate Change email address;
- (e) A lengthy debate ensued on the linkages between standards of new build construction and the Climate Change agenda. In particular, the Committee made reference to the Council decision at its meeting that was held on 17 December 2019 (Minute CM 51 refers):

*'The Council actively lobbies both Central Government and its local MPs to improve the standard of infrastructure and new development and to introduce incentives to make our homes as energy efficient and clean as possible.'*

When questioned, officers confirmed that the Council had not yet received any responses to the correspondence that had been sent following the meeting on 17 December 2019.

Furthermore, Members felt that the Devon Building Control Partnership Committee should give this issue formal consideration at a future meeting.

It was then:

**RESOLVED**

1. That the update on the work of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group be welcomed; and
2. That the Devon Building Control Partnership Committee be asked to give formal consideration to potential methods and incentives to make new development as energy efficient and clean as possible.

85.

**Customer Satisfaction Progress - Quarterly Update**

\*O&S 85

Members considered a report that presented the progress made to date in the development of the Customer Satisfaction Improvement Plan.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) To enable for comparisons to be drawn, the Committee requested that statistical information be presented in future quarterly updates. In accepting the point, the Committee acknowledged that officers were reviewing the high level reporting process for the desired outcomes that were aligned to each of the six themes that underpinned the Council's adopted Corporate Strategy. As a consequence, it was

anticipated that the method by which the Council reported its performance would be presented in a different format in the future;

- (b) Members welcomed the roll-out of the new accessibility website toolbar that was due to be launched imminently.

It was then:

**RESOLVED**

That the progress made to date be noted.

86. **Task and Finish Groups Updates (if any)**

\*O&S 86

The Committee noted that there were no active Task and Finish Groups at the time of this meeting.

87. **Annual Work Programme 2019/20**

\*O&S 87

The Committee considered the latest version of its Work Programme for the remainder of the 2019/20 Municipal Year and it was requested that an update on the Member Locality Fund be presented to a future Committee meeting.

The Meeting concluded at 4.10 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chairman**

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