

WEST DEVON HUB COMMITTEE



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Hub Committee** held
on
Tuesday, 16th May, 2017 at **2.00 pm** at the **Chamber -
Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Sanders
Vice Chairman Cllr Baldwin

Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Moody
Cllr Parker
Cllr Samuel

Cllr Jory
Cllr Oxborough
Cllr Sampson

In attendance:

Councillors:
Cllr Cann OBE
Cllr Lamb
Cllr Mott
Cllr Yelland

Cllr Davies
Cllr Leech
Cllr Musgrave

Officers:
Lisa Buckle
Nadine Trout
Lucy Ford
Sophie Hosking

Section 151 Officer
Commissioning Manager
Joint Procurement Officer
Executive Director

71. **Welcome**

***HC 71**

As this was the first meeting since his recent election, the Chairman took the opportunity to welcome Cllr Brian Lamb on to the membership of West Devon Borough Council.

72. **Declarations of Interest**

***HC 72**

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

73. **Confirmation of Minutes**

***HC 73**

The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 28th March 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

74. **Lead Member Update - Cllr Samuel**

***HC 74**

Cllr Samuel began by explaining how the Health and Wellbeing portfolio covered a vast area of responsibility across the Council and her update today was intended to highlight some key areas of work over the last year.

In making her presentation, Cllr Samuel advised Members of the following:

Members had been asked to allocate some of the Public Health grant funding from Devon County Council for a pilot scheme for Social Prescribing. The scheme had been in operation since August 2016. It was set up to offer social advice and information at three GP surgeries in the Borough at Chagford, Lifton and Yelverton. The project aim was to help tackle underlying social factors affecting patients by intervening at an early stage.

In the first quarter of operation, 37 unique clients had been seen of which 21 were new to Citizens Advice. 91 advice issues were presented and £46,345 income had been gained for those individuals in accessing new benefit claims. This was a positive step forward in helping residents within the Community who were in need.

Partnerships with the CAB and CVS had been reviewed to ensure the outcomes were linked to the Councils priority themes.

The Council awarded £164,000 Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) which equated to 43 projects to facilitate independent living through the adaptation of homes such as level shower access, stair lifts and rails.

The DFG delivery had improved and performance had moved from 'average' to 'very good'. The main success was in processing applications quicker, which had enabled the Council to access further funding from the better care fund.

The Council had adopted the Five Year Homeless Strategy and 226 cases of homelessness had been prevented (down from 282 last year). The next year would be challenging for the homeless sector as recently the Homeless Reduction Bill passed its reading in the House of Lords and was now awaiting Royal Assent prior to becoming legislation which would change and reform housing benefit, particularly for under 21s, people in supported housing and funding for temporary accommodation.

Aspirations for the following year included linking to the Homes agenda, particularly looking at fuel poverty and energy efficiency; working with existing schemes such as the Local Energy Advice Programme and signposting customers to the schemes and looking to develop a healthy workforce as it was vital that we remained healthy ourselves.

In response to a request for a geographical breakdown of the homeless cases prevented, the Lead Member advised that whilst she did not have the information with her, it would be circulated to Members at a later date.

Members thanked and praised the Lead Member for the report, and noted that the examples of work undertaken on behalf of the community should be drawn to public attention.

75. **T18 Task and Finish Group - Final Report (Cllr Mott of Task & Finish Group)**

***HC 75**

Members were presented with a report that presented the findings of the T18 Review Task and Finish Group, as endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny (Internal) Committee.

Cllr Mott, as Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, introduced the report. Members stated that the report was concise and well presented. There was a detailed discussion on this item and the following points were raised:

- It was confirmed that, at this time, the Senior Leadership Team was unaware of any desire for South Hams District Council to conduct a similar review;
- A Member noted that despite the challenges faced by staff the T18 project had been delivered within budget and there were now improving performance trends in most areas. As a result, a debt of gratitude was owed to staff;
- Members felt the conclusions in the presented appendix should be worked into a document that could be embedded into existing Codes of Practice so that lessons were learned from the review. In further discussing this point, Members requested a Working Group of Members consider the conclusions and report back to the Hub Committee at a later date. This was agreed and the membership of the Working Group would comprise of the Task and Finish Group Members with Cllrs Edmonds and Moody; representing the Hub Committee;
- One Member noted that the recommendation that monthly monitoring reports be produced for projects may be onerous. In response, Cllr Mott stated that, in some cases the report may only be a short report to confirm that the project was still live and ongoing, but this would be sufficient to remind Members that the project continued and progress was being made;
- The Executive Director (SD&CD) responded to comments related to the relationship between SLT and Members by stating that in the early days of the T18 Programme there were new Members and a new management team and there was some uncertainty around how information should be shared. However, she concurred with the recommendations within the report and felt they were positive in how to take things forward;

- In response to comments from one Member relating to the need to keep the wider membership updated, the Leader outlined the latest position in respect of the IT contract. In so doing, he noted that the planning portal on the Council website was a good example of where the purchased system did not work well but that staff within IT had developed a bespoke portal that was working much more effectively.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the findings and conclusions of the Task and Finish Group (as outlined in Appendix 1) be noted; and
2. a Working Group of Members to comprise of the Task and Finish Review Group and Cllrs Edmonds and Sampson from the Hub Committee consider the conclusions presented and report back in due course.

76. **Future Garden Waste Service Design (Cllr Sampson)**

***HC 76**

Members were presented with a report that detailed the operational changes that required implementation timing for an opt-in charged garden waste service in West Devon and addressed the minute of Council on 7 February 2017 (Minute CM 55 refers).

The Lead Member introduced the report and responded to questions. In response to concerns that the price was being set until 2019, the Group Manager Commercial Services reminded Members that inflationary pressures that could impact on the cost of the service such as fuel were built into the contract with the service provider and therefore would not result in a budget deficit for the Council.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. The annual subscription for the opt-in, garden waste service be set at £40 and be fixed for the duration of the current waste contract (to 31 March 2019);
2. The service started as soon as possible which, subject to confirmation of container delivery times, is estimated to be late summer 2017;
3. A structured campaign be delivered to promote the scheme and also to promote home composting as the best environmental option; and
4. Any changes considered necessary to the terms as highlighted be delegated to the Commissioning Manager (Waste) in consultation with the Lead Hub Committee Member for Commercial Services.

77. **Using the Cornwall & West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document in decision making (Cllr Parker)**

HC 77

Members were presented with a report that outlined how the World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document (WHS SPD), which had been prepared by the Cornish Mining WHS Partnership to support the protection of the asset through

the UK planning system and had been adopted by Cornwall Council, was being presented to Hub Committee to consider with a view to recommending to full Council that the document be adopted.

It was further requested that the Committee endorse two further actions in order to further strengthen the status of the WHS in the planning process:

- That the Thriving Towns and Villages Supplementary Planning Document (TTV SPD) included clarification and detail with respect to Policies SPT11, TTV 20, DEV21 and DEV23 of the emerging Joint Local Plan, drawing on the WHS SPD as its evidence base; and
- A review of the Tavistock Conservation Area Management Plan is undertaken and that this incorporates a WHS element, again drawing on the WHS SPD as its evidence base.

The Lead Member for Strategic Housing introduced the report. Members discussed the importance of the World Heritage Site listing. The Lead Member confirmed that an officer had been identified to undertake the review of the Tavistock Conservation Area Management Plan.

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

- i. Agree to adopt Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document as a guidance document in planning decision making;
- ii. Agree the approach of including clarification on and further detail to Policies SPT11, TTV20, DEV21 and DEV23 of the emerging Joint Local Plan in the Thriving Towns and Villages Supplementary Planning Document; and
- iii. Agree to a review of the Tavistock Conservation Area Management Plan with the specific purpose of incorporating a World Heritage Site element into that document.

78. **100% Business Rate Retention Consultation Response (Cllr Edmonds)**

HC 78

Members were presented with a report that set out the Council's response to a consultation document published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) entitled '100% Business Rates Retention: further consultation on the design of the reformed system'.

The Lead Member introduced the report, and the s151 Officer outlined the main areas within the consultation response for Members information and responded to queries. Members were advised that a number of existing grants were likely to be rolled up into the new Business Rates payments. Members asked that the right message was communicated to the public, as there was currently evidence of misunderstanding in respect of the Council receiving 100% of business rates, giving the perception that the Council could receive significant additional funding in the future. In fact, the Council will only receive a share of the 100% of business rates and the share is currently to be determined. The risk is that the Council could end up with less funding from business rates in the future.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. The response to the 100% Business Rates Retention consultation as presented at Appendix A to the report be noted; and
2. Council be **RECOMMENDED** that West Devon Borough Council agrees 'in principle' to apply to DCLG to become a business rates pilot for 2018/19, in alliance with the County Council, subject to the financial modelling being undertaken by Local Government Futures (on behalf of the Devon s151 Officers Group) demonstrating that there is no financial detriment to Authorities in doing so.

79. **Insurance Contract (Cllr Edmonds)**

***HC 79**

(Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information)

Members were presented with an exempt report that sought agreement to extend the current insurance contract by 3 months to end on 31 December 2017.

The Lead Member for Support Services presented the report.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Hub Committee agrees to extend the current insurance contract by 3 months to end on 31 December 2017.

The Meeting concluded at 4.05 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
