

WEST DEVON OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY (EXTERNAL) COMMITTEE



Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Overview & Scrutiny (External) Committee** held on **Tuesday, 14th June, 2016 at 2.00 pm** at the **Chamber - Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Sellis
Vice Chairman Cllr Cloke

Cllr Cheadle
Cllr Leech
Cllr Roberts
Cllr Stephens

Cllr Jory
Cllr Pearce
Cllr Sheldon
Cllr Watts

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Baldwin
Cllr Moyse
Cllr Parker
Cllr Yelland

Cllr Benson
Cllr Musgrave
Cllr Sanders

Officers:

1. **Apologies for absence**

***O&S(E) 1**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr K Ball.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

***O&S(E) 2**

The minutes of the Meeting held on 15 March 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

At the discretion of the Chairman, a Member was permitted to express his disappointment that there had still been no retraction in the local press in respect of the misleading article that had wrongly stated that a Council meeting had been held with Mel Stride MP (Minute *O&S(E) 36 refers). In response, it was agreed that this matter would be taken up with the Council's Communications Team.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

***O&S(E) 3**

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

4. **Public Forum**

***O&S(E) 4**

The Chairman informed that there had been no issues raised for this meeting in accordance with the Public Forum.

5. **Hub Committee Forward Plan**

***O&S(E) 5**

The most recent (published 9 June 2016) Hub Committee Forward Plan was presented for consideration and was duly noted without any issues being raised.

6. **Joint Local Plan Update**

***O&S(E) 6**

(Resolved that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be disclosed as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12(A) to the Act).

The lead Hub Committee Member for the Local Plan provided an update to the Committee and, in so doing, made particular reference to:-

- Cllr Baldwin and him being the two Council representatives on the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan Steering Group;
- the Plan being worked upon by a combination of officers across Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council;
- the requirement for each partner authority to work together to ascertain actual housing need in the area. To supplement

- this requirement, a consultant had been appointed to undertake a Housing Market Need Assessment on behalf of the authorities. The Member confirmed that the draft Assessment had now been received and was being checked by officers to ensure that they were content with the facts and assumptions included;
- the focus of future development in West Devon and South Hams being on market towns and the local centres;
 - Neighbourhood Plans. Members were advised that one of the principles of the Joint Local Plan was that decisions should be taken locally and that Neighbourhood Plans would be a vital instrument in this regard;
 - a public consultation exercise that would commence on 1 July 2017;
 - the current focus being on the site allocation and housing need policies. In the upcoming summer months, it was noted that other policies (including an Economy policy) would be developed. In reply to a question, the Member confirmed that it was hoped that the Plan would ultimately be adopted by June/July 2017;
 - the main risks. The Committee was advised that the main identified risks at this stage were further changes being made to national policy and the responses received during the aforementioned public consultation exercise.

In the ensuing discussion, particular reference was made to:-

- (a) the involvement of the Dartmoor National Park. Whilst dialogue and co-operation was taking place with the National Park, it was confirmed that the organisation was not a member of the Local Plan Steering Group, mainly in light of its area of responsibility straddling two different housing market needs areas. Whilst some concerns were expressed at this lack of representation, assurances were given to the Committee that working relations with the National Park were very positive;
- (b) housing allocations. It was confirmed that the outcome of the Housing Needs Assessment would be that the Council would have a target number of houses that it would need to deliver across the West Devon borough;
- (c) the continued monitoring role of the Committee. In recognising the importance of the Joint Local Plan, the Committee requested that this matter be retained as a standing agenda item for the foreseeable future;
- (d) support for Neighbourhood Planning Groups. In light of neighbourhood plans being currently produced in a vacuum, a

Member emphasised the importance of the Council re-convening meetings of the Neighbourhood Planning Groups Forum in order that they can receive some much needed support. In reply, Members stated that, whilst the importance of Neighbourhood Plans could not be underestimated in this process, the loss of central government funding in this regard was not helpful.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked the lead Member for his informative presentation and honest responses to the questions raised by the Committee and it was then **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and when put to the vote declared **CARRIED** that: 'the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.'

7. **Health and Wellbeing (Leisure) Procurement Update**

***O&S(E) 7**

The Assets Community Of Practice Lead provided an update to the Committee on the Health and Wellbeing (Leisure) Procurement exercise. In so doing, the following points were raised:-

- It was noted that the tenders were currently being finalised before the deadline of 22 June 2016. Following this deadline, officers would then be evaluating the final submissions before recommending a preferred bidder to the Joint WD/SH Member Leisure Board;
- Once a preferred bidder had been selected, it was intended that they would attend and present their proposals to an all Member Briefing at Kilworthy Park on 18 July 2016 at 10.00am. It was also anticipated that this session would enable all Members the opportunity to ask pertinent questions. Whilst acknowledging that this Briefing had been fixed in consultation with the Member Leisure Board, some Members advised of their inability to attend this session and questioned whether this date and time could be revisited. In response, officers confirmed that they would see if it was possible for the proposed date and time to be changed;
- The Committee was advised that the recommendations on this procurement exercise would ultimately be presented to the Council meeting on 26 July 2016 and the South Hams District Council equivalent meeting on 28 July 2016.

8. **Task and Finish Group Updates**

***O&S(E) 8**

(a) DCH Review Proposal

As an update, the Committee requested that it be in receipt of a concluding report on this matter at its next meeting on 2 August 2016.

(b) Partnership Review

The Deputy Leader introduced this update and highlighted that:

- meetings were currently being held with representatives from those partnerships that had been deemed as being 'significant';
- the Group hoped to be in a position to make its final recommendations to the next Committee meeting on 2 August 2016;
- a letter had been sent to all partners informing them that the outcome of the Review could be a funding reduction in the 2017/18 Budget; and
- it was already apparent that some partnerships provided better value for money to the Council than others.

9. **Committee Decisions Log**

***O&S(E) 9**

The latest version of the Committee decisions log was presented to the meeting and, with no debate or discussion, it was:

RESOLVED

That the published Decisions Log be noted.

10. **Draft Annual Work Programme**

***O&S(E) 10**

The Committee considered its draft 2016/17 Work Programme and made reference to the following comments, additions and amendments:-

- (a) It was agreed that the joint WD/SH Economy Working Group findings would be presented to the Committee meeting on either 2 August 2016 or 11 October 2016;
- (b) The Chairman confirmed that she had made contact with the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner and she had agreed to attend the Committee meeting on 11 October 2016;

(c) It was noted that progress had been made with the NHS England agenda item and a representative from the organisation had now confirmed their ability to attend the next Committee meeting on 2 August 2016.

The Meeting concluded at 3.15 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
