

# WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (EXTERNAL) COMMITTEE



**Minutes** of a meeting of the **West Devon Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday, 7th July, 2015** at **2.00 pm** at the **Chamber - Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

**Chairman** Cllr Ridgers  
**Vice Chairman** Cllr Cloke

Cllr Ball  
Cllr Leech  
Cllr Pearce  
Cllr Roberts

Cllr Sheldon  
Cllr Stephens  
Cllr Watts

**In attendance:**

Councillors:  
Cllr Evans  
Cllr Moody  
Cllr Musgrave

Cllr Sampson  
Cllr Yelland

Officers:  
Head of Paid Service

Place and Strategy – Lead Specialist

1. **Apologies for Absence**  
**\*O&S(E) 1**  
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R Cheadle and N Jory.
2. **Declarations of Interest**  
**\*O&S(E) 2**  
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.
3. **Committee Terms of Reference**  
**\*O&S(E) 3**  
Being the first meeting of the newly established Committee, its draft terms of reference were presented for consideration.

In consideration, the following points were raised:-

- Having sought clarification regarding the Call-in process, the Committee requested that the rules be circulated to all Members for their information;
- The Chairman informed that he was keen for the Committee to develop closer working relations with external partner agencies;
- The importance of the Committee following up on its agreed actions was emphasised. In response, officers confirmed that a Committee decisions log would be a standing agenda item for the Committee in the future;
- The Committee recognised the importance of the Council's Partnership arrangements. In so doing, Members felt it would be beneficial to consider a collated list of partnerships that the Council was involved in to enable for consideration of factors such as: performance and value for money. As a consequence, the Committee requested that this matter be considered at its next meeting on 29 September 2015;
- Officers gave assurances that Overview and Scrutiny related training would be included in the Council's Learning and Development Programme;
- A process for considering agenda items related to external agencies and partners was established. In stressing the reluctance for standardised presentations, the Committee agreed the following three stage process:
  1. Circulation to Members of background information relating to the external agency/partner;
  2. Submission of advanced questions from Members to officers; and
  3. Agenda item presentation based upon the advanced questions received.

It was then:

**RESOLVED**

That the terms of reference (as outlined in the presented agenda report) be noted.

4.

**Public Forum**

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

The Chairman informed that the creation of a Public Forum was a new and exciting concept. Whilst no questions (or issues) had been raised by the public for consideration at this meeting, the Chairman commented that it was incumbent upon Members to promote this concept amongst their local communities.

In discussion, particular reference was made to:-

- (a) confirmation that the Forum would be promoted on the Council website;
- (b) the Forum procedures being amended to restrict individual speakers to a maximum of three minutes each;

- (c) the need for some guidance notes to be produced which underpin the Forum procedures. The Committee requested that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Paid Service and Senior Specialist – Democratic Services, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, to produce and publish the guidance notes.

It was then:

### **RESOLVED**

1. That, subject to inclusion of the provision whereby each individual speaker should be restricted to a maximum of three minutes each, the Public Forum procedures be approved; and
2. That the Head of Paid Service and Senior Specialist – Democratic Services, in consultation with the Committee Chairman, be granted delegated authority to produce and publish a set of guidance notes to underpin the Public Forum procedures.

## **5. Hub Committee Forward Plan**

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

The most recent (published 2 July 2015) Hub Committee Forward Plan was presented for consideration.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the main purpose of this standing agenda item. It was noted that the main purpose was to enable lead Hub Committee Members to be called to Committee meetings to update Scrutiny Members on specific items which were scheduled to come forward to the Hub Committee, thereby enabling early scrutiny of proposed agenda items;
- (b) the provision for public questions to be raised at Hub Committee meetings;
- (c) differentiating between Internal and External Overview and Scrutiny matters. The Committee requested that, in the future, the Forward Plan include an additional column that illustrated whether a Hub Committee agenda item was within the remit of the Internal or External Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **(i) Leisure Services Procurement**

The Lead Hub Committee Member for Commercial Services and Contracts and Place Strategy – Lead Specialist attended the meeting to provide an update on the Leisure Services Procurement agenda item that was being presented to the next Hub Committee meeting.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- it being regrettable that the recently published Hub Committee report had not been circulated to the Committee. Nonetheless, it was agreed that a copy of the published report would be

circulated to Committee Members before the Hub Committee meeting;

- the proposed award criteria. The lead Member confirmed that the proposed percentage weighting for the award criteria had been considered at great length and the following percentage allocations were being recommended:- Services (40%), Technical (10%) and Commercial (50%).

A number of Members stressed the importance of the contract being sufficiently robust in respect of responsibility for replacement(s), repair(s) and maintenance. As a result, these Members questioned whether the weighting for Technical should be increased to 15%. To reflect this increase, some Members felt that the weighting allocated for Services should be reduced to 35%, whereas other Members were of the view that the allocation for Commercial should be decreased to 45%.

In light of these strong views, officers gave an assurance that further work on the proposed weighting for Technical would be undertaken with colleagues and the joint Member board before the Hub Committee meeting on 14 July 2015.

- the starting point for letting the contract being to award to a single contractor across both councils for a minimum of 20 years and a maximum of 25 years. However, the lead Member confirmed that the process would retain complete flexibility, with there being potential for tender submissions from local interest groups and for bids to be made for a variety of different combinations of the leisure centres across the South Hams and West Devon. A Member was of the view that there was local interest in the Okehampton area. However, such was the perceived lack of Council support to assist local groups in this regard that they would be at such a disadvantage and there was little point in them expressing a formal interest in the process;
- the quality of the leisure centre staff. In recognising the importance, the lead Member commented that it was particularly evident during the recent Leisure Centres tour that the staff at each site were very impressive.

It was then:

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Hub Committee take into account the comments and views of the Overview and Scrutiny (External) Committee (as summarised above) when it considers the Leisure Services Procurement agenda item at its next meeting.

6.

#### **Members Proposal Form for Potential Agenda Items \*O&S(E) 6**

Subject to inclusion of two minor amendments, Members were supportive of the proposal form being adopted and recognised the importance of the key objectives and outcomes sections of this document.

It was also noted that nothing would be excluded from consideration and each submitted form would be reviewed by a Panel comprising of the Head of Paid Service and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

It was then:

**RESOLVED**

That, subject to inclusion of two minor amendments, the Proposal Form be adopted as the means for submitting future agenda item requests, with submitted forms being determined within seven working days of receipt.

**7. Draft Work Programme 2015/16**

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

The Committee considered its draft 2015/16 Work Programme and made reference to the following additions and amendments:-

- (a) It was noted that consideration of the Council's list of partnerships would be scheduled on to the agenda for the next Committee meeting on 29 September 2015;
- (b) The importance of 'Our Plan' was emphasised by the Committee and a progress update on the document was requested for the Committee meeting on 17 November 2015;
- (c) Members confirmed their intention to submit proposal forms (minute O&S(E) 6 above refers) that seek approval to consider future agenda items in relation to rural broadband provision and the Chamber of Commerce;
- (d) The Committee agreed that a task and finish group should be established to undertake a review into Devon and Cornwall Housing. It was agreed that officers would support the group (comprising of Cllrs Ball, Leech and Watts) to develop some terms of reference and scope for the review, with this being reported back to the next Committee meeting. Whilst this would be formally reported to the next meeting, Members encouraged the group to commence with its work in the meantime;
- (e) Members acknowledged that a Committee Decisions Log would be a standing agenda item for future meetings.

The Meeting concluded at 4.00 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chairman**

