

# WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (EXTERNAL) COMMITTEE



**Minutes** of a meeting of the **West Devon Overview and Scrutiny (External) Committee** held on **Tuesday, 29th September, 2015 at 11.30am** at the **Chamber - Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

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

**In attendance:**

Cllr Ball  
Cllr Jory  
Cllr Leech

Cllr Roberts  
Cllr Stephens  
Cllr Watts

Councillors:

Cllr Baldwin  
Cllr Davies  
Cllr Moody  
Cllr Moyse

Cllr Musgrave  
Cllr Sampson  
Cllr Samuel  
Cllr Yelland

Officers:

Head of Paid Service  
Place & Strategy – Lead Specialist  
Group Manager – Commercial Services  
Lead Specialist – Waste Strategy  
CoP Lead – Environmental Health  
Senior Community Safety Officer (S Devon  
& Dartmoor Community Partnership)  
Inspector Mark Sloman  
Community Safety Officer

8. **Apologies for Absence**

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

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R Cheadle, T G Pearce and J Sheldon.

9. **Declarations of Interest**

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

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.

10. **Public Forum**  
**\*O&S(E) 10**  
The Chairman informed that there had been no issues raised for this meeting in accordance with the Public Forum.

11. **Hub Committee Forward Plan**  
**\*O&S(E) 11**  
The most recently published Hub Committee Forward Plan was presented for consideration.

**(i) Procurement of Waste and Cleansing Contract**

In light of there being a report scheduled for consideration at the Hub Committee meeting on 27 October 2015 entitled 'Procurement of Waste and Cleansing Contract', the Group Manager – Commercial Services and the Lead Specialist – Waste Strategy had been invited to provide an update to this meeting.

In so doing, it was noted that the Hub Committee would be requested to approve the tender process for the waste and cleansing contract, with this process being overseen by the Waste Working Group, with progress being regularly reported to future Hub Committee meetings.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

(a) the current waste and cleansing contract expiring on 31 March 2017;

(b) the role of the Waste Working Group. The Committee noted that the Working Group had a strategic role to play during this process and would consider future service provisions both individually and jointly with the equivalent South Hams District Council Working Group. When questioned, officers gave an assurance that all potential future options would be presented to the Working Group for consideration.

12. **Community Safety Partnership**  
**\*O&S(E) 12**  
The Committee considered a report that provided Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), as defined by Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Crime and Disorder (Overview & Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.

In her presentation, the Senior Community Safety Officer (South Devon and Dartmoor Community Safety Partnership) emphasised that the future funding for the CSP was uncertain, particularly in light of the Police and Crime Commissioners Elections, which were due to take place in May 2016.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) Officers confirmed that the 'Prevent' programme was an issue for the Partnership and there had been instances of referrals made from across the Partnership area;
- (b) In respect of the Tavistock Matters and Okehampton Matters meetings, Insp Sloman advised that these were very well received and those police representatives who attended these meetings found them to be very useful;
- (c) With regard to the associated costs of 'Targeted Families', it had been broadly estimated that this amounted to in the region of £220,000 per family (across a number of different agencies). Whilst more cost modelling was in the process of being developed, it was noted that the Partnership gave great emphasis to attempting to 'turnaround' these families. Members commented that they would welcome inclusion of greater cost analysis information in future reports from the Partnership;
- (d) For 2015/16, officers confirmed that the income to the CSP again included a £20,000 grant of Safer Communities funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner. In recognising the importance of this grant being retained beyond 2015/16, Members felt that they needed the Leader (who was the appointed Council representative on the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel) to use his influence in an attempt to retain this funding source;
- (e) The Council representative on the CSP informed that a positive meeting had recently taken place in Tavistock. Some of the relevant outcomes which had been generated from this meeting were that Tavistock was now considered to be a much safer town on both a Friday and Saturday night and the Council's support given to the local street pastors was recognised and very well received.

It was then:

**RESOLVED**

1. That the annual update report be noted; and
2. That Members would welcome the inclusion of greater cost analysis information in future update reports.

13. **Partnership Review**

**\*O&S(E) 13**

A report was considered that requested that a comprehensive review of the principles for partnerships be undertaken. The primary purpose of this piece of work would be to review the purpose and effectiveness of partnerships along with conducting a review of individual partnerships. In addition, it was felt that the review should also consider where there may be opportunities for efficiencies between the partners and with other organisations and whether other elements of Council work were suited to partnership working.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) A number of Members expressed their overriding support for such a review to be undertaken. Whilst Members acknowledged that the Terms of Reference for the Group would be agreed at its first meeting, they hoped that the Review could include consideration of:-
- the Council's financial contributions;
  - partnership outcomes and measuring tangible outcomes;
  - how proportionate the current process was and a wish to refresh the Council's approach;
  - ensuring that the Council obtained value for money from its partnership arrangements;
  - simplifying the approach to, and establishing more consistent, partnership arrangements; and
  - if possible, harmonising partnership arrangements with South Hams District Council;
- (b) Assurances were given that, whilst a joint task and finish group was being proposed, there would be the ability for the West Devon Group Members to meet in their own right to discuss and consider those partnerships only relevant to West Devon Borough Council;
- (c) Having invited nominations to serve on the Group, it was subsequently agreed that Cllrs Baldwin, Cloke, Stephens and Roberts would be the appointed representatives.

It was then:

**RESOLVED**

1. That the background information on Partnerships be noted;
2. That a task and finish group (comprising of Cllrs Baldwin, Cloke, Roberts and Stephens) be established to review the Council's Partnership arrangements. Where appropriate, the group should meet jointly with the equivalent South Hams District Council task and finish group;
3. That the terms of reference for the group be established (and agreed) at its first meeting; and
4. That the group regularly report back to meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny (External) Committee.

14.

**Decisions Log**

**\*O&S(E) 14**

Following the views expressed by Members at the last Committee meeting

It was then:

**RESOLVED**

That the published Decisions Log be noted.

15.

**Draft Work Programme 2015/16**

**\*O&S(E) 15**

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

- (a) With regard to the proposal raised at the last meeting to undertake a review into Devon and Cornwall Housing and specifically the rents payable by tenants of the former West Devon Homes, the Chairman read to the meeting a written submission from the COP Lead Housing, Revenue and Benefits. Whilst noting the comments, Members advised that this remained a problem and felt that to use Exeter rents as a benchmark for West Devon residents was wholly inappropriate. As a way forward, the Committee requested that a meeting be held between the COP Lead Housing, Revenue and Benefits and Cllrs Ball, Leech and Watts in an attempt to focus on the key issues before an update was presented back to the Committee;
- (b) The Committee requested that a progress update be presented on behalf of the Leisure Member Working Group to the next Committee meeting on 17 November 2015;
- (c) Members also felt it would be timely to be in receipt of an update on the Rural Broadband project. As a result, Members asked that project representatives be invited to attend the next Committee meeting on 17 November 2015.

The Meeting concluded at 12.50 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chairman**

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