

WEST DEVON HUB COMMITTEE



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Hub Committee** held
on
Tuesday, 16th March, 2021 at **2.00 pm** via **Teams**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Jory
Vice Chairman Cllr Samuel

Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Leech
Cllr Moody
Cllr Sellis

Cllr Mott
Cllr Cheadle
Cllr Pearce

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Crozier
Cllr Ewings
Cllr Hipsey
Cllr Kimber
Cllr Ratcliffe
Cllr Wood

Cllr Daniel
Cllr Heyworth
Cllr Kemp
Cllr Musgrave
Cllr Southcott
Cllr Yelland

Officers:

Senior Leadership Team
Monitoring Officer
Democratic Services Manager
Head of Strategy & Projects
Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits
Affordable Housing Specialist
Senior Specialist Environmental Health
Business Manager (Specialists)
Business Manager (Case Management)
Senior Specialist – Place Making

60.

Apologies for absence

*HC 60

No apologies were received.

61. **Declarations of Interest**

*HC 61

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be discussed and these were recorded as follows:

Cllr T G Pearce declared a personal interest in agenda item 9: 'Community Housing – Brentor and Lamerton' (Minute HC 67 below refers) by virtue of being the Chairman of Brentor Parish Council and remained in the meeting during the debate and vote on this item; and

Cllr D K A Sellis declared a personal interest in agenda item 12: 'Public Space Protection Order – Dog Controls' (Minute HC 70 below refers) by virtue of walking her dog on Dartmoor and remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and vote thereon.

62. **Confirmation of Minutes**

*HC 62

The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 2 February 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

63. **Public Questions - a period of up to 15 minutes is available to deal with issues raised by the public**

*HC 63

One Question had been received from a member of the public as follows:

Question from Helen Harris

Will the toilets at the car park at Brentor be open from Easter for the season?

In reply, the Leader informed that it was intended that the toilets at the car park would be open from 1 April (as per the annual contract), subject to confirmation from the church to the Parish Council that its financial contribution towards maintaining the toilets would be received.

64. **Hub Committee Forward Plan**

*HC 64

Members were presented with the Hub Committee Forward Plan setting out items on the agenda for Hub Committee meetings for the next four months and the Plan was duly noted without any further comment.

65. **Lead Hub Committee Member Update - Cllr Jory**

*HC 65

The Leader introduced his update and advised that it was intended to focus on the proposed timeline for the Council's Corporate Strategy. The Leader introduced the proposed timeline for the Strategy (as set out at Appendix A to these minutes) and made particular reference to:

- the importance of all Members being involved in the development of the Strategy; and
- his wish for the Strategy (once adopted) to be in place for the next three years. Furthermore, it was the wish of the Leader for the Strategy to sharpen the Council's focus on community and to create specific measurable targets that could be worked towards. In so doing, the need for the Strategy to be realistic and reflective of the Council's resources was noted.

In the ensuing discussion, the important role to be played by lead Hub Committee Members was highlighted and, as part of the appointment process at Annual Council in May, the need for parity of workload across the lead Member portfolio areas was recognised.

66. **"Better Homes, Better Lives" adoption of South Hams & West Devon Housing Strategy 2021-2026**

HC 66

The Committee was presented with a report that recommended adoption of the draft South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy for 2021/26.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the affordable housing numbers in the annual delivery plan. When questioned, officers advised that the numbers would be in line with those that had been adopted in the Joint Local Plan. In response to a specific request, officers agreed to circulate these numbers (including the numbers of shared ownership properties that were to come forward) to Members outside of this meeting;
- (b) the definition(s) of affordable housing. When considering the Delivery Plan in future years, some Members felt that it would be beneficial to include more detail in relation to the definition(s) of affordable housing and the different types of tenure to be included in development schemes;

- (c) the direct links to the Health and Wellbeing agenda. In stressing the close linkages to Health and Wellbeing, the lead Member stated the need for good quality housing to be developed;
- (d) thanks to the lead officers. In particular, Members wished to record their thanks to the Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits for her hard work and efforts in developing such a comprehensive Strategy and Delivery Plan whilst also being heavily involved in the Council's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the "Better Homes, Better Lives" – the South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy for 2021-2026 (as set out at Appendix 1 to the presented agenda report); and
2. the Delivery Plan for 2021 that supports the South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy for 2021-2026 (as outlined at Appendix 2 to the presented agenda report) be approved.

67. **Community Housing - Brentor & Lamerton**

HC 67

A report was considered that presented an updated on the Community Housing Programme and set out the recommended approach to:

- underlying principles;
- governance;
- budget and funding, including staff cost, design costs and borrowing; and
- housing need.

The report also provided an update on the Brentor and Lamerton projects.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) In light of a number of detailed questions arising in relation to the Lamerton project, the following additional recommendation was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED**:

'That the Lamerton scheme be subject of a further report to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.'

In debate on the addition, Members felt that there remained a number of questions that should be subject to further review by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. When put to the vote, the addition was declared **CARRIED** and it therefore became part of the substantive motion;

- (b) A number of Members expressed their support for the Community Housing concept and, whilst recognising that schemes were incredibly difficult to deliver and there were a number of associated risks, it was hoped that the Brentor scheme would ultimately be delivered;
- (c) Members expressed their support for the Governance Review to be undertaken by the Director of Governance and Assurance and it was agreed that the findings of the Review should be presented to a future meeting of the Hub Committee;
- (d) The extent of the Housing Need in the Borough and the requirement for the Programme to reflect the priorities of the Housing Strategy (once adopted) were noted.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the revised management structure of the community housing programme, jointly between the Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits (community and housing need) and the Head of Assets (delivery) be noted;
2. the principles of the community housing scheme (as set out in section 3 of the presented agenda report) have been considered and approved;
3. the update on Brentor and Lamerton schemes be noted and it also be noted that the Lamerton scheme is not proceedable at this time;
4. the Lamerton scheme be subject of a further report to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
5. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve the expenditure of £85,000 from the Innovation Fund (Invest to Earn) Earmarked Reserve to undertake detailed design, specification and tendering of the Brentor scheme, subject to a successful planning decision.

HC 68

Members considered a report that set out the latest Revenue Budget Monitoring up to the end of January 2021.

In discussion, Members wished to put on record their thanks to the Section 151 Officer, Deputy Section 151 Officer and their finance colleagues for their prudent financial management. Also, Members welcomed the cautious but optimistic approach to financial management that was being adopted by the Council.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the significant forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2020/21 financial year and the overall projected surplus of £323,000 (4.19% of the total annual Budget of £7.713 million) be noted;
2. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to transfer the business rates pooling gain of £100,000 for 2020/21, into the Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve and £200,000 of the 2020/21 projected surplus into a Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy Earmarked Reserve.

(NB. If approved by Council in March 2021, this would leave a remaining surplus on the 2020/21 Accounts position of a surplus of £23,000 (£323,000 less £100,000 less £200,000) against the 2020/21 Amended Budget);

3. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to transfer £80,000 of salary savings from 2020/21 into a Salary Savings Earmarked Reserve, to be ringfenced to support salary costs in 2021/22 as set out in section 1.8 of the presented agenda report; and
4. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to transfer any award from the National Leisure Recovery Fund (the national £100million Leisure Fund), into the Leisure Services Earmarked Reserve (as set out in Section 1.12 of the presented agenda report).

(NB. The Council's indicative allocation is £80,000, which has been applied for).

69. **Capital Budget Monitoring 2020/2021**

HC 69

Members considered a report that advised of the financial position as at 31 January 2021 for the purposes of Budget

Monitoring.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) In citing the Green Homes Grant and Business Grants as examples, some Members felt that representations should be made to Central Government in respect of simplifying such processes; and
- (b) With regard to the condition of Brook Street Car Park, officers committed to re-opening discussions and dialogue with the Co-op;

It was then **RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be endorsed.

70.

Dog Control Orders

HC 70

Consideration was given to a report that sought a recommendation to the Council meeting to be held on 30 March 2021 that a Public Space Protection Order 2021 be made.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the importance of a communications campaign. Members emphasised the importance of a robust communications and education campaign to underpin the Order once approved;
- (b) reaching this point. A number of Members highlighted the difficulties that had been experienced in reaching this point whereby a recommendation could now be put forward to the Council. As a result, the Committee wished to thank the lead officers and lead Members in achieving a satisfactory outcome.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the Public Space Protection Order 2021 (as outlined at Appendix 1 of the presented agenda report). To come into effect from 30 March 2021, the Order will introduce the following Borough-wide provisions that require dog walkers to:-

1. carry the means to pick up and to pick up;
2. keep dogs on leads on land designated as a Dogs on Lead Area and on roads with speed zones up to 30mph;
3. comply to put and keep dogs on leads if so directed (by an authorised officer); and
4. prevent dogs from accessing a dog exclusion zone.

71.

Recommendations arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 2 March 2021:

HC 71

(a) Consultation and Engagement Task and Finish Group

Members considered the concluding report of the Consultation and Engagement Task and Finish Group that recommended adoption of a draft Community Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

The report also highlighted that the Strategy had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 2 March 2021. At that meeting, Committee Members had proceeded to recommend adoption of the Strategy.

During discussion, thanks were extended to the Task and Finish Group Members and the lead officers.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the draft Community Consultation & Engagement Strategy (as set out at Appendix B of the presented agenda report).

(b) Localities Task and Finish Group

The Committee considered the concluding report of the Localities Task and Finish Group.

The report informed that a version of this report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 2 March 2021 and Committee Members had proceeded to recommend onward consideration of each of the recommendations.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (i) the need for local Ward Members to engage with their Locality Officers. In particular, the importance of both Members and Officers providing feedback to each other (where appropriate) was recognised;
- (ii) the proposals having the support of the Team;
- (iii) the future of the Community Clustering arrangements. In the event of these arrangements being wound down, it was requested that those external representatives be kept informed and advised accordingly. To compensate for such a decision being taken, a Member proceeded

to ask whether the Link Committees would be reinstated. In response, officers confirmed that the future of the Link Committees would require further consideration in the upcoming months;

- (iv) the lone worker policy. When questioned, officers confirmed that the Team was very familiar with the contents of the policy. As a general point, Members were reminded that the Council's Lone Worker Policy similarly applied to them and the wider membership was therefore encouraged to familiarise itself with the contents of the most recently adopted version;
- (v) a further report on the service being presented to the next Hub Committee meeting on 22 April 2021.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Business Manager for Case Management (in consultation with the Lead Hub Committee Member):

1. Carry out a review of the Locality Service structure in order to deliver the following:
 - 1.1 Environmental Protection Officers are incorporated into the Localities Service;
 - 1.2 close working relationships between the Localities, Parking Enforcement and Waste teams are formalised;
 - 1.3 shared officers are introduced to improve the flexibility to meet team demands; and
2. Drafts a new Locality Team structure to support recommendation 1 (above) that will ensure:
 - 2.1 Clearly defined roles that support the delivery of scheduled tasks and the work of community groups, developing service level agreements where necessary;
 - 2.2 Improved office based and field support for mobile officers.

72. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

*HC 72

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded

from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act is involved.

73. **Deed of Variation in relation to Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project**

*HC 73

Members considered an exempt report on a Deed of Variation in relation to Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project.

In discussion, which concentrated on those considerations relevant to the Council's land management functions, Members asked that it be made absolutely clear that, for Development Management purposes, there had been no pre-determination in this respect.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the basis for taking the proposed approach with the underlying aim of safeguarding public access to the Tamar Trails network be noted; and
2. final approval of the Deed of Variation be delegated to the Head of Assets, in consultation with the lead Hub Committee Member for Environment.

(NOTE: THESE DECISIONS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MINUTES HC 66 PART 1, HC 67 PART 4, HC 68 PARTS 2, 3 AND 4, HC 70 AND HC 71 (a), WHICH ARE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 30 MARCH 2021, WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH 2021 UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 18)

The Meeting concluded at 4.50 pm

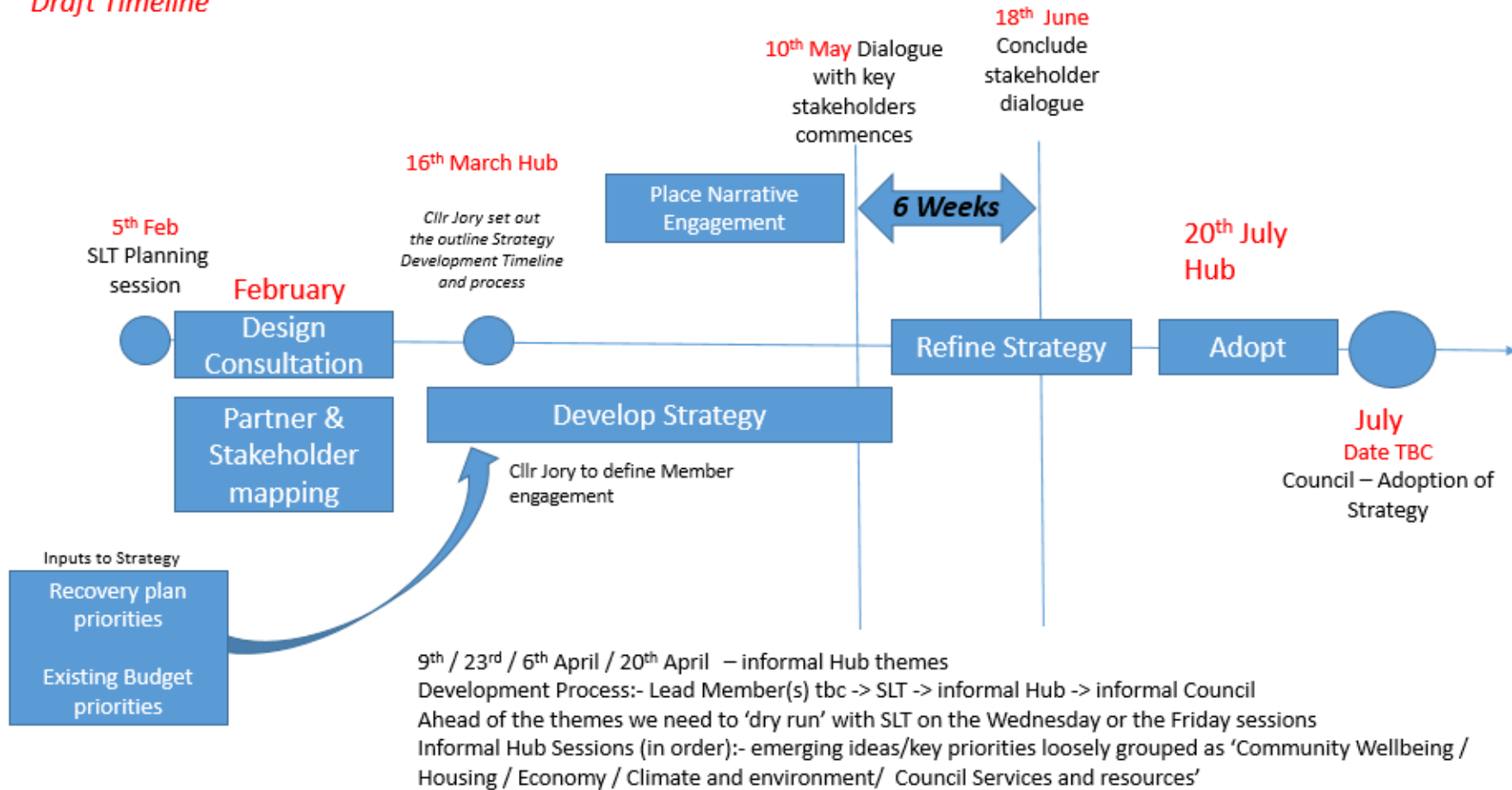
Signed by:

Chairman



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**Corporate Strategy
Draft Timeline**



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