

WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday, 15th November, 2022 at 2.00 pm** at the **Chamber - Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Ewings
Vice Chairman Cllr Kimber

Cllr Coulson
Cllr Heyworth
Cllr Moody
Cllr Pearce
Cllr Spettigue

Cllr Daniel
Cllr Kemp
Cllr Moyse
Cllr Southcott
Cllr Turnbull

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Blackman (via Teams)
Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Mott (via Teams)
Cllr Yelland (via Teams)

Cllr Crozier
Cllr Leech (via Teams)
Cllr Ratcliffe (via Teams)

Officers:

Deputy Chief Executive
Director - Place & Enterprise
Assistant Director – Strategy & Organisational Development
Head of Finance
Customer Service Improvement Manager
Community Digital Specialist
Specialist – Leisure
Democratic Services Manager
Senior Case Manager – Democratic Services

31. **Apologies for Absence**

*O&S 31/22

Apologies for absence for this meeting were received from Cllrs Sellis, Jory and Wood and Cllr Blackman who joined the meeting via Teams.

32. **Confirmation of Minutes**

*O&S 32/22

The minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4 October 2022 were confirmed as a true and correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- Cllr Blackman was present as the meeting.
- Cllr Turnbull was not present at the meeting.

Members requested an update on the outstanding actions from the minutes and officers reported:

- The My Place Survey information has been requested and will be forwarded when complete;
- The ring back service was under constant review;
- There is a dedicated line for Members and this number to be circulated to all Members;
- The Committee to explore with the Community Safety Partnership in February on how best to engage the police at Links Meetings.

33. **Declarations of Interest**

*O&S 33/22

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

34. **Public Forum**

*O&S 34/22

The Chairman confirmed that no formal requests had been received in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

35. **Fusion Update - including maintenance schedule (*O&S 59)**

*O&S 35/22

The Lead Member for Leisure, Health and Wellbeing reported that the leisure sector continues to experience difficult times. The leisure contract sets out specific performance indicators which Fusion will deliver through its plans and targets. The Lead Member gave thanks to Peter King, who was soon leaving Fusion for his work with the Council.

Peter King provided a presentation and highlighted:

- They were working on key campaigns such as encouraging people to test and try in December and January for free;
- Engagement with the local community to develop programmes that fit the community;
- Looking at ways to increase participation;
- The introduction of short term memberships to cover visitors over the summer period;
- Pricing to be reviewed and any increases will not be introduced until April 2023.

In response to questions raised by Members, it was reported that:

- There was no obvious reason why Parklands membership was low, however were looking at how to make the programmes at Parklands more attractive;
- Strategic review of pricing structure, promotions and taster sessions would hopefully see them through financially;
- Maintenance review of the guttering at Meadowlands to ensure that the gutters are cleared;
- Hand gel stations would remain in all the leisure centres;
- Higher energy costs continued to be a huge issue for leisure centres and they were looking at ways to mitigate this, such as energy saving schemes, sourcing additional funding and lobbying Sport England;
- They were sourcing alternative companies to provide solar panels on the roofs of the sports complexes and hopefully this work would commence in April 2023.

The Chairman gave thanks to Peter King and wished him well in his future endeavours.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents and progress of Fusion's Quarterly Report – Q2 for 2022.

36. **Active Travel**

*O&S 36/22

The Community Digital Specialist highlighted that:

- The promotion of active travel, cycling, horse riding and walking to be funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund;
- Projects to be supported by UKSPF and REPF include: active travel officer and commissioning a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
- A suite of further indicative projects have been identified such as e-bike trials, training, quiet lane trials, behaviour change campaigns which will be confirmed following the strategy plan.
- £120k is also committed to provide match funding for the Levelling Up bid for the West Devon Transport Hub.
- Submitting an investment plan for a further pot of money £800k from REPF for capital projects. A proportion of this has been allocated for active travel projects;
- Importance and scope of LCWIP, providing evidence to secure future funding, and will involve extensive engagement with community and stakeholder groups.
- DCC looking at a county wide LCWIP, that will focus on leisure trails;
- Next steps to secure the SPF money.

In response to questions raised by Members, it was reported that:

- The quiet lanes scheme is a challenging area which requires a lot of consultation and research;
- The plan will identify areas around schools but we need to focus on the development sites and cycle routes for particular communities;
- Members raised that there is a strong argument for a cycle lane adjacent to the A386. Director of Place and Enterprise reported that there is an approved route in the consultation which is slightly more aligned to the carriageway, Members felt the consultation was more biased towards leisure users rather than commuters;
- They have been in discussion with 4 different consultants and will then go out to competitive tender;
- They were looking at the routes first and infrastructure along those routes would follow;
- Dartmoor National Park have submitted a heritage lottery bid to get cars off the moors and we will be working with them.

It was reported that WD members will be included in the consultation and presentation slides to be circulated to Members.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Committee note the Active Travel Update.

37.

Council Delivery against Corporate Theme: Resource Services

*O&S 37/22

The Lead Member for Maximising Resources introduced a report that reviewed latest progress against the Maximising Council Resources Theme as follows:

- Action R1.1 – Amber. Delay of new planning systems and work ongoing with Northgate Assure to be resolved in next two weeks.
- Action R1.2 – On track.
- Action R1.3 – On track.
- Action R1.4 – On track.
- Action R1.5 – On track.
- Action R1.6 – Amber. On track to produce a balance budget for 23-24.
- Action R1.7 – On track.
- Action R1.8 – On track.
- Action R1.9 – On track.
- Action R1.10 – On track.

In response to questions raised by Members, it was reported that:

- They were not aware of any complaints with regard to the opening of the reception area, however activity has been logged and assessed with a report going to hub in December;
- They were looking to generate income at Kilworthy Park and sourcing additional tenants;
- The old website will be phased out and new website phased in over a period of time until October 2023;
- They have scoped out a case management solution for the legal team and will be in place by the end of January 2023;

- They were looking to undertake review on car park uptake, however on-line shopping has had an impact;
- Employees were going back into the workplace and teams were finding the right the balance and meeting at least once a month.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Committee note the progress in delivering against the Plan for West Devon 'Council Resources' Thematic Delivery Plan.

38. **KPI Year End Performance Report**

*O&S 38/22

The Customer Service Improvement Manager reported that a new suite of KPIs were being developed and will be reported back to the committee in January 2023.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Committee:

1. Review the performance figures for 21/22 financial year shown in the performance management report as included in Appendix A to this report.
2. Note the proposed format for an enhanced performance report (as set out in Appendix B) which will be populated with performance data and considered at the meeting of this committee in January 2023.

39. **Member Induction Programmer Review - May 2023 (Verbal Update)**

*O&S 39/22

The Democratic Services Manager reported that following the Task and Finish on 18 October 2022, useful suggestions were put forward to help new members and an updated plan to bring back in the New Year.

Members raised the following to be included as part of the review:

- The importance of face-to-face meetings;
- Understanding of the planning process;
- Awareness of how to communicate with residents;
- Understanding of new corporate plans, and remote meetings;
- Prospective Councillor Day to include what the role entails and highlight the amount of time spent during the induction process;
- Ensure that DM&L training is circulated early on in the induction process and training to include TPOs and heritage sites.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Committee note the Member Induction Programme Review.

40. **Task & Finish Group Updates (if any)**

*O&S 40/22

The Vice-Chairman reported that the Member Induction Programme Review Task and Finish took place on 18 October 2022. A further

meeting to be set up after SLT have reviewed the amended Member Induction Programme.

41. **Draft O&S Work Programme 2022/23, inc. prep for next meeting**

*O&S 41/22

The draft proposal for the work programme was reviewed. The following amendments to the work programme were agreed as follows:

- Contact Centre Review deferred to January and Members will receive a report on Customer Access Strategy and Contact Centre Review;
- Draft Budget 2023/24 added to January work programme.
- NFU Involvement in the Devon Carbon Plan to be added to the work programme in the New Year.

42. **Member Learning and Development Opportunities arising from this Meeting**

*O&S 42/22

Building Control Regulations was raised by Members as a learning and development opportunity.

The Meeting concluded at 4.02 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
