

WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday, 23rd April, 2024** at **2.00 pm** at the **Chamber - Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Kimber
Vice Chairman Cllr Johnson

Cllr Calder
Cllr Elliott
Cllr Mann
Cllr Southcott
Cllr Viney
Cllr West

Cllr Casbolt
Cllr Guthrie
Cllr Saxby
Cllr Vachon
Cllr Wakeham (via Teams)

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Daniel
Cllr Renders

Cllr Edmonds

Officers:

Director Customer Services and Delivery
Assistant Director Strategy & Organisational Development
Principal Waste Officer
Assistant Director Waste & Operations Environment Services
Head of Housing
Executive Director of Development & Investment Livewest
Head of Municipal Collections & Streetscene FCC
Senior Democratic services Officer

32. **Apologies for Absence**

*O&S 32/23

There were no apologies for absence

33. **Confirmation of Minutes**
*O&S 33/23
The minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 February 2024 were confirmed as a true and correct record. Items arising from the minutes –
- The dome at Meadowlands was confirmed as being cleaned in March.
 - Devon Building Control Manager to give a further written update and be brought back to the next meeting

34. **Declarations of Interest**
*O&S 34/23
There were no declarations of interest

35. **Public Forum**
*O&S 35/23
The Chairman confirmed that no formal requests had been received in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules

36. **Waste and Recycling Services Update**
*O&S 36/23
The Lead Hub Committee Member introduced the report to Members.
- During the presentation, the following points were covered:
- The target of 80 missed bins per 100,000 collections was on target;
 - Bulky waste collections would in the future be recorded as how many items were collected rather than as per collection in the statistics;
 - Replacing vehicles with electric ones posed a problem due to the infrastructure in West Devon. The cost of an electric vehicle was approximately three times the cost of a diesel vehicle. However, FCC (the Council's waste contractor) would be trialling an electric recycling vehicle in the near future. To electrify the Depot would incur charges of around £500,000. The range of travel for recyclers would be around 100 miles before needing to be recharged;
 - The Waste Working Group would be looking at a different material/style for garden waste containers;
 - Waste composition analysis carried out in West Devon showed that 26% of waste in a black bin was food waste, with 3% being steel.

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

1. performance of the waste and recycling service over the last 12 months;
2. presentation provided from the contractor's representative on performance; and

3. work being undertaken to drive forward continuous improvement of the service.

37. **LiveWest - Presentation and Update**

*O&S 37/23

The Lead Hub Member introduced the update to the Committee after which the Executive Director of Development and Investment at Livewest gave a presentation. In that presentation, reference was made to:

- Livewest owned more than 40,000 homes across Devon, Cornwall and Somerset and the West of England. In West Devon, there were 1,855 low-cost rental homes, of which 60 were shared ownership;
- In excess of £100 million was spent on existing homes per year;
- In excess of £200 million was spent on new homes per year;
- £39.5 million was spent on void homes per year;
- To reach the Decent Homes Standard, 70 kitchens and 50 bathrooms were updated per year; and
- In respect of the approach to disposals, future investment was disproportionately high compared to the return over the long term. The Committee noted that there was a prolonged difficulty to re-let and disposals had increased since 2020.

In discussion, the Director of Development and Investment for Livewest stated that money from disposals was being spent in West Devon, however in regard to replacing property in rural areas, it was with the help from the local authority to identify schemes and Livewest would work together with the Borough Council. The Director said he would find out what checks were made on properties that had Section 157 covenants and feed back to the Committee.

The Director explained that the volume of opportunities to build new homes that came through the planning system would mean, as a larger organisation, that they would pick the larger sites. He also confirmed that the West Devon Housing Offer initiative was a real positive in increasing the supply of affordable housing.

In response to a Member question, the Director explained that Livewest would not put batteries in any of their homes for renewable energy purposes. This was due to the potential fire risk and, as a regulated social housing provider, they would be deemed as putting tenants at risk. The Director committed to reporting back to the Committee to give the number of Livewest homes in West Devon that had photovoltaic panels.

The Head of Housing informed that there were around 600 people in identified housing need currently in West Devon (NB. the exact data is set out in the following link:

<https://www.devonhomechoice.com/useful-information-2>

The Head of Housing committed to letting Members have more information on how allocated sites for affordable accommodation were progressed to stop them becoming open market homes.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Committee **NOTE** the update.

38. **Key Performance Indicators April 2023 – March 2024**

*O&S 38/23

The Lead Hub Committee Member introduced the performance monitoring report to the Committee.

In discussion, a Member queried as to who had decided on the new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The Assistant Director: Strategy and Organisational Development replied that Officers had listened to the new intake of Members during previous consideration of the KPI's and had also removed those measures that were not considered to add any value to consideration of performance. An example of this was the 'Temporary Events Notices', where performance was always 100%.

The officer also added that narratives could be added to areas to explain a little more detail on certain areas. In addition, the KPIs would continue to evolve and, for example, a question was raised at a recent Audit and Governance Committee meeting in relation to food premises inspections and how the Council performed and this one had been added as a new KPI. The officer added that performance was monitored regularly through a range of in-house Governance Boards.

A Member queried the Planning KPI's in regard to the number of planning applications that were determined within the statutory timescale. This query would be referred to the Director of Strategy and Governance for a response.

The Director of Customer Services and Delivery explained to the Committee that, at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting in the next municipal Year, the Committee would review each Thematic Delivery Plan from the adopted Plan for West Devon. Each lead Hub Committee Member would be invited to the meeting at which their Delivery Plan was being presented to explain progress and respond to Member questions.

It was debated whether to discuss the revised suite of KPI's at the Performance & Resources Hub Advisory Group or to set up a Task and Finish Group. It was decided that a Task & Finish Group would be set up comprising of Cllrs Elliott, Mann, West and Cunningham. Their findings would be presented to the Performance & Resources Hub Advisory Group prior to it being brought back to Committee.

The Assistant Director of Strategy and Organisational Development updated the Committee on the vacancy of Wildlife Warden Co-Ordinator. The post had been advertised and interviews were taking place on 30 April 2024.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the Key Performance Indicators for April 2023 – March 2024 be noted; and
2. a Task and Finish Group be set up to look at the revised suite of Key Performance Indicators (as set out in Appendix A of the published agenda report) which were to have been implemented from 1st April 2024.

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

*O&S 39/23

The South West Water (SWW) Task & Finish Group would be meeting with an Officer from SWW.

The Fusion Task & Finish Group was to meet with the Principal Assets Officer and the Senior Leisure Contracts Officer to discuss parking fees. The Group would also visit the Leisure Centres prior to the summer holidays. The Task & Finish Group findings would be taken through the Performance & Resources Advisory Group prior to being brought back to the Committee.

A suggestion was brought to set up a Task & Finish Group for Okehampton Railway Station. The Director of Customer Services and Delivery suggested that updates would be given to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the Council Plan thematic delivery update. He would give an update to Members via email as to whether this would be happening and then the Committee could make a decision whether to form a Task & Finish Group at the next Committee meeting.

40. **2024/25 Committee Annual Work Programme**

*O&S 40/23

One Lead Member would be addressing the Committee on a specific theme and giving updates at each Overview and Scrutiny meeting. The new workplan would be presented at the next meeting for agreement.

The Meeting concluded at 4.40 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
