

**NORTH DEVON COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held at the Brynsworthy Environment Centre, Barnstaple on Thursday 23rd August 2018 at 2.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Members

Councillor Patrinos (Chair)

Councillor Mathews (Vice Chair)

Councillors Spear, White and Worden.

Also Present

Councillors Edmunds, Greenslade (present from minutes 31 to 35) and Moore.

Officers

Head of Corporate and Community Services (KM) and Corporate and Community Services Officer (KJ).

**26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bonds, J. Cann, Chesters, Ley and Roome.

**27 MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2018 (circulated previously) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**28 ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman advised the Committee that a letter had been sent to the Secretary of State in relation to RMB Chivenor by Peter Heaton-Jones, who had advised the Clerk that he would keep the Committee updated regarding any response received.

**29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declaration of interest was announced:

Items 6 and 9: Councillor Worden declared an interest as his son was due to join the Police Force and, Cllr Worden was a member of the South Molton P.C.C. and was a Police Advocate.

**30 TO APPOINT MEMBERS OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Committee discussed the appointment of members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Crime and Disorder Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED that all members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be appointed to the Crime and Disorder Sub-Committee.

**31 WORK PROGRAMME/FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Work Programme / Forward Plan (circulated previously).

In response to a question from the Committee, the Head of Corporate and Community Services confirmed that:

- Members of the public may wish to speak at a future Committee when Health and Care Services were considered. The Chairman may need to allow for public questions.
- The trial period for the new Recycle More service would not be extended further. The item had been considered by the Executive.

RESOLVED that:

- a) all non-cyclical items be removed from the programme;
- b) the Task and Finish Group information be removed from the programme;
- c) the item "Car Parking Strategy" be added to the programme for 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018;
- d) the item "Health and Care Services" be added to the programme for 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018;
- e) the item "Impact of Agricultural Sector on the Northern Devon Economy " be added to the programme for 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019;
- f) the item "Fair Funding for Education" be added to the programme for 12<sup>th</sup> February 2010.
- g) Councillor Worden advise the Clerk of the contacts of those who may be invited to the future Committee in February 2019, when 'Fair Funding for Education' was considered.

**32 21:21 UPDATE**

The Head of Corporate and Community Services gave an update regarding the 21:21 project.

He advised the Committee

- That reports detailing the progress of the project would be presented quarterly.

- The Council's two objectives were Service Improvement and Growth Agenda. The 21:21 project was about improving services for the general public.
- Future aims of 21:21 included the wish to locate as many staff as possible to the one site, Recycle More, and income generation.
- Lynton House would remain the customer service point of contact.
- The movement of additional staff to BEC was limited without further building and increased parking.
- CCTV project was ongoing
- He felt that by moving staff to one site it had improved staff working relations and encouraged closer working and cooperation between teams.
- The improvements under the Recycle More project had been reported to Overview and Scrutiny previously by the Head of Operational Services.
- In the first year the new Green Waste service had 4000 more customers than anticipated. Food waste and dry recycling had increased.
- Vehicle issues had hampered progress on the Recycle More project. The vehicle replacement programme had been brought forward by one year, with second-hand vehicles being sourced as these had no lead time on purchases (new vehicles could have six month lead times).

In response to questions from the Committee about the Recycle More project, the Head of Corporate and Community Services advised:

- The sign-up figures for this year had been similar to the previous year.
- A MOT for a commercial vehicle would result in a vehicle being out of commission for a week. This included time for extensive pre-MOT checks and thorough cleaning.
- £0.450m was being spent this year (one year early) on vehicles.
- Figures for missed collections were now at a level comparable with figures prior to the trial/changes.
- The public were often more sensitive to service changes and more likely to report missed collections.
- When customers signed up online for the service they were informed of the date their permit would become valid.
- Vehicle breakdowns had been the result of vehicles being used for longer than viable. Vehicles had not been replaced as often as they could have been in order to meet savings. These changes had been agreed by Members. The issues were not that the mechanics did not have the time or skills to replace them, it was that the vehicles were beyond repair.
- Operations staff did work evenings and weekends when required, although excessive overtime costs would affect the budget.
- Council staff performed the vehicle repairs. This was the same case as when the Council had a DLU (Direct Labour Unit).
- The new infrastructure was in place to assist the unit going forward. This included the new Firmstep and Bartec systems.

- Future remodelling or both green and black rounds would be done in-house using our own systems and staff (rather than using external consultants).

Councillor White wished to express his appreciation to the Head of Operations for his presentation at a local Parish Council meeting.

- The Council were looking to become more commercial with regards to income generation. Investments strategies would need to be considered which may have previously be seen as too high-risk. This could involve investment in residential and/or commercial property to generate income and capital return. Two residential properties had already been purchased, with a further two in progress. These would be used by Environmental Health and Housing as temporary accommodation. The Council's future Asset Strategy would be reviewed.
- As part of the Transformation of Services process the Council would be replacing much of the ICT used. The 'wyse' boxes currently in use would be replaced with a new system which would enable staff to work from home and utilise mobile working. A new telephony system would be installed, along with new Planning and Committee systems. These would be in place next year. The Council was re-examining its processes and procedures as part of the transformation work.
- The Council had also embraced the Plastic Free North Devon concept and had started to make changes to processes where possible. The consortium had brought many organisations together to work on the project.
- Plastic recycling from NDC had never been sent overseas so had not been affected by China's withdrawal from the market. The recycling was sent to a UK company to be recycled into plastic milk bottles. None were sent to landfill.
- It was noted that some 'Veg-ware' products, as promoted as a green option to plastic, were actually not compostable and were not universally recyclable. It could contaminate the recycling if present in high quantities with standard plastics.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

### **33 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSION UPDATE**

The Vice Chairman addressed the Committee regarding the latest information from the Police and Crime Commission (PCC).

The Chairman advised the Committee of the following:

- At the last meeting of the PCC the group unanimously decided not to support the merger of the Devon and Cornwall Police and the Dorset Police, but it was noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner did not require permission from the group to

proceed with the merger, although she would prefer to have their support.

- The number of PCSOs (Police Community Support Officer) had reduced from 360 to approximately 160. The Chief Constable wanted this to be at 200.

Councillor Worden advised the Committee that at a previous Police Advocate meeting the Police and Crime Commissioner had indicated that she was undecided about the merger.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

### **34 HEALTH AND CARE SERVICES**

The Chairman addressed the Committee and confirmed that he had recently had a meeting with the new CEO of the Northern Devon Healthcare Trust; Mrs Suzanne Tracey. They had discussed the situation regarding the North Devon District Hospital including the staffing and geographical issues faced. She had confirmed that she did not envisage the area being without Maternity and Accident and Emergency services. Mrs Tracey had confirmed that she would attend the Overview and Scrutiny meeting in November 2018.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

### **35 EXEMPTIONS TO CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES**

The Committee considered and noted the report of Exemptions to Contract Procedure Rules (circulated previously).

Chairman

The meeting ended at 3.40 p.m.

**NOTE:** These minutes will be confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting of the Committee.