



Public Document Pack

North Devon Council
Brynsworthy Environment Centre
Barnstaple
North Devon EX31 3NP

K. Miles
Chief Executive.

To: All Members of the Council
and Chief Officers

NOTE: PLEASE NOTE THAT PRAYERS WILL BE SAID AT 6.25 P.M. PRIOR TO THE COUNCIL MEETING FOR ANY MEMBER WHO WISHES TO ATTEND

COUNCIL MEETING

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a meeting of **NORTH DEVON COUNCIL** to be held in the Virtual - Online meeting on **WEDNESDAY, 25TH NOVEMBER, 2020 at 6.30 pm.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Miles', written in a cursive style.

Chief Executive

AGENDA

16. Commercialisation Strategy

Report by Head of Resources to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 2 November 2020 (attached).

(a) Report by the Policy Development Committee (Pages 5 - 6)

To receive the report of the Policy Development Committee held on 19 November 2020 (attached).

If you have any enquiries about this agenda, please contact Corporate and Community Services, telephone 01271 388253

17.11.20

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

Part 4, Council Procedure Rules of the Constitution

The basics

At a meeting of Full Council, Members shall stand when speaking unless unable to do so and shall address the Chair.

While a Member is speaking, other Members shall remain seated unless rising for a point of order, a point of information or in personal explanation.

No speeches may be made after the mover had moved a proposal and explained the purpose of it until the motion has been seconded.

Unless notice of motion has already been given, the Chair may require it to be written down and handed to him before it is discussed.

When seconding a motion or amendment, a member may reserve their speech until later in the debate.

Speeches must be directed to the question under discussion or to be personal explanation or point of order.

A speech by the mover of a motion may not exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the Chair.

Speeches by other Members may not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Chair, unless when the Council's annual budget is under discussion, the leader of each political group on the Council may speak for up to 5 minutes or such longer period as the Chair shall allow.

The rules of Question Time

At a meeting of the Council, other than the Annual meeting, a Member of the Council may ask the Leader or the chair of a committee any question without notice upon an item of the report of a committee when that item is being received or under consideration by the Council.



North Devon Council protocol on recording/filming at Council meetings

The Council is committed to openness and transparency in its decision-making. Recording is permitted at Council meetings that are open to the public. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be recorded. The Chairman of the meeting will make sure any request not to be recorded is respected.

The rules that the Council will apply are:

1. The recording must be overt (clearly visible to anyone at the meeting) and must not disrupt proceedings. The Council will put signs up at any meeting where we know recording is taking place.
2. The Chairman of the meeting has absolute discretion to stop or suspend recording if, in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting or if the person recording is in breach of these rules.
3. We will ask for recording to stop if the meeting goes into 'part B' where the public is excluded for confidentiality reasons. In such a case, the person filming should leave the room ensuring all recording equipment is switched off.
4. Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. We ensure that agendas for, and signage at, Council meetings make it clear that recording can take place – anyone not wishing to be recorded must advise the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.
5. The recording should not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or in a way that ridicules or shows a lack of respect for those in the recording. The Council would expect any recording in breach of these rules to be removed from public view.

Notes for guidance:

Please contact either our Corporate and Community Services team or our Communications team in advance of the meeting you wish to record at so we can make all the necessary arrangements for you on the day.

For more information contact the Corporate and Community Services team on **01271 388253** or email **memberservices@northdevon.gov.uk** or the Communications Team on **01271 388278**, email **communications@northdevon.gov.uk**.

North Devon Council offices at Brynsworthy, the full address is:
Brynsworthy Environment Centre (BEC), Roundswell,
Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 3NP.

Sat Nav postcode is EX31 3NS.

At the Roundswell roundabout take the exit onto the B3232, after about ½ mile take the first right, BEC is about ½ a mile on the right.

Drive into the site, visitors parking is in front of the main building on the left hand side.

On arrival at the main entrance, please dial 8253 for Corporate and Community Services.



NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 25 NOVEMBER 2020

COMMERCIALISATION STRATEGY

REPORT OF THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2020

MINUTE 70. COMMERCIALISATION STRATEGY

The Committee considered a report to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 2nd November 2020 by the Head of Resources together with a minute extract and additional appendix (circulated previously) regarding the Commercialisation Strategy.

The Head of Resources advised that the report had already been subject to consideration by the Strategy and Resources Committee on 2nd November 2020.

He highlighted the following points to the Committee:

- The Authority had forecast large budget gaps likely in the near future.
- The aim was to look internally and externally for opportunities to potentially create revenue streams for the Council and to look to maximise any assets currently held. A good example was the letting of a parcel of land on Seven Brethren to the Police force on a commercial lease.
- The report set out the forecast budget gaps, alongside an amended version which identified the period should the expected Government funding not be forthcoming.
- The Government Spending Review was due to be announced shortly. This would provide a more accurate picture of the funding settlement but the Authority could not rely on funding alone.
- The Authority was looking to become more commercially-minded.
- This was not an exercise in budget cost-cutting. Improvements in efficiency and additional revenue generation were what was being sought.
- The targets set were aspirational – to deliver a minimum of £0.500m of new revenue income by 31st March 2023 and to reduce back-office costs by 5% by 31st March 2024.
- The Capital Spending Decisions should focus on at least one of the following main drivers:
 - Revenue generation / Invest to Earn
 - Invest to Save
 - Social Value
 - Improving the environment or increasing natural capital.

In response to questions submitted by Councillor Luggar (not present) the Chief Executive advised that there was no direct budget to support the strategy and that the budgets for the schemes would be presented as Business Cases to Members via Strategy and Resources Committee, then to Full Council, on a case by case basis as they would normally. The £0.5m was aspirational but could be met by savings and/or revenue streams which would be the result of a number of separate projects.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Head of Resources advised that;

- The target of £0.5m was a realistic and achievable one. At that time it was the preferred option rather than aim too high and struggle initially. Targets could be reviewed as time progressed.
- Central Government was monitoring the commercial activities being undertaken by Local Authorities and there were concerns over some types of investments and borrowing being made.
- Government reimbursement of charges and fees would not be affected by any revenue received from commercial projects. It was noted that the Government had not provided reimbursement to Authorities for commercial income losses.

In response to questions, the Chief Executive advised that;

- Some Authorities had been criticised over their commercial strategies where, for example, huge investments had been made into retail properties. These investments could be compromised as the retailers faced financial difficulties during the pandemic. The Council's auditors would be concerned with any investments they felt were 'cavalier'. It was for the Members to set the tone for Council's Commercialisation Strategy and steer away from investments made purely to generate income.
- The Council would not be insured against business losses as result from pandemics such as Covid-19. Many policies contained exclusion clauses which would prevent claims being paid.

The Chair advised that he felt the Council had been fortunate in that they had been slightly 'behind the curve' in relation to commercial investments to date as the pandemic took hold.

The Head of Resources advised that the Authority was now carefully looking at each parcel of land owned. Where, twelve months ago, it had been looking to sell surplus assets it was now reviewing them with view to the commercial options available. The Authority held a substantial asset base for which every opportunity would be explored.

In response to a question from Cllr L Spear, the Head of Resources confirmed that the Authority was looking at locations of current land owned which were adjacent to residential areas to explore the opportunity to provide housing, possibly working alongside local social landlords/ housing associations.

The Chief Executive advised that the Authority was also considering the options available in connection to the North Devon Biosphere. This may provide opportunities which work with the greener recovery plan. The Biosphere organisation had plans which they would be looking to develop.

RESOLVED, that the decisions and recommendations of the Strategy and Resources Committee be endorsed.