

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Strategy and Resources Committee held at Barum Room - Brynsworthy on Monday, 6th December, 2021 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Worden (Chair)

Councillors Knight, Lane, Lofthouse, Patrinos, Pearson, Prowse, L. Spear, Wilkinson and Yabsley

Officers:

Chief Executive, Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive, Senior Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, Head of Place, Property and Regeneration, Head of Environmental Enhancement and Project and Procurement Officer

Also Present:

Councillors D. Spear

83. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

84. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 NOVEMBER 2021 (ATTACHED).

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2021 (circulated previously) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

85. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE MEETING AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.

(a) Informal Briefing

The Leader requested that the Group Leaders remain behind following the conclusion of the formal Committee meeting for an informal briefing.

86. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.

There were no declarations of interest received.

87. APPROVAL AND RELEASE OF S106 OPEN SPACE FUNDS - FILLEIGH, NEWTON TRACEY AND WITHERIDGE

The Committee considered a report by the Project, Procurement and Open Space Officer (circulated previously) regarding the allocation of section 106 public open space funds towards a project in Filleigh, Witheridge and Newton Tracey.

The Project, Procurement and Open Space Officer highlighted the following:

- Filleigh Village Hall project as detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report.
- Witheridge Village Hall project as detailed in paragraph 4.2 of the report.
- Witheridge adventure playground project as detailed in paragraph 4.3 of the report.
- Newton Tracey cricket club practice bay project as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

RESOLVED that section 106 public open space funds be allocated as follows:

- (a) £36,394 to Filleigh Village Hall towards village hall enhancement scheme;
- (b) £50,000 to Witheridge Parish Hall towards the enhancement of the Village Hall;
- (c) £130,000 to Witheridge Parish Council towards the enhancement of the Adventure Playground;
- (d) £3,216 to Newton Tracey Cricket Club towards the provision of a Non Turf Practice Bay.

RECOMMENDED:

- (e) That the capital programme be varied by £219,610 and that funds be released, subject to a Funding Agreement upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed by the Senior Solicitor, for external projects.

88. TARKA LEISURE CENTRE UPDATE

The Committee received an update from the Head of Environmental Enhancement regarding the Tarka Leisure Centre project. He highlighted the following:

- Since the last update to the Committee in September 2021, the project was still on schedule for completion on 16 May 2022.
- Currently works were being undertaken to relay the gas mains into the Leisure Centre along the pavement and on the new entrance to the centre. This had resulted in logistical issues in relation to parking and accessing other areas. Therefore improved signage had been put in place for the Covid testing centre, ice rink and BJ's Value House.
- The ski machine had been delivered last week.
- The footfall in the current leisure centre had increased and positive feedback had been received from customers on the works to the new leisure centre.
- The swimming pools were now tiled and glazing being put in place to make the building water proof.

In response to a question, the Head of Environmental Enhancement advised the following:

- The operators of the ice rink had enquired regarding holding it at the Pannier Market in Barnstaple, however it was not feasible. There was no market located next to the ice rink at Seven Brethren and only a number of food stalls.

89. WORK OF NORTH DEVON+

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive and Leader (circulated previously) regarding the work of North Devon +.

The Chief Executive highlighted the following:

- North Devon+ was a company jointly owned with Torridge District Council which operated as a local authority/private sector partnership. It was chaired by the private sector.
- One of its main purposes was to provide business support to existing and new businesses within the northern Devon area and also to support both councils in their economic development and regeneration functions.
- Both Councils and North Devon+ were having a positive impact on local businesses.
- In the past the team had successfully administered large grant schemes such as the Leader programmes but with the European funded schemes now coming to an end, the team have been concentrating on building up their “portfolio” of schemes and working in partnership with other business support providers.
- The Team have been successful in securing additional funding and were now in the process of appointing additional temporary staff to assist with the current schemes being administered. The current schemes being administered by the team were detailed in the Appendix to the report.
- Business boost scheme (as outlined in paragraphs 4.7 and 4.8 of the report) provided funding for new business support and a small grant scheme. The scheme had now helped 44 local businesses.
- Kickstart scheme (as outlined in paragraph 4.5 and 4.6 of the report) had been successful and 16 young people had now completed their placements with 12 being given permanent roles with local employers.
- Research was currently being undertaken by consultants regarding establishing a Direct Management Organisation. It was anticipated that the consultants report would be received by end of February and a report would then be presented to Members in March 2022.

The Committee noted the report.

90. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chief Executive provided an update to the Committee regarding environment impact assessments for committee reports.

The Chief Executive advised:

- That the committee report template would be amended to include an environmental impact assessment section for officers to highlight whether the decision would have either a positive or negative environmental impact.
- An assessment criteria would be produced for officers to use to help to assess the environmental impact.
- The report template would also be amended to include a corporate priorities section for officers to indicate the appropriate priority.

The Committee noted the update.

91. LITTER WORKING GROUP

Councillor Worden advised that Councillor Pearson would be late and therefore requested that the item be deferred until later in the meeting.

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report of the Litter Working Group until following the conclusion of items 13 and 14 on the agenda.

92. URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Committee noted the urgent decisions that had been made by the Chief Executive in accordance with paragraph 3.48, Annex 2, part 3 of the Constitution (circulated previously) regarding the North Devon Household Support Fund policy.

93. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS AND RESTRICTION OF DOCUMENTS

RESOLVED:

(a) That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items as they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3, Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended from time to time), namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

(b) That all documents and reports relating to the items be confirmed as “Not for Publication”.

94. BARNSTAPLE PANNIER MARKET - CONSULTANCY REPORT ON FUTURE OPERATING MODEL

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Place, Property and Regeneration (circulated previously) regarding the Barnstaple Pannier Market consultancy report on future operating model.

The Committee received a verbal report by the Head of Place, Property and Regeneration regarding the Barnstaple Pannier Market consultancy report on future operating model.

The Chief Executive, Director of Resources/Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Place, Property and Regeneration responded to questions from the Committee in relation to the same.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report and the findings from the market consultancy report that concluded the ongoing management of the Pannier Market remained with North Devon Council be noted;
- (b) That the Council works closely with Barnstaple Town Council to ensure a coherent management of the Guildhall, Pannier Market and Butchers Row was in place.
- (c) That a future update report be brought to Members outlining progress against the recommendations within the market consultancy report.

95. SEVEN BRETHERN - AGREEING A WAY FORWARD

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Place, Property and Regeneration (circulated previously) regarding agreeing a way forward for Seven Brethren.

The Committee received a verbal report by the Head of Place, Property and Regeneration regarding agreeing a way forward for Seven Brethren.

The Chief Executive, Director of Resources/Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Place, Property and Regeneration responded to questions from the Committee in relation to the same.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That officers continue to work to secure a delivery partner for this site, recognising the escalating costs and that compromise would be required;
- (b) That in any event, that the planning application currently with the Local Planning Authority be not withdrawn and be progressed to determination.

96. RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting.

97. LITTER WORKING GROUP

The Committee considered a report by the Lead Member for the Environment (circulated previously) regarding the outcomes of the Litter Working Group.

In response to questions, the Lead Member for the Environment advised the following:

- It was proposed that the material used for signage to be placed on bins would be of reflective material so that they could be seen in darkness.

- The proposed powers to be delegated to Parish Councils in relation to litter related enforcement was voluntary for Parish Councils if they wished to take part in the scheme.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That an annual purchasing plan for litter bins that takes into account the baseline data collected be considered, with a view to removing and/or replacing broken bins with the right size, colour, and type of bin and an understanding of appropriate placement;
- (c) That consideration be given to developing a website dedicated to litter campaigns;
- (d) That the Head of Planning, Housing and Health be authorised to delegate litter-related enforcement powers to other groups where it can be demonstrated that they hold the appropriate competencies, e.g. Police Officers, Parish Council Officers and specific individual landowners on request;
- (e) That a programme of accreditation which takes into account the requirements of all legislation and associated guidance be put in place to enable a robust assessment of competence to take place before such delegation was given;
- (f) That Members read Litterology to get an insight into the psychology of littering.

Chair

The meeting ended at 12.03 pm

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