

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Policy Development Committee held in the Barum Room - Brynsworthy on Thursday, 8th December 2022 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Campbell (Chair)

Councillors Bulled, Hunt, Jenkins, Mackie, Walker and York

Officers:

Head of Planning, Housing and Health

Also Present virtually:

Councillor D. Spear

77. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Roome and Councillor D Spear who joined virtually.

78. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17TH NOVEMBER 2022 (ATTACHED).

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2022 (circulated previously) be agreed as a correct copy and signed by the Chair.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest made.

80. NORTH DEVON COUNCIL WORK STREAMS WHICH ARE ADDRESSING COASTAL DEPRIVATION CONCERNS.

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Planning, Housing and Health in respect of North Devon Council work streams, which were addressing Coastal deprivation concerns.

The Head of Planning, Housing and Health provided the following highlights:

- Further to reporting on headline information from the Chief Medical officer and headline information from North Devon it was discovered the information we had on North Devon was limited.
- During research to find more information, a report by the company Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI) called Local Profile Insight was discovered.

- This 70 page report was commissioned by North Devon plus.
- The report was very user friendly and the information contained in it covered areas such as the total population of North Devon, health, education standards, crime statistics.
- It was not possible to drill down to specific Parishes/Towns but gave detailed information on the wider population of North Devon.
- Housing matters were recognised as a Corporate priority for North Devon Council. There were 11 priority programmes of work set up within North Devon Council, around housing such as standards and supply.
- Ilfracombe was the area's largest coastal town of concern which was highlighted in the OCSI report. Information around vulnerable groups, and how young people were performing could be easily extracted from the report and supported areas of work already being carried out by officers from North Devon Council.
- There was a significant programme around the economy and this along with the programmes of work on housing would be collated by the Head of Programme Management and Performance and reported back to Members detailing progress updates.
- Another area of concern the OCSI report picked up was around crime and disorder. A Crime Safety Partnership made up of 7 partners was set up dealing with the issues of crime and disorder but their activities were not being reported back to Members effectively.
- A lot of work was carried out in the background that the public were not necessarily aware was happening.
- The Communications team at North Devon Council needed to be kept informed of updates so that these could be posted on social media keeping the public up-to-date on progress.
- The lack of housing challenge was not just to do with affordability but concerned lack of supply. Key workers taking up employment in the area were struggling to find accommodation.
- Fuel poverty in North Devon found 5 % of households in North Devon did not have central heating, and alternative forms of heating were being used at a higher cost to the household having a knock on effect to the cost of living crisis.
- There were no areas of neglect or deficiency in the work carried out by North Devon Council but rather a lack of updates to Members on progress in key areas.
- A report was being put together to be taken to Strategy and Resources setting out the Council's progress on areas of concern to update Members on work being undertaken by Officers.

In response to questions from Members, the Head of Planning, Housing and Health gave the following replies:

- The Council did not have the staff resources to undertake such a report itself. The Company that produce this report were specialists in this type of work, not aware of other services they provided.
- The Policy Development Committee would lead on promoting the information in the report to all Members of the Council.

- Future administration would need to take the decision on how frequently to report the information.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

81. WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23.

The Committee considered the work programme for 2022/23 (circulated previously).

It was requested that a cut-off date for receipt of questions to be put forward for South West Water be provided.

A question was asked about whether there would be a jointly held meeting with Torridge District Council's External Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in relation to the South West Water work programme item.

It was felt that the items Locality Director for Local Care Partnership and Age Concern and the elderly - provisions in supporting charities should be considered together.

Clarification was requested on the Road Network and infrastructure item and why it was being discussed by the Policy Development Committee.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2022/23 be noted.

Chair

The meeting ended at 11.07 am

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