

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Council held at Crematorium Meeting Room - North Devon Crematorium on Wednesday, 6th April, 2022 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Hunt (Chair)

Councillors Biederman, Bulled, Cann, Chesters, Crabb, Davis, Davies, Gubb, Henderson, Jenkins, Lane, Leaver, Ley, Lofthouse, Lovering, Luggar, Mack, Mackie, Orange, Phillips, Prowse, Roome, Saxby, D. Spear, L. Spear, Topham, Topps, Tucker, Turton, Walker, Wilkinson, Worden, Yabsley and York

Officers:

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

118. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barker, Bushell, Campbell, Fowler, Knight, Patrinos and Pearson.

119. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2022 (ATTACHED)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2022 (circulated previously) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

120. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Former Councillor Roy Lucas

Council stood in silence in memory of former Councillor Roy Lucas who had been a long standing Councillor and had sadly passed away.

(b) Chair's Civic Service Functions

The Chair advised that over £500 in donations had been made at her Civic Service on 27 February 2022 which had been given to the charities Over and Above and North Devon Against Domestic Abuse.

She also advised that a number of other Council Civic Service events had now been arranged over the forthcoming months and thanked Councillor Tucker for attending recent events.

(c) North Devon World Surfing Reserve

The Chair invited Councillor Wilkinson to address Council.

Councillor Wilkinson advised Council that it had been announced that North Devon had become the first place in the UK to be selected as a World Surfing Reserve. North Devon was the 12th World Surfing Reserve and was only the second in the whole of Europe which was a remarkable achievement and recognised the environment. This had been the result of the hard work of Kevin Cook leading the submission and the British Surfing Museum in North Devon. This reflected the impact of the environment and would also have benefits for tourism. It also linked well to the recent notice of motion submitted regarding Ocean Recovery and the importance of keeping the ocean clean.

121. BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY OR WITH THE CONSENT OF THE CHAIR

There were no items of business brought forward by or with the consent of the Chair.

122. REPLIES TO ANY QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE PUBLIC AND/OR TO RECEIVE PETITIONS UNDER PART 4, COUNCIL PROCEDURES RULES, PARAGRAPHS 8 AND 9 OF THE CONSTITUTION

There were no questions submitted by the Public, or Petitions received under Part 4 of the Council Procedure Rules, Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Constitution.

123. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 4, COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES, PARAGRAPH 11 OF THE CONSTITUTION

Councillor Walker presented her notice of motion to Council as amended as follows:

- (i) Removal of paragraph 1 as this work had already been completed by the Devon Audit Partnership
- (ii) Removal of paragraph 5 as the Council had a responsibility to support all citizens
- (iii) Amendment to paragraph 2 to replace “Home Office” with “Foreign Office”

It was moved by Councillor Walker and seconded by Councillor Lofthouse “that the notice of motion as amended be adopted”.

The Chief Executive advised that the Council was already working on providing support to Ukraine Refugees in partnership with other Devon Local Authorities as

part of Team Devon. The Council was also working with third parties such as Pickwell Foundation and Sunrise to ensure that the placements were successful and they were provided with appropriate support. If a placement failed, refugees would present themselves to the Council as being homeless and requiring emergency accommodation. A review of the Devon County Council's Pension Fund had already been carried out and only 0.15% of the Pension Fund was linked to Russian involvement and the Fund was looking at ways to reduce this percentage even further.

RESOLVED that the Council:

- (a) Where possible to offer the help and assistance to Ukrainian refugees that they require during this heart-breaking period.
- (b) Support, promote and work in partnership with local charitable, community and religious organizations that are working to provide resources and assistance for those affected and displaced by the conflict in Ukraine.
- (c) Through press releases, thank those who have made generous offers of accommodation to Ukrainian refugees within their homes.
- (d) Ask the County Council to work with our local school community to urgently find placement for school age children seeking refuge in North Devon.
- (e) Promote opportunities to support organisations working on the ground in Ukraine to provide humanitarian aid and shelter – such as the British Red Cross, Unicef and the UN Refugee Council.
- (f) Ask our Member of Parliament to raise with the Home Office the difficulty children, who don't have a passport, are currently experiencing at the UK border.
- (g) Write to the Foreign Office to give North Devon support to stricter sanctions on the Russian regime – and in particular to extend sanctions against Russian oligarchs with ties to Putin's regime to fully block their access to financial operations in the UK.
- (h) Ask all Group Leaders to sign a joint letter to the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary calling on the UK Government to match words with action and:
 - a. Offer sanctuary to Ukrainian people in their hour of need without having to go through a prolonged visa application process.
 - b. End our dependence on Russian energy as quickly as possible and fast-track the transition to renewable energy sources.
 - c. Impose the severest economic, financial, technical and cultural sanctions on the Russia state.

124. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

125. CHAIR'S REPLIES TO ANY QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL BY MEMBERS SUBMITTED UNDER PART 4, COUNCIL PROCEDURES RULES, PARAGRAPH 10 OF THE CONSTITUTION

There were no questions received by Members submitted under Part 4, Council Procedure Rules, Paragraph 10 of the Constitution.

126. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Council considered and noted a report by the Leader of the Council (circulated previously) regarding work that had been undertaken since the last Council meeting.

He expressed concern that the Council was still in Priority 3 for the Levelling Up Fund where other Councils in the South West had moved up to either Priority 1 or 2. North Devon had a number of wards with the highest level deprivation.

In response to a question, the Chief Executive advised that the replacement for the Development Manager position would be advertised shortly.

127. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

There were no questions submitted by Members to the Leader or the Chair of a Committee under Part 4, Council Procedure Rules, paragraph 10.4 of the Constitution.

**128. A NEW ACCESS OFF ALEXANDRA ROAD, BARNSTAPLE -
OPTIONS REPORT**

Council considered a report by the Head of Place, Property and Regeneration (circulated previously) regarding an options report in relation to a proposed new access off Alexandra Road, Barnstaple.

Council noted that the inclusion of reference to the “former abattoir” in paragraph 1.3 of the report was incorrect.

It was moved by Councillor Prowse and seconded by Councillor Lofthouse “that the Council proceed with an access from Alexandra Road into the Queen Street/Bear Street car park and that option 1 (a) be progressed; and that Council vary the capital programme by up to £495,000 and funds be released to enable the delivery of a new access from Alexandra Road to the new Queen Street/Bear Street car park”.

Councillor Prowse thanked the team for progressing this work.

In response to questions, the Head of Place, Property and Regeneration advised the following:

- £190,000 of the estimated total cost of up to £495,000 was for utility diversion. These cost may reduce.
- Concerns regarding the Bear Street junction would be raised with Devon County Council Highways.
- The feasibility and options for the provision of directional signage would be explored.

In response to questions, the Director of Resources advised the following:

- 20 car parking spaces would be allocated for electric vehicle charging.

- Bear Street car park was underutilised due to issues with accessibility. It was hoped by that by making the improvements proposed that the car park would be a “flagship” and revenue income would increase. This would outweigh the borrowing costs incurred by the Council to undertake the works. The costs had been carefully modelled.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Council proceed with an access from Alexandra Road into the Queen Street/Bear Street car park and that option 1 (a) be progressed; and;
- (b) that Council vary the capital programme by up to £495,000 and funds be released to enable the delivery of a new access from Alexandra Road to the new Queen Street/Bear Street car park

Councillor Phillips requested that it be noted that he abstained from voting on this motion.

129. LEVELLING UP ROUND 2

The Chief Executive advised that shortly prior to the publication of the agenda, the prospectus for the Levelling up Round 2 had been published. He provided Council with the following update:

- The Levelling Up Fund was £4.8bn.
- Round 1 closed in June 2021. The second round of the Fund focussed on the same three investment themes as the first round: local transport projects that make a genuine difference to local areas; town centre and high street regeneration; and support for maintaining and expanding the UK’s world leading portfolio of cultural and heritage assets.
- The priority areas for the fund were categorised into levels 1, 2 and 3. North Devon had been placed at the lowest level 3. Other areas in Devon such as Torridge District Council had been categorised into higher priority areas. Other areas in Devon have been moved from 3 up to category 2. These changes had occurred as a result of the indices that were used.
- He recommended that Council to go ahead and submit a bid for Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund concentrating on Ilfracombe and to use Round 1 bid as a basis for the bid.
- Investment proposals should focus on supporting high priority and high impact projects that will make a visible positive difference to local areas.
- Projects may include capital infrastructure proposals that better protect against flooding and coastal erosion where they form a coherent part of a wider transport, regeneration, and/or culture and heritage bid.
- Projects may include proposals that strengthen the work of councils and multi-agency partners in tackling a range of community safety issues and reducing crime.
- Bids would be assessed based on 4 criteria set out in the assessment framework.

- As part of the process the Council would be required to consult with a range of local stakeholders including the MP. The MP was required to be in support of the bid.
- The deadline for the submission of bids for round 2 was 6 July 2022.

It was moved by Councillor Worden and seconded by Councillor Prowse “that Council go ahead and submit a bid for Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund concentrating on Ilfracombe and to use Round 1 bid as a basis for the bid”.

RESOLVED that Council go ahead and submit a bid for Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund concentrating on Ilfracombe and to use Round 1 bid as a basis for the bid.

130. STATUTORY PAY POLICY 2022

Council considered a report by the Head of Organisational Development (circulated previously) regarding the Statutory Pay Policy 2022.

The Director of Resources outlined the report to Council.

It was moved by Councillor Biederman and seconded by Councillor Worden “that the recommendation be adopted”.

RESOLVED that the Statutory Pay Policy 2022 report, its Appendix and Annex thereto, be approved.

131. REPORT OF LEAD MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Council considered an update report by the Lead Member for Climate Change (circulated previously).

The Lead Member for Climate Change reported that the teams within the Council were currently in the process of working towards making improvements in relation to Climate Change. A more detailed report would be presented in due course. He referred to 6 Government White papers which were currently out for consultation relating to climate change or the environment and requested that Members review and submit their comments.

Councillor Leaver as the Council appointed representative to the LGA (General Assembly) provided a brief update regarding the work that the Local Government Association was undertaking.

132. OUTSIDE BODIES - REPORT OF APPOINTEES

Council considered and noted the reports of appointees to Outside Bodies (circulated previously).

In response to a question, the Chief Executive advised that the Council representative for One Northern Devon was the Leader of the Council.

Councillor Hunt reminded Members of the importance of providing reports if they had been appointed to an Outside Bodies or advise that there was nothing to report if no meetings had been held.

133. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) **Building Control Joint Committee**

RESOLVED that the following minutes of the Building Control Joint Committee (circulated previously) be noted and adopted as follows:

(i) 10 February 2022

In response to a question, the Chief Executive provided an update on the replacement of the Building Control Manager.

(b) **Joint Planning Policy Committee**

RESOLVED that the following minutes of the Joint Planning Policy Committee (circulated previously) be noted and adopted as follows:

(i) 28 January 2022

(c) **Licensing and Community Safety Committee**

RESOLVED that the following minutes of the Licensing and Community Safety Committee (circulated previously) be noted and adopted as follows:

(i) 8 February 2022

(ii) 8 March 2022

(d) **Planning Committee**

RESOLVED that the following minutes of the Planning Committee (circulated previously) be noted and adopted as follows:

(i) 9 February 2022

(ii) 9 March 2022

(e) **Strategy and Resources Committee**

RESOLVED that the following minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee (circulated previously) be noted and adopted as follows:

(i) 7 March 2022

(A) Minute 118(b): Approval and Release of Section 106 Public Opens Space Funds – Morteheo

(B) Minute 119(b): Allocation of Affordable Housing Commuted Sums – Beechfield Road, Fremington

Chair

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm

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