

# WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



## Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday, 2nd March, 2021 at 2.00 pm Via Teams**

Present: **Councillors:**

**Chairman** Cllr Ewings  
**Vice Chairman** Cllr Kimber

Cllr Coulson	Cllr Crozier
Cllr Daniel	Cllr Heyworth
Cllr Hipse	Cllr Kemp
Cllr Moyse	Cllr Musgrave
Cllr Ratcliffe	Cllr Southcott
Cllr Wood	

### **In attendance:**

Councillors:	
Cllr Cheadle	Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Jory	Cllr Leech
Cllr Moody	Cllr Mott
Cllr Pearce	Cllr Renders
Cllr Samuel	Cllr Sellis
Cllr Yelland	

Officers:  
Senior Leadership Team  
Head of Strategy & Projects  
Democratic Services Manager  
Business Manager – Case Management  
Case Management Team Leader  
Specialist – Leisure  
Case Manager – IT  
Democratic Services Specialist  
Fusion Representatives

61. **Apologies for Absence**  
\*O&S 61

Apologies for absence for this meeting were received from Cllrs T Bolton and J Spettigue.

62. **Confirmation of Minutes**

\*O&S 62

The minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 19 January 2021 were confirmed by the Meeting as a true and correct record.

63. **Declarations of Interest**

\*O&S 63

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of this meeting but there were none made.

64. **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

\*O&S 64

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Director for Place and Enterprise updated the meeting on the Tavistock/Plymouth cycle route. Sustrans had been asked to investigate the corridor and had concluded that, at this stage, the route appeared feasible.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- a) The project would be progressed through the Council's Corporate Strategy.
- b) Progress would include discussions with Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council, Devon County Council, Dartmoor National Park Authority and cycling lobby groups.
- c) The officer would contact Cllr Heyworth to progress an application for ELS funding through Defra (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs).
- d) Members were asked to send any suggestions to the Director of Governance and Assurance or the Head of Strategy and Projects for inclusion in the developing Corporate Strategy.

The lead officer agreed to ensure that local Ward Members received regular updates.

65. **Public Forum**

\*O&S 65

The Chairman informed that no formal requests had been received in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

66. **Hub Committee Forward Plan**

\*O&S 66

It was noted that no prior requests had been received in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

Following the decision of Full Council to defer a decision at its meeting on 8 December 2020 on the Dog Control Orders (Minute CM 28 refers), it was also noted that the issue would be reconsidered at the next Hub Committee meeting to be held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

67. **Leisure Contract - Fusion Annual Report 2020**

\*O&S 67

At the invitation of the Committee, Gregg Holland (Fusion, Regional Manager and Steve Rose, Business Development Manager) gave a presentation of the Annual Report, during which the following key points were highlighted:

- Thanks were given to West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) for all the help Fusion had received through the pandemic;
- Lockdowns 1 and 3 had been hard closures, ie mothballing of centres, with lockdown 2 a soft closure where water temperatures were dropped rather than heating turned off. Monies received from the Council had been used to support maintenance and asset protection;
- Centres would be reopened in line with Government guidelines, with new covid-19 procedures in place, including risk assessments, increased cleaning regime, and training for staff, including CIMSPA (Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity) accredited course;
- The greatest lesson learnt by Fusion from the first lockdown was for increased communication with customers. Mitigation measures included the introduction of a dedicated customer service team available seven days a week. The intention to continue to build on communication channels with customers was also highlighted.
- A staff review had been carried out in July 2020, with redundancy of 37 positions (which equated to 11 people) concluded in November 2020. This was confirmed as being across both WDBC and South Hams District Council geographical areas.
- Fusion was currently working on financial projections for April 2021 to March 2022. Once this exercise was completed, along with a review of the pricing structure, these figures would be brought to WDBC.
- The CLBIL loan had been confirmed. Other funding had been applied for, and Fusion was hoping to hear the outcome of these applications shortly. It was noted that Fusion was looking to re-open its centres in April 2021.

- Members were reminded of a Joint All Member briefing with South Hams District Council Members on Fusion which would occur on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

In conclusion, and on behalf of the Committee, the Chairman wished Fusion well with reopening and thanked Mr Holland for his presentation.

It was then:

### **RESOLVED**

That the Committee note the contents of Fusion's Annual Report for 2020 and proposals for 2021.

#### **68. Verbal Update from the Rural Broadband Working Group - standing agenda item**

\*O&S 68

In his update, the Hub Lead Committee Member for Enterprise highlighted that:

- a) WDBC were in the process of hiring a dedicated broadband officer; this role would be employed in a shared capacity in conjunction with SHDC.
- b) Sydenham Damerel had now signed a Community Fibre Partnership Agreement with BT Openreach. WDBC would be underwriting the legal framework of the agreement and would monitor this as a pilot project.
- c) Connecting Devon and Somerset had developed contracts with Airband to provide fixed fibre from Airband hubs. However, no one had connected via this route yet, but surveys and engineering works were on-going.
- d) Some Members had met with Sir Geoffrey Cox MP and broadband provision had been high on the agenda. The MP had been very interested and had requested more information which had been provided to him. The MP said he would do what he could to assist generally, as he understood the need for good broadband in rural environment.

#### **69. Task and Finish Group Updates:**

O&S 69

##### **(a) Consultation and Engagement Strategy**

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group highlighted that the group had meet five or six times, and had now completed its task. The strategy had been put together with help from officers. The highlights were:

- i) The framework in middle of strategy outlined various forms of engagement and consultation which Council could embark on when making any changes
- ii) When any new piece of work comes in front of Council for approval, it would now have a standing item in the report outlining engagement and consultation format for that piece of work. Format will have been chosen from table mentioned in i) above.
- iii) Action plan and dates outlined for adoption of policy.
- iv) In terms of next steps, it was confirmed that the recommendations would now be presented to the Hub Committee at its meeting to be held on 16 March 2021 for consideration before onward determination at the Full Council meeting to be held on 30 March 2021

The Chairman remarked that it was a brilliantly set out document, easy to read, and would be very useful.

It was then:

### **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- 1) Note the work of the Consultation & Engagement Task & Finish Group
- 2) Endorse the draft Community Consultation & Engagement Strategy and;
- 3) **Recommend** that the Hub Committee consider and recommend the strategy to Council for adoption.

### **(b) Localities and Clusters**

The Localities and Clusters Group Chairman introduced the concluding report from the Group which had been asked to consider options for future partnerships to support the voluntary and community section; review the Locality Officer's role; approach to enforcement and tackling environmental crime; review of community clusters; and to review current tasks and roles of the Locality Engagement and Mobile Locality Officers.

Following a question from a Member, it was clarified that there was no recommendation on clusters because there had been no consistency across the Borough on how these clusters had worked. Therefore the flexibility of how these groups worked was important to maintain.

It was also confirmed that the Locality Officers had been involved in the review.

It was then:

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee **RECOMMEND** to the Hub Committee that the Business Manager for Case Management (in consultation with the Portfolio Holder):

1. Carries out a review of the Locality Service structure in order to deliver the following:
  - 1.1 Environmental Protection Officers are incorporated into the Localities Service;
  - 1.2 Close working relationships between the Localities, Parking Enforcement and Waste teams are formalised;
  - 1.3 Shared officers are introduced to improve the flexibility to meet team demands; and
2. Drafts a new Locality Team structure to support recommendation 1. which will ensure:
  - 2.1 Clearly defined roles that support the delivery of scheduled tasks and the work of community groups, developing service level agreements where necessary;
  - 2.2 Improved office based and field support for mobile officers.

70.

### **Draft Annual Work Programme 2020/21**

\*O&S 70

The Committee considered the final version of its draft Annual Work Programme for 2020/21 and noted its contents without any further debate.

Officers confirmed that work is underway on the annual programme for next municipal year which would be brought to the next meeting for the Committee to review and input.

71.

### **Member Learning and Development Opportunities Arising from this Meeting**

\*O&S 71

Members were reminded that a Joint Member Briefing with Fusion had been arranged to be held on Thursday, 18 March 2021.

The Meeting concluded at 3.17 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chairman**

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