

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT
COUNCIL HELD AT FOLLATON HOUSE, TOTNES ON THURSDAY 25 JULY 2019**

MEMBERS

* Cllr R Rowe – Chairman

* Cllr R J Foss – Vice-Chairman

* Cllr V Abbott	* Cllr D W May
* Cllr L Austen	* Cllr J McKay
∅ Cllr K J Baldry	* Cllr D M O’Callaghan
* Cllr H D Bastone	* Cllr G Pannell
* Cllr J P Birch	* Cllr J A Pearce
* Cllr J Brazil	* Cllr J T Pennington
* Cllr D Brown	* Cllr K Pringle
* Cllr M Chown	* Cllr H Reeve
* Cllr J D Hawkins	* Cllr J Rose
* Cllr J M Hodgson	* Cllr P C Smerdon
* Cllr T R Holway	* Cllr B Spencer
* Cllr N A Hopwood	* Cllr J Sweett
* Cllr S Jackson	* Cllr B Taylor
* Cllr K Kemp	* Cllr D Thomas
* Cllr M Long	

* Denotes attendance

∅ Denotes apology for absence

Officers in attendance and participating:

For all items: Chief Executive, Deputy Monitoring Officer; and Senior Specialist –
Democratic Services

24/19 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman informed that she had no items of urgent business for consideration at this meeting.

25/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

26/19 COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval to a revised Commercial Investment Strategy to relax the current geographical investment restriction for Renewable Energy generation assets.

During discussion, particular reference was made to:-

- (a) an amendment to the draft Strategy was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** as follows:

Reference: Governance Arrangements Bullet Point 2 be amended to read:

- *When any decision to proceed with a development or acquisition is being considered, local Ward Members will be briefed at the earliest opportunity and be able to share their views with Executive Members and be consulted before the final decision is made;*

In support of the amendment, the proposer and seconder reiterated the importance of local Ward Members being involved in the decision-making process from the earliest opportunity. When put to the vote, the amendment was declared **CARRIED**;

- (b) solar arrays. A Member asked that, when making investment decisions related to solar energy in accordance with the Strategy, consideration be given to whether solar arrays were positioned on elevated apparatus thereby ensuring that the land underneath them could still be used.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the revised Commercial Investment Strategy be approved, subject to inclusion of the following amendment:

- Reference: Governance Arrangements Bullet Point 2 being amended to read:

‘When any decision to proceed with a development or acquisition is being considered, local Ward Members will be briefed at the earliest opportunity and be able to share their views with Executive Members and be consulted before the final decision is made.’

27/19

RESTRUCTURE OF THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Members were presented with a report that sought to approve a revised Senior Leadership Team structure, roles and salaries to come into effect from 1 September 2019.

In discussion, reference was made to some comments that had been expressed on social media and, for absolute clarity, the Leader confirmed that this proposal was in no means the first step to re-exploring the ‘One Council’ proposal with West Devon Borough Council. In expanding upon the point, the Leader stated that she had absolutely no intention of revisiting the ‘One Council’ proposal during this Council administration.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That, with effect from 1 September 2019, a new Senior Leadership Team structure be developed that has the capacity to meet the Councils' needs and addresses four key requirements:

- Customer facing;
- Community facing;
- Financial; and
- Governance and Assurance;

To meet these requirements, the team will comprise of the Chief Executive and four Director roles:

- Strategic Director of Customer Service and Delivery;
- Strategic Director of Place and Enterprise;
- Corporate Director of Governance and Assurance; and
- Corporate Director of Strategic Finance (and Section 151 Officer);

That, for each of the four Director roles, the role profiles and salaries be approved as outlined in Appendix A of the presented agenda report;

2. That the Chief Executive be requested to review and implement changes to the Extended Leadership Team and Pay Structure to take account of the new Senior Leadership Team structure, other recent changes in the organisation and Benchmarking data by the end of December 2019; and

3. That it be noted that the combined restructures will achieve ongoing annual revenue savings estimated to be at least £120,000 per annum (£60,000 per annum for each Council).

28/19

OUTSIDE BODIES

Members considered a report that requested that the Council made appointments to two additional Outside Bodies: Hope Harbour and the Governance Board (South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation).

The Council proceeded to note that the Group Leaders and Independent Members had been invited to submit their nominations for these Outside Bodies and the following had been received:

- Hope Harbour – one nomination (Cllr M Long) for one position; and
- Governance Board (South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation) – three nominations (Cllrs S Jackson, J T Pennington and R Rowe) for one position.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That, for the remainder of the 2019/20 Municipal Year:

1. the Council be represented by Cllr M Long on the Hope Harbour and Cllr R Rowe on the Governance Board (South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation) Outside Bodies;
2. attendance at meetings of these Bodies be regarded as an 'Approved Duty' (for the purposes of Members' Allowances); and
3. these appointed Members provide regular feedback and consultation on issues affecting the Bodies concerned.

29/19

REPORTS OF BODIES

RESOLVED

That the minutes and recommendations of the undermentioned bodies be received and approved subject to any amendments listed below:-

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| (a) | Development Management Committee | 22 May 2019 |
| (b) | Executive | 6 June 2019 |

E.06/19: Climate Change

In proposing the Executive recommendations, the Leader informed of her intention to add a further recommendation that read as follows:

'That the Council establish a politically balanced Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group that comprises of 6 Members, with the Group Leaders being given delegated authority to put forward their respective nominations after this meeting, with the Group being chaired by the lead Executive Member for Climate Change.'

Each of these recommendations were duly **SECONDED** by the Deputy Leader.

In the subsequent debate, the following amendment (indicated in red font) was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED**:

*'1. That a Climate Change **and Biodiversity** Emergency be declared;*

2. That an Action Plan be developed that outlines how the Council will address the Emergencies and meet or exceed the targets set by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), including an assessment of the viability of a 2030 target and respond to the concerns raised by the IPBES report on global species and habitat loss to be brought to Council for approval within 6 months;

3. That the Council commit to collaborating with Devon County Council, all the Devon District Councils, Plymouth City Council and other agencies to address the Emergencies;

4. That the Action Plan identify Key Performance Indicators measured against any relevant national standards;

5. That a politically balanced Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group be established that comprises of 6 Members, with the Group Leaders being given delegated authority to put forward their respective nominations after this meeting, with the Group being chaired by the lead Executive Member for Climate Change; and

6. That the Working Group be instructed, at its first meeting, to consider the setting up of a Citizens' Assembly and to submit a recommendation to the next Council meeting to be held on 26 September 2019 and that prior to that it be submitted to the September meetings of the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Panel for comment.'

The proposer of this amendment spoke to each part in turn and advised that these had been presented following discussions with the Leader of Council.

In discussion, the Leader confirmed that this was the case and, as the proposer of the original motion, she was therefore supportive of this amendment. The Deputy Leader also confirmed his support for the amendment and it was therefore included as part of the substantive motion.

At this point, a further amendment was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** as follows:

'1. That *both* a Climate Change and *Ecological* Emergency be declared;

2. That an Action Plan be developed that outlines how the Council will address the Emergencies and meet or exceed the targets set by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), including an assessment of the viability of a 2030 target and respond to the concerns raised by the IPBES report on global species and habitat loss to be brought to Council for approval within 6 months;

3. That the Council commit to collaborating with Devon County Council, all the Devon District Councils, Plymouth City Council and other agencies to address the Emergencies;

4. That the Action Plan identify Key Performance Indicators measured against any relevant national standards;

5. That a politically balanced Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group be established that comprises of 6 Members, with the Group Leaders being given delegated authority to put forward their respective nominations after this meeting, with the Group being chaired by the lead Executive Member for Climate Change;

6. That the Working Group be instructed, at its first meeting, to consider the setting up of a Citizens' Assembly and to submit a recommendation to the next Council meeting to be held on 26 September 2019 and that prior to that it be submitted to the September meetings of the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Panel for comment; and

7. That the Council takes steps to reinforce its Joint Local Plan Policies in respect of wildlife and biodiversity through the Supplementary Planning Document to require developers to demonstrate biodiversity gain as part of any relevant planning application so that there is a robust and consistent basis to assess and secure meaningful biodiversity enhancements having regard to a mitigation hierarchy, namely to avoid impact first, provide mitigation where there is unavoidable harm and, in the event that there is no alternative, provide compensatory measures as a last resort.'

The proposer felt that the term 'Ecological' would strengthen the motion and advised that part 7 had been drafted in consultation with the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer.

With the exception of the term 'Ecological', the Leader and Deputy Leader both confirmed their support for the other two parts of the amendment and they were therefore included in the substantive motion.

In the debate on the term 'Ecological', the point was made that the overwhelming majority of local authorities had declared a Climate Change and *Biodiversity* Emergency. As a result, it was considered important to make the same declaration as other local authorities and, when put to the vote, the amendment was declared **LOST**.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That both a Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency be declared;
2. That an Action Plan be developed that outlines how the Council will address the Emergencies and meet or exceed the targets set by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), including an assessment of the viability of a 2030 target and respond to the concerns raised by the IPBES report on global species and habitat loss to be brought to Council for approval within 6 months;
3. That the Council commit to collaborating with Devon County Council, all the Devon District Councils, Plymouth City Council and other agencies to address the Emergencies;
4. That the Action Plan identify Key Performance Indicators measured against any relevant national standards;
5. That a politically balanced Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group be established that comprises of 6 Members, with the Group Leaders being given delegated authority to put forward their respective nominations after this meeting, with the Group being chaired by the lead Executive Member for Climate Change;
6. That the Working Group be instructed, at its first meeting, to consider the setting up of a Citizens' Assembly and to submit a recommendation to the next Council meeting to be held on 26 September 2019 and that prior to that it be submitted to the September meetings of the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Panel for comment; and
7. That the Council takes steps to reinforce its Joint Local Plan Policies in respect of wildlife and biodiversity through the Supplementary Planning Document to require developers to demonstrate biodiversity gain as part of any relevant planning application so that there is a robust and consistent basis to assess and secure meaningful biodiversity enhancements having regard to a mitigation hierarchy, namely to avoid impact first, provide mitigation where there is unavoidable harm and, in the event that there is no alternative, provide compensatory measures as a last resort.

E.08/19: Devon Wide Housing Assistance Policy

RESOLVED

That the existing 2018/19 Homes Assistance Policy be updated with the revised 2019/21 Devon Housing Assistance Policy.

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| (c) | Overview and Scrutiny Panel | 13 June 2019 |
| (d) | Development Management Committee | 19 June 2019 |
| (e) | Audit Committee | 20 June 2019 |
| (f) | Salcombe Harbour Board | 24 June 2019 |
| (g) | Overview and Scrutiny Panel | 11 July 2019 |

O&S.18/19: Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

RESOLVED

That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2018/19 be approved.

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| (h) | Executive | 18 July 2019 |
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E.14/19: Ivybridge Regeneration

A non-Executive Member asked that, prior to being signed off at the next Executive meeting as a 'true and correct record', consideration be given to expanding the draft minute to emphasise the importance of youth facilities in the town.

E.18/19: Adoption of the Totnes Air Quality Action Plan

RESOLVED

That the amended Air Quality Action Plan for Totnes be adopted.

E.19/19: Medium Term Financial Position for 2020/21 Onwards

RESOLVED

That the Council consult with all of the Town and Parish Councils within the District on the basis that the District Council is 'minded to' withdraw the Council Tax Support Grant from Town and Parish Councils (with effect from 1 April 2020) by 50% per annum over the next two years, in order to allow time for Town and Parish Councils to plan for the reduction in their budget setting processes.

E.22/19: Car Parking Order Amendments

RESOLVED

That the Off-Street Parking Order be amended to include reference to Electric Charging Points to enable future provision and enforcement of the Electric Charging point bays.

(Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.20 pm)

Chairman