

Report to: **Council**

Date: **26 September 2019**

Title: **Climate Change – Citizens’ Assembly**

Portfolio Area: **Leader – Cllr Judy Pearce**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: **Immediately**

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#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That, in considering the setting up of a Citizens’ Assembly, the Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group RECOMMEND to Council that:**

**The Working Group be provided with full particulars of the Citizens’ Assembly proposed by Devon County Council including, but not limited to, the issues and matters to be addressed; the number of assembly members and their geographic spread; and means of administration / operation.**

**(This will inform the benefits and options of establishing a Citizens Assembly for the South Hams).**

#### **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 At a Special meeting of the Council held on 25 July 2019, the Council declared a ‘Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency’ (Minute 29/19(b) refers);
- 1.2 At the same meeting, the Council established a politically balanced ‘Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group’ and instructed this Group, 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.'*

- 1.3 This report presents the recommendations of the Working Group in respect of the setting up of a Citizens' Assembly.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Working Group (comprising of Cllrs Pearce (Chairman), Austen, Birch, Hodgson, Holway and McKay) held its inaugural meeting on 29 August 2019 and approved its Terms of Reference;

- 2.2 When considering the merits of setting up a Citizens' Assembly at this meeting, the Group proceeded to make the following recommendation to Council:

*'That the Working Group be provided with full particulars of the Citizens' Assembly proposed by Devon County Council including, but not limited to, the issues and matters to be addressed; the number of assembly members and their geographic spread; and means of administration / operation.*

*(This will inform the benefits and options of establishing a Citizens Assembly for the South Hams).'*

## **3. Overview and Scrutiny Panel Comments**

- 3.1 In accordance with the resolution arising from the Special Council meeting, the Working Group recommendation was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 5 September 2019 for its comment (Minute O&S.28/19 refers).

- 3.2 In so doing, the Panel was of the view that the lack of any timeframe in the Working Group recommendation was unfortunate and a number of Members felt that it would be appropriate for the full particulars to be provided to the next meeting of the Working Group.

## **4. Executive Comments**

- 4.1 At the time of writing this report, the Executive had not met to provide its comments on the Working Group recommendation and these would be available via the published draft Executive minutes that are to be presented later on the agenda.

## **5. Options available and consideration of risk**

- 5.1 In the event of the recommendation being approved, the Working Group will have access to the full particulars before it makes a final decision on the merits of setting up a Citizens Assembly;
- 5.2 As is custom for all Working Groups of the Council, all Members (irrespective of being appointed to serve on the Working Group) will be able to attend and contribute to the deliberations before a final decision is reached.

## 6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Council has formally constituted the Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group for the remainder of the 2019/20 Municipal Year.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	Whilst there are ultimately financial implications to the Council should the Working Group opt to set up a Citizens' Assembly, there are no financial implications directly arising from this report.
Risk	Y	Risk measures are highlighted at Section 5 above.
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Relevant theme – communities.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	N/A
Safeguarding	N	N/A
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	N/A
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	N/A
Other implications	N	None

### Background Documents:

Council Constitution;

Working Group Terms of Reference;

Special Council agenda and minutes – 25 July 2019 meeting; and

Overview and Scrutiny Panel agenda and minutes – 5 September 2019.