

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2017

Present:

Councillor Haines (Chairman)

Councillor Ford (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors J Hook (was Brodie), Golder, Winsor, Clarence, Colclough, Connett, Dennis, Dewhirst, Eden, Gribble, Hayes, G Hook, Keeling, Kerswell, Matthews, Mayne, Morgan, Orme, Parker, Peart, Price, Prowse, Smith and Thorne

Other Members in Attendance:

Councillors Bullivant, Christophers, Goodey, Hockin and Lake

Apologies:

Councillors Hocking, Jeffery and Nutley

In Attendance:

Graham Davey, Housing Enabling Manager

David Eaton, Environmental Protection Manager

Fergus Pate, Principal Delivery Officer

Amanda Pujol, Housing & Health Business Manager

Chris Braines, Waste & Cleansing Manager

108. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2017 were approved and signed as a correct record.

109. MATTERS OF URGENCY OR REPORT ESPECIALLY BROUGHT FORWARD WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIRMAN

The Vice Chairman voiced her disappointment regarding the recent press coverage relating to the redevelopment of Newton Abbot. Advising that the leaked report could jeopardise the Council's ability to negotiate.

The Chairman advised it placed every councillor under suspicion and suggested the leak could affect confidence in holding future discussions with Members.

110. PRESENTATION FROM THE GROUP MANAGER HOUSING SERVICES AT MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL OUTLINE OF MENDIP'S LOCAL AUTHORITY OWNED HOUSING COMPANY

The Group Manager from Mendip District Council provided a presentation on setting up a local authority wholly owned housing company, during her presentation she highlighted the following:

- Mendip had identified a budget deficit for 2020, there was a need to find substantial savings or to deliver income;
- A housing company was established in July 2015, it had taken over two years to set up;
- The need to be mindful of the amount of officer time to develop a company;
- The Journey – originally it had been anticipated that the Council would be investing in properties to rent, prices were high breakeven would not have been achieved for 20 years;
- The company would purchase land, with a ‘gold plated partner’ to build homes to sell;
- The need for expert legal advice from a specialist company, any borrowing from the Council had to be at market rate;
- Audit Committee to assist with risk assessment;
- The process of setting up the company was time consuming and costly.
- To consider political arrangements – there was the possibility for conflict with decision making, any director should not be a Council decision-maker (Planning or Executive), the other directors should be experts from finance and industry;
- Location – to consider if you wished to deliver housing in your area, any restriction could have an effect on profitability;
- Social Housing – the need to consider the local housing allowance rate.
- The need to be as least bureaucratic as possible, to ensure you can move forward quickly. Mendip’s Cabinet had agreed a business plan for the housing company which meant any future decisions would not have to go back to the Cabinet for approval.

During discussion, particular reference was made to:

- (a) Social Housing. Members were advised that Mendip District Council had taken the decision not to become a landlord. Building social housing would have resulted in the need to reignite the housing revenue account, the Council wished to focus on employment;
- (b) Priorities – the need for the decision making process to be clear in terms of whether it wished to address social housing or to invest to generate income. Mendip Council had been provided with a figure to work towards and a business plan was worked back to deliver that figure;
- (c) Why a developer would wish to work with the Council? Mendip were currently looking for a partner, the council could offer funding to enable sites to go ahead;

- (d) Social and affordable housing. Concern that should the Council become a developer that it too would wish to renegotiate affordable housing percentages on approved sites;
- (e) Housing Associations – concern that Teignbridge’s local housing associations had walked away from the proposal suggesting if it was sustainable they would have remained on board.

The Chairman and Members thanked the officer for her presentation and were advised that a report would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

111. COUNCIL STRATEGY T10 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TARGETS AND THE Q1 2017-18 COUNCIL STRATEGY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Consideration was given to a report which provided performance data for Quarter 1 (1 April to 30 June 2017) on the Teignbridge Ten (T10) programmes. Each T10 project had actions with performance indicators and/or projects which monitored their progress against targets and milestones.

Members attention was drawn to the following error:

- Page 9, Clean Scene, paragraph 5 Q1 87.2kg per household should read 91.3kg per household, this figure meant the indicator was still on target, but not ahead of target.

Programme overviews would be provided at each of the quarterly performance meetings, detail of the proposed timetable would be provided in the Members’ Newsletter.

The Business Manager for Housing provided detail of ‘ roof over our heads’ T10 programme, which aimed to provide more, and improved, homes. It was noted that many performance indicators were ahead of target. Challenges facing the Council related to older persons housing and universal credit. Members were reminded of the annual Housing Strategy review which would be held on the 28 November 2017.

The Council’s Principal Growth Point Officer provided an overview of projects being delivered within the district for the ‘moving up a gear’ T10 programme, these included: the widening of the A382 and A383, park and change facilities, challenges with network rail and the proposed station at Marsh Barton.

Consideration was then given to the report which provided detail on actions being taken to rectify performance, during discussion, particular reference was made to:-

- (a) Trend for residual waste per household. A suggestion that the report should provide the figure for the corresponding quarter which would provide clarity on and allow for seasonal variations;

- (b) CSCLS 5.5 – Update Recycling Plan. The delay to this review would enable officers to assess the 3 weekly residual waste collections by neighbouring authorities in terms of customer satisfaction and performance. Further, the over-arching strategy document for Devon was being refreshed which would influence the Council's Plan.
- (c) CSCLS 5.1 – Household Waste Recycled and Composted. In response to concern regarding this figure Members were advised that Teignbridge was the highest in Devon, suggesting it was inappropriate to compare previous figures with the current service as the Council collected garden waste separately as a paid service, and it was difficult to compare against current targets;
- (d) GSGTT 4.2 – Peripatetic Town Centre Manager. The Leader advised that there was current no budget for this post he hoped the current budget round would secure funding;
- (e) Recycling Rates – it was requested that officers bring a report on recycling rates to a future meeting of the Committee;
- (f) CSGP 3.3 – Solar Photovoltaic Developments in the Landscape, Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPD). It was agreed that the officer would be asked to inform Members when SPD consultation is published, to enable Members to contribute.
- (g) CSHAH 1.7 – Smoke Free Play Parks. A Member questioned whether there were any bye-laws to support this policy. It was agreed information would be provided in the Members' Newsletter;
- (h) CSIIP 8.1 – Improved broadband provision. Noting the investment provided by the Council, it was agreed an update would be provided by the Portfolio Holder in the Members' Newsletter.
- (i) SC15.1 Encouraging networking - Members were not aware of the Buckland Hub digital project and requested information be provided via the Newsletter;
- (j) CSSC 1.1 – Encourage Councillors to help develop and deliver local ideas. Members requested further information on the heritage forum, this would be provided outside of the meeting.
- (k) ZH 5.2 - Examine the potential for electric car charging points. A request that more information be provided via the Newsletter.

Resolved

To note the actions being taken to rectify performance.

112. COUNCIL STRATEGY TEIGNBRIDGE TEN PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

TARGETS

The Committee considered a report which proposed targets and rationale for new performance indicators and for those where performance in 2016/17 had exceeded expectation.

In considering the table within the agenda report Members questioned the baseline figure of £99 on line 42, WE6.3 - £ cost per head of population on all services and the target was higher than the baseline figure. It was agreed an explanation would be provided in the Members' Newsletter.

Resolved

To note the report.

113. INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN

Consideration was given to a report which provided detail of progress with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Members' attention was drawn to table 1 within the agenda report which provided a summary of completed projects; table 2 summarised projects where notable updates or progress towards completion had been made.

A Member raised concern that the proposed train station at Marsh Barton was not currently fully funded suggesting it should not be included in the table, in response the Committee was advised that Teignbridge had met its obligations with the project.

Resolved

To note the report.

114. EMERGENCY PLANNING UPDATE

The Council's Environmental Protection Manager provided a presentation on the Council's emergency plan. During his presentation, he made particular reference to:

- the overall aims of the emergency planning function: to provide resilience and capacity to respond to incidents;
- 2 main bodies: Local Resilience Forum (LRF) based on the police area, membership includes: Devon County Council, all blue light services, chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable; Devon Emergency Planning Service (DEPS) set up in 2016 to provide the opportunity for local authorities across Devon to work together to ensure all partners have emergency plans which are up to date, consistent and which reflect current legislation.
- Incident Response and Recovery Plans;

- 53 high risk flooding response plans in Devon;
- 11 high risk flooding response plans in Teignbridge;
- Learning opportunities from other recent major incidents;
- Members' role in incidents – as the interface with the local community.

In response to a question, Members were advised the most efficient process for anyone seeking information on a current incidents was to call either the Teignbridge main switchboard number (if the emergency was in office hours) or to use the Home Safeguard number which was manned on a 24 hour basis.

The Chairman and Members thanked the officer for his presentation.

115. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

The Executive Forward Plan was noted.

116. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted its work programme, no additional items were highlighted for inclusion.

117. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE STRATA JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the last meeting were noted.

118. SOUTH EAST DEVON HABITAT REGULATIONS EXECUTIVE MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting were noted.

MIKE HAINES
Chairman