

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 JULY 2020

Present:

Councillors Bullivant (Chairman), D Cox (Vice-Chairman), Austen, H Cox, Daws, Eden, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Hayes, Hocking, Jenks, Morgan, Mullone, Nuttall, Nutley, Orme, Patch, J Petherick, L Petherick, Parker-Khan, Purser, Peart, Rollason, Thorne and Tume

Members in Attendance:

Councillors J Hook, G Hook, MacGregor and Taylor

Apologies:

Councillors Cook, Evans, Gribble and Keeling

Officers in Attendance:

Neil Blaney, Head of Place & Commercial Services

Tony Mansour, Housing Needs Lead

Sarah Selway, Democratic Services Team Leader & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Trish Corns, Democratic Services Officer

Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

Michelle Luscombe, Principal Policy Planner

GESP Officers

40. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

It was proposed by Councillor Purser and seconded by Councillor D Cox that Councillor Bullivant be elected Chair. There were no other nominations.

A roll call was taken as follows:

For: Councillors Austen, D Cox, H Cox, Daws, Eden, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Hayes, Jenks, Morgan, Nuttall, Nutley, Orme, Parker-Khan, Peart, J Petherick, L Petherick, Purser, Rollason, Thorne

Against: Councillor Mullone

RESOLVED

That Councillor Bullivant be elected Chair.

It was proposed by Councillor Bullivant and seconded by Councillor Morgan that Councillor D Cox be elected Vice Chair. There were no other nominations.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillor D Cox is elected Vice Chair.

41. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March were approved as a correct record.

In relation to Minute 30 Housing Targets, the Leader of the Council confirmed a letter had been sent to the Secretary of State on 4 March 2020 requesting an update on whether the Government would be reviewing the current formula used to assess local housing targets. A response had not been received and he had followed this up with a further letter.

In relation to Minute 31 Poverty in Teignbridge, the Leader of the Council confirmed that this work would be progressed as part of the Councils Covid-19 recovery plan, which involved significant partnership work with the voluntary sector.

In relation to Minute 35, fly tipping it was noted that an update report would be provided to the Committee. The report would include civil action.

The PH for Sport, Recreation and Culture advised that in relation to Minute 36 non toxic weed control, this was being evaluated and an alternative was being investigated. A report would be brought to the Committee in September.

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

43. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY) UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 5.8(H)

None.

44. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS (IF ANY) UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 5.8(I)

None.

45. CALL-INS

None.

46. GREATER EXETER STRATEGIC PLAN (GESP)

The Chairman welcomed officers from the GESP Team.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning referred to the report circulated with the agenda, the recommendations therein, and the purpose and strengths of the GESP.

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Teignbridge, Mid Devon and East Devon District Councils, and Exeter Council formed some four years ago to work in partnership on GESP. The purpose of the draft policies and site options consultation is to invite comments on a number of draft strategic planning policies which would apply across the Greater Exeter area. It also enables discussion of the proposed spatial development strategy for the area and provide the first indication of the potential housing and employment site options which may form part of the GESP. The proposed consultation document contains a total of 39 site options on which comments will be sought.

The Principal Policy Planner reported on the context of the GESP which had been produced following extensive engagement with Councillors. It is being prepared jointly by the four authorities in partnership with Devon County Council, and Homes England. Once adopted it would be the strategic planning document for the four authorities covering the period 2020-2040, providing an effective addressing of planning issues and securing government funding for delivery. GESP would work with the other local plans for the area, such as Neighbourhood Plans and Local Plans.

Public engagement and consultation on GESP would commence in September for an eight week period.

Comments by Members included: concern that the consultation was taking place during the restrictions of Covid-19, set report for results of consultation and where changes will be implemented; the financial implications of the Plan then Plan would not benefit Teignbridge; housing numbers were being reviewed in the Teignbridge Local plan Review; the employment allocation and how this will be achieved is welcomed; what would happen to the Plan should either of the four authorities pull out; is eight weeks appropriate for the consultation; the document provides the policies on which to base future development.

In response the Committee was advised that: it was statutory requirement for public consultation and a detailed summary of all comments and how the Plan should be consequently amended would be provided; delaying GESP would affect the Council's five year land supply, required by central Government, and control over where development could take place; the GESP Leadership Group would consider the effect of any Authority withdrawing from the partnership; Exeter was meeting its own housing needs; the current documents is an options allocation document to provide homes to meet the housing needs; it would ensure the infrastructure would be provided for the larger developments; the statutory consultation period is six weeks; this has been extended to eight week period is recommended given the restrictions of Covid-19; most consultation comments are received within the last two weeks of the consultation period irrespective of the length of consultation time; specific site options for 5,250 dwellings over the four authority areas were included in the Plan; Teignbridge was required by Government to provide housing irrespective of whether the council was part of GESP; it would enable assistance with infrastructure and bring other much needed benefits for the area.

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It was proposed by Councillor Rollason and seconded by Councillor Goodman-Bradbury that recommendations 1,2,3,4 and 7 be approved as set out in the agenda report.

The vote was taken by roll call as follows:

For: Councillors Austen, D Cox, H Cox, Eden, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Hayes, Jenks, Morgan, Nutley, Nuttall, Parker-Khan, Peart, J Petherick, L Petherick, Purser, Rollason, Thorne, Bullivant - 19

Against: Councillors Daws, Hocking, Mullone - 3

Not Voted: Councillor Patch – 1

The Proposal was carried.

It was proposed by Councillor Parker-Khan and seconded by Councillor Peart that recommendation 5 be approved as set out in the agenda report subject to *minor* changes.....

It was proposed by Councillor Jenks and seconded by Councillor D Cox that the above proposal also be subject to the addition of*in consultation with the PH, the Leader of the Opposition and Managing Director, to agree minor editorial changesand to email all Members within 24 hours of those changes.*

The amendment was accepted by Councillor Parker-Khan and Peart to be incorporated into the original motion.

It was noted that *minor* would include points of clarification and would not include changes to context or site specific allocation. Councillor Eden proposed that *editorial* be added to *minor changes*. This was agreed by Councillors Parker-Khan, Peart, Jenks and D Cox,

The vote was taken by roll call as follows:

For: Councillors Austen, D Cox, H Cox, Daws, Eden, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Hayes, Jenks, Morgan, Mullone, Nutley, Nuttall, Orme, Parker-Khan, Peart, J Petherick, L Petherick, Purser, Rollason, Thorne, Bullivant - 22

Against: Councillors Hocking - 1

Not Voted: Councillor Patch - 1

The proposal was carried

It was proposed by Councillor Bullivant and seconded by Councillor J Petherick that recommendation 6 be approved as set out in the agenda report.

The vote was taken by roll call as follows:

For: Councillors Austen, D Cox, H Cox, Eden, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Hayes, Jenks, Morgan, Nutley, Nuttall, Orme, Parker-Khan, Peart,

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J Petherick, L Petherick, Purser, Rollason, Thorne, Bullivant - 20

Against: Councillors Daws, Hocking, Mullone - 3

Not Voted: Councillor Patch - 1

The proposal was carried.

In relation to recommendation 8 the Committee was referred to Appendix F of the agenda report. The Principal Policy Planner advised that two officers from each authority would form the officer group for GESP and resources from Devon County Council. This would bring the resources into an equitable level from one which was unbalanced due to other work commitments. The current resources were not sufficient to meet the timescales. Although an additional resource for Teignbridge, the equitable level of resources would result in a saving of around £45,000 for Teignbridge as compared to the resources the council was providing previously. This would ensure commitment to delivering the project and resourcing it.

In answer to a Member question as to whether the Council could meet the costs of GESP, the Chair advised that as a 114 Notice had not been issued the Council has the funds to commit to this obligation.

It was proposed by Councillor Peart and seconded by Councillor Rollason that recommendation 8 be approved as set out in the agenda report.

The vote was taken by roll call as follows:

For: Councillors Austen, D Cox, H Cox, Eden, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Hayes, Jenks, Morgan, Nutley, Nuttall, Parker-Khan, Peart, J Petherick, L Petherick, Purser, Rollason, Thorne, Bullivant - 19

Against: Councillors Daws, Hocking, Mullone, Orme - 4

Not Voted: Councillor Patch - 1

RECOMMENDED

The Executive is recommended to:

1. Approve the GESP Draft Policies and Site Options consultation document (attached at Appendix A) for public consultation as detailed in Appendix A to the agenda report.
2. Approve the GESP Draft Policies and Site Options Sustainability Appraisal Report for public consultation as detailed in Appendix B to the agenda report.
3. Approve the Initial Habitat Regulations Assessment Report for public consultation as detailed in Appendix C to the agenda report.
4. Note the content and conclusion of the GESP Equality Impact Assessment Screening Report as detailed in Appendix E to the agenda report.

5. Delegate authority to the Leader, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, the Leader of the Opposition and Managing Director, to agree editorial changes to the above documents arising from decisions by the other GESP authorities before they are published for consultation, and to advise all Members by email within 24 hours of those changes.

6. Approve a further 'call for sites' process, to be held alongside the consultation on the GESP Draft Policies and Site Options document;

7. Note the content of the consultation statement for the 2017 Greater Exeter Strategic Plan Issues consultation as detailed in Appendix D to the agenda report.

8. The GESP team is brought up to 8 full time equivalent members of staff and all Local Planning Authority staff resources are provided equitably to the team through equalisation arrangements. Subject to future confirmation of the additional GESP staff roles that will be required, for Teignbridge this is likely to equate to a total contribution of approximately £62,000 per annum towards staff costs, or up to an additional c£30,000 per annum on top of existing staff contributions.

47. GESP - JOINT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI)

The Committee referred to the report circulated with the agenda.

The PH reported that the Joint SCI had been produced by the GESP authorities to explain to the public how they would be involved in planning matters. The document sets out the proposed approach to public consultation on the GESP as it progresses through its statutory plan-making stages towards adoption.

It is proposed that the consultation period is extended from six to eight weeks in light of the current Covid-19 situation. This would help members of the public and organisations such as Town and Parish Councils to make comment. The consultation would be undertaken by flexible approaches, supported by Government guidelines, given the current situation.

The proposed Joint SCI covered the four Greater Exeter local planning authorities of Exeter City, East Devon District, Mid Devon District and Teignbridge District Councils. It would become a Local Development Document, if approved by all four local planning authorities. Should any changes be suggested by the GESP authorities there would need to be a meeting of the Council Leaders in consultation with PHs and Chief Executives or Managing Directors to agree a consolidated version of the document.

The Principal Policy Planner added that the adoption of the SCI was a statutory requirement. A similar Plan for Teignbridge was adopted last year, which is used to consult on the Local Plan. A draft of the proposed Joint SCI was itself subject to public consultation in 2017. The agenda report explained how the proposed Joint SCI had been amended, both in light of responses to the 2017 consultation

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and to take account of Government guidance on Covid-19 restrictions on social interaction.

It was proposed by Councillor Jenks and seconded by Councillor Parker-Khan that the recommendations as set out in the agenda report be approved subject to an amendment to recommendation B to include the additional words in italics.

.....in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, *Leader of the Opposition and Managing Director*, to agree minor *editorial* changes, and *emailing all Councillors within 24 hours of the changes* to the Joint SCI.....

During discussion it was asked whether the consultation would cover the Council's legal requirements. In response the Principal Policy Planner confirmed that the SCI as written addressed the Council's statutory requirements.

The vote was taken by roll call as follows:

For: Councillors Austen, D Cox, H Cox, Eden, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Hayes, Hocking, Jenks, Morgan, Nutley, Nuttall, Orme, Parker-Khan, Patch, Peart, J Petherick, Purser, Rollason, Thorne, Bullivant - 21

Against: Councillors Daws, Mullone - 2

The Proposal was carried.

RECOMMENDED

The Committee recommends that the Executive:

- A. Approves the contents and adopts the Joint SCI that has been prepared for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP); and
- B. Gives delegated authority to the Leader, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Leader of the Opposition and Managing Director, to agree minor editorial changes, to the Joint SCI arising from decisions by the other GESP local planning authorities, and emailing all Councillors within 24 hours of the changes, and to approve it as a Local Development Document, noting that it will apply jointly to East Devon District, Exeter City, Mid Devon District and Teignbridge District Councils.

48. IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON COUNCIL SERVICES

The Chairman referred the committee to the previously circulated report. The Leader of the Council and PH for Strategic Direction reported on the generalities of the report reviewing the Council's response to the impact of covid-19 and its approach to recovery. He referred to his letter he circulated to all Members which thanked officers and Members for their work. The review is suggested to progress the Council's approach to the unprecedented situation with the establishment of two Member review groups to consider amongst other issues, recommendations of residents, and the devastating effects of the covid-19 pandemic. The review would aim to provide positive and proactive actions for

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communities, and those suffering deprivation as a result of the situation. The groups would review policies and ambitions and encourage green environments.

The Project Recovery Lead Officer referred to the recommendations of the report, which also outlined the Council's initial response. The Council would continue to deliver core services whilst also aligning staff and resources to respond to the emerging needs of the community and government initiatives. In relation to the strategic approach to recovery there would be an extended response stage co-ordinated County wide and nationally, with potential for further spikes and infections, to work towards an organisation that is fit for purpose and financially sustainable. Engaging with the community and responding in the short, medium and long term was at the forefront of recovery.

One review group would call representatives from organisations including rural parishes, community and voluntary sector groups, local businesses, and resident groups. The second review group would review the Council Strategy 2020-30.

In response to a questions the Leader advised that three review groups could be established in relation to recommendation 1 of the agenda report, if sufficient members come forward to sit on those groups, which would not need to be politically balanced.

It was proposed and seconded that the recommendation as set out in the report be approved subject to group membership being a minimum of 6 members overall and be non-political. The review group the subject of recommendation 1 be subdivided into three to deal with urban, rural and coastal areas.

The Committee was advised that timescales set out in the report were based on resources available and what could be achieved in the timescale.

A vote was taken by roll call as follows:

For the proposal: Councillors Austen, D Cox, H Cox, Daws, Eden, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Hayes, Hocking, Jenks, Morgan, Mullone, Nutley, Nuttall, Parker -Khan, Patch, J Petherick, Purser, Rollason, Thorne, Bullivant Total 21 – unanimous.

RESOLVED

1. That members note and endorse the council's response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic to date.
2. That two, non-political working groups each of a minimum of six Members are established to:
 - a) Assess the impact of COVID-19 on communities in rural, urban and coastal areas calling witnesses from each, and be subdivided into three groups to focus on each of the rural, urban and coastal areas
 - b) Review the Council Strategy in light of COVID-19, determine whether the plans still hold true and confirm what the recovery plan should aim to enable.

49. REPORT OF THE PERFORMANCE TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Committee referred to the agenda report of the Performance Task and Finish Group. The Chairman of the group advised that the way that performance monitoring is reported to the Committee had been reviewed, and a more user friendly and meaningful Committee report format was recommended as set out at appendix 1 to the agenda report. Portfolio Holders (PHs) would be available when the reports are presented at future meetings to elaborate on any concerns and actions to rectify the situation. Members would be able to ask questions of the PHs if the questions are submitted three clear days before the meeting as set out in appendix 2 to the agenda report. A recommended protocol for PH reports to the Committee was also set out at appendix 3. He thanked the Councillors and staff involved in the review.

The Chairman added that the new report format would be more effective and efficient.

It was proposed and seconded that the recommendations as set out in the agenda report be approved. It was unanimously

RESOLVED

1. The performance report template as set out in Appendix 1 be used for future Overview and Scrutiny performance monitoring reports.
2. Performance reports continue to be presented to Overview and Scrutiny on a quarterly basis.
3. The protocol for the presentation of performance reports be agreed as set out in Appendix 2 to this report.
4. An annual target setting report be presented to O&S early March each year so new and future targets are agreed and in place for the start of the new financial year from 1st April.
5. The task and finish group reconvenes at a future date to review the new style reporting.
6. The proposed procedure for Portfolio Holder biannual reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in Appendix 3 be approved, and be referred to the Executive for noting.

RECOMMENDED

That the Executive notes the procedure for Portfolio Holder biannual reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in Appendix 3 to the agenda report.

50. PROPOSED TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - EMPLOYMENT SITES AND CULTURAL QUARTER

The Chairman referred to the agenda report which proposed two Task and Finish groups: *Making Employment Sites Work*, and *Delivering a Shared Vision for New Strategic Developments*. The former would review why employment development sites were not being developed, consequential opportunity for jobs not coming forward, and issues faced in delivering the jobs to meet the Council's aspirations and needs of residents.

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The second group *Delivering a Shared Vision for New Strategic Developments*, would focus on a shared vision between different levels of local government and increase effective working between town, parish, district and county to deliver the common vision for a cultural quarter in Newton Abbot. The Group would consist of all non-executive Councillors who represent the four wards of Newton Abbot.

The review groups would report back to the Committee with recommendations for consideration by the Executive.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED

Two Task and Finish groups: *Making Employment Sites Work*, and *Delivering a Shared Vision for New Strategic Developments*, be established. The former be politically balanced on a ratio of 3:2:1 and consist of a minimum of six Councillors. The latter consist of all non-executive Newton Abbot district councillors who represent the four wards of Newton Abbot.

51. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

The Committee noted the Executive forward plan.

The Chairman requested that the Portfolios for each item on the forward plan be asked if they would like any support or help from the Committee by way of project work to help the Council deliver the requirements of the forward plan.

52. SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Committee received and noted the Executive decisions of the 19 May 2020.

53. STRATA JOINT EXECUTIVE MINUTES

The Committee received and noted the Strata Executive decisions of 16 June 2020.

The Chairman referred to the monies of £400 being paid by each Councillors for the provision of Ipads and the update report to come to the Committee.

54. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the work programme circulated with the agenda.

CLLR P BULLIANT
Chairman

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