

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

FRIDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2020

Present:

Councillors Bullivant (Chair), Swain (Vice-Chair), D Cox, Evans, G Hook, Morgan, Parker-Khan and Tume

Members Attendance:

Councillors H Cox, Gribble, Jenks, Connett, Jeffries, Keeling, MacGregor and Taylor

Apologies:

Councillors Austen, Daws, Hayes, Nuttall and L Petherick

Officers in Attendance:

Neil Blaney, Head of Place & Commercial Services
Liz Gingell, Project Officer
Michelle Luscombe, Principal Policy Planner
Trish Corns, Democratic Services Officer
Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

20. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2020 were approved as a correct record and would be sign at the earliest convenience.

21. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None.

22. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

23. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

None.

24. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee work programme as circulated with the agenda was noted.

25. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

The Executive Forward Plan was noted.

26. EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR JOBS AND ECONOMY PRESENTATION

The Executive Member for Jobs and economy updated Members on the services under the remit of the portfolio.

The Executive Member paid tribute to staff proactively reacting since the Covid lockdown in supporting business and the community, particularly in the speed at which grant applications were processed.

Actions delivered or progressed on the Council's T10 projects included:

- **Going to Town and Investing in Prosperity**

Successful Future High Street Fund application; £9m bid for Market Hall, Queen St cycle improvements, decked car park; and Premier Inn in Teignmouth and Travelodge in Newton Abbot.

The Future High Street Fund is a significant bid for transformational improvements to Newton Abbot town center, for improvements to the market's quarter, Queen Street public realm, cycling and accessibility, and Cricketfield car park capacity increase.

Covid had delayed many projects and had significantly affected the economy, particularly the leisure centers and Newton Abbot Markets.

Unemployment had risen particularly for the 16 to 24 year olds, which was above the national average for Teignbridge. The effect on the economy had particularly affected the accommodation and food services, which was a national trend.

The Economic Development team were looking to take on a Kickstarter to assist with tourism and town center based projects, including setting up the Coastal Contribution scheme. The Coastal Contribution was a proposed visitor donation scheme, asking paying guests at participating accommodation providers (within one mile off the Teignbridge coast) to voluntarily pay £1 per room per night, capped at £3. The funds raised would be used to pay for conservation and tourism related projects for the coastal areas of Teignbridge. Feedback had been positive. The Kickstarter would be in place from March to August 2021, after which it was hoped the businesses themselves would manage most of the scheme with support from the Council.

- **Great Places to Live and Work**

Current projects included moving towards electric vehicles, supporting businesses and communities to encourage carbon emission reductions, and working in partnership with parishes and towns to ensure car parks were used to potential.

Successes for the car parks service included: an increase in the amount of customers using cashless parking payments; going live on a new parking management system, new machines purchased to replace existing stock; and 4 new car parks (3 pay and display and 1 reserved car park).

The Council was successful in working with businesses, delivering Covid grant scheme; had excellent connections with local businesses; and staff with expertise and knowledge. The Council was continuing to financially support businesses through the deployment of national grant schemes, from which 661 local businesses had benefitted. The Council was now delivering the Winter £5 million Programme of Local Restriction Support Grants and Additional Restrictions Grants, and working with community and business organisations to develop longer term plans for economic recovery.

In response to questions from the Committee: it was noted that the Car Park Review Group was meeting regularly to progress improvements, and would be reporting progress to the Committee; and the Leader advised he would approach Devon County Council regarding the school holiday hunger voucher scheme to extend the places the vouchers could be redeemed to include local shops and businesses.

The full presentation can be seen at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E109IUUY-JI>

27. COUNCIL STRATEGY PERFORMANCE MONITORING Q2

The Committee referred to the agenda report which gave an update on the delivery of the Council Strategy 2020-2030, and an overview of performance for the Teignbridge Ten Programmes for quarter 2, 1 July to 31 September 2020. It provided the detailed performance information used to track its delivery, and advised Members where performance was not on track.

The Leader advised that Council resources were continuing to be directed to respond to the impact of the Covid situation which disappointingly had resulted on some projects underperforming or being on hold, such as the refurbishment of the leisure centres and investment in open spaces. This was also the case with the impact on the community, and the local and national economy which had effected some performance indicators.

In regard to improvement to broadband provision, this had also been delayed due to Covid, however this was being progressed and the County representative from Connecting Devon and Somerset would be updating Members in the New Year and how the investment from the Council was progressing improvements. The improvements would focus on both domestic and business premises. Connection was important for premises across the district particularly now that many residents were working from home, and the potential for rural isolation.

Regarding open spaces on development sites, concern was raised that these areas were passed from the developers to management companies which may not be providing an efficient and cost effective service to residents. This would be investigated by the Executive Member and officers and further information provided to Councillors.

Concerns relating to dog faeces in public spaces were raised. It was noted that this had been recently discussed by the PSPO (control of dogs) review group. A report of the review group would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny 1 Committee on 22 December, 2020 and which included a recommendation regarding that a publicity/awareness campaign to improve the situation.

RESOLVED

The report and actions being taken be noted.

28. FUTURE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING WITH EXETER CITY COUNCIL, EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL, MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL AND DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

The Executive Member for Planning, Councillor Taylor presented the report circulated with the agenda. The report provided further information on the 3 November 2020 Executive report which presented options for alternative joint strategic planning approaches in light of the recommendation to withdraw from the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) project. The Executive report recommended that joint strategic planning should continue in the form of a non-statutory joint plan prepared by the four authorities of East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Councils, in partnership with Devon County Council.

It was confirmed that all Councils recognised the benefits of partnership working, and were seeking approval to progress in principle the production of a joint non-statutory plan

It was proposed and seconded that the decision of the Executive on 3 November 2020 be supported.

A roll call was taken and the proposal was carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDED

Council be advised that this committee supports the Executive's recommendation of 3 November 2020:

To support in principle the production of a joint non-statutory plan, to include joint strategy and infrastructure matters, with East Devon, Exeter and Mid-Devon Councils, and in partnership with Devon County Council is approved. This will be subject to agreement of details of the scope of the plan, a timetable for its production, the resources required, and governance arrangements to be agreed at a later date.

CLLR P BULLIVANT
Chairman