

Agenda for Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 22 January 2015; 6.30pm



[Members of the Committee](#)

Venue: Council Chamber, Knowle, Sidmouth, EX10 8HL

[View directions](#)

Contact: Debbie Meakin, 01395 517540 (or group number 01395 517546): Issued Tuesday 13 January 2015

East Devon District Council
Knowle
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8HL

DX 48705 Sidmouth

Tel: 01395 516551

Fax: 01395 517507

www.eastdevon.gov.uk

- 1 [Public speaking](#)
- 2 Minutes for 13 November 2014 (pages 3 - 13)
- 3 Apologies
- 4 [Declarations of interest](#)
- 5 [Matters of urgency](#) – none identified
- 6 To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including press) have been excluded. There are **no** items that officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.
- 7 Decisions made by Cabinet called in by Members for scrutiny in accordance with the Overview Procedure Rules. There are **no** items identified.
- 8 **Office relocation update** (pages 14 - 35)
Cabinet report of 3 December on update is provided in this agenda, along with the minutes from Council on 17 December 2014. A short update note is to follow.
- 9 **Portfolio Holder Update - Environment** (pages 36 - 57)
A comprehensive report from the Portfolio Holder on the remaining areas of this portfolio, following on from updating on refuse and recycling at the meeting of the committee on 16 October 2014.
- 10 **Task and Finish Forum improvements** (pages 58 - 60)
Suggested improvements to the current process of setting up a forum by the committee.
- 11 **Business Task and Finish Forum** (pages 61 - 65)
An opportunity for the committee to evaluate if this Forum should continue, and what form it should take in terms of scope and timeframe.
- 12 **Evaluation and Protection of Trees Task and Finish Forum** (pages 66 - 69)
To report the minutes for the first meeting on 5 December 2014. The report also operates on the assumption that the committee have resolved to agree the scope for forums at a committee meeting, so a revised draft scope is presented for consideration.
- 13 **Second report of Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Forum** (to follow)

14 Overview and Scrutiny Forward Plan (page 70)

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, any members of the public are now allowed to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings (including on social media). No prior notification is needed but it would be helpful if you could let the democratic services team know you plan to film or record so that any necessary arrangements can be made to provide reasonable facilities for you to report on meetings. This permission does not extend to private meetings or parts of meetings which are not open to the public. You should take all recording and photography equipment with you if a public meeting moves into a session which is not open to the public.

If you are recording the meeting, you are asked to act in a reasonable manner and not disrupt the conduct of meetings for example by using intrusive lighting, flash photography or asking people to repeat statements for the benefit of the recording. You may not make an oral commentary during the meeting. The Chairman has the power to control public recording and/or reporting so it does not disrupt the meeting.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 13 November 2014

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.30pm and ended at 9.57pm.

***44 Public Speaking**

Robert Persey asked the committee if they could conduct a review of how planning officers interpret “sustainable locations” in open countryside. He outlined how the Council took a narrow view of the NPPF and the new permitted development order introduced in April, comparing a 100% refusal of application against this new order for the Council as opposed to only 14% refused for Mid Devon District Council. He suggested that the Council’s approach to determining a sustainable location was not consistent with other authorities.

Robert Leach informed the committee of his recent application under the new permitted development rights, and that despite meeting the criteria, the application was refused. He quoted from the Minister of State for Housing and Planning on the application of the new permitted development rights. Mr Leach felt that the Council was not in line with the views of the Minister on development.

In response, Councillor Helen Parr, Chairman of Development Management Committee, informed the committee that the issue of sustainability was discussed at a recent meeting of her committee. The important issue of determining what was sustainable would be set out in the Local Plan, which was due before the Development Management Committee in January, expected to go onto full Council in February of next year and she welcomed views of Members at both of those meetings. In response specifically to the new permitted development rights, she advised the committee that the authority was not alone in refusing applications and that appeals on those decisions had been upheld.

***45 Minutes**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 16 October 2014 were confirmed and signed as a true record subject to an amendment to Minute 40 to add:

RESOLVED

That the committee receive a report on how contracts are drafted where substantial grants are made to other organisation, outlining steps taken to safeguard the investment to ensure that it is used for the purpose intended.

***46 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Eileen Wragg: personal interest; member of Regional Coast and Flood Committee

Councillor Peter Halse: prejudicial interest; Chairman of Honiton Town Council.

***47 Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Chairman welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Devon and Cornwall, Mr Tony Hogg, who was accompanied by one of his team, Richard Martin. Mr Hogg was also joined by Superintendent Keith Perkin, Local Policing Commander for Exeter, East and Mid Devon; as well as Inspector Antonia Weeks (Exmouth and Ottery).

Paul Arnott spoke about the conclusion of the police investigation into former councillor, Graham Brown, of the district council and questioned if the investigation had indeed been robust and extensive as stated; he accused the Chief Executive of “meddling” with the investigation and targeting the council’s best councillors. Following a reference to the current president of FIFA, he commented on whether the announcement of the police investigation one day prior to the Police and Crime Commissioner attending the committee that evening was co-incidental.

The Police and Crime Commissioner, Tony Hogg, outlined to the committee his recent work in light of continued budget pressures for the police force. He outlined his six priorities from his plan:

- To make our area a safer place to live, work and visit – reducing the likelihood that people will become victims of crime
- To reduce the crime and harm caused by the misuse of alcohol
- To make every penny count in protecting policing for the long term, We need to drive for further efficiency, work to secure more central funding and actively explore all avenues to deliver the significant savings we require from 2017/18 to sustain our services
- To promote an effective criminal justice system for our area, delivering a high quality service for victims, witnesses and society
- To deliver a high quality victim support service across our area
- To encourage and enable citizens and communities to play their part in tackling crime and making communities safer.

He outlined the financial savings already made by Devon and Cornwall constabulary and the issues ahead to secure further savings, such as making transformations to the service and pursuing a strategic alliance with Dorset. There was also work to be done towards closer working with other agencies such as with the Health and Wellbeing Board to help knit together services, and some further promotion to the public of the valued work by the Community Safety Partnerships.

The service to victims was outlined in response to a question, with a victims code being introduced last December being built on to provide an ambitious model providing a victims’ hub and links to forty organisations that could benefit victims (from locksmiths to specialist services) that would be in operation from April 2015.

Work on alcohol abuse in no way impeded the war against drugs, but consultation had made clear that alcohol needed clear focus. Police checked legal highs and some results had shown contamination with class A and B drugs in some areas. Recent changes to anti-social behaviour legislation meant that police had more powers to secure closing down shops that sold such products. Health partners need to be involved in terms of the impact of legal highs on the health and wellbeing of individuals.

In response to a question on police numbers and retiring officers, Mr Hogg responded that pension changes for 2016/17 were twice the level of the precept, and the budget instability was concerning, but he was committed to defend the 3,000 plus level of officers.

In response to a question relating to the closure of safe houses, Mr Hogg outlined a shift in approach away from removing the victim from their area to removing the perpetrator. Supt Perkin advised the committee of the recent introduction of sexual offences and domestic abuse investigation teams; the use of safeguard alarms; close working advisors to victims;

and new notices and orders now available under the changes in legislation to be used prior to obtaining a court order.

A number of questions had previously been submitted to the PCC, which are reproduced below with the response.

Q Is your office ever informed of the progress of ongoing police investigations that are of local or national interest? If so, with whom might you share any such confidential information?

In response, Mr Hogg confirmed that he was kept informed of high profile or high risk investigations and was party to confidential information, but he was not informed of very investigation due to the high number.

Q The way in which the police service now works involves closer working with many partner organisations and agencies, e.g. local authorities, social services, the NHS. Consequently, if there are allegations of criminal conduct by members of any such partner organisations, it may be regarded as inappropriate for the local force to investigate such allegations in the same way, as it may be inappropriate for the police to investigate themselves. What reassurances can you offer that there are systems in place to ensure that local police are not too close to persons and organisations complained of and that if such complaints are made, there is due consideration of the question of requesting that an outside force investigate?

In response, Mr Hogg stressed that the police are impartial and adhere to high standards of behaviour. He was confident that there were provisions in place to reduce the risk referred to in the question. In addition, a joint audit committee examines that the recently updated code of ethics is embedded and followed.

Q Does the commissioner have any plans to ask the Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police to require all staff, police and civilian, who may be members of organisations such as the Freemasons, to register such membership? (At present there is no such local requirement, only an expectation that any such officers will report such membership where there may be potential for conflict. Unless there have been any recently, no such potential conflicts have ever been reported) Further, will the commissioner make public whether he or any of his staff are members of such organisations?

In response, Mr Hogg stated that he was not a member of any organisation. There were certain prescribed organisations that police officers were not permitted to belong to because of the potential for being compromised. The Freemasons was not one of the organisations and the force vetting service does not ask applicants if they are a member of that organisation.

Q Is the Commissioner aware that the respected organisation Transparency International is of the opinion that corruption, at all levels, is one of the biggest global issues of our time (<http://www.transparency.org.uk/corruption>) and that the same organisation gives, in its report 'The Mounting Risks', the following two examples: "Electoral corruption, such as the in the 2004 Birmingham local elections, when over 1,500 votes cast were subsequently identified as fraudulent." and "Bribery in local government, such as in the case of a councillor in the West Country who was recorded making claims that he could obtain planning permission in return for payment". Is the commissioner satisfied that Devon and Cornwall police have the experience and resources to deal with allegations of corruption in

the West Country, in any of its partner organisations, in a professional, diligent and timely manner?

In response, Mr Hogg advised that if any suspicion was referred by the Returning Officer to the police, guidance in investigation was followed from ACPRO and the Electoral Commission, working with the CPS. He gave an example of a Saltash councillor case in 2013. In terms of bribery in local government, each council would have its own defence against fraud in place and the referral options to the police to pursue. If referred, the police would allocate resources appropriately.

Q Can the Commissioner comment on the length of time it is taking to deal with the Graham Brown case and the unfairness this has caused to various individuals involved, as well as the continuing damage it does to the Council's reputation while the matter remains unresolved?

In response, Mr Hogg read out the announcement by the police of the previous day. Supt. Keith Perkin explained the delays in the initial stages where the case fell to the national body of the fraud squad, which took time to filter back down to the local force. CID officer took initial statements and those went onto the serious crime branch. The case was complex, with excess of 40 statements taken. The case was thorough and undertaken by specialist investigators, who have to follow evidence and determine that a threshold of evidence has been reached. In this case, the evidence was not there.

A question was asked by Councillor Giles if the police intended to release details of those who gave statements. The response was no, as per any other investigation the statements would not be released. In response to a question on what view the police would take on someone else releasing details of who had been interviewed, the Superintendent advised he would take a dim view. He was not prepared to answer any further questions put forward on the same topic.

A question was asked if a report was submitted along with recommendations to the council by the police. The Superintendent was unable to answer the question because he was not informed of the full operational details of the case but would find out and respond in due course. He also made clear that the delays did not affect the outcome, as no evidence was lost.

Q Please can you explain the difference in comparative expenses today of your office as against the old Police Authority. How does this offer better value for money to the council tax payer?

In response, Mr Hogg informed the committee that in 2013 the Police Authority budget was £1.623m; 2013/14 budget for the Commissioner's office was £1.93m, which included £183K transition costs. Costs also included some redundancies. The Police and Crime Panel undertake scrutiny of the budget. In comparison with the previous Police Authority, the work achieved was improved. Efficiencies were also being made by moving the Commissioner offices to Middlemoor and two redundancies had been made from the team.

In response to a question about what the Commissioner felt was his greatest achievement, he responded that it was to uphold the number of police officers.

Q The Exe Valley is a fairly neglected area with regard to police. We have been moved from pillar to post, from Ottery to Crediton, back to Ottery, with rumour that Crediton Police

Station was closing. We have always had great support from the over stretched staff in Crediton, but even they do not know the future of this rural patch. We have various issues, which we have asked for support with including speeding, school parking as well as crime prevention and neighbourhood watch. Some members have asked to be on the police email system but this has resulted in emails regarding crimes not relevant to this patch – apparently done by Beat numbers not location. I would be grateful to know what the future plans are for policing in the Exe valley, and how we can get details of the police events in this area.

Inspector Weeks responded that every effort was made to police a geographically challenging area. The local policing team for that area is the Ottery team and officers are deployed from the nearest station as necessary and available. Rural policing is a priority for the service. Community messaging continues to be used extensively. Supt Perkin added that it was key for officers on the ground to have leadership in place, and the area now had a full complement of Inspectors, with a move to achieving the same result for Sergeants.

Other questions included:

- Closure of enquiry desks – footfall evidence showed that those desks were not being used to a large extent and closures had produced £800K savings. Where closure had occurred, local arrangements had been made to provide the ability for people to meet with local police officers. Mr Hogg did not believe that closure of desks prevented people from reporting crime;
- Lost property could now be reported online or handed into the Exeter office;
- 101 service had been recognised as needing full review, with plans to enable calls made from blue police phone boxes to jump the queue once technology permitted it.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hogg, his aide, and the police officers for their attendance and responses to the numerous questions from members.

***48 East and Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership update**

The Chairman welcomed Gerry Moore, the Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator who presented his latest update.

Highlighted were a number of examples of work recently undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership and their local action groups, including:

- Raise awareness of domestic abuse and the support services available
- Delivery of consistent messages on substance misuse
- Make local communities aware of the new Anti-Social Behaviour legislation
- Promote the activities of the local action groups and arrange positive news stories
- Tackling rural crime

In response to a question on the change of provider for advice and support in the area, Mr Moore informed the committee that the provider SPLITZ was providing the same if not improved service, and he was working to distribute the change of provider around local services, such as GP surgeries.

Members agreed in praise of the work of the Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and the continued work of the local action groups.

49 Exmouth beach management task and finish forum report

Councillor Maddy Chapman presented her findings of the Forum, set up in response to local concerns about the loss of beach material. There was also concern on the focus on Dawlish contained in the beach management study being led by Teignbridge District Council, where Exmouth was contained within the plan title, which raised expectations of Exmouth residents.

She outlined the site visit undertaken and the Forum's work in discussion the issue with officers from both the council, and the Environment Agency. As a result of the meeting and site visit, the Forum were satisfied that Exmouth issues had been clarified and felt reassured that appropriate consideration was being given to local concerns.

John Golding, Strategic Lead - Housing, Health and Environment, reassured the committee that the situation would continue to be monitored. The Forum has given members the opportunity to question the experts and made clear to members the funding rules for such work.

RECOMMENDED

1. To understand that the current Beach Management of Exmouth beach is in respect of protecting its amenity value – there is no identified risk of flooding and therefore any works will not attract government funding. Any emergency resulting from an exception storm would justify government funding to repair damage but not to undertake improvements;
2. Consideration should be given to raising funds from commercial enterprises and new development to use for future beach management specific to maintaining the amenity value of the beach area and address problems of sand erosion and accretion;
3. To undertake consultation with beach users – including the RLNI, fishermen and Stuart Line cruises – as an important means of local intelligence in determining any change to the beach and estuary profile. This local information could be used to support the 6 monthly monitoring being undertaken by the Plymouth Coastal Observatory on behalf of the Environment Agency, and also to immediately flag up any problems or significant changes;
4. The Dawlish and Exmouth Beach Management Study to be renamed “The Dawlish Beach Management Plan” to be more factual and to avoid raising Exmouth residents’ expectations;
5. The beach trends and sand movement to be closely monitored to inform the Exmouth Beach Management Plan and to potentially bring forward action should the sand loss/accretion indicate an accelerated trend. The drafted Plan to be referred to the Task and Finish Forum and/or Exmouth Town Council for consideration before being referred to Cabinet;
6. Immediate improvement works to be carried out – including removal of sand from the Esplanade and road, clearance of exposed gun emplacement debris and alerting South West Water to problems arising from the exposure of the sewerage drainage pipe at the Maer.

50 Full council meeting review

Councillor Ray Bloxham, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Business, briefly outlined work undertaken by a joint Think Tank in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services.

RECOMMENDED

1. In respect of agendas and decisions by the council that:
 - a. There is timely and early involvement of Chairman in production of the draft Council agenda;
 - b. Councillors have a responsibility to contact the Chairman at their earliest opportunity about any inaccuracy or other concern over a minute that will become part of the minute book;
 - c. Councillors have a clearer understanding of the procedures to “calling in” a decision and “calling” a minute;
 - d. Councillors to have a clearer understanding of the decisions that can be made by Cabinet (resolutions) and those which are referred to Council (recommendations);
 - e. Councillors have a clearer understanding of the significance of starred and un-starred minutes;
 - f. That recommendations to council from other meetings include a link to the officer report on which the recommendations were based. Where the officer report was in Part B of the agenda, councillors will be given a supplementary list of agenda links to these officer reports;
 - g. That when the issue is within the remit of the Council to make a decision, in making its recommendations, Cabinet or other decision making committee adds the wish that this matter is shown as a separate item on the Council agenda.
2. In respect of presentations to Council, that presentations will only be made in the following cases:
 - a. where the matter relates to the health and wellbeing of the district;
 - b. where the matter relates to a change to national policy and/or legislation which affects the Council’s core business;
 - c. there the matter relates to a key decision that the council will be asked to make;
 - d. and, in all of the above cases, it is considered necessary that all members of the Council be briefed;
3. Presentation of long service awards and other awards such as Bes Kept Village be retained at full council;
4. In respect of minutes of meetings, that as soon as possible (normally within five working days) draft (unsigned) minutes are publicised to councillors via email or knowledge newsletter with link;
5. Called minutes should be notified by councillors to democratic services by no later than 6pm on the Monday preceding full council, to notify of the intention to “call” a minute from the minutes book;
6. Questions to the leader and portfolio holders administration is amended as follows:
 - a. That the period of notice of questions be increased to midnight on Thursday prior to the Wednesday full council;
 - b. That questions provided for council are circulated prior to the meeting for members to consider them;
 - c. That the initial question and answer is projected on the screen so that members of the public may be aware of the question and answer;
 - d. That the questions and answers (and supplementary questions and answers if made) are included as part, or as an appendix to, the minutes of the meeting;

7. That the website be revised and improved in setting public speaking rules and what to expect.

RESOLVED

That the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Business report back to a future meeting of the committee on the other matters debated by the joint think tank following further research.

***51 Performance monitoring second quarter 2014/15**

A query was raised prior to the meeting on council promise “Make sure that new developments are supported with the right level of investment in infrastructure to benefit the community”, in that the promise seemed vague as did the answer. A revised comment to the council promise was issued to all members prior to the meeting which stated:

The reason it is shown as variation is simply that viability remains an issue with developments and as a result it is not always possible to secure all of the necessary planning obligations to meet policy requirements in relation to education contributions, affordable housing provision etc. This is nothing new and is completely outside of our control since where a development would not be viable under our policy requirements we are required to reduce our requirements until the scheme is viable. This is a national issue and not unique to East Devon.

RESOLVED

that a report be provided to the committee at a future date on the council promise relating to developments supported with the right level of investment in infrastructure to benefit the community to help explain the issues to members.

***52 Finance Portfolio Holder update**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor David Cox, Portfolio Holder for Finance to update the committee on his work.

He gave the committee an update on the asset management aspect of his portfolio, including:

- Refreshed corporate property asset management plan
- Additional land and buildings management in Cranbrook
- Tenanted non residential review of leisure assets, beach huts and chalets, private clubs and sports clubs;
- Estates team systems thinking review
- Whole life costing appraisal
- Beach development plans
- East Devon serviced workspace demand and delivery appraisal
- Policy on unauthorised occupation of council owned land

He also reminded the committee on the challenges already achieved on the budget, set out in a presentation to the committee. The work of the Budget Task and Finish Forum was also fed into the draft budget process and the general understanding of both the services and the budget process by members had been boosted as a result.

A report is being prepared on how to achieve a balanced budget up to 2020/21, helping to identify how future savings will be achieved to cover a £2.7m shortfall.

In response to some comments about the need to relocate in light of future budget shortfall, the committee were reminded that the council needed to be mindful of good stewardship in preparing for providing consistent services in the future.

The Chairman and the Portfolio Holder thanked the Strategic Lead – Finance for the work he and his team had undertaken in budget preparation, and in making the accounts more transparent in terms of additional information supplied.

53 Viewpoint survey results

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Business presented the report on behalf of the Strategic Lead – Organisational Development and Transformation. The report set out the feedback from the 2014 viewpoint survey on the council overall, and on specific council priorities and services.

Members flagged up the satisfaction rate with the planning service and debate took place over the difference between satisfaction with the service and satisfaction with the outcome of a planning application.

RECOMMENDED

1. that members note the contents of the report and agree that the actions and responses are delegated to the Chief Executive and SMT in conjunction with their portfolio holders.
2. that members note that the results of the residents' survey are very similar to last year. On that basis, we have identified where responses show a 5% difference or more compared to last year. We would expect some fluctuations year on year.
3. that members agree that due to the similar nature of the feedback to the 2013 Viewpoint Surveys these will next be carried out in 2016.

***54 Overview and Scrutiny Forward Plan**

Jacqueline Green spoke about the former Economic Development Manager as lead officer of the Business Task and Finish Forum, asking who would act as lead officer for the Forum once it resumes.

An answer had been provided which the Chairman read out:

At the April 2014 Council meeting, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee responded to a question raised by Jacqueline Green on when the Business Task and Finish Forum would resume and if the Council's Economic Development Manager would continue to be the Forum's lead officer. Councillor Tim Wood advised that he was guided by legal advice and, so far as he was aware, the Economic Development Manager would continue to be the lead officer for the Forum, as there was no reason for this not to be the case.

With the conclusion of the police investigation into ex Cllr G. Brown, the Chief Executive has issued advice regarding this particular TAFF. The most appropriate next step is to now consider that advice.

The Chairman expressed that he saw the next step for the committee was to review the requirements of the Forum at their next meeting and for the Forum to briskly complete work, aiming for March 2015. He wanted the committee to be confident that the Forum was able to investigate and ensure a satisfactory relationship with businesses. He also commented strongly that businesses should have the right, just as individuals enjoyed, to communicate their views to the council.

Mrs Green asked a supplementary question: was it appropriate for a paid servant of the council to influence the committee?

The Chairman confirmed that it was the role of officers to give advice to the committee and members make their own decision. The Chief Executive affirmed this as his role to give advice to council. The Chairman also made clear that it is the decision of the committee to decide the composition of the Forum.

In clarifying his advice, the Chief Executive set out to the committee that it was important for them, in considering the future of the Forum, to understand the full history of the Forum to date and the issues involved. He outlined that, in response to the police referral, he had advised them to take into account when the concern about the East Devon Business Forum (EDBF) had first been raised at the meeting of Council on 27 July 2012 where a motion had been put to Council on the subject. Clearly those individuals raising concern at Council on 27 July 2012, and at subsequent meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Business TaFF would be of interest to the police to contact.

In response to statements that the naming of a councillor was incorrect to do, legal advice from the Principal Solicitor was provided to the committee that the advice issued by the Chief Executive did not state that the police interviewed those individuals detailed, it stated that there was contact with the police.

Councillor Claire Wright commented on recent circulation of letter of the East Devon Alliance, and stated that trying to eject her from the membership of the Forum sends a message to the public that there is something to hide.

Councillor Allen reminded the committee that a Task and Finish Forum could not pursue a legal investigation under the terms of the constitution. He suggested that, if the Forum proceeds, the committee consider including in its remit to investigate any undue influence of any councillor or organisation, including political elements, on the issue of land use.

Arising from the minutes of the 16 October 2014, Councillor Allen asked the committee to agree to, further to the agreement to have a report back on general contract terms, a report specifically on the contract relating to the Beehive, Honiton. He wanted to be clear on the contractual obligations for Honiton Town Council in respect of the development on a charity basis.

RESOLVED

1. that a report be brought to the committee at their next meeting on the Business Task and Finish Forum with proposals of how, if the committee agrees, it should proceed, bearing in mind that there has been no criminality, unlawfulness or maladministration arising out of the operation of the Forum and the Council's relationship with it;
2. that a report be brought back to the committee at a future meeting on the contractual arrangements of the Beehive, Honiton to scrutinise how the value of the investment is being secured.

Attendance list

Present:

Tim Wood (Chairman)
Graham Troman (Vice Chairman)
Mike Allen
Peter Bowden
David Chapman
Maddy Chapman
Deborah Custance Baker
Roger Giles
Peter Halse
Tony Howard
John Humphreys
David Key
Frances Newth
Brenda Taylor
Chris Wale
Eileen Wragg
Steve Wragg
Claire Wright

Also present:

Pauline Stott
Peter Sullivan
Susie Bond
Ray Bloxham
Tom Wright
Iain Chubb
Stephanie Jones
Steve Gazzard
David Cox
Ben Ingham
Andrew Moulding
Phil Twiss
Paul Diviani
Philip Skinner

Mark Williams, Chief Executive
John Golding
Simon Davey
Jamie Buckley
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Henry Gordon Lennox, Principal Solicitor

Apologies:

Derek Button
Sheila Kerridge
Jill Elson
Alan Dent

Chairman

Date.....

Report to: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 3 December 2014
Public Document: Yes
Exemption: None



Agenda item:

Subject: Relocation Update – key decision

Purpose of report: To advise members of latest developments regarding the relocation of EDDC HQ from Knowle. In particular to make Members aware that marketing of Knowle and Manstone sites is completed and further discussions with bidders are in progress and, to advise Members of changed circumstances and proposed changes to the preferred new HQ site.

Recommendation:

- 1. Note project progress following the previous update report of 4 June 2014**
- 2. Recognise emerging changes to the relocation project agree the following:**
 - a. The marketing exercise for Knowle and Manstone has resulted in a range of offers and, following a detailed assessment process, we have received price, form and quality of development propositions that merit further detailed negotiation toward selection of a preferred developer.**
 - b. Leading offers for Knowle do not include options to sell Manstone in which case EDDC can choose to retain Manstone for the foreseeable future as a depot function and continued employment use.**
 - c. The reduced offer for EDDC's Heathpark site no longer represents a sufficiently persuasive level of capital receipt and will not be pursued further.**
 - d. The retention of Heathpark in EDDC ownership means that this now represents the most cost effective and straightforward location to develop a new headquarters building for the Council.**
 - e. Relocation to Skypark is no longer a viable proposition based on the reduced offer for Heathpark and combination of Knowle market value and prudential borrowing.**
 - f. The East Devon Business Centre (EDBC) should preferably be retained and could potentially be combined within a new EDDC HQ development.**
 - g. In the interim, Exmouth Town Hall has been vacated by Devon County Council Services and represents a new opportunity within the relocation plan.**
 - h. A new HQ in Honiton can be restricted in size and cost to a 170 desk equivalent scale with an improved Exmouth Town Hall for 80 EDDC staff as a main**

- satellite office in the District's largest community.
- i. As part of its commitment to more mobile working and accessibility, the Council will offer a service presence as customers require in future at locations elsewhere in the District.
 - j. That relocation continues to make financial and operational sense on a whole life cost basis, specifically 20 yr. projections combining capital receipt and repayment of prudential borrowing versus existing office running cost and unfunded expenditure on existing building repair, maintenance and improvement.
3. Authorise the Deputy Chief Executive (Development, Regeneration and Partnership) in consultation with the Office Accommodation Executive Group to take forward further actions in pursuit of the above recommendations and Project Plan
 4. Agree that further reports are produced for Cabinet and Council on project progress and to seek formal approval for any disposal of Knowle.

Reason for recommendation:

To advise on project progress, in particular the outcome of Knowle and Manstone site marketing and significant changes to relocation site preferences. To seek agreement to further progress the project and commit to report back to Cabinet and Council.

Officer:

Richard Cohen rcohen@eastdevon.gov.uk
 Deputy Chief Executive (Development, Regeneration and Partnership)

Financial implications:

The recommendations in this report follow the financial assessments for the options identified, considering; the cost of acquiring land if appropriate, cost of build and/or renovation, any associated capital receipt from asset sales, ongoing costs for a 20 year period including total financing costs required. These calculations have been on a consistent basis throughout this project appraisal. Cost factors can be estimated with a degree of certainty and contingency sums allowed in the calculations, an unknown factor to date was the receipt that could be obtained from the Knowle and Manstone and although this was considered on valuation sums it is only now that tenders have been received that we can assess with some certainty the actual value and therefore complete the assessments and make recommendations to Cabinet and Council.

The report highlights the costs associated if the Council wished to continue operating from the Knowle, essential repairs alone would cost £1.566m this is without a capital receipt or a reduction in running costs in order to meet this outlay. The financial assessments show that the Honiton/Exmouth solution is financial viable over the 20 year period which takes all costs into account, including those already incurred on the project to date. There are financial risks and these have been considered in the financial assessments mainly relating to cash flow implications where costs will be incurred on the accommodation before a receipt is received. The most significant risk being the potential tender does not securing the necessary planning permission at which stage the Council would have already incurred significant outlay in its new

accommodation, mitigation will be taken where possible but this risk will remain.

Legal implications:

Cabinet's role includes considering the Council's position as landowner and to manage the Council's property assets within overall Council policy.

The general legal rule, set out in the Local Government Act 1972, is that a council can dispose of land in any manner they wish, subject to getting the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained. Our commercial land agents, Savills, have been made aware of government guidance in terms of the valuer's role in assessing and demonstrating best value. A public tender process has been adopted. Once the bids for Knowle have been fully evaluated by Savills and the Council's project manager, further legal advice will be given as required.

There are some exceptions to the best consideration rule which enable, for example, certain projects of social value to go ahead where land is disposed of at less than market value, and some special rules relating to particular types of disposal, such as open space.

The planning history and potential Local Plan issues are relevant background to understanding possible options/strategy for the Council as landowner; without prejudice to the normal planning application processes that might follow at a later date for proposed redevelopment of sites to be released to provide funds for an office move. As members are aware, the consideration of planning applications for council owned land is a matter for the Development Management Committee and members are aware of that separation of functions.

The report to Cabinet on July 17 2013 identified that the Council has a best value duty toward its community. The headline duty is to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way Council functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The [separate] general equality duty requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations across all of the characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010. EDDC will be introducing more flexible working arrangements allied to new technologies to ensure that staff and services are accessible to our resident and business communities, partners, visitors and other stakeholders. It is understood that stakeholder involvement and consultation will continue as the office relocation project moves forward to ensure that Equality Act and best value duties are complied with.

The report refers to possible legal challenges to various aspects of the office relocation project, based on the national picture that those who disagree with planning or council strategic objectives may seek to use judicial review to challenge or delay council plans. This possibility will be managed through awareness of potential areas of challenge, allowing for delays within the timetable, since delays can be caused even where a

challenge is without merit.

On 4 June 14, Cabinet agreed that specialist expertise be commissioned to advise on the specialist area of European procurement, relating to Skypark. This advice has confirmed that a European procurement process for site acquisition and development was likely to be required, with additional cost and associated delay. Since June, however, as the body of the report explains, Skypark has in any case become less affordable due to the reduction in projected capital receipts likely to be available for the office relocation project.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

As part of the project development process going forward, a full equalities impact analysis will be carried out. Equality and accessibility considerations will be thoroughly explored including both physical and remote means by which our customers can contact the Council.

Risk: Low Risk

This report does not commit the Council to sell Knowle or Manstone sites and recommends actions that remove the additional complexity of a new site acquisition.

This is one among a series of reports that has sought Cabinet and Council decisions on project actions and advised on project progress. As well as a managed and monitored risk review process, the regular reporting process and Member Executive Group oversight means that risk is reviewed and mitigated.

Decisions in this report enable officers to pursue negotiation with buyers for Knowle, further refine the new opportunity for Honiton/Exmouth offices and confirm that sale of Heathpark is no longer financially attractive with the resultant impact on Skypark relocation viability.

The report contains a reminder of overall project risks further in this report.

Links to background information:

- Cabinet Minutes 5 Feb 2014, Minute 180
- Report on Relocation Update, Cabinet 4 June 2014

Attached Appendices

- Cost Model for Refurbishment of all Knowle Office Buildings
- Cost Model for Refurbishment of 1970 Office Building and Complimentary New Building

Link to Council Plan:

Relocation meets a range of priorities in the Council Plan. It will provide future resilience and improved working for the council to continue to design and deliver services that suit our residents, businesses and visitors' needs. EDDC is also committed to making the best use of its assets including the longer term certainty and efficiency that modern offices will provide with operational flexibility alongside more mobile working across the district.

Progress

The Cabinet report in June 2014 committed to report back later in the year principally regarding marketing of the Knowle and Manstone sites and, progress on Skypark as the preferred relocation site.

This report now updates Cabinet on those matters and seeks agreement to a number of recommendations principally to agree to enter into negotiations with a preferred bidder for the sale of Knowle and develop in detail plans for our Honiton and Exmouth assets as relocation sites in preference to the sale of Heathpark, Honiton and a development at Skypark.

Knowle/Manstone Sites

The Knowle and Manstone sites were marketed in September/October 2014. The marketing exercise was open to any and all types of appropriate development proposals. A number of proposals were received and considered in long and short list exercises by the Office Accommodation Executive Group. Through a detailed, scored selection process including interview of short listed bidders the number was reduced. Following the interviews of short listed bidders further information has been provided by them on certain detail of the bids for our consideration. In particular, a raised offer was submitted at interview by one proposer which necessitated the opportunity to offer other bidders the chance to improve their offers as well. Further improved offers have been received.

Among the shortlisted development proposals were bids that now merit further investigation in terms of the offered price for our land, quality of proposal, risk and other matters. Discussion and negotiation will continue with the aim of securing a preferred bidder from among bids of sufficient value that have been offered to the overall relocation project and merit continued engagement. There are capital receipts being offered that in combination with prudential borrowing make the revised relocation opportunities described below viable and can allow the Council to remove itself from a more costly, uncertain and increasingly impractical future at Knowle.

In response to the marketing exercise, a mix of proposals were received all of which proposed variations on residential, retirement and/or care and extra care communities. The bidders all understood the planning history of Knowle as well as the current and draft Local Plan policy position. The bidders at interview displayed a range of careful thought and enthusiasm with their development proposals. As well as bid values the selection panel heard from bidders regarding demand analysis, design detail, planning consideration, local benefits and other matters.

Whilst this report cannot at this time go into the detail of bids received due to ongoing and commercially sensitive discussions, the proposals offered to the Council represent a mix of responses to local need and demand in terms of residential and/or care provision in a setting that retains the public park.

It should also be noted that whilst care facilities for example will certainly bring jobs, none of the proposals received was for a continued specific employment use on either Knowle or Manstone. Furthermore there was no market interest in retaining any of the existing buildings. All proposals received were based on the removal of existing buildings (while retaining or re-provisioning 'Building B', the bat roost).

Going forward there will be a range of matters to explore further in selecting a preferred developer. The Office Accommodation Project Executive Group will reconvene to recommend a preferred developer who will then be given a period of exclusivity to refine their proposition in terms of design, planning considerations, site investigations and other matters.

Among the bids are proposals to develop the Knowle alone and not including Manstone Depot. It may be that a preferred developer is selected that leaves Manstone to continue operating as a depot for the foreseeable future. The depot functions currently provided at Knowle Depot will be transferred across to Manstone.

Skypark

In February 2014 Cabinet and Council agreed to pursue Skypark as their preferred relocation site and tasked officers with beginning detailed negotiation. A further recommendation was to market Knowle and Manstone to ascertain developer interest and value attached to the sites. The marketing exercise was subsequently held over pending resolution of the Town and Village Green application pursued by local objectors. The decision to pursue Skypark was also informed by the offer of a capital receipt for EDDC's Heathpark site.

Between Feb 2014 and now circumstances have changed. The offer price for our Heathpark site has reduced. The supermarket concerned has, along with others in the sector, revised its business model. In this case the retailer revised their offer around a reduction in size of foodstore and significantly reduced the offer price for the site. This reduced offer takes a significant sum of money out of the funding package to deliver a new build at Skypark as well as providing a replacement of EDBC.

Also, a key plus point regarding Skypark was the prospect of a turn-key guaranteed maximum price arrangement to completion of a new HQ that would minimise uncertainty and reduce risk. However, within the negotiation, due diligence process and legal advice it has become clear that such an arrangement could potentially fall outside of European Union regulations. This would have then required a new site search exercise, cost and delay.

The progressive and risk managed approach that the Council is taking means that we have been able to respond to this viability issue in a manner that effectively manages public finance.

Whilst Skypark offered an attractive option of new build in the District's key emerging employment and commercial development, it was predicated on the comfort of a fixed price project and sufficient financial receipt from land sales.

Honiton Heathpark

In September 2013 Cabinet agreed that officers should investigate the opportunity to sell the former SITA depot site at Heathpark. Through a marketing exercise it became clear that there was commercial interest in the Heathpark site with food retail presenting the highest value interest. The offer price negotiated at that time was attractive as part of the funding package to relocate to Skypark and with the potential to invest in replacement facilities for EDBC. However, the supermarket operator reduced its offer in line with a new business sector model. Members will be aware of the changing face of food retail and its impact especially on the 'Big Four'.

This is a disappointing turn of events but one that, through the progressive development of this project, can be managed and still enable the Council to achieve its objective of relocation from Knowle and securing a capital receipt for that site. The reduced offer for Heathpark makes a sale of the site no longer attractive.

Since it will no longer sufficiently fund a Skypark move and Business Centre replacement, officers recommend that Cabinet agrees not to sell Heathpark at the revised sum and, instead, retains the site as the location for its new Headquarters building and seeks to retain a business centre operation on the site as well. Design of a new HQ will be able to consider joining up the business centre as a part of the new HQ and utilising the existing building including efficiencies and savings through shared space.

Furthermore and with reference to the opportunity provided by Exmouth Town Hall as described below, the new HQ building at Honiton can be smaller and even cheaper to build and run than was previously costed.

Using our Heathpark site plays to a recognised strength of Honiton which is that this is a site in the Council's ownership, thereby giving stronger certainty and control. Whilst the vast majority of the Council's transactions with its communities are remote rather than face to face, there has been debate about centrality versus peripherality. Honiton delivers on the former.

Exmouth Town Hall

A reduced size of Headquarters building in Honiton is possible because the Council also needs to address the future of Exmouth Town Hall (ETH) which was vacated by Devon County Council in Sep 2014.

Initial survey work identifies that EDDC could use ETH to house 80 staff while retaining the existing tenants and their function. Internal and front of office improvements will be needed to the offices as well as a car parking strategy and travel plan for staff as required. The building is designed for local government operation and is a 1920s construction. The costs of modernisation are factored into the overall project budget.

The Council could decide to sell the site and focus entirely on Heathpark as a single location but this is a more expensive option and would result in both EDDC, Exmouth Town Council and various service providers looking for alternative venues and compromise the ability of EDDC to provide a comprehensive service within East Devon's largest town.

Operationally, a twin site approach accommodating in the region of some 250 desk equivalent in total will be further supported by a greater degree of mobile working facilitated by better use of technology.

Additionally the council aims to expand its digital offering and has an ongoing project to improve existing online transactions and develop a further significant number of online services for customers who would like to do their business online.

Sites in Exmouth and Honiton provide an ideal opportunity for us to respond to the demand analysis that our various services have carried out. We already know there is a clear need to increase the service provision for Housing Benefits, Council Tax, Housing advice and register and debt advice in both Exmouth and Honiton.

The council will provide surgeries in other towns as we do now in Cranbrook, Axminster, Seaton etc. and will experiment with the frequency and range of services depending on what our demand analysis shows.

Other Considerations

Site Preference Process

The previous process of site consideration from Cabinet in Feb 2014 offered Members an order of preference. The two lead options considered were Skypark and Clyst House, Winslade Park with the former decided as the preferred option. In total five sites had been shortlisted. Cranbrook had been scored higher than our Heathpark site but was not preferred and, like Skypark, required the sale of our Heathpark site to provide funding.

EDDC's Heathpark Site was considered straightforward in the sense that the Council owned the site but new build on this site and retention of EDBC would preclude its sale and therefore reduce the overall financial package that could fund relocation to Skypark.

Our Heathpark site was recommended elsewhere in the Feb 2014 Cabinet report for sale as a retail food store. This has subsequently been superseded by a reduced offer from the supermarket developer.

Financial

The reduced offer for Heathpark, the availability of Exmouth Town Hall and the values of bids for Knowle/Manstone have required officers to revisit the options for relocation and the financing arrangements.

It remains the case that in terms of capital outlay and a 20 year operational cost analysis, the Honiton/Exmouth solution is more cost effective and predictable than staying at Knowle as well as operationally more flexible and viable.

Offers received for Knowle are subject to further negotiation with the Council as landowner.

Risk – In moving from a scenario of new site acquisition to using existing owned assets the Council is reducing risk, cost and complexity within the relocation project. We also now know that there are developers offering bids for the Knowle of sufficient value to merit further negotiation. Previously, the project costings were based on estimated market values.

We now know what values developers are offering for Knowle and can calculate accordingly following further negotiation.

The risks associated with staying at Knowle remain with the added intelligence that no developer has proposed to retain the former hotel building or other existing buildings individually or as part of a larger development.

As part of the selection interviews, the bid proposers were asked for their view on the challenges and risks of their development proposal including matters of finance, track record and planning. The Council has taken independent planning advice on the proposals and a selected preferred developer will be expected to engage promptly with the planning authority.

Previously identified risks are recognised and mitigated within the process. Delay to planning permission (e.g. Judicial Review) is reflected in a cost profile that includes extended borrowing within the overall project budget. The Council's Development Management Committee will consider any planning application in the normal way; obviously the outcome of any planning application cannot be assumed as each application is considered on its planning merits.

Relocation will be dependent on a developer securing planning permission meaning that the Council will not be left homeless.

The project budgeting includes a combination of mitigations of risk not least contingency throughout and borrowing projections that include added time to manage delays through judicial review or similar challenge.

Overall 20% contingency has been identified through design and build to allow for unplanned expenditure. Council has decided that it wants to relocate having fully considered the risks in remaining at Knowle compared to moving to new offices. There is no developer interest nor value in the existing Knowle buildings. There is outstanding basic repair cost and significant cost to any efforts to refurbish or modernise the current buildings with no prospect of capital receipt to help fund such expenditure.

Bidders have considered planning issues in preparing their bids including an independent planning statement commissioned by the Council as landowner. The preferred developer will carry out pre-app discussions promptly. The Council will not enter into unconditional contract with a developer for the Knowle without planning permission in place. Once permission is obtained by the developer the risk substantially diminishes allowing Council new build/refurb at Honiton and Exmouth to commence. At the same time, other risk factors need to be mitigated through keeping to a construction timetable to avoid construction cost inflation (currently at 7.1% pa – BCIS Tender Price Indices). Members should be aware that Judicial Review or call in are factored into risk analysis and management.

Geography - The Council's customers are predominantly communicating with us via remote means with telephone as a preferred method. We also increasingly offer on-line transaction and information services. This move away from a focus on the importance of location of an HQ was a consideration in the HQ site selection process. However, an HQ in Honiton also resonates with a concern that remains about the physical accessibility and geography of the Council. Combined with a significant office presence in Exmouth and mobile working elsewhere in the district, this will be a more than satisfactory resolution to concern about location.

Impact – As we know from the previous Economic Impact Assessment, Sidmouth is estimated to experience a reduction in economic activity through the Council's move. Those benefits will be redistributed between Honiton and Exmouth. Development of the Knowle for residential and/or

care facilities would bring economic benefits of construction jobs, new residents' spending as well as the additional potential for purchase of local services and possible new employment. Overall there will be an economic uplift distributed around the district.

Residential, retirement and or care facilities would offer a mix of other benefits to Sidmouth including social, health and wellbeing considerations along with new residential facilities and the freeing up of existing homes in the area.

The Future of Knowle

It is worth restating the key reasons why this Council has committed to move from the Knowle to new Headquarters:

1. Essential repair works to existing buildings will cost £1.566m . There is no funding allocation (capital receipt or otherwise) to cover this cost. Such repairs would not include any redecoration, refurbishment or rebuilding. No internal restructuring or modern office working would be provided.
2. In buildings of this age and design there is little doubt that they will present further problems even after repair and/or refurbishment.
3. Refurbishment of all of the existing buildings will cost up to £15.9m. This can reduce if only newer parts of the office spaces were refurbished and with minimum additional build but the cost will still be of the order of £7.7m without a significant capital receipt to cover the costs nor any uplift in value to the site or buildings (see two attached cost model reports).
4. No market interest has been shown in retaining and refurbishing any of the existing buildings. All bids were made only for a site vacated by EDDC and cleared. Bids received all covered the upper car parks, office and depot space.
5. Bids received make clear that to derive a meaningful capital receipt from the Knowle requires EDDC to leave.
6. Suggestions that the Council can retreat to the 70s/80s blocks and derive a significant receipt from sale of the former hotel are unviable. The Council has considered the possibility (including a reduced size of workforce) and found that it fails on the basis of cost, lack of asset uplift in value and absence of market interest.
7. Knowle has annual energy costs of £83,900 pa compared to a predicted energy cost for Honiton/Exmouth combined of £33,700 pa. Even after repairs, Knowle energy costs would still be double those of the Honiton/Exmouth alternative.
8. Based on Dept. of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) current fuel price indices, gas has increased on average 18.8% pa between 2003 and 2013 whilst over the same period, electricity has increased on average by 11.9% pa. Allowing a modest 10% pa inflation rate for energy and 2% for general inflation, the total savings in running costs of Honiton/Exmouth over Knowle are of the order of £5.55m over 20 years.
9. New build at Honiton and refurbishment of Exmouth Town Hall will be funded via capital receipt and prudential borrowing. Over a whole life period of 20 years the spend will pay for itself with savings accruing thereafter.
10. The outcome of a departure from Knowle will be new and refurbished modern offices with low maintenance and minimised additional maintenance costs.

Looking Forward

Fundamentally, any efforts to keep EDDC at Knowle will be expensive and inefficient in the short and long term. Capital repair costs loom and long term running costs are high while the buildings inhibit effective modern working in terms of space usage, flexibility, accessibility, communication and cooperation. Attempts to argue that the Council can remain in part of the buildings while securing a capital receipt for the former hotel building are both impractical and unattractive to the market. The reality is that, no interest has been shown by developers in retaining any of the existing buildings on Knowle.

In the longer term EDDC needs to consider what the shape of local government may be. Among its merits Skypark offered a flexible office space in a location that lent itself to wider accessibility and cross border cooperation with other authorities. A combined Honiton and Exmouth office base offers a different approach involving new or modernised offices in two locations. In a world of potentially merging or reducing scale of local government an HQ and satellite or multi-hub function offers a responsive option. For example, if the Council were to reduce in size then ETH could be converted in to a business centre or, on the other hand, there is additional space on the Heathpark site to allow for both new offices , EDBC and an extended office building or a relocated depot allowing a future sale of Manstone depot. The strategy has flexibility to accommodate what the future holds.

If a successor organisation or other local government arrangement were to inherit Knowle from EDDC it is unlikely that such care would be shown toward its future use as has been shown by EDDC. An objective assessment of Knowle says that none of its buildings are fit for purpose and as such would be vacated by a different authority. Either the site might be sold quickly or the site and buildings left undeveloped. EDDC has sought to respect the parkland and reflect the previous planning decision by limiting the area of development. In leaving Knowle, EDDC has sought to secure a sensitive exit and leave behind both an extensive public parkland and a type and quality of future use that makes sense to the town and reflects the quality of its location.

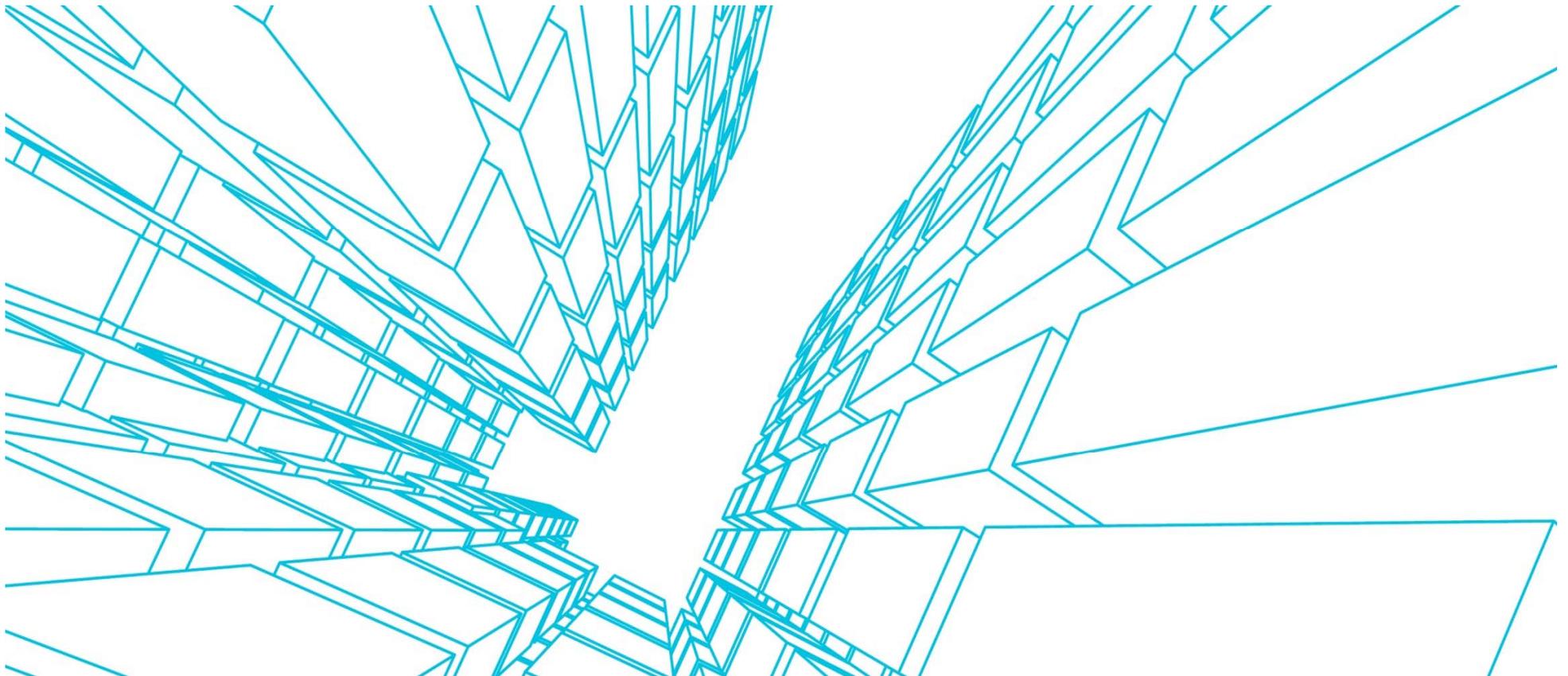
An HQ at Honiton and a significant Exmouth satellite operation offer both a physical presence for the Council in key locations and an asset base that can be adapted to respond to future change in the way local government is structured and carries out its business.

EDDC RELOCATION PROJECT

COST MODEL FOR REFURBISHMENT OF ALL EXISTING KNOWLE OFFICE BUILDINGS

For East Devon District Council

Revision J - 21 November 2014 - BREEAM VERY GOOD



BASIS OF ESTIMATE

Cost Basis

Following a request from Steve Pratten a cost model has been produced to provide an indication as to the order of cost for refurbishment of the existing premises based on an overall gross internal area of 7,722 m2. The standard cost model has been adjusted to reflect the two different construction types consisting the former hotel building previously converted to offices and the purpose built concrete framed office building.

- The extent of refurbishment can vary greatly but in this case the scope of works has been assumed as follows (without any specific knowledge of the buildings) :-
- Full strip out of existing building services, fittings and internal partitions to provide modern open plan accommodation
- Essential repairs to the existing building fabric including replacement of existing roof finishes
- Replacement / upgrade of windows and external doors
- Alterations to provide a DDA compliant building
- Upgrade to the thermal performance and carbon efficiency of the building and achievement of minimum BREEAM Very Good rating.
- Full replacement of all building services installations

Tender Price Inflation

The base cost estimate is at Forth Quarter 2014 prices and an adjustment for inflation has been included separately, based upon the BCIS Tender Price Index for the proposed tender being received during the Q4 2016. This allowance is 9.8%, based upon available indices as at 10 November 2014.

Exclusions

EDDC Temporary Offices, decanting and subsequent returning costs

Surveys and any preliminary opening up works, site investigations etc

FF&E

VAT

Unknown abnormal within the existing building structure and fabric including any abnormal ground conditions or contamination issues

Archaeological and ecological issues

Offsite roadworks and transport systems beyond the immediate access to the Development - e.g. upgrades to existing road junctions (Section 278 Works) etc.

CIL / Section 106 contributions

Any offsite reinforcement of utilities - electrical supplies, sewage treatment, links to offsite sustainable energy systems, water infrastructure, gas and telecoms

Site specific external works and car parking including any alterations

Finance costs

Notes

This cost model has been provided as an approximate indicative cost subject to further scoping, detailing and design. These costs have been based on AECOM's standard Cost model for office refurbishment for the use of EDDC only and are not intended for the use or manipulation by a third party without AECOM's prior consent.

INDICATIVE COST MODEL		GIA		7,722 m2	
	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<u>Demolitions and Alterations</u>					
General internal soft strip out / demolition of internal walls, doors, stairs, timber floors, fittings etc	7,722	m2	31	239,382	31.00 Subject to extent of re-configuration and proportion of open plan space
Allowance for repairs to internal floors etc where retained / allowance for timber boarding replacement or latex levelling screed etc subject to construction type	1	Item		200,000	25.90
Removal of existing plasterwork, ceilings etc	7,722	m2	8	61,776	8.00
Strip out of existing sanitary fittings, redundant heating systems, boiler, electrical installations etc.	7,722	m2	6	46,332	6.00
Allowance for removal of asbestos	1	Item	120,000	120,000	15.54 Subject to Survey
<u>Roof</u>					
Hotel building - strip off of existing roof tiling and replace, Extension - replacement of flat roof finish and replace	7,722	m2	35	270,270	35.00
Repairs to chimneys including brickwork, pots and providing new linings / cappings etc	1	Item		20,000	2.59
<u>Stairs</u>					
Repairs to existing stairs including replacement of handrails / balustrades, sundry steps and ramps	7,722	m2	10	77,220	10.00
<u>External Walls, Windows and Doors</u>					
Allowance for cleaning brickwork facades as necessary and repointing brickwork joints	1	Item		280,000	36.26
Allowance for repairs / replacement of areas of damaged stonework window and door surrounds - old building only	1	Item		50,000	6.48
Replacement of existing doors and windows	7,722	m2	80	617,760	80.00
Allowance for any damp and rot issues including installation of injected damp proof course and tanking to Ground Floor / Basement areas	1	Item		100,000	12.95
		Carried Forward		2,082,740	269.72

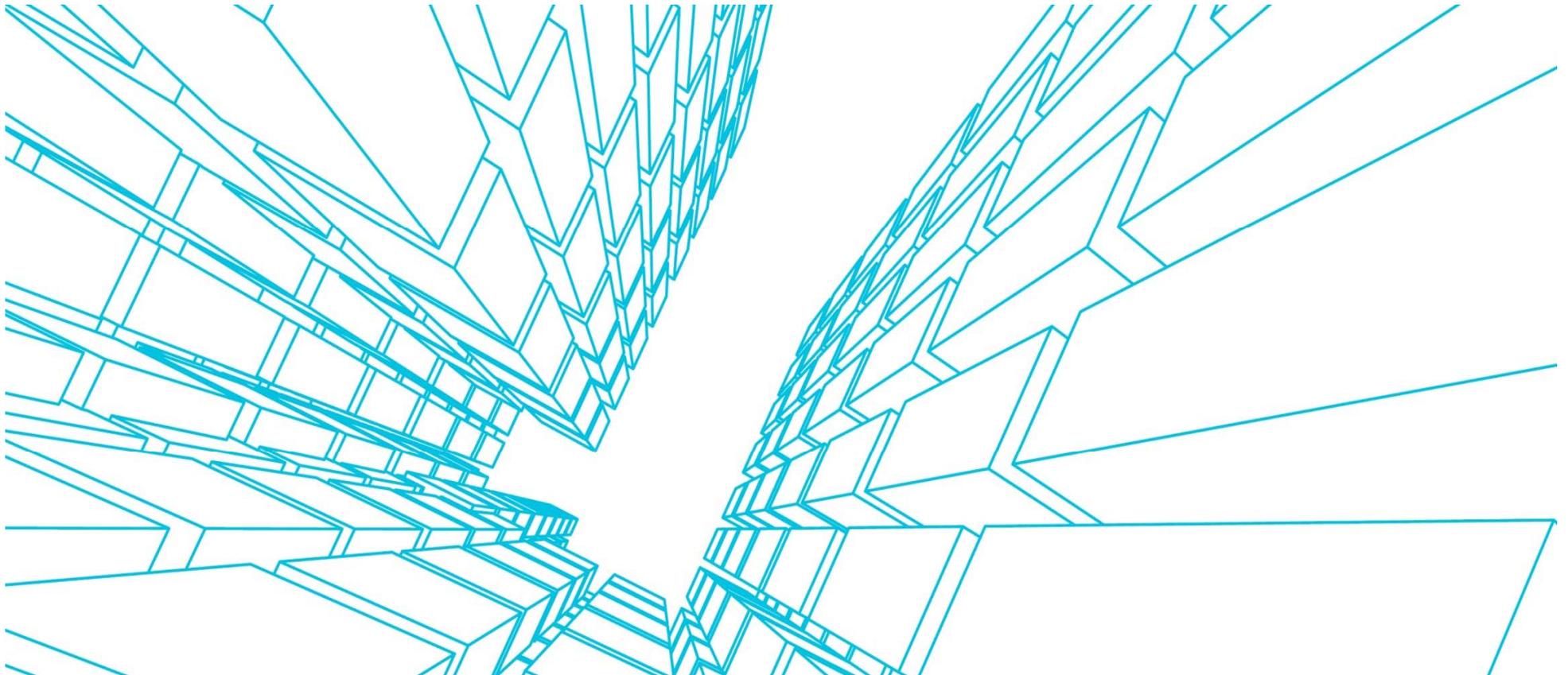
<u>INDICATIVE COST MODEL</u>		GIA		7,722 m2		Comments
Qty	Unit	Rate	£			
		Brought Forward	2,082,740	269.72		
<u>Structural Alterations</u>						
		Allowance for structural alterations to existing for new layout, openings etc	1 Item	130,000	16.84	
		Allowance for main contractor building surveys, remedial works	1 Item	40,000	5.18	
<u>Office Fit Out</u>						
		New internal walls and doors - metal stud partitions, mdf skirtings, flush doorsets, glazed screens to meeting rooms etc.	7,722 m2	95	733,590	95.00
		Wall finishes - plasterboard linings to inner face of external walls, painting generally	7,722 m2	16	123,552	16.00
		Floor finishes - replacement screeds, raised floor to 70% of floor area, carpet finish, ceramic tiling to toilets and kitchen areas, reconstituted stone tiling to reception & floor paint to plant rooms	7,722 m2	75	579,150	75.00
		Ceiling finishes - suspended ceilings - plasterboard on MF system including bulkheads, repairs and re-decoration of existing ceilings	7,722 m2	35	270,270	35.00
		Fittings & Furniture including general joinery, kitchenette fit-out, no canteen fit-out	7,722 m2	45	347,490	45.00
		Sanitary Installations - toilet core fit-out, WC's, urinals, wash hand basins, vanity units, hand dryers, mirrors, shower cabinets	7,722 m2	34	262,548	34.00
		Disposal Installations - soil, waste, rainwater disposal	7,722 m2	15	115,830	15.00
		Water Installations - hot & cold water service, storage and	7,722 m2	20	154,440	20.00
		Heat source - gas fired boilers, flue, pumps, heat exchanger etc	7,722 m2	12	92,664	12.00
		Allowance for renewable energy source - Photo Voltaics	1 Item	100,000	12.95	
		Space heating & air treatment - LTHW installation, hot & cold water supply to plant, dedicated localised cooling systems, toilet & kitchen extract	7,722 m2	135	1,042,470	135.00
		Carried Forward		6,074,744	786.68	

<u>INDICATIVE COST MODEL</u>		GIA		7,722 m2		Comments
Qty	Unit	Rate	£			
		Brought Forward	6,074,744		786.68	
Electrical installations - LV switchgear, panels and distribution boards, power to main plant & lifts, small power, containment to security & power, office high level exposed luminaires, emergency lighting, PIR sensors etc	7,722 m2	185	1,428,570	185.00		
Gas installation - renewal of gas distribution	7,722 m2	3	23,166	3.00		
Lift installations	7,722 m2	35	270,270	35.00		
Protective installations - earthing & bonding and lightning protection	7,722 m2	2	15,444	2.00		
Communication installations - fire & smoke detection, security installation, disabled refuge alarms, induction loops & ICT cat 6 data cabling	7,722 m2	41	316,602	41.00		
CAT 6A Data & AV installation to meeting areas	7,722 m2	50	386,100	50.00		
Building management system	7,722 m2	17	131,274	17.00		
Builder's work in connection with services	5%		216,969	28.10		
Localised adjustment and repairs to pavings, ramps, landscaping etc	1 Item	20,000	20,000	2.59		
Drainage - partial replacement and connection to existing externally	1 Item	20,000	20,000	2.59		
			8,903,139	1,152.96		
Contractors Preliminaries, OH&P	15%		1,335,471	172.94		
Add for Inflation based upon BCIS TPI 4Q 2014 - 4Q 2016 (based	9.8%		1,003,384	129.94		
Uplift to achieve BREEAM Very Good	2.5%		281,050	36.40		
			11,523,043	1,492		
Design & Construction Risk / Contingency	20%		2,304,609	298.45		
			13,827,652	1,790.68		
Allow for Professional Fees, Planning and Building Reg Fees	15%		2,074,148	268.60		
Total Construction Cost at Q4 2016 SAY			£15,901,800	£2,059		

EDDC ACCOMMODATION PROJECT

**COST MODEL FOR REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING 1970 OFFICE BUILDING & COMPLIMENTARY
NEW BUILDING, KNOWLE, SIDMOUTH - BREEAM Very Good and Excellent Options Review
For East Devon District Council**

Revision F- 21 November 2014



BASIS OF ESTIMATE

Cost Basis

This cost model has been produced to provide an indication as to the order of cost for refurbishment of the existing 1970's purpose built concrete framed office building based on an overall gross internal area of 1,938 m². In addition due allowance has been included for a new office / facilities to provide the overall required 2,776 m² of floor area for 170 desks.

The extent of refurbishment can vary greatly but in this case the scope of works has been assumed as follows (without any specific detailed design knowledge of the existing buildings) :-

Full strip out of existing building services, fittings and internal partitions to provide modern open plan accommodation

Essential repairs to the existing building fabric including replacement of existing roof finishes

Replacement / upgrade of windows and external doors

Alterations to provide a DDA compliant building

Upgrade to the thermal performance and carbon efficiency of the building and achievement of BREEAM excellent or BREEAM very good rating.

Full replacement of all building services installations

Resolution of levels issues within existing space (particularly Reception). Provision of linking facilities between buildings.

Tender Price Inflation

The base cost estimate is at Fourth Quarter 2014 prices and an adjustment for inflation has been included separately, based upon the BCIS Tender Price Index for the proposed tender being received during the Q4 2016. This allowance is 9.8%, based upon available indices as at 10 November 2014.

Exclusions

Surveys and any preliminary opening up works, site investigations etc.

FF&E

VAT

Unknown abnormals within the existing building structure and fabric including any abnormal ground conditions or contamination issues

Archaeological and ecological issues

Offsite Roadworks and transport systems beyond the immediate access to the Development - e.g. upgrades to existing road junctions (Section 278 Works) etc.

CIL / Section 106 contributions

Any offsite reinforcement of utilities - electrical supplies, sewage treatment, links to offsite sustainable energy systems, water infrastructure, gas and telecoms

Site specific additional external works and car parking including any alterations.

Notes

This cost model has been provided as an approximate indicative cost subject to further scoping, detailing and design. These costs have been based on Aecom's standard Cost Model for office refurbishment for the use of EDDC only and are not intended for the use or manipulation by a third party without Aecom's prior consent.

<u>INDICATIVE COST MODEL</u>	<u>GIA</u>		<u>1,938 + 838</u>	<u>2776 m2</u>	<u>Comments</u>
	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>£</u>	
<u>Demolitions and Alterations</u>					
General internal soft strip out / demolition of internal walls, doors, stairs, timber floors, fittings etc	1,938	m2	31	60,078	Subject to extent of re-configuration and proportion of open plan space
Allowance for repairs to internal floors etc. where retained / allowance for timber boarding replacement or latex levelling screed etc. subject to construction type	1	Item		50,000	
Resolution of issues associated with differing levels within buildings (particularly Reception Area	1	Item		40,000	
Removal of existing plasterwork, ceilings etc.	1,938	m2	8	15,504	
Strip out of existing sanitary fittings, redundant heating systems, boiler, electrical installations etc.	1,938	m2	6	11,628	
Allowance for removal of asbestos	1	Item	40,000	40,000	Subject to Survey
<u>Roof</u>					
Replacement of flat roof finish and replace	1,938	m2	35	67,830	
Allowance for sport repair and structural enhancements to the roof	1	Item	25,000	25,000	
<u>Stairs</u>					
Repairs to existing stairs including replacement of handrails / balustrades, sundry steps and ramps	1,938	m2	10	19,380	
<u>External Walls, Windows and Doors</u>					
Allowance for cleaning brickwork facades as necessary and repointing brickwork joints	1	Item		25,000	
Replacement of existing doors and windows	1,938	m2	80	155,040	
			Carried Forward	509,460	

<u>INDICATIVE COST MODEL</u>	<u>GIA</u>		<u>1,938 + 838</u>	<u>2776 m2</u>	<u>Comments</u>
	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>£</u>	
			Brought Forward	509,460	
<u>Structural Alterations</u>					
Allowance for structural alterations to existing for new layout, openings etc.	1	Item		40,000	
EO for linking existing Office space	1	Item		80,000	
Allowance for main contractor building surveys, remedial works	1	Item		10,000	
<u>Office Fit Out</u>					
New internal walls and doors - metal stud partitions, mdf skirtings, flush doorsets, glazed screens to meeting rooms etc.	1,938	m2	95	184,110	
Wall finishes - plasterboard linings to inner face of external walls, painting generally	1,938	m2	16	31,008	
Floor finishes - replacement screeds, raised floor to 70% of floor area, carpet finish, ceramic tiling to toilets and kitchen areas, reconstituted stone tiling to reception & floor paint to plant rooms	1,938	m2	75	145,350	
Ceiling finishes - suspended ceilings - plasterboard on MF system including bulkheads, repairs and re-decoration of existing ceilings	1,938	m2	35	67,830	
Fittings & Furniture including general joinery, kitchenette fit-out, no canteen fit-out	1,938	m2	45	87,210	
Sanitary Installations - toilet core fit-out, WC's, urinals, wash hand basins, vanity units, hand dryers, mirrors, shower cabinets	1,938	m2	34	65,892	
Disposal Installations - soil, waste, rainwater disposal	1,938	m2	15	29,070	
Water Installations - hot & cold water service, storage and	1,938	m2	20	38,760	
Heat source - gas fired boilers, flue, pumps, heat exchanger etc.	1,938	m2	12	23,256	
Allowance for renewable energy source - Photo Voltaics	1	Item		100,000	
Space heating & air treatment - LTHW installation, hot & cold water supply to plant, dedicated localised cooling systems, toilet & kitchen extract	1,938	m2	135	261,630	
			Carried Forward	1,673,576	

<u>INDICATIVE COST MODEL</u>	<u>GIA</u>		<u>1,938 + 838</u>	<u>2776 m2</u>	<u>Comments</u>
	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>£</u>	
			Brought Forward	1,673,576	
Electrical installations - LV switchgear, panels and distribution boards, power to main plant & lifts, small power, containment to security & power, office high level exposed luminaires, emergency lighting, PIR sensors etc	1,938	m2	185	358,530	
Gas installation - renewal of gas distribution	1,938	m2	3	5,814	
Lift installations	1,938	m2	35	67,830	
Protective installations - earthing & bonding and lightning protection	1,938	m2	2	3,876	
Communication installations - fire & smoke detection, security installation, disabled refuge alarms, induction loops & ICT cat 6 data cabling	1,938	m2	41	79,458	
CAT 6A Data & AV installation to meeting areas	1,938	m2	50	96,900	
Building management system	1,938	m2	17	32,946	
Builder's work in connection with services		5%		58,198	
Localised adjustment and repairs to pavings, ramps, landscaping	1	Item	20,000	20,000	
Drainage - partial replacement and connection to existing externally	1	Item	20,000	20,000	
Temporary Offices for 80 desks, based upon Portakabin indicative cost advice - includes civil / building works				578,009	
Rotating Decanting Costs	Say			40,000	
Rotating Moving in Costs	Say			40,000	
			Carried Forward	<u>3,075,137</u>	

<u>INDICATIVE COST MODEL</u>	<u>GIA</u>		<u>1,938 + 838</u>	<u>2776 m2</u>	<u>Comments</u>
	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>£</u>	
<i>Refurbishment costs - Brought Forward</i>				£3,075,137	
BREEAM Excellent for the Refurbishment and New Build					
Allowance for New Build Offices to make up balance of Desks (250 Total)					
Due to EDDC requiring space for 170 desks, the overall floor area requirement is 2,776 m2. Thus there is a need for an additional building of 2,776 - 1,938 = 838 m2					
New Build to accommodate additional area requirement	838	m2	1,454	1,218,662	<i>Rate extracted from Initial Order of Cost Estimate for 170 desks Rev A 29 October 2014+5% for reduced build scale efficiency</i>
		Sub total		<u>4,293,799</u>	
Contractors Preliminaries, OH&P	15%			644,070	
Add for Inflation based upon BCIS TPI 4Q 2014 - 4Q 2016 (based on update indices available 10 November 2014)	9.8%			483,911	
Uplift to achieve BREEAM Excellent	6%			<u>325,307</u>	
				5,747,086	
Design & Construction Risk	20%			<u>1,149,417</u>	
				6,896,504	
Professional design fees, Planning and Building Regulation fees,	15%			1,034,476	
				<u>1,034,476</u>	
				£7,930,979	BREEAM Excellent for the Refurbishment and New Build
Total Construction Cost at Q4 2016 SAY				£7,930,979	

INDICATIVE COST MODEL	GIA		1,938 + 838	2776 m2	Comments
	Qty	Unit	Rate	£	
Alternatively					
BREEAM VG for both the Refurbishment and BREEAM Excellent for the New Build					
				<u>£3,075,137</u>	
<i>Baseline Refurbishment costs</i>					
Contractors Preliminaries, OH&P	15%			461,271	
Add for Inflation based upon BCIS TPI 4Q 2014 - 4Q 2016 (based on update indices available 10 November 2014)	9.8%			346,568	
Uplift to achieve Very Good for the Refurbishment	2.5%			97,074	
				<u>3,980,050</u>	
New Build to accommodate additional area requirement	838	m2	1,454	1,218,662	<i>Rate extracted from Initial Order of Cost Estimate for 170 desks Rev A 29 October 2014+5% for reduced build scale efficiency</i>
Due to EDDC requiring space for 170 desks, the overall floor area requirement is 2,776 m2. Thus there is a need for an additional building of 2,776 - 1,938 = 838 m2					
Contractors Preliminaries, OH&P	15%			182,799	
Add for Inflation based upon BCIS TPI 4Q 2014 - 4Q 2016 (based on update indices available 10 November 2014)	9.8%			137,343	
Uplift to achieve Excellent for the New Build	6%			92,328	
				<u>1,631,132</u>	
Refurbishment Sub Total (<i>brought forward</i>)				3,980,050	
New Build Sub Total (<i>brought forward</i>)				1,631,132	
Design & Construction Risk	20%			1,122,236	
				<u>6,733,419</u>	
Professional design fees, Planning and Building Regulation fees,	15%			1,010,013	
				<u>7,743,431</u>	
Total Construction Cost at Q4 2016 35 DAY				£7,743,431	BREEAM VG for the Refurbishment and BREEAM Excellent for the New Build

Environment Portfolio Holder Update 2014

Briefing Note to Overview & Scrutiny

Councillor Iain Chubb

Agenda item 9



CONTENT

Introduction

1. Countryside & Leisure

- 1.1. Countryside Team
- 1.2. Countryside Outputs
- 1.3. Volunteer Activities
- 1.4. Arboricultural Service
- 1.5. Press Awards and Events
- 1.6. Securing Funding
- 1.7. Arts and Culture
 - Manor Pavilion Theatre
 - Thelma Hulbert Gallery
- 1.8. Operational Improvements 2014
- 1.9. Financial Performance
- 1.10. Grants Awarded 2014/2015 (Year to Date)
- 1.11. Sponsorship & Income

2. Environmental Health & Car Parks

- 2.1. Public Health
- 2.2. Commercial Premises Team
- 2.3. Environmental Protection Team
- 2.4. Crime & Disorder
- 2.5. Licensing
- 2.6. Car Parks

3. Streetscene (excluding Recycling & Waste Management)

- 3.1. Service Purpose
- 3.2. Strategy
- 3.3. Improving the Services
- 3.4. Headlines
- 3.5. Statutory Service Areas
- 3.6. Discretionary Service Areas

Introduction

I think we all agree - East Devon is a great place to live in and a great place to visit. As Portfolio Holder for Environment I still face the same daunting challenge. How can we strike the right balance between protecting and improving our outstanding environment and the ever present imperative to promote and encourage economic development in East Devon?

As Portfolio Holder for Environment I have the sometimes tricky job of balancing the need to protect and improve this outstanding environment with a pressing need to promote economic development in East Devon.

Our health, quality of life and economic prosperity are all dependent upon this high quality environment and we do of course have an Environment Strategy that sets out our approach. In essence we see our role as making sure that the environment is being protected, that where possible it is being improved and that its value to the economy is properly recognised.

Most of you will know something about what we do day-to-day. I would however like to take this opportunity to just give you all a flavour of the breadth of my portfolio, to remind you of some of the key issues we are now facing and highlight some of our past achievements and plans for the future.

1. COUNTRYSIDE & LEISURE

1.1. Countryside Team

Core areas of Countryside Service work are:

- LNR management (12 LNRs)
- Environmental education (schools service)
- Trees (Planning & Council owned)
- SW Coast Path management
- Public engagement & events programme
- Volunteer engagement – East Devon Volunteer Network, Tree Warden scheme, Junior Rangers & special needs groups
- Special project development – Axe Wetlands, Water Vole Recovery project etc.

1.2. Countryside Outputs

- Countryside Team has recently set up a student placement scheme with Bicton College which will enable up to 2 students a year are placed with the Team to help develop their countryside management skills and form part of the diploma course.
- Axe Wetlands plans to create a 200 acre regionally important nature based tourism linking with the emerging Seaton Discovery Centre and Stop Line cycleway which will help attract in excess of 60K visitors pa and contributing additional £250K into local economy once all works are finished in 2015/16.
- Axe Wetlands has recently developed new facilities to improve the visitor experience including new toilets, broadband connection to Info Centre, new access for all tracks and visitor picnic area
- Environmental Education visits for schools and youth groups up by over 10%; number of pupils being actively engaged in learning about their environment increased by 15% on 2013/14
- Cranbrook Country Park Ranger post established and first events for local community up and running – orchard planting event, guided walks and signing up volunteers to help manage the Country Park
- Honiton Bottom Community Nature Reserve community project established and successful tree planting event delivered with EDDC's Community Development Team and local housing tenants
- Funding secured from Housing to deliver a countryside outreach project working in East Devon's most deprived communities to help engage and inspire residents about our outstanding natural environment
- Established a monitoring programme for key habitats and species across suite of Local Nature Reserves that help inform the health of our sites recording impacts of management improvements on key species such as Dartford Warblers (heathland sites), water voles and otters (Axe Wetlands), Brent Geese (Exmouth LNR), dormice (Holyford Woods LNR) etc.
- Trinity Hill LNR continues to improve its nationally important lowland heathland habitat through Defra's Higher Level Stewardship funds for reserve management that will help to fund works for reinstating heathland, recreate new areas of heath working with neighbouring landowners FC & improving access.
- Knapp Copse LNR continues to improve its habitat as a County Wildlife Site through Defra's Higher Level Stewardship agreement including significant access improvements for visitors with better connectivity to the East Devon Way; volunteers have been helping with many of the tasks.

- Fire Beacon Hill LNR also received a HLS grant for management works that will enable RSPB and Countryside Team to achieve habitat for species such as nationally declining Dartford Warbler and Nightjar.
- Maer LNR has developed an environmental play trail and access for all utilising S106 funds that will help encourage new audiences to site and provide interpretation via play trail equipment of local native species.
- New community orchard scheme has been set up working in partnership with Housing and Streetscene looking at under utilised open spaces where local housing tenants can get actively involved in managing an orchard – an important and declining habitat in Devon, first site has been identified in Exmouth.

1.3. Volunteer Activities

- The Team supports a district-wide Volunteer network that includes LNR Volunteers, Tree Wardens and Junior Rangers as part of our commitment to engaging with the local community
- Currently over 200 volunteers are signed up and work on the Wetlands, Trinity Hill, Holyford Woods and Knapp Copse.
- The team has committed to providing training and skills development through its adopted Countryside Volunteer Guidebook
- The team runs weekly Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday groups with the Rangers and it is the plan to expand across all our sites as there are considerable health & wellbeing benefits from doing this work.

1.4. Arboricultural Service

- Processed over 250 applications p.a for works to trees
- 130 planning consultations p.a
- Deals with an average of 60 phone calls p.w
- Deals with 200 tree status enquiries p.a
- 12 FC woodland grant/felling license schemes p.a
- 3 FC Forest Design Plans p.a
- Leads 2 evening Parish tree talk n' walks
- Provides survey & professional advice to Streetscene on managing Council owned trees
- Currently the team is going through a systems review process to help improve the efficiency of the way the team works as it is under huge pressure to deliver a district wide service on a very limited budget.

1.5. Press, Awards & Events

- Delivered in 2014 over 110 events and had 12% increase in visitors compared to 2013
- Over 3300 column inches of press coverage equivalent to £18K in PR value (including articles in the Western Morning News as well as all local papers)
- Nature Conservation Officer writes regular feature in the Exmouth Journal and has a weekly slot with Bay FM promoting the Team's work.
- Axe Wetlands received an Outstanding Certificate by South West in Bloom (the highest award) and Golden Toilets Award.

1.6. Securing Funding

The Team also manages to secure huge amounts of external funding for its projects from partners such as Natural England and the Environment Agency as well as from lottery bodies highlights over the last 3 years are:

- £162K for Devon Water Vole Project from SITA Landfill Tax Fund
- £40K for Water Vole Recovery Project Officer from Environment Agency
- £270K for Axe Wetlands habitat creation from Environment Agency
- £70K for the Axe Wetlands visitor facilities from AONBs Making it Local Fund
- £20K for wildlife enhancement projects from Natural England.

1.7. Arts & Culture

Key areas are:

- Manor Pavilion Theatre
- Thelma Hulbert Gallery

Manor Pavilion Theatre

Business performance

Operational/Trading figures

2008/09 - £73,057

2009/10 - £65,361

2010/11 - £53,589

2011/12 - £43,285

2012/13 - £32,949

2013/14 - £57,157 (Theatre was closed for 6 weeks for refurbishment)

1.8. Operational improvements 2014:

- Manor Pavilion Theatre has delivered another record achieving year with ticket sales up 30% due to the continued success of the Summer Season with Paul Taylor Mills and the box office opening all year.
- The Manor Pavilion Theatre also established a excellent working relationship with the top touring Ballet company, Ballet Theatre UK who are now performing twice a year at the theatre
- Manor Pavilion theatre had a first time visit from Oxfordshire Theatre Company who presented Around the World in 80 Days to great acclaim.
- Manor Pavilion Theatre had more single night shows have sold out than ever before, including, James Pellow, and the Jersey Boys.
- Record number of shows booked – 54 for the 2014 season of which there are a number of nationally acclaimed companies and celebrity acts.
- New box office investment will mean Theatre has ability to take more bookings on upgraded software and also “chip & pin” facilities as well as improving the overall look of the venue.
- Ticket sales for the 2013/14 season were up £113,141 on 2012/13 which was achieved despite the ongoing impacts of the recession.

Thehma Hulbert Gallery:

The future of the THG is to be considered by Cabinet on 7th January 2015 in which its business performance will be looked at and a decision made to its future operation.

The key areas of success 2014:

The Gallery’s ability to reach out to the community, and in particular to disadvantaged groups, young people and individuals who find it extremely difficult to access some of the Council’s services has been recognised in national awards (see appendix B). Examples of this work include:

- THG awarded Gold at the Devon Tourism Awards 2014 for most accessible attraction and the prestigious Winner of Winners Award. Once again THG has been awarded the Visit England Quality Assured Visitor Attraction award
- THG’s exhibitions provide a year round diverse and engaging programme. Engaging with local, national and international visitors. Exhibitions such as Peter Randall-Page (internationally renowned sculptor) have helped to build the gallery’s reputation. This exhibition encouraged sales of art of high value (one sculpture sale made a £2,500 profit for THG) alongside merchandise which is affordable i.e. postcards, catalogues
- THG is now a Dementia-friendly gallery following training for staff and volunteers
- THG employed 2 new part-time staff (job-sharing the Gallery & Shop Officer position) plus a new Casual member of staff is being funded by HLF and Arts Council to work on THG Education Projects. Impressive results from new THG team include a dramatic upturn in income through sales, donations, sponsorship and grants.
- THG secured £18,400 funding from HLF to explore the history of Elmfield House with socially excluded young people, the THG youth group, adults with Dementia and to work with range of local cultural and community organisations

- THG secured £5450 from The Northbrook Trust and £250 from The Norman Family Charitable Trust towards our education programme with local schools and socially excluded young people.
- THG delivered free artist-led workshops with over 800 local schoolchildren at the gallery, thanks to Arts Council funding.
- THG delivered a series of conservation workshops with local schools with funding from The Eridge Trust to promote the paintings of Thelma Hulbert and enable local young people to work with a professional conservator explaining how to restore paintings.
- THG partnered Honiton Memory Cafe and Hospital League of Friends and with support of 50 local artists, the fundraising art auction at THG raised £15,000, which was split between the three organizations.
- THG created a new Audience Development Strategy and partnered The Audience Agency to issue nationally-recognised arts questionnaires for visitors.
- New sponsors Every Solicitors secured for Present Makers 2014 exhibition. New links forged with 10 sponsor partners hoping to sponsor 2015 exhibitions
- THG now a registered member of the Own Art Scheme for galleries of contemporary visual arts and crafts, which offers customers the opportunity to purchase art works by spreading the cost over 10 months interest free. This scheme looks to build a sustainable and resilient creative economy making the arts accessible and affordable to all
- The gallery facilities were made accessible to a number of local community groups throughout the year for: reading, knitting, free public valuations, creative workshops, meetings, launches and promotional events.
- THG has built links with local businesses who hire the gallery space on a regular basis and for one off events, for cross-promotional purposes and sharing and expanding audiences e.g. Bearness Hampton & Littlewood auctioneers have booked antique valuations every Thursday. Total income £2,500 for 2014 and further £2,500 budgeted for 2015
- THG has raised the gallery & exhibitions profile by promoting the gallery in new art and lifestyle publications, including Devon Life, Devon Home and Flybe magazines, what's on and art websites and secured advertisement at Honiton Station for 2015 to reach out to visitors/tourists arriving in Honiton
- THG has raised the gallery's social media profile to engage new and younger audiences (Twitter 1,352 followers, Facebook 270 Likes) and adding to THG to Pinterest and Trip Advisor
- Two Hayward Touring exhibitions secured including Matisse cut outs for early 2015. Providing a major pull for visitors and potential sales opportunities for merchandise are good.
- THG went out and about to promote the gallery. We took THG out on a pitch at Honiton Street Market to promote the gallery on the High Street. Also we had two stands at Honiton Show promoting the gallery in the Blackdown Hills marquee and in the Bearness, Hampton and Littlewood marquee (extending our successful partnership with the auctioneers) these lead to extra visitors both on the day and subsequently. THG will continue this in 2015.

1.9. Financial performance:

The THG's financial performance between March – September 2014 has been very encouraging in comparison to the same period 2013 **is up by £3,375.52 a 24.31% increase on last year.** Also visitor footfall has exceeded 7,000 year to date and is on track to reach the 10,000 target outlined in the Business Survival Strategy 2013.

Comparative Shop and Exhibition Takings (2014 v 2013)

THG Income					
Month	2014	2013	Variation	Percentage	2012
April	£2,195.90	£1,450.94	up	51.34%	£1,412.34
May	£2,318.97	£2,780.06	down	16.59%	£723.14
June	£4,524.79	£418.87	up	980.24%	£835.67
July	£2,530.45	£1,848.06	up	36.92%	£1,389.20
August	£2,372.21	£2,183.62	up	8.64%	£915.45
September	£3,319.65	£5,204.90	down	36.22%	£764.30
TOTALS	£17,261.97	£13,886.45	up	24.31%	£4,629.30

Visitor Figures (6 months)					
Month	2014	2013	Variation	Percentage	2012
April	822	556	up	47.84%	639
May	470	462	up	1.73%	487
June	624	424	up	47.17%	410
July	776	810	down	-4.20%	587
August	712	686	up	3.79%	608
September	629	691	down	-8.97%	457
TOTALS	4033	3629	up	11.13%	3180

1.10. Grants awarded 2014/15 (Year to date):

- The Arts Council - £40,000: project costs for audience development and education programme during 2015 -17. This funding will largely be spent on an Education Co-ordinator in order to deliver this work. The £40,000 is ring fenced for expenditure on developing THG's audiences over 2 years it will also generate income by:
 - Delivering more paid workshops, artist talks and hiring the Learning Room
 - Increased audiences = increased sponsorship, donations and spending in shop
 - Creating more affordable artwork to sell
 - Levering further funding because the ACE grant provides matchfunding/ the kind of projects that will lead to further grants
 - Meeting some of THG's overhead costs where possible such as marketing, technical support, community and schools workshops.
 - Bringing in partnership funding by collaborating with other cultural and healthcare organisations.
- THG secured £18,400 funding from HLF to work with socially excluded young people, other young people, adults with Dementia and to work with range of local cultural and community organisations
- THG secured £5,450 from The Northbrook Trust and £250 from The Norman Family Charitable Trust towards the Gallery's education programme with local schools and socially excluded young people.
- **Total grants awarded: £64,100**

1.11. Sponsorship & income 2014 (Year to date)

- Exhibition sales from all THG events held (achieving 40% commission on each sale made) £5,013
- THGs partnership with auctioneers Bearnes, Hampton & Littlewood now brings in £2,600 annually in room hire fees for antique valuations every Thursday.
- Shop income currently £9,138 (THGs Art Auction in partnership with Honiton Memory Café & Hospital League of Friends made THG £4,738).
- 2014 Sponsorship in kind (competition prizes & food) £1,100
- 2014 Exhibition Sponsorship £900
- **Total income & sponsorship: £18,751**

2. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & CAR PARKS

I know you all know what the Environmental Health team do on a day-to-day basis. But... it does no harm to remind you of the quantity and quality of good work going on behind the scenes in dealing with troublesome neighbours, protecting air and water quality, advising on the environmental impact of planning and licensing applications and helping local businesses to maintain good standards of hygiene, health and safety. Our wellbeing is influenced not only by our behaviours but also by the general appearance of the district and the quality of the air we breathe, the cleanliness of the water we drink, the cleanliness of the sea in which we might swim, the food we eat, and our right to enjoy our homes without the stress caused by the unreasonable intrusion of noisy, inconsiderate or antisocial neighbours.

A clean and safe environment also attracts business investment. Our Environmental Health team makes sure that local businesses produce safe food and protect the safety and welfare of both their customers and their staff. They also work to ensure that the balance of the potentially conflicting needs of residents and businesses is retained whenever there are new developments in an area. We strive to produce an environment in which businesses can operate on a level playing field without fear of being undercut.

Every day our officers work tirelessly behind the scenes to monitor and control a wide range of environmental health and safety safeguards to protect all of those things that nowadays most of us simply take for granted.

2014 has also seen some new areas of activity around our health and wellbeing agenda which does remind us of our local authority roots and shifts our focus firmly back to the people who live and die here and alerts us to the real health inequalities that still exist even in beautiful East Devon. For this reason, in this year's update I have included a feature on this area of work.

2.1. Public Health

Towards the end of 2014 using separate government funding streams we were able to recruit a new Public Health Project Officer. Helen Wharam has been appointed on a 2-year fixed term contract and has been tasked specifically with implementing evidence-based projects which meet the actions identified via the "East Devon Public Health Plan 2014-2017". Her role is about *"Making a positive difference to the health and wellbeing of residents and communities"*

The key themes of this work are going to be about:

1. Realising our health potential
2. Developing connected communities and
3. Positively influencing our health

We have already put together a "Priority Actions Implementation Plan" and as a Council we have six specific areas on which we want to focus our efforts:

1. The existing targeted family support work
2. Work to prevent cardiovascular disease in priority communities
3. Finding ways to encourage people to raise their levels of physical activity at every stage of their lives
4. Falls prevention
5. Improving emotional health and wellbeing in our communities and

6. Taking action to address poverty and provide real support for those experiencing hardship.

In the first eight weeks in post, the Helen has concentrated on developing her partnerships and networks and she now enjoys a good relationship with the Public Health team at Devon County Council, the Devon Health Promotion team at Cullompton, Kennaway Centre, THAG, LED, Budleigh Salterton Hub, Plough & Share credit union and last but by no means least, the Reverend Mark Gilborson in Cranbrook

Specifically, real “visible” work delivered on the ground so far includes

1. New signs promoting smoke-free playgrounds with the message “Please don’t smoke where we play” have already been installed in some of our Children’s play parks across East Devon including Littleham, and there has been associated positive media coverage
2. New work on raising the awareness of availability of Cosy Devon grants to insulate homes, helping to improve energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty via the internet.
3. Working with the manager of Plough & Share to extend credit union coverage in East Devon: to raise awareness among staff, help seek volunteers at service points, and primarily to help establish a new service point in Cranbrook
4. Supporting Alcohol Concern’s “Dry January” campaign to reduce alcohol-intake; promoting the scheme to staff in EDDC and encouraging LED leisure centres and Axminster Power Tools to support the campaign as well

In October 2014 Public Health England published a national set of public health priorities. Going forward onto 2015 we will review East Devon’s own public health priorities and where it is sensible to do so, we will align them with these national priorities.

East Devon is fortunate in many ways and our population does on the whole enjoy good health. However when we begin to look more closely, real data shows us for instance that if you live in certain parts of Littleham and Honiton you will on average die up to 5.2 years younger (for men) (2.8 years for women) than if you had lived in a one of our less deprived Ward. These early deaths are on the whole life-style related and this shocking statistic reminds us that there is still a lot to do in tackling obesity (particularly among children), reducing smoking and stopping children starting, reducing harmful drinking and alcohol-related hospital admissions.

So far our plans for 2015 include working with partners to:

1. Promote credit union activities to staff and residents and opening a service point in Cranbrook
2. Encourage an improved diet across East Devon. Helping to deliver cookery classes and / or to encourage fast-food outlets to offer healthy options, in selected areas of deprivation. This involves liaising with food banks.
3. Tackle loneliness by raising awareness of the national Silver Line phone line for older people
4. Identify and scope the potential to increase physical activity in key areas; this could include walking schemes, a park run in Exmouth, fitness classes for older people (working closely with LED and the EDDC Countryside team)

In the longer term we hope to promote wellbeing to EDDC's workforce, improving access to dementia-friendly services, raising levels of health information literacy, and working with planners to inform polices for new developments across East Devon.

2.2. The Work of The Commercial Premises Team

As the name implies, the work of the Environmental Health Commercial Premises team focuses on businesses that operate within the district. What follows is a snapshot of some facts, figures and highlights that we thought you might find interesting. The data relates to the period 1 January to 30 November 2014.

Work area	Number of cases
Routine food hygiene inspections	536
Inspections of new food businesses	185
Revisits following inspections	179
Infectious disease notifications	252
Accident notifications	110
Service requests	765
Food Samples taken	237 (39 unsatisfactory)

Following an inspection each business receives a “star rating” and this year the breakdown has been as follows:

FHRS score	Number of premises
5	601
4	356
3	149
2	21
1	26
0	2

In January the Team did a major health and safety project on Heathpark Industrial Estate, working in partnership with Exeter City Council and the HSE. We visited 101 premises to offer them health and safety advice and a focused health and safety audit visit. 20 businesses took up this offer, and 9 businesses sent some 26 staff on the free training courses we provided.

In May the Team satisfied the Food Standards Agency audit team that work had been completed on the Action Plan developed following their initial audit in 2009. The team have put renewed emphasis on careful file and computer record keeping, and improved review and checking procedures and practices to ensure we maintain the standards required.

In December we put on a set of training events to inform our caterers of the impending allergy information requirements that can in to force. 142 businesses sent a total of 232 staff.

Following deregulation it is no longer appropriate to routinely visit business premises in order to carry out health and safety inspections. Instead we now write to all newly registered business premises (where the business activity is one for which the Council would be the health and safety enforcing authority). In our letter we welcome the new business, we introduce ourselves and we offer advice and information on how they can meet their responsibilities under health and safety legislation. Over the past six months we have written to 261 businesses.

We are looking to improve the service we provide to members of the public that are planning some form of event in East Devon. We have a duty to advise on health and safety matters at events, and we are currently working on proposals for an East Devon Safety Advisory Group that would pull together all the agencies involved in advising and regulating events to provide a single point of contact for event organisers. This would simplify the application process for all agencies that need to comment on the applications, and enable the applicant to meet and discuss the event at one time rather than have to arrange a number of meetings, some of which could replicate issues.

2.3. The work of the Environmental Protection Team

The team's work is grounded in a range of statutory duties and powers that it fulfils and implements on behalf of the Council under delegated authorities. Team members also provide advice and deliver a range of services to residents, businesses and visitors that link back to our Council priorities and underpin our general purpose of protecting and improving the environment and people's health and wellbeing. The statutory role is broad and includes the investigation and control of nuisances, investigating untreated pest infestations, dealing with ASB, air quality management, environmental permitting, licensing, contaminated land, bathing water quality improvement, enforcement of dog control orders and the collection of found dogs. The key advisory roles are associated with providing expert opinions in respect of planning applications, supporting our housing management roles in dealing with tenants who are allegedly causing nuisance or behaving in an antisocial manner and working in partnership with the Police, the Environment Agency, South West Water and others to find innovative solutions to people's problems. Other day to day work includes the provision of information to the public, maintenance and development of our on-line presence, the provision of an in-house pest control service along with a range of educational and promotional activities closely linked to our purpose. We are finding the latter is a particularly important tool now with respect to virtually all matters concerning dogs. This team is managed by an experienced Principal EHO currently supported by two more EHOs, three technical officers, a dog warden and a pest control technician.

In October 2014 new legislation in the form of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 has further strengthened the Council's statutory toolkit and has provided the opportunity to intervene and hopefully solve a range of long standing neighbourhood issues that have previously been out of scope. Whilst this is welcome, there is now a new group of customers who will be entitled to ask for our help with the legitimate expectation that we will be able to deliver good outcomes and satisfactory resolutions. This requires a level of planning followed by a reallocation of resources to ensure that cases are given sufficient priority to deliver these outcomes and resolutions. The team is already the Council's lead on key aspects of the new legislation.

Over the coming year we can see there is a demand for an enhanced visible presence throughout the District to inform and educate the public in respect of dog fouling, dog bans, dogs on beaches and responsible dog ownership. The new antisocial behaviour legislation offers opportunities to strengthen this role, and also requires a review of the Dog Control Orders within the next 3 years. The team has concluded that it is not possible for just one or two officers to provide the necessary visible presence on their own. However there are many other Officers of the Council who regularly and routinely carry out duties in the public domain and we will explore the opportunities that might be available to work more flexibly and efficiently.

Finally, it can be interesting to look at some statistics. During 2014 so far (1 January to 30 November) the team has dealt with:

Work area:	Number of cases
Noisy neighbour investigations	767
Complaints about other people's pest infestations	261
Requests to treat pest infestations*	291*
Planning and Licensing consultations	574
Complaints about smoke pollution	155
Contaminated land enquiries	97
Other service requests	892
Total jobs	3037

*new service commenced mid June 2014

2.4. Crime and Disorder

Our Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator works to levels of crime and anti social behaviour. His work covers a range of initiatives, interventions as well as specific cases and includes safety campaigns in schools aimed at reducing the risk of antisocial behaviour and taking part in initiatives such as county Domestic Abuse Awareness week which starts on Monday 25th November. This year he will be writing to all the major employers in East Devon providing promotional material and offering help and support for people who are suffering from some sort of domestic abuse.

2.5. Licensing

The Environmental Health teams work closely with our licensing officers and they provide the professional front line inspections and investigations that ensure that appropriate safety and welfare standards are maintained in licensed zoos, pet shops, animal boarding and breeding establishments and a range of other licensed premises.

2.6. Car Parks

You all know that our car parks portfolio is one of our important sources of revenue and as such they are assets that we are obliged to manage well and to maximise the amount of revenue they earn. However we are also acutely aware that there is a relationship between the availability and price of car parking and the viability and success of our town centre businesses. A compromise in the way we manage these assets was therefore always going to be inevitable.

We work closely with Chambers of Commerce and other groups and we now recognise that this is never going to be a one size fits all business. The availability and affordability of car parking are important factors in the health and vitality of our town centre economies. We

have had some success with pricing initiatives and incentives including our highly successful Christmas Campaign for which we have already received considerable praise from Chamber Members. Over the next year we will continue to explore new opportunities to use our car park assets to generate revenue but to do so in such a way as to not harm local communities nor to damage the vitality of our high streets.

3. STREETSCENE (Excluding Recycling & Waste Management)

East Devon is an Outstanding Place to Live, Work and Enjoy. The work of our Streetscene teams directly contributes to these Council Priorities. Our Streetscene teams keep our district clean and tidy and looking beautiful. They protect our environment, service the amenities which our residents and visitors enjoy such as our beautiful beaches, our public toilets and our town centres. They collect waste and recycling from over 64,800 properties. All of this work ensures East Devon continues to be an Outstanding Place.

3.1. Service purpose

The service purpose of our Streetscene teams is to clean & maintain the environment and provide advice about the environment. Our Waste & Recycling Teams service priority is to help householders manage their waste and increase recycling, and following collections, leave the environment clean.

3.2 The strategy

As with the other parts of the Environment Portfolio our role is to make sure that the environment is being protected, keeping it clean and in a good state of repair, somewhere that people want to live and that attracts and keeps visitors, which in turn supports our economic aspirations by making the Environment somewhere that attracts businesses or supports businesses by encouraging visitors. Improving the Environment where possible and making sure that its value to the economy is properly recognised. It is extremely important in this respect that we make proper provision for a modern depot facility in Sidmouth now that we are no longer relocating our depot to Honiton.

3.3 Improving the services

Last year we reported systems thinking changes which resulted in £120k p.a. of savings through better optimisation of the workforce and multiskilling. We continue to build on this work and have almost completed the roll out of smartphones throughout our teams. This allows more efficient routing of work requests and better monitoring of our staff.

3.4 Headlines:

This year has been dominated by the winter storms and floods which impacted all of East Devon's coastal areas. Streetscene were involved in the emergency response and recovery work for the storms, putting in huge efforts to keep people safe (during the storms in Exmouth our sandbagging of at risk properties ahead of one of the high tides prevented them from flooding). In the aftermath of the storms we began the big clear up effort, removing tons of shingle from seafront roads and promenade areas and returning things to normal.

The flood recovery and repair work has continued through the year with notable repairs at Exmouth and Sidmouth. Exmouth has had repair work carried out to the Victoria wall and the sea wall at Orcombe Point. Sidmouth has had repair work to the sea wall at Jacobs Ladder and the footpath at Port Royal and currently recycling is happening to move shingle from the western end of the beach to the middle and eastern ends. This will bring the shingle levels to where they were in October 2013. Work is also being carried out in partnership with the EA at Axmouth Harbour to construct a barrier on the footpath and possibly one in front of the Yacht Club to improve protection for properties to the West.

3.5 Statutory Service Areas

Street Cleansing (Budget £1,332,170)

We have a statutory duty to clean relevant land and highways to keep clear of litter & refuse, so far as is practicable, to standards set out in a Code of Practice. We clean public areas, providing a pleasant place to live, helping to support our businesses and attract visitors.

This year we have had 472 requests for street cleansing, taking an average of 4 days to resolve (with a UCL of 13 days - usually when a sweeper or large scale clearance of rubbish was required). This compares to 1045 cases last year, being cleared on average in 3.5 days with a UCL of 14 days).

We use the numbers of requests for service as a measure of effectiveness. The lower the number, the better the service is performing as the level of cleanliness we are providing is meeting the customers needs. We feel that just under 500 requests in a year is very good for an area with almost 65,000 households. Whilst the recent Viewpoint survey did show high levels of satisfaction with public areas, there was an increase in percentage of people (from 11% to 23%) feeling litter was a big problem. We continue to review the way we work and will address any specific problem areas we are aware of, however we do have a limited budget and do the best we can with it. This year has seen pressures from large scale events and storms/flooding which all stretch our service. Overall we have continued to provide a high level of service, keeping our public spaces clean and attractive, helping with flood recovery and clearing up in preparation for and after major events such as the Tour of Britain, Ottery Tar Barrels and Exmouth Christmas Cracker, keeping the streets clean so most people are unaware of the level of mess these events create.

Waste & Recycling (Budget £4,080,620)

Covered in the separate October brief because of the size of this service area. The re-tendering of our recycling and waste contract and investigations into Integrated Devon waste services are taking a lot of the teams focus at the moment. As you know this is an important area to get right as it accounts for 26% of the Council's revenue spend each year.

Amenity Facilities Axmouth Harbour (Budget £79,090) – This year we will be carrying out an investigation into scour from the River on the harbour wall. This may lead to future capital works to protect/repair the wall.

We also saw the size of the protective shingle spit in front of the harbour reduced during the February storms. We have had meetings with the EA to check that the standard of protection of the spit is still enough to ensure we don't get flooding problems at this end of Seaton. As a result we plan to install some local level protection near the road gate into the yacht club to help prevent tidal surges travelling down the road. We will also be looking at all of Seaton's beach processes and protection issues through the Seaton Beach Management plan. This project has been added to the EA's funding plan for the coming years.

Cemeteries (Budget £161,540)

We provide and maintain 3 active cemeteries and have a statutory duty to maintain a further 14 closed churchyards. This includes maintenance of footpaths, grass, trees, shrubs and listed boundary walls as well as periodic memorial stability checks. East Devon staff are best placed to provide this service as we are already in all areas to carry out other regular maintenance.

Coast Protection (Budget £253,640)

Apart from the annual Cliff inspections and scalling work at Budleigh, Sidmouth, Beer and Seaton we have added extra sites at Exmouth Plantation Walk and Madeira Walk. We have carried out netting to the cliffs at Riverside House and Alma Bridge Footpath in Sidmouth and we have had to take down a section of wall above the coastal footpath at Connaught Gardens as it was cracking and dangerous.

An area that we will overspend this financial year due to all of the protection works we have had to undertake as a result of the storms such as Alma Bridge footpath rock netting, concrete slabs at Jacobs Ladder and temporary steps at Exmouth Harbour View Café and Foxholes, Sidmouth Alma Bridge and Seaton West Walk. £ 40k of the money spent to repair the storm damage has come from the EA, but sand and shingle clearance has all had to be funded by EDDC.

Exmouth sea wall repairs

We have carried out repair work on a number of sections of Exmouth Sea Wall. Victoria wall had damage to the coping, the Old Lifeboat Station wall has had the foundations rebuilt, and extensive patching work has been carried out from the New Lifeboat Station eastwards to Orcombe Point.

Exmouth beach recharge project

Earlier this year we worked with the EA on a project looking at what beach recharge works may be required at Exmouth. We piggybacked the EA's Dawlish project in order to save the Council money doing the science. It was hoped that if work were required we would also be able to save money dredging the sand using the equipment Dawlish would be using.

The result of the science was that although the sand level has fluctuated along the seafront at Exmouth and dropped in some places, the loss wasn't bad enough to trigger funding for a sand recycling or recharge project until the 2020's. At this point the sand loss would threaten the toe of the seawall and we would be able to get funding to manage the beach level. It was agreed that up until 2020 we will keep a close eye on the beach and review the timescale if the rate of sand loss increases.

Sidmouth Beach Management Plan

Currently the baselines are being delivered to EDDC and the Steering Group members by Halcrow for discussion at the next Steering Group meeting at the end of February 2015. This will lead on to the options for the beach and the public consultation and exhibitions with the final document being produced in September 2015. We have suffered delays in this project due to the need to track down information relating to the design standard for Sidmouth's 1995 scheme. This standard of protection amongst other information was essential to allow us to understand what is happening in the system. We are now on track to meet with the Steering Group in February to review the baselines of the project. This will allow recommendations of options to be created. We are hoping to review these in July. After this our next steps would be to submit options to the EA to try and gain funding.

Sidmouth shingle recycling

Separately from the BMP project government funding has been made available to restore the standard of protection of Sidmouth beach to pre Feb 2014 levels. We have been working hard to try and access this funding and have been successful in gaining approval to recycle shingle from areas of accretion to the west of the main seafront to the town beach. These works are due to start in the first week of January.

Flood Prevention (Budget £152,390)

The headline scheme in terms of flood prevention is Feniton. We have now submitted the planning application for this £1.6mil scheme. Once this is granted in the New Year we can move forwards with planning the timetable for delivering the works, which will start with the continued negotiation with land owners.

We have continued to maintain and monitor our 14 Council owned flood alleviation schemes to protect homes.

Public Protection (Budget £61,900)

The civil contingency planning we do with our partner agencies came into it's own this Winter as we had to deal with multi agency emergencies related to the February storms and flooding. The multi agency teleconferences helped us coordinate our response efforts.

Street Nameplates (Budget £12,630)

We have a statutory duty to sign roads in the district and provide street nameplates.

Water Safety (Budget £99,860) – Our beach safety officer is currently working with Exeter and Teignbridge to look at ways of tackling anti social behaviour at sea, particularly speeding jet skis. This work has to be lead by Exeter as they are the Harbour Management Authority. We hope to progress work with them leading to a joint patrol boat.

3.6 Discretionary Service Areas

All discretionary service areas have some elements of statutory spend, mainly relating to landlord liability, health and safety - ensuring our assets are safe.

Parks & Pleasure Grounds (Budget £918,240)

We have only had 136 requests to cut overdue grass this year which is a low number given the size of the district (one of the measures we use to track service efficiency, compared to 2012-13 – 76 cases). This is slightly up on last year, but good considering our grounds teams were heavily involved in the storm clear ups and their works suffered as a result. We got back on track through the hard work of our team members and because they really care about what they do.

This is a mainly discretionary service, but East Devon's outstanding Green Flag Award Winning Parks and other open spaces attract a lot of visitors each year. We have retained our green flags at Connaught Gardens and Manor Gardens for the 10th year in a row!

Our parks and gardens help fulfil the government aims to encourage a healthy life and helps make our District and Outstanding place to live. The service maintains over 700 grounds sites, seven main parks, seven playing fields, five recreational grounds totalling over 1.5 million sq m of grass and 100,000 sq m of hedges, trees, shrubs and floral displays. Streetscene carry out a large amount of grounds maintenance on behalf of Housing – including Individual Garden Maintenance for tenants that are unable to cope with their own gardens. We also work in partnership with Town & Parish Councils, charities and schools to provide a cost effective service, whilst visiting all towns/villages carrying out our regular maintenance.

Our Parks, Gardens and green spaces strongly help us meet 3 out of our 4 Council Priorities; Living, Working and Enjoying this Outstanding Place.

Volunteer groups support the work of our grounds staff in some parks. They are a useful and worthwhile supplement, but can't replicate the work output of our own teams. Volunteer support is transient and it takes a lot of officer time to coordinate. Where flower beds and features have been transferred to volunteer groups we often see these features going for long periods with no maintenance and complaints being received about the standard of work. East Devon staff have the skills required to care for our green spaces and to maintain the high standards our residents and visitors have come to expect.

Beaches & Foreshores (Budget £217,820)

We already have quite a small budget for the management of our 5 beaches considering they are such an important asset, meeting key Council Priorities, and being enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors alike.

We have a statutory duty to maintain safe navigation markers and inspect water taxi licensing, but all other beach management duties such as sand management, beach levelling and beach huts are discretionary.

This year we have almost full capacity on Exmouth Beach Huts – for the first time in over 7 years! We tried to increase our income by extending the season for Budleigh huts & sites but after advice had to withdraw our planning application. We are currently looking at different ways of increasing our income as per Beaches TAFF.

Bus Shelters (Budget £23,350)

This budget was reduced in the 2010 cuts. We now just make sure the shelters are safe, repair them if we can using staff resource and remove them if they become dangerous. We are trying to get Fernbank (bus shelter advertising company) to take on our bus shelters (has happened in Honiton), however Fernbank are reluctant due to low potential advertising income.

Security Lighting (Budget £66,790)

We light 12 sites, which are generally our public gardens to aid community safety and allow people to enjoy our gardens in the winter. There is no obligation to do this, but dark park spaces may encourage anti-social behaviour and limit their use in the winter.

Play Equipment (Budget £819,270)

We maintain and improve over 58 play sites (not including housing sites), 4 skate parks, several MUGAs and 8 outdoor gyms. These sites are important for the wellbeing and health of our population, especially the younger ones. There is no statutory duty to provide play, but it does contribute to East Devon being an Outstanding place to Live and Enjoy.

This year we invested £90K to renew equipment in Allhallows skate park, Honiton. We consulted the local users to ensure the design met their needs and expectations. The new concrete park has been well received and has attracted sponsored riders and skateboarders from far and wide.

S106 Contributions provide new play and sport facilities across the district. These can be entirely new areas like the outdoor gyms at Stowford, Sidmouth and The Green, Budleigh, or enhancing existing areas with new facilities such as a £40K MUGA provided next to The Crescent play area at Littleham.

EDDC has been working with Town and Parish Councils and the public to identify a priority list of desired facilities for every town. EDDC organise and provide the facility when there is enough S106 for the highest priority to take place. This has been achieved at Phear skate park, Exmouth, where the highest priority/desired facility was an increase in the size of the park. The area has now been doubled in size and filled with new equipment. It is extremely well used and an attraction to all skaters across the district and beyond.

Public Conveniences (Budget £795,350)

We provide 47 public conveniences which are an important amenity for all, but especially so in tourist areas. There is no requirement to provide public toilets and some have already been closed as a result of our 2005 toilet review.

In 2014 we closed the oversized and outdated toilets at the old lifeboat station and replaced them with a new smaller block. There was much public concern that these would not be sufficient to meet peak customer demand, however, in our busiest summer for some years they coped very well.

Sports Grounds (Budget £204,650)

As with play, our sports grounds are very important for the health and wellbeing of our residents and contribute to the Council priorities of Living in and Enjoying an Outstanding Place.

The budget pays for the upkeep of 4 main sports grounds, 4 sports pavilions and 3 bowling greens, 3 putting greens, 10 tennis courts and a pitch and putt golf course. The budget is quite high as facilities such as bowling greens and grass tennis courts require a high level of maintenance. Due to the terms of the LED service level agreement, not all costs of maintenance are covered, which leaves EDDC subsidising this amenity.

Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date of Meeting: 22 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Review date for release None



Agenda item: **10**

Subject: **Task and Finish Forum improvements**

Purpose of report: This report endeavours to offer an improved approach to the setting up and scoping of Task and Finish Forums by the committee.

Recommendation:

- 1. Adopt an approach of scoping for Forums being undertaken by the committee;**
- 2. Set membership at a level of 7 to 9 voting members for each Forum**

Reason for recommendation:

1. Scoping at an early stage provides clarity for all involved in the work required and will help inform members before they agree to take part in the Forum. The Forum can then begin work immediately from their first meeting.
2. Ensuring a larger group for a Forum enables it to continue to meet effectively even if one or two members are unable to make every meeting. All members continue to be welcome to attend meetings and can contribute to the debate.

Officer: Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

Financial implications: There are no financial implications.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications requiring comment, however it is necessary for any TaFF Member to understand the scope of the TaFF on which he/she sits and not to use it as a forum to hijack the specific scope that has been set. Legal officers may need to advise TaFF Chairman on this point.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk

The committee need to establish if the setting up of Forums that result in members being able to pursue personal agendas are in fact damaging the reputation of the council and undermining the credibility of the scrutiny function.

Links to background information: None.

Link to Council Plan: Working in this outstanding place; Living in this outstanding place.

Report in full

1. Task and Finish Forums completed May 2011 – present

1.1 The committee have set up and run the following task and finish forums:

- Vitality of High Streets and Town Centres (2012)
- Arts and Culture (2012)
- Broadband (in conjunction with South Somerset District Council) (2014)
- Communications and Reputation Manager Post (2012)
- Community Infrastructure Levy (2012/2013)
- Exmouth beach management (2014)
- Fees and Charges (2013/2014)
- Leisure East Devon (2011)
- Ward Member satisfaction with Planning (2011)

1.2 The Forums have ranged in length, from as little as one meeting to running over a number of months, but have been largely successful in producing practical recommendations, most of which being agreed at either Cabinet or Council. The work of the forums in undertaking a specific task, carefully scoping the work and giving, in some cases, real results, has been commended by Members.

2. Task and Finish Forums outstanding

2.1 The following Forums are still due to complete:

- Budget Scrutiny (2013 onwards with a rolling programme and therefore will not technically complete unless the committee changes its budget scrutiny approach)
- Business (started December 2012)
- Value and protection of Trees (first meeting December 2014)

A separate report on both the Business TaFF and the Tree TaFF are contained in the agenda for consideration on 22 January 2015.

3 Membership approach to Forums

3.1 Membership is generally drawn from the committee itself, but can also be drawn from the Council as a whole. This can be a useful approach in utilising the appropriate skills set from the wealth of experience available for the task in hand. The Chairman of this committee has the right to choose which councillor leads the Forum, subject, of course, to his or her agreement.

3.2 The difficulty for officers in supporting any Forum, is that the task originally set is overshadowed when campaigning for another issue takes over, such as evidenced recently with desire to examine housing allocation and employment land allocation. The role of agreeing and approving the Local Plan is constitutionally placed with the Development Management Committee and full Council; it is not within the constitution for any Forum set up by this committee to revisit any content of the emerging Local Plan. The committee does, under the constitution, act as a “consultee” at the point when the draft local plan is being consulted on, which has already taken place

3.3 The committee need to be satisfied that the membership of any Forum is appropriate to undertake the work required. Membership can be drawn from the wider membership of all councillors in order to draw on any specific skills sets that the committee feel would be appropriate. Previously some Forums have suffered from minimal attendance due conflicting commitments, so a recommendation is set out in this report to work on the basis of 7 to 9 voting members of the Forum to enable the Forum to continue to operate effectively even if one or two

members miss some of the meetings. The Chairman of the committee has the right to appoint a particular member as chairman of a Forum, subject of course to their agreement.

4 Scoping approach

4.1 Scoping has been used for some time for the work of the committee and any Forum the committee appoints. This is key in defining:

- What the task is
- What evidence or good practice can be considered
- What experts would assist
- What isn't included (in order to keep the task on track and keep within the constitution)
- What resources are required
- What outcome is desired

4.2 Clear scoping results in a structured Forum that delivers valid recommendations, based on evidence, back to the committee for further debate and recommendation to Cabinet.

4.3 I recommend that a different approach is taken for existing and future Task and Finish Forums in that the draft scope is debated by the full Committee before coming before the Forum to undertake. This may assist in helping to clarify what Members wish to achieve in terms of specific issues to review, what the limitations are, and what outcome is desired so that the Forum may make an immediate start on the work required. Undertaking the scoping exercise at committee will also help members decide if they wish to volunteer to be on the Forum, because they will have a clear expectation of what will be expected of them by being aware of the agreed scope. Undertaking the scoping exercise at committee will also involve legal opinion as a legal officer is now always present at the committee.

Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date of Meeting: 22 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Review date for release None



Agenda item: 11

Subject: **Business Task and Finish Forum**

Purpose of report: This report looks specifically at difficulties in the continuation of Business Task and Finish Forum. It sets out the considerations for the committee to evaluate if the Business Task and Finish Forum should continue; and if so, what form this Forum should take in terms of scope and timeframe.

Recommendation:

- 1. Debate if the Forum should continue;**
- 2. If the committee agree that it should, review and agree a revised scope for the Business Task and Finish Forum with a view to completing the work by end March 2015**

Reason for recommendation: Improving communication between the Council and the business community is still desired and a revised scope for this TaFF will help deliver this, if the committee wish to see the Forum continue and complete its work.

Officer: Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

Financial implications: There are no financial implications.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications requiring comment.

Equalities impact: Medium Impact

It is important that there is a means for local businesses, regardless of scale, to communicate to the council their views, just as individuals are able to make representations.

Risk: Medium Risk

The committee need to weigh up if public concern about the continuation of the Business Task and Finish Forum, with current membership, is of such a high level that it may be damaging to the council's reputation to discontinue the Forum.

Links to background information: • Links to previous Forum meetings are provided in the body of the report.

Link to Council Plan: Working in this outstanding place; Living in this outstanding place.;

Report in full

1. Business Task and Finish Forum

1.1 Background information – timeline of the Forum to date

- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee 27 September 2012** agreed to set up Forum
- [Business Task and Finish Forum 11 December 2012](#) first meeting and agreed scope
- [Business Task and Finish Forum 12 March 2013](#)
- [Overview and Scrutiny Committee 28 March 2013](#) widened scope to include employment land
- [Business Task and Finish Forum 24 June 2013](#)

1.2 Business Task and Finish Forum Scope

1.2.1 Since the adoption of the scope of the Forum, a number of changes have taken place. The EDBF support provided in the form of administration and officer time was removed; the EDBF have since disbanded; and a number of other organisations and groups exist that are self sufficient.

1.2.2 Therefore the main topic of the scope, the EDBF and the specific areas identified to review, such as its objectives, if it is a lobby group, and if a conflict of interest existed in being a member of it, are now irrelevant.

1.2.3 The committee may feel that there are still questions unanswered relating to the EDBF. Members are reminded that the outcome of the police investigation found no evidence worth pursuing.

1.3 Engaging with businesses

1.3.1 The Forum has already agreed to consult with local businesses, but this was on the basis of how the businesses and Chambers of commerce found the EDBF of benefit, and if they did not attend the EDBF, the reasons why they did not attend. The survey has not been carried out, as the Forum had agreed to wait to survey businesses until the “East Devon Business Group”, had become established, to then ask what the reputation of the Council was amongst businesses in the district.

1.3.2 The [East Devon Business Support Group](#) (EDBSGroup) now operates on an annual subscription basis, which consists of five strands:

- The Association of East Devon Chambers of Commerce, which consists of the following existing chambers who pay this association a fee:
 - Axminster Chamber of Commerce and Industry
 - Blackdown Hills Business Association
 - Budleigh Salterton & District Chamber of Commerce
 - Budleigh in Business
 - Exmouth Chamber of Trade & Commerce
 - Honiton & District Chamber of Commerce
 - Ottery St Mary Chamber of Commerce
 - Seaton & District Chamber of Commerce
 - Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce
- Devon Branch of the National Farmers Union
- East Devon Branch of the Federation of Small Businesses

- Tourism support organisations including:
 - Heart of Devon ATP
 - Sidmouth & District Hospitality Association
 - Exeter & Heart of Devon Hotels and Restaurant Association
- The East Devon Business Leaders Group

1.3.3. The EDBSGroup, across the five strands, represents over 2,000 businesses, and provides a forum for networking and exchange of ideas, meeting as necessary (no less than four times a year) with an independent chairman who does not belong to any of the five strands set out above.

1.3.4 The committee may want to consider how the Forum proceeds:

- What form should consultation with businesses take?
- Is there a budget for undertaking wide-scale consultation?
- What information is required from businesses?
- Could Forum members adopt the approach of the Vitality of High Streets TaFF and visit individual businesses and business groups to establish what they need?

1.3.5 The Forum can then discuss their findings to reach a clear conclusion on:

- What businesses already belong to local groups, such as chambers of commerce;
- What use is made of the current facility provided by Business Information Point (BIP);
- What businesses expect as a service from the Council;
- What businesses want to see for the future for continued success and development.

1.3.6 The Forum could also debate the Services Workspace Demand and Delivery Appraisal that is currently being finalised.

1.3.7 The committee also need to be clear on the outcomes they want to achieve from this TaFF.

1.3.8 Taking this approach will provide a re-energised Forum with a clear purpose and clear outcomes, with a tangible benefit to the business community as a whole in making a positive step towards an improved relationship between the Council and local businesses.

1.4 Employment land planning issues

1.4.1 The Forum had already accepted legal advice that:

- It had no power to investigate planning applications (as set out in the constitution)
- Debate into individual site allocations in the Local Plan was detrimental to the process of producing the Local Plan because of the opportunities already provided in commenting on it, and the pending review by the Inspector.

1.4.2 As already set out in an earlier report in this agenda, the role of agreeing and approving the Local Plan is constitutionally placed with the Development Management Committee and full Council; it is not within the constitution for any Forum set up by this committee to revisit any content of the emerging Local Plan, including individual allocations of employment land.

1.4.3 I would recommend that the Forum leave aside any discussion on employment land and focus instead on the forthcoming Services Workspace Demand and Delivery Appraisal.

1.5 Revised scope

1.5.1 A revised draft scope, with input from both officers and the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, is set out below for consideration by the committee.

Broad topic area	To produce an in-depth report on the nature and methods of all business engagement within East Devon, the relationship between business and the Council, and how it might be improved both as regards effectiveness and transparency.
Specific areas to explore within topic area	<p>To consider</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lessons that should be learnt from the previously existing relationship between the former East Devon Business Forum and the Council. 2. The new structure (EDBSGroup) that East Devon businesses have set up to pursue matters of their mutual interest. 3. How best the services of BIP and other business services may be promoted to businesses and used to best advantage in the district. 4. How other councils engage with business 5. How best, either via this structure (EDBSGroup), or in other ways businesses in the district may best pursue their concerns with Council and how best the Council should keep local business informed of administrative and legislative changes that may affect their well-being. 6. What dangers there are and what advice might be given to ensure that potential conflicts of interest are avoided, the public perception of the relationship is satisfactory and reputation of both the Council and local businesses is maintained. 7. What resources (e.g. staffing, finance, IT) may be required from the Council to ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved.
Areas NOT covered by review	<p>Individual planning applications Planning policy East Devon Local Plan Individual contracts between the council and contractors or suppliers</p>
Desired outcomes of the review	<p>Improve communication between business and the Council and ensure that businesses have appropriate opportunities to put forward their concerns and their suggestions regarding the economic opportunities and problems in the District Recommendations on a positive and transparent way forward for EDDC to engage with business, that has the confidence of East Devon businesses and residents.</p>
Who should be consulted to obtain evidence (eg ward member, officers, stakeholders)	<p>Chambers of Commerce representatives Local Enterprise Partnership Educational Institutions Blackdown Hills Business Association Federation of Small Businesses Representative from East Devon Business Support Group Tourism representatives</p>

What evidence already exists (consultation, good practice examples)	Mid Devon Business Forum Other Business Forums nationally East Devon Business Support Group
What experts are needed to help with the review	Deputy Chief Executive and, Economic Development Manager (once appointed), Principal Solicitor
What other resources are needed	Democratic Services to service meetings
Undertaken by the committee or is a TAFF required	(Previously existing Business TaFF has comprised: Councillors Graham Troman, Mike Allen, Vivien Duval Steer, Claire Wright, Steve Gazzard, Peter Burrows, Maddy Chapman And Alan Dent)
Timescale including start date	February to Mid April
Who are the recommendations being reported to	Overview and Scrutiny Committee before going to Cabinet/Council.

Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date of Meeting: 22 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Review date for release None



Agenda item: 12

Subject: **Evaluation and protection of trees Task and Finish Forum**

Purpose of report: To report the minutes for the first meeting in December. This report also operates on the assumption that the committee have resolved to agree the scope for Forums at a committee meeting, therefore a revised draft scope is presented for consideration.

Recommendation:

- 1. Review and agree the draft scope for the Evaluation and protection of trees Task and Finish Forum in light of discussion that was unable to be completed at the forum's first meeting;**
- 2. Note the minutes of the Tree TaFF on 5 December 2014.**

Reason for recommendation: The scope for this Form could not be agreed in full at the first meeting of the Forum. It may benefit the progression of this Forum to have the scope agreed by the committee so that work may immediately start at the next meeting of the Forum.

Officer: Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

Financial implications: There are no financial implications.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications requiring comment.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: None.

Link to Council Plan: Working in this outstanding place; Living in this outstanding place.

Report in full

1. Tree TaFF meeting 5 December 2014

1.1 The notes from this Forum follow the draft scope.

1.2 The scope was not agreed in full at that first meeting. In light of this, and my earlier report on suggestions for improvement in setting up of forums, I have included a draft scope for consideration. It has been revised slightly to incorporate an opportunity to look at national policy, but has been opened up to look more at the demands on the aboricultural service and assess

Broad topic area:	Value and protection of trees
Specific areas to explore within topic area:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for assessment of tree when a TPO application is made • Explore the measures available to protect trees • Consider the local evidence and issues that threaten trees • Review national and local policies designed to protect trees • Practicalities and resource issues of tree assessment of trees currently not covered by a preservation order • Explore other approaches by local authorities • Consider enforcement data, enforcement resources and penalty for felling trees under a Tree Protection Order (TPO)
Areas NOT covered by the review:	<p>Specific review of applications to remove, or works to, tree protected by a preservation order (“TRE” applications) is not permitted under the constitution</p> <p>Local plan housing allocation. The emerging local plan part D3 Trees and Development Sites (6.231) can be considered by the Forum as part of the review of national and local policies designed to protect trees</p>
Desired outcomes of the review:	<p>Clear understanding of the demands on the aboricultural service and the resources available</p> <p>Establish the effectiveness of current local measures to protect trees and recommend any further improvements if felt necessary, to local policy, working practices and resources</p> <p>Understanding of national policy on the protection of trees and recommend, if felt necessary, modifications to national policy to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.</p>
Who should be consulted to obtain evidence (e.g. Ward Member, officers, stakeholders)	<p>Countryside service Aboricultural officer Planning officer Trees & Design Action Group Ward members for local evidence and issues</p>
What evidence already exists (consultation, good practice examples)	Epping Forest pilot on fees
What experts are needed to help with the review:	<p>Countryside service Arboricultural officer Planning officer Trees & Design Action Group</p>
What other resources are needed:	Democratic services

Undertaken by the Committee or is a TAFF required:	Task and Finish Forum as agreed at full Council on 23 October 2013. Comprising of Councillors: Tony Howard, Roger Giles, John Humphreys, David Key, Claire Wright, David Atkins, Mike Howe.
Timescale including start date:	Start date 5 December 2014; Complete by March 2015
Who are the recommendations being reported to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 March 2015; onto Cabinet on 15 April 2015 and Development Management Committee 21 April 2015

Notes of a Meeting of the Tree Task and Finish Forum held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 5 December 2014

Present:

Councillors:

Tony Howard (Chairman)

Roger Giles

Claire Wright

Iain Chubb, Portfolio Holder - Environment

Officers:

John Golding – Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment

Charlie Plowden – Service Lead – Countryside and Leisure

David Colman – Senior Arboricultural Officer

Stuart Baker – Arboricultural Officer

Diana Vernon – Democratic Services Manager

Amanda Coombes – Democratic Services Officer

Apologies:

David Key

Brenda Taylor

Non-attendance

John Humphreys

The meeting commenced at 9.35 am and ended at 10.15 am

1. Introduction and welcome

The Chairman of the Forum welcomed those present.

The appointment of Councillor Howard as Chairman of the Forum had been made (as established practice) by the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tim Wood. Councillor Howard's appointment was challenged and would be raised again at the next meeting of the Forum.

2. Public speaking

Val Jones attended the meeting to learn more about Tree Preservation Orders and how to protect trees under threat. She gave specific examples of specimen trees in Feniton on the boundary of development sites. She said that these trees were worthy of preservation but her efforts to get a TPO on the trees had so far been unsuccessful. She was assured that developers were required to take account of trees and conditions were imposed when planning permissions were granted. Ms Jones agreed to speak with the Council's Arboricultural Officers at the close of the meeting.

3. Declarations

Councillor Claire Wright declared a personal interest as Devon Tree Champion for the Woodland Trust.

4. Scoping of the Forum

The draft scope of the Forum was set out in the agenda for the meeting.

Comments raised during the subsequent debate:

- The scope should include opportunities for tree planting.
- Local data should be reviewed to determine threats to protected trees and how many trees were felled prior to a TPO being made.
- Why was the Local Plan not included within the scope? The Local Plan was specifically shown as an area not being covered by the review of the Forum. The Local Plan was not yet approved. The tree policy within the Local Plan was very good but the house allocation within the Plan would have an impact on trees. An addendum specific to trees could be added to the Plan.
- There was a real danger that including the Local Plan within the scope of the Forum would open up discussions too widely. The priority of the Forum was to look at the protection and value of trees.
- The Forum needed to make sure that the scope was not too restrictive.
- Enforcement action should be included.
- National and local tree policy should be covered within the scope.

It was clear that those present at the meeting would not reach agreement on a number of issues and the Chairman adjourned the meeting to consider how best to proceed.

5. Closure of meeting

Following the adjournment and failed further attempts to agree the scope of the Forum, the Chairman said that there were too many disagreements and challenges within the meeting to continue. He closed the meeting and said that this should be reconvened when the full complement of Forum members could be present. He suggested that at that meeting, members would be asked to appoint a new Chairman.

6. Date of next meeting

The suggested date for the next meeting was 26 January 2015.

Agenda Item 14**Overview and Scrutiny Committee****22 January 2015****Overview and Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan 2014/15**

Date of Committee	Report	Lead
26 Feb 2015	Economy Portfolio Holder update	Councillor Ian Thomas
	Playing pitches strategy (tbc)	Graeme Thompson
	Contracts relating to substantial grants	Henry Gordon Lennox
	Performance monitoring report quarter 3	
	National Parks proposal and Member Champion for Tourism update (tbc)	Councillor Sheila Kerridge/Debbie Meakin
26 Mar 2015	New homes bonus panel update	Cllr Ray Bloxham
	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	Debbie Meakin

Work for scoping and allocation to the Forward Plan:

Proposed date	Topic
Pending	Review of production process of Local Plan
When available	NHS England to discuss the provision of GP services
Pending	Honiton Town Council update on the Beehive Centre
pending	Business Task and Finish Forum
ongoing	Budget Task and Finish Forum reports
pending	Trees Task and Finish Forum