

## Agenda for Poverty Working Panel

### Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, 10.00 am

#### Members of Poverty Working Panel

Councillors: P Arnott, M Chapman, B Collins, M Goodman, D Haggerty, J Heath, D Ledger (Chair), M Martin, M Rixson and S Smith

**Venue:** Online via the Zoom app

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(or group number 01395 517546)

Friday, 8 November 2024

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 June 2024
- 3 Declarations of interest  
Guidance is available online to Councillors on making [declarations of interest](#)
- 4 Public speaking  
Information on [public speaking is available online](#)
- 5 Update on work being done to support EDDC's Anti-Poverty Strategy – presentation by Devon Communities Together
- 6 Update on Pension age Take-up Campaign – presentation by Citizens Advice East

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Chief Executive: Tracy Hendren

- 7 Update on Household Support Fund – presentation by the Benefits and Financial Resilience Manager
- 8 Progress on updating the Anti-Poverty Strategy and connected work – verbal update from the Assistant Director – Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services, Fraud & Compliance

Members of the public exercising their right to speak during Public Speaking will be recorded.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Poverty Working Panel held at Online via the Zoom app on 24 June 2024**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.00 am

#### **1 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 March 2024**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 March 2024 were noted as a true and accurate record.

#### **2 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

#### **3 Public speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

#### **4 Updated terms of reference for Poverty Working Panel**

The Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services, Fraud & Compliance introduced this report which set out proposed updated Terms of Reference, with a view to providing greater clarity and relevance on the role of the Poverty Working Panel moving forward.

**RECOMMENDED to Cabinet** to approve the updated Terms of Reference for the Poverty Working Panel.

#### **5 Template Poverty Working Panel Work Programme 2024-2025**

Members received the template work programme for the Poverty Working Panel for 2024-2025 and were encouraged to input into the programme, to shape the meetings of the Panel going forward.

#### **6 Timelines for updating the Poverty Strategy**

The Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services, Fraud & Compliance presented this briefing paper which detailed proposed timelines for updating the Poverty Strategy, noting that the current strategy ends on 1 July 2024.

It was intended to consult with the Poverty Working Panel and with the voluntary sector, to receive contributions to help shape the emerging new strategy.

Members discussed priorities for the strategy, and noted the report.

## 7 **Voluntary Sector Anti-Poverty Event**

The Chair outlined proposals to hold a Voluntary Sector Anti-Poverty Event in the autumn, to coincide with the first anniversary of the VCSE. This event would be an opportunity for networking between ourselves and community groups, listening and learning from our partners to help shape and inform our work, raising awareness of the work we are doing to help reduce poverty across the district including our updated Poverty Strategy. The day would include having key note speakers.

Members suggested to contact the Assistant Director on any feedback they had on what should be included as part of the event.

Members expressed unanimous support for the proposed event.

## 8 **Household Support Fund update**

The Benefits & Financial Resilience Manager presented this report which provided an update on deployment of Household Support Fund (HSF) 4, and detailed the HSF5 policy agreed by Cabinet on 5 June 2024. The report also set out future considerations, given that the future of the HSF beyond the end of September 2024 is unknown, and may not continue.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The financial resilience team continue to work with residents to support them to reduce their outgoings and increase incomes, particularly where there has been a repeat need for emergency help.
- The team also work collaboratively with a range of agencies and different voluntary groups to access the right support for residents.
- Voluntary groups can be invited to register their organisation with the Devon Connect online database, a community hub which aims to connect people to their community and promote social action.

Members noted the report.

## 9 **East Devon District Councils Public Health Strategy 2024-2027**

The Public Health Project Officer introduced this item, outlining how the new Public Health Strategy and some of its uppermost priorities link to the work of the Poverty Panel. These priorities include:

- Cost of living crisis
- Mental health
- Unpaid carers
- Loneliness and social isolation (also known as social health)
- Dementia
- Homelessness, housing and indoor environment factors.

Members were encouraged to use the Public Health Strategy as a tool to help to influence the decisions they take in other committee meetings, which will in turn align with the Council's anti-poverty strategies.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

P Arnott  
B Collins  
D Ledger (Chair)  
M Martin  
M Rixson  
S Smith

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
K Bloxham  
R Collins  
C Fitzgerald  
S Westerman

**Officers in attendance:**

Sharon Church, Benefits Manager  
Libby Jarrett, Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Access,  
Fraud & Compliance  
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer  
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer  
Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

M Goodman  
D Haggerty  
J Heath

Chair: .....

Date: .....