

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Communities Overview Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on Tuesday, 18 May 2004

Present:

Councillors:

Mrs P A Stott (Chairman)
R C Peachey (Vice-Chairman)

Miss V Ash	Mrs M L Hardy
P W Burrows	A S Pascoe
B H Clark	T G Reeves
D J Cox	Mrs L A Roden
Mrs C E Drew	Mrs B O Taylor

Also Present:

Councillors:

Miss J M Elson
A J Wilkinson

Dr A Round – East Devon Primary Care Trust

Apologies:

Councillors:

Mrs P Graham
H J Jeffery
D R A Key
Mrs A E Liverton
A T Moulding
P C Townsend
Mrs E E Wragg

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.25pm

*40 **Minutes**

The minutes of the special meeting of the Communities Overview Committee held on 24 March 2004 were confirmed and signed as a true record. The minutes of the joint meeting of the Communities, Economy and Environment Overview Committees held on 30 March 2004 were received and noted.

*41 **Housing Strategy Statement 2004-2007 – Consultation draft**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Housing and Social Inclusion and to the accompanying draft Housing Strategy Statement 2004-2007. The Statement outlined proposals for the Council's housing priorities and plans for the following three years based on research and information gathered on housing needs, stock condition and the local housing market. The conclusions of the Best Value Review of Housing Services, the Balanced Housing Markets Task and Finish Forum and the Service Planning Exercise were taken into account in producing the Strategy document. The comprehensive strategy covered all forms of housing available and included an action plan that would be a useful working document for the Council, Councillors, Partners and tenants. The targets set in the action plan were challenging but considered to be achievable. If accepted the Housing

***41 Housing Strategy Statement 2004-2007 – Consultation draft (Cont)**

Strategy would be put out for wider consultation with key partners and stakeholders and refined in the light of the comment received.

The overall aim of the strategy was to ensure that a good quality, affordable home was available to all households in the district and that each home was adequate in size and suitably located for the occupants.

Members wished to have their appreciation for the work involved in producing the Strategy recorded.

RECOMMENDED that the draft Housing Strategy be accepted for the purpose of wider consultation

***42 Choosing Health consultation**

The Corporate Director – Communities advised Members that the Department of Health had produced a consultation document called ‘Choosing Health’. The Department sought to consult users on how they felt health care and illness prevention could be improved. Members were asked to consider “what could be done to encourage you to adopt a healthier lifestyle”. During the following discussion Members put forward the following suggestions which included ideas on how to encourage the population in general to be healthier:

- Ban smoking in all public places
- Bring back cookery/home economics lessons in schools
- Encourage dog walking
- Provide stress relief classes possibly at Doctors’ surgeries
- Increase the accessibility of leisure facilities – both indoor and outdoor
- Provide more dentists
- Display warnings on food indicating the levels of fat, sugar and salt which they contain
- Look into the price differentials between ‘healthy’ and less ‘healthy’ foods
- Stronger sanctions on drinking eg in public places and through licensing hours
- Wider access to contraception for teenagers and the setting up of healthy living centres
- More sport to be played in schools
- Use the opportunity of motherhood to teach about healthy eating and the value of home cooking, possibly by making use of health visitors
- Recognise the emphasis society places on time and the cost of time

Dr A Round of the Primary Care Trust took note of the suggestions raised. Members were reminded of the benefits of exercise for stress relief and advised that 50% of men and 30% of women in East Devon were categorised as being overweight which was above the national average.

***43 Housing register and allocations**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Housing and Social Inclusion that explained the operation of the Council’s Housing Register and Allocation Scheme. The Housing Register is used to prioritise applications for Council owned and other forms of affordable housing. A points system is in operation and each application is awarded points based on various criteria to determine level of need. The differing levels of demand across the district and the types of rehousing options provided were noted. Households with 30 points or more were deemed to be in priority housing need. The Council wished to house everyone on the housing register but were unable to do so due to demand far outweighing supply. The possible provision of foyer accommodation and the movement of parents out of family size houses once their children had left home were considered. Future changes

*43 **Housing register and allocations** (Cont)

in the operation of the Housing Register would include the introduction of a new IT system and the Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

*44 **Proposed forward programme**

Members considered proposed forward programme for 2004/05 that outlined the matters to be discussed at each meeting.

RESOLVED that the forward programme be noted.

Chairman

Date.....