

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at Knowle, Sidmouth on Wednesday, 11 October 2006

Present:

Councillors:

Lt Col A J M Drake (Chairman)
G P Chamberlain (Vice-Chairman)

Miss V Ash	J A Knight
Mrs K J Bamsey	Mrs A E Liverton
Mrs M J Boote	G K Liverton
R W Boote	S C Luxton
Mrs R E Burrow	A T Moulding
P W Burrows	R Mudge
T A Cope	J B Nicholson
P A Diviani	Mrs H E Parr
Mrs C E Drew	R C Peachey
Miss J M Elson	Miss S M Randall Johnson
J E D Falby	A W J Reed
R G Franklin	T G Reeves
K W George	Mrs L A Roden
A R Giles	Mrs M A Rogers
J H Glanvill	P J Skinner
Mrs P A Graham	Mrs B O Taylor
J P Halse	P C Townsend
Mrs M L Hardy	A J Toye
S Hughes	B J Toye
D R H Hull	C H Wale
B O Ingham	A J Wilkinson
H J Jeffery	Mrs E E Wragg
D R A Key	

Apologies: Councillors:

D G Button	Mrs F I Newth
D J Cox	N J Spence
A E J Dinnis	Mrs P A Stott
C F A Gibbings	Dr H W Waterworth
M J L Green	S C Wragg
Ms S M Merritt	

The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 7.55 pm

***25 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12 July 2006 and of the Special Meeting held on 26 September 2006 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

***26 Customer Service Centre – up-date**

The Chairman reminded Members that following the close of the meeting there would be a presentation in the Committee Room up-dating Members on the Customer Service Centre.

***27 Presentation – Commonwealth Games medal winners**

The Chairman welcomed and introduced Imogen Cairns and Jo Pavey, medal winners at the Commonwealth Games, Melbourne, 2006. Councillor Moulding as past Portfolio Holder – Culture out-lined and praised their impressive achievements.

*27 **Presentation – Commonwealth Games medal winners (cont)..**

Imogen won the Gymnastics Women's Team all-round silver medal and a gold medal in the Women's Individual Gymnastics (Women's Vault). Jo won the Athletics – Women's 5000M silver medal. Jo had also recently come 4th in the Great Northern Run.

The Chairman presented Jo and Imogen with engraved glass and a certificate in recognition of their success.

In response, Jo spoke on behalf of herself and Imogen, thanking the Chairman and the Council. She said that they were honoured by the Council's recognition and grateful for the awards and the opportunity to meet everyone.

*28 **Presentation of Best Kept Village Competition awards**

The Chairman presented the Cups of the Best Kept Village Competition 2006.

The Baker Cup was presented to Sidbury as the village in East Devon which scored the highest number of points (after Upottery, winner of the Devon-wide Best Kept Village award and East Budleigh with Bicton, winner of the Devon-wide Past Winners award), in the Large Village category)

The Glanvill Cup was presented to Offwell as the village scoring the highest number of points in East Devon in the Small Village category.

Certificates were presented to the above winners and also to Upottery as winner of the Devon-wide Best Kept Village Award (Large Village category) and East Budleigh with Bicton as winner of the Devon-wide Past Winners award.

The Chairman congratulated the winning villages for their achievements and thanked them for taking part in the competition, acknowledging the hard work, dedication, and community effort involved.

The representatives of the winning villages thanked the Chairman and Council in response.

*30 **Questions**

Councillor S Hughes, Portfolio Holder - Communications, pursuant to Procedure Rules No. 8.2 and 8.5, advised that Officers would re-assess the positioning of the railings at the Chine, Seaton.

Pursuant to Procedure Rules No. 8.2 and 8.5, Councillor S Hughes advised that in future when Councillors were to be quoted in press releases, they would be given opportunity to comment on the wording to be used before it was published.

Councillor P Burrows, Chairman of Scrutiny, pursuant to Procedure Rules No. 8.2 and 8.5 advised that in future descriptions of Portfolio Holder decisions printed in the Knowledge would be expanded to avoid misunderstanding about what was actually being referred to. He also agreed that the charges for use of Council land by small community groups should be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee.

***31 Minutes of Executive Board and Committees**

RESOLVED (1) that the under-mentioned minutes be received and the recommendations approved

Executive Board	Minutes	23-73
Development Control	Minutes	7 -18
Planning Inspections	Minutes	4-11
Licensing & Enforcement	Minutes	5-6
Licensing and Enforcement Sub A & B	Minutes	1-4, 1-17
Audit and Accounts	Minutes	5-6

(2) that Executive Board recommendation at minute 70 – Disposal of Assets to Leisure East Devon under the General Disposal Consent (England 2003 – key decision – be approved, namely:

- that the valuations detailed in the report to the Board, and contained within the full report of the District Valuer and Valuation Officer dated 30 August 2006, be agreed, and the disposal of the assets to the Leisure Trust be at less than best consideration,
- that the assets contained within the schedule attached to the report be transferred to the Leisure Trust on the basis of 30 year leases, the terms of which have been agreed by the Chief Executive and the Portfolio Holder- Economy and Regeneration in accordance with Executive Board minute 120 (4) of 14 December 2005.

(3) that the under-mentioned minutes be received. Scrutiny Committee minute 19 in respect of the Service Planning Template would be considered by the Executive Board at its meeting on 18 October when the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee would be considered in detail.

The Executive Board (minutes 27, 44 and 61) had noted or accepted the Scrutiny and Corporate Overview Committees recommendations from their meetings of 6 July , 3 and 31 August 2006 (Corporate Overview) and of 26 July 8 (Scrutiny) with or without amendment. The Scrutiny Committee minutes of the meeting of 20 September 2006 and the Housing Review Board minutes of the meeting of 10 August had been referred direct to the Council.

Corporate Overview	Minutes	9-18
Scrutiny	Minutes	8-22
Housing Review Board	Minutes	9-19

Arising from consideration of the above minutes:-

a) Church House, Sidmouth: Request for grant aid (Executive Board min 34)

Councillor G K Liverton thanked the Council, on behalf of the supporters of Church House for its contribution towards the building's restoration. As a result of the Council's positive support and that of Sidmouth Town Council, the lottery bid had been successful. Councillor Liverton said that this was an excellent example of effective partnership working for the benefit of the community.

Arising from consideration of the above minutes (cont)..

Church House, Sidmouth: Request for grant aid (Executive Board min 34) (cont)..

(Councillor T A Cope declared a prejudicial interest in this item as a teacher at Sidmouth College and left the Chamber during the discussion. The Governors of Sidmouth College had actively campaigned for the restoration of the building)

b) Meetings of the Scrutiny and Corporate Overview Committees (Executive Board min 44 (2c))

Item 26 (3.2) Appendix A of the Scrutiny Committee minutes of 26 July 2006 referred to the principle of charging for pre-application planning advice. This was not yet implemented and Members discussed the inappropriateness of having a flat rate for such advice. An example of possible advice sought was in respect of wind turbines and solar panels. Properties within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas would need permission but those outside could use permitted development rights subject to conditions. It would be helpful to have this advice, organised by postcode, on the web site.

RESOLVED that charging for planning advice be further considered by the Scrutiny Committee at the same time as the charges for events on Council owned land are reviewed.

c) Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) key decision (Executive Board min 45)

It was confirmed that the Council had met the time scale for making a formal response to the draft Regional Spatial Strategy.

The Portfolio Holder – Communities raised concerns in respect of recommendation (7) in the minute – Housing Distribution and Housing Totals for East Devon. Provision of affordable housing was one of this Council's top priorities. The highest provision of affordable housing would be in Cranbrook but there was also a need for towns within the district to provide a range of affordable accommodation. The Chairman of the Corporate Overview Committee urged Members to attend the meetings of his Committee when affordable housing issues would be further debated. This would help towards developing effective policies to meet this priority.

The Leader stated that East Devon was not an area of significant social deprivation and could not attract funding for affordable housing. However, Cranbrook had provided an opportunity to achieve regional funding for affordable housing. This would be incorporated within the community to achieve a balanced housing mix. She also asked Members to encourage local parishes to be involved in the Local Development Framework process.

***32 Exeter to Waterloo Rail Service**

The following motion (in the names of Councillors Mrs M A Rogers, A R Giles, D R H Hull, Mrs B O Taylor and D G Button) was proposed by Councillor Mrs M A Rogers and seconded by Councillor A R Giles:

“This Council welcomes the decision by the Department for Transport (DFT) to award the South Western Rail Franchise to Stagecoach and to support an hourly train service from Exeter to Waterloo which will start when an extra passing loop between Axminster and Chard Junction has been constructed (it is understood that Network Rail will fund the loop, and that it should be constructed by the end of 2009).

The Council regrets that the DFT have decided not to support additional local services between Exeter and Axminster and urges the DFT to approve the other loop proposed south west of Axminster and, therefore, a half-hourly service from Exeter to Axminster.”

***32 Motion- Exeter to Waterloo Rail Service (cont)..**

A letter from Ian Harrison, Environment, Economy and Culture at Devon County Council to Roger Jones, Divisional Manager, Franchise Specification, Department for Transport was circulated at the meeting. The letter set out the County's views. Train services between Waterloo and Exeter were a fundamental component of public transport provision in the Exeter sub region with the economy being particularly buoyant to the east of the city adjacent to the Waterloo railway line. The letter stated that the County Council would wish to see the South Western Franchise contract awarded on the basis of including both the priced option for the hourly Waterloo to Exeter service and the priced option for an hourly local train service between Axminster and Exeter.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Mrs Rogers asked Members to unanimously support the need for a half hourly service from Exeter to Axminster for the economic and social benefit of the area. It was a vital second strategic rail route into the South West.

The need for a second loop between Broadclyst and Whimble would effectively reduce pollution, congestion and would overcome problems experienced as a result of the unreliability of the Paddington line. Flooding on that line meant that the Waterloo line was used for diversions. The improved rail network could also carry additional freight to relieve the road network and accommodate the requirements of the new intermodal freight facility at Cranbrook.

Councillor J E D Falby, the Council's representative on the Salisbury – Exeter Lineside Consortium of Authorities, felt that it was important to emphasis the local benefits of the improved service and to include reference to the new community within the motion. This proposal was seconded by the Leader. The amendment was put to the vote and the amended motion was unanimously supported.

RESOLVED

- (1) that this Council welcomes the decision by the Department for Transport (DFT) to award the South Western Rail Franchise to Stagecoach and to support an hourly train service from Exeter to Waterloo which will start when an extra passing loop between Axminster and Chard Junction has been constructed (it is understood that Network Rail will fund the loop, and that it should be constructed by the end of 2009),
- (2) that the Council regrets that the DFT have decided not to support additional local services between Exeter and Axminster and urges the DFT to approve the other loop proposed south west of Axminster and, also to serve the new community of Cranbrook, therefore, a half-hourly service from Exeter to Axminster,
- (3) that a press release be issued to set out the Council's position and support for improvements to the Exeter to Waterloo rail link which would facilitate a half-hourly service from Exeter to Axminster.

***33 Revised Committee appointments requested**

Audit and Accounts Committee

Members considered the requests for amendments to the existing Audit and Accounts Committee:

- RESOLVED**
- (1) that the Audit and Accounts Committee be renamed 'The Audit and Corporate Governance Committee' to better reflect the Committee's remit,
 - (2) that the existing membership of the Committee be amended in response to advice from the Audit Commission with the Leader and Deputy Leader being replaced and the vacant seats on the Committee being allocated to Councillors C F A Gibbings and S C Luxton,
 - (3) that Councillor A T Wilkinson be elected Chairman of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee,
 - (4) that J P Halse appointed Vice Chairman of the Committee,
 - (5) that the following changes to scheduled meetings be noted:

14 December 2006
15 March 2007
14 June 2007

(The scheduled meeting of 26 October 2006 would remain unchanged).

Licensing and Enforcement Committee - vacancy

This item was withdrawn.

***34 Outside Bodies – East Devon Citizens Advice Bureau**

- RESOLVED**
- (1) that the change of status of the Citizens Advice Bureau Management Committees to Management Boards with existing trustees becoming board members be noted,
 - (2) That Members be given legal advice about how changes from Management Committees to Management Boards would affect elected Members representing the Council on Outside Bodies in these and similar circumstances.

(Councillor Miss V Ash declared a personal interest in this item as a member of the East Devon Citizens Advice Bureau.)

Chairman Date.....