

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Economy Overview Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on Wednesday 15 September 2004

Present: Councillors:
S C Luxton (Chairman)
C H Wale (Vice Chairman)

P W Burrows	R Mudge
B H Clark	A S Pascoe
J E D Falby	A J Toye
J P Halse	B J Toye
G K Liverton	
Ms S M Merritt	

Also Present: Councillor:
P A Diviani

Apologies: Councillors:
K W George
D R A Key

The meeting started at 6.30pm and ended at 8.45pm

*16 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Economy Overview Committee held on 13 July 2004, were confirmed and signed as a true record.

*17 **Economic Development Issues Task & Finish Forum**

Consideration was given to the report of the meetings held on 29 July and 19 August 2004 of the Economic Development Issues Task & Finish Forum. Members noted and discussed the Forum's recommendations.

The Economic Development Manager reported that a conducted tour of the Council's industrial sites would be held on Monday 18 October and Wednesday 27 October, visiting different sites on both occasions.

- RESOLVED**
1. that the report be noted and the recommendations contained therein be accepted;
 2. that a letter with itinerary be sent to Members inviting them to attend the conducted tours of the Council's industrial sites in October.

Economic Development Issues Task & Finish Forum (Cont)

- RECOMMENDED**
1. that the agreed major regeneration scheme for Seaton Harbour Road be given top priority with the Imperial Road Car Park, Exmouth scheme being given second priority;
 2. that the private sector be encouraged to provide more premises for businesses starting up;
 3. that a survey be undertaken of East Devon businesses to discover what percentage know of the existence of the Heart of Devon Enterprise Agency and the services it offers.

*18 **Quarterly Monitoring of Performance – First Quarter 2004/05**

Members noted the report of the Policy Officer in respect of performance and proposed remedial action against key performance indicators for the second quarter of 2004 for services under the control of the Economy Overview Committee. Members had not received the relevant appendices to the report and therefore did not consider they had sufficient information in front of them to meaningfully discuss the report.

RESOLVED that consideration of the report be deferred due to insufficient detail provided and discussed with the half yearly report in November.

*19 **East Devon Tourism Service Update**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director – Economy on tourism development activities within and across the region. It also aimed to set out some recommended changes to activity in order to maintain the momentum of progress and its thorough evaluation in the light of Best Value and Service Prioritisation.

Members noted the importance of working in partnership with the private sector and that South West tourism aimed to encourage this and also to simplify the message to potential visitors by pushing the Devon brand as this had a strong global image. However, there was some concern expressed that the large number of bodies representing tourism were duplicating effort and resources.

The Economic Development Officer (Tourism) reported that 2.27% of visitors to East Devon attended the District's Tourism Information Centres(TIC's) and 0.33% of bookings were made through TIC's.

Whilst Members accepted that TIC's did excellent work and were good value for money, many were poorly positioned within the towns they served.

East Devon Tourism Service Update (Cont)

- RESOLVED**
1. that the report be noted;
 2. that the East Devon Tourism Group be requested to discuss the provision and siting of Tourism Information Centres within East Devon;
 3. that the Economic Development Officer (Tourism) circulate statistics on visits to TIC's to Members.
- RECOMMENDED**
1. that the re-negotiation of the TIC Service Level Agreements (as contained in paragraphs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 of the report) be supported, in order to obtain the agreed Best Value Performance Indicators;
 2. that the East Devon Tourism Group consider refocusing and expanding its activities in key tourism areas as outlined in paragraph 2.5.2 and 2.5.3 of the report.

*20 **Progress Report on Interpretation Proposals for the Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director - Economy which summarised progress on interpretation proposals for the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site, focussing particularly on the Interpretation Action Plan.

RESOLVED that the continuation of officer work on this project be endorsed.

*21 **Heart of Devon Enterprise Agency**

Members received a presentation by the Chairman of the Heart of Devon Enterprise Agency's (HoDEA) Board, Peter Walmsley and their new General Manager, Les Christiansen on the work of the Agency and their vision for the future.

Members noted the recent challenges faced by HoDEA due to substantial funding cuts and the subsequent reduction in its managerial and administrative staffing. However, no reductions had been made to the number of Advisors who met with its clients and performance targets as laid out within its Service Level Agreements were being met. The possibility of HoDEA raising further funding from both its clients and also other sources was discussed. Members asked that for regular up dates on HoDEA's progress at the Overview Committee meetings.

*21 **Heart of Devon Enterprise Agency**

RESOLVED that Peter Walmsley and Les Christiansen be thanked for their useful and informative report.

- RECOMMENDED**
1. that subject to budgetary constraints, the financial support offered to the Heart of Devon Enterprise Agency Ltd in 2005/06 be maintained at the same level as that given in 2004/05 (£40,000);
 2. that the release of Council funding for 2005/06 be subject to the successful negotiation of a revised Service Level Agreement (to reflect the priorities and actions of the emerging sub-regional and East Devon Economic Development Strategies) and the receipt of a convincing Business Plan.

Chairman Date.....