

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at Knowle, Sidmouth on Wednesday, 21 April 2004

Present:



Councillors:

Mrs A E Liverton (Chairman)
Mrs K J Bamsey (Vice-Chairman)

Miss V Ash	G K Liverton
Mrs M J Boote	S C Luxton
P W Burrows	Ms S M Merritt
D G Button	A T Moulding
G P Chamberlain	R Mudge
B H Clark	B Nicholson
T A Cope	Mrs H E Parr
D J Cox	A S Pascoe
A E J Dinnis	R C Peachey
P A Diviani	Miss S M Randall Johnson
Lt Col A J M Drake	A W J Reed
Mrs C E Drew	T G Reeves
Miss J M Elson	Mrs L A Roden
J E D Falby	Mrs M A Rogers
R G Franklin	N Rogers
K W George	N J Spence
A R Giles	Mrs P A Stott
J H Glanvill	Mrs B O Taylor
Mrs P A Graham	P C Townsend
M J L Green	A J Toye
Mrs M L Hardy	B J Toye
B C J Hughes	C H Wale
S Hughes	Dr H W Waterworth
D R H Hull	A J Wilkinson
B O Ingham	Mrs E E Wragg
H J Jeffery	S C Wragg

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and terminated at 7.40 pm.

*71 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25 February 2004 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

*72 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R H H Cross, J P Halse, D R A Key and P J Skinner. Councillors Miss S M Randall Johnson and N Rogers gave apologies for their anticipated late arrival and arrived during the meeting.

***73 Obituary: Late Mr W E Cogger**

The Chairman of the Council referred to the death in March of Bill Cogger, former Member of the Council. She paid tribute to the extent of his service as Member of the Council and the Council stood in silence as a mark of respect.

***74 London Marathon: Councillor T Cope**

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Cope on completing the London Marathon in good time on Sunday, 18 April. She advised that Councillor Cope had raised £1500 for his two chosen charities.

***75 Centre Stage Production: Exmouth Pavilion**

The Chairman reported that she had attended the current production of Centre Stage, Pirates of Penzance, at the Exmouth Pavilion the previous evening. Both the Chairman and Councillor G Liverton thought that this was an excellent production. She advised that tickets were still available and encouraged Members to enjoy an evening's entertainment and support the local youngsters.

***76 Member Planning Comment Form**

The Chairman of the Council reminded Councillors to use the printed planning forms when commenting on planning applications in their ward. Members were advised that if they were e-mailing their comments, they should add the disclaimer, which was on the printed forms, namely: 'In the event that this application comes to Committee, I would reserve my position until I am in full possession of all the relevant facts and arguments for and against'. The Chairman confirmed that the form would shortly be made available electronically.

***77 Partnering Charter: Housing Repairs and Maintenance**

The Chairman was pleased to report that the Partnering Charter, for the provision of response to day to day housing repairs and maintenance for the next five years, had been signed that afternoon. This was the first such partnering charter in the south west. Officers and Members who had been involved in bringing this arrangement to fruition were congratulated and thanked for their efforts. The arrangement would help to provide our customers with a first class service which would continue to improve.

***78 Gittisham – up-date**

In the absence of the Leader of the Council, the Chairman invited the Gittisham Ward Member to give an up-date on the arrangements now in place to overcome the housing problems in Gittisham where 27 families living in leased accommodation had been given notices to quit by their landlord. Councillor Spence was congratulated on his efforts on behalf of his ward who in turn thanked the officers involved and the Leader for her help, particularly in dealing with the media.

***79 Questions**

The Economy Portfolio Holder pursuant to Procedure Rules 8.2 and 8.5 answered questions by Councillor R Giles regarding the level of car park charges. The Portfolio Holder reminded Members that the level of charges has been debated thoroughly by the Executive Board and the Council. A Portfolio Holder working party had been set up to look at individual car parks, particularly non-charging car parks. Full notice was being taken of representations made and a meeting would be held with the Chambers of Commerce before any alterations were recommended. The Economy Portfolio Holder confirmed that he had made random checks of a number of local car parks to gauge use and public response to the level of charges. He confirmed that as well as income generated by the car parks, the number of tickets issued would be taken into account as part of the review process.

***79 Questions (cont)**

The Economy Portfolio Holder pursuant to Procedure Rules 8.2 and 8.5 answered questions by Councillor Miss V Ash regarding action in respect of a petition from Honiton residents opposing the increase in car parking charges. The Economy Portfolio Holder confirmed that a written response would be sent to up-date Honiton members about how the petition was being handled. He confirmed that any possible impact on the local economy as a direct result of the increase in car parking charges would be monitored. This process would take into account national economic trends. He confirmed that clarification of the signage at East Devon's car parks would be considered by the Working Party.

The Environment Portfolio Holder pursuant to Procedure Rules 8.2 answered a question by Councillor Button regarding effectiveness of the current Development Control Committee arrangements. It was suggested that the process could be reviewed by the Environment Overview Committee.

The Environment Portfolio Holder pursuant to Procedure Rules 8.2 answered a question by Councillor S Wragg confirming that a final report, in respect of investigations into Application 03/P2275 would be referred to the Development Control Committee in June.

The Environment Portfolio Holder pursuant to Procedure Rules 8.2 and 8.5 answered a question by Councillor Mrs E Wragg and confirmed that a written reply would be sent to her from the Corporate Director – Environment to clarify the current internal arrangements in respect of provision of arboricultural advice.

The Environment Portfolio Holder pursuant to Procedure Rule 8.2 answered a question by Councillor G Chamberlain and confirmed that it was prudent to retain a portion of the Planning Delivery Grant for possible contingencies.

***80 Minutes of Executive Board and Committees**

RESOLVED (1) that the following minutes be received and the recommendations approved:

Executive Board	Minutes	183-226
Development Control	Minutes	43-56
Planning Inspections	Minutes	28-36
General Licensing Sub	Minutes	36-41
Housing Allocations	Minutes	16-19
Standards Committee	Minute	1
Employment Appeals Committee	Minutes	7-12

(2) that the following minutes be received; their recommendations having been referred to the Executive Board (Min No 207 refers) for decision, when the Board noted or approved the recommendations contained in the minutes without amendment:-

Special Joint (Economy and Environment) Overview	Minutes	1-2
Special Joint (Communities, Economy and Environment)	Minutes	1-3
Communities Overview	Minutes	31-39
Environment Overview	Minutes	56-58
Economy Overview	Minute	30

*80 **Minutes of Executive Board and Committees (cont)**

Arising from consideration of the above Minutes:

- (a) Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing fees – annual review (Executive Board Minute 195) and Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Fees and Administration Charge (Executive Board Minute 196)

Councillor Miss J M Elson declared a prejudicial interest in both of these minutes, as she is a hackney carriage proprietor, on which there was no further discussion.

- (b) Legal Services – cost of early retirement (Executive Board Minute 223)

In calling this minute, Members were reminded that this item was an exempt information report and that if it was necessary to discuss details of the case, it would be taken in Part B.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that rules for early retirement in local government were changing and there would be greater emphasis on improving performance. She acknowledged that the original report to the Executive Board had contained incorrect financial information and that lessons had been learnt from this.

- (c) Performance Monitoring 2003/04 – February 2004 (Executive Board Minute 221)

The Leader suggested that the relevant Overview Committee could consider how to encourage the Government to help address the local workforce skills shortage through apprenticeships and youth schemes. Members were reminded that the partnering arrangement reported at Minute 77 above would also help to address this shortage and help to deliver a good standard of homes for everyone.

The Economy Portfolio Holder confirmed that car parking data was available and the information was systematically monitored.

- (d) Tourism Promotion 2004/05 (Executive Board Minute 200)

In reply to a question, the Leader confirmed that the Council wanted to promote and co-ordinate cycle facilities in East Devon. The proposed Cycling Officer post had remained unfilled due to budgetary constraints. However, the Leader emphasised that the Council's primary goal was to improve people's quality of life and the use of cycle tracks would be encouraged through other means.

- (e) Gittisham up-date (Executive Board Minute 203)

The up-date at the Executive Board meeting and earlier at this meeting was welcomed. The Leader confirmed that Councillors and Officers had dealt with the problem very professionally. The Leaders of the Liberal Democrats' and the Independents' Groups would have been involved in addressing the issue had the situation not been resolved so quickly. The Leader of the Council advised that there would be a full review of the work and procedures undertaken in resolving this issue to see what lessons could be learnt in dealing with other major landlords within the district.

- (f) Council Tax on Second Homes – housings initiatives (Executive Board Minute 215)

The Leader of the Liberal Democrats, in answer to a question, advised that he would review and clarify the mis-information included in his Group's newsletter in respect of this Council's agreed levels of discount on second homes.

*80 **Minutes of Executive Board and Committees (cont)**

- (g) Draft Waste Management Strategy (Joint communities, Economy and Environment Overview Committee Minute 3)

The Leader confirmed that in addition to recycling and re-using waste, the Council was aware of the need to target the production of waste, including packaging, in the first place. It was confirmed that this was within the remit of the strategy and tied in with the issues being dealt with at County level. The Councillors and Officers involved in developing the strategy were thanked for producing this first class document.

*81 **Sidmouth International Festival: Proposed Working Party (Executive Board minute 180 of 11.02.04 refers)**

The Working Party (name to be confirmed) was set up by the Executive Board to investigate the future organisational development of the Festival from 2006 onwards.

RESOLVED that the proposed Sidmouth International Festival Working Party comprise 5 Conservatives (namely: the Leisure and Economy Portfolio Holders, the Chairmen of the Communities and Economy Overview Committees and Councillor B Clark), 2 Liberal Democrats (namely: Councillors G P Chamberlain and D R H Hull) and 1 Independent (namely Councillor M J L Green).

(Councillors S Hughes declared a personal interest in this item as an organiser of Caribbean Evening. Councillor A R Giles declared a personal interest as a helper.)

Chairman Date.....