



Minutes of the Oversight Committee of the Democratic Services held on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 19:00 at The Bungalow, 8 North Street, EX17 2BT

Present: Cllrs Steve Huxtable, Liz Brookes-Hocking, Guy Cochran, Giles Fawssett, Rachel Backhouse, Joyce Harris and Natalia Letch

Apologies: Cllr Jim Cairney

In Attendance: One member of the public

Minute Taker: Rachel Avery, Town Clerk

MINUTES

150 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cllr Huxtable opened the meeting at 19.04 and members introduced themselves.

151 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public asked about the potential increase in the precept for 2025/26. Cllr Huxtable acknowledged that the precept was on the agenda and questions would be addressed during the relevant item.

152 APOLOGIES

Decision: The apologies of Cllr Cairney (holiday) were **noted**.

153 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS

153.1 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPI'S) IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

153.2 TO CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS (REQUESTS SHOULD BE MADE TO THE TOWN CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING)

There were no dispensation requests.

154 CLIMATE EMERGENCY

It was **noted** that decisions will be made with the climate emergency at the forefront of decision and policy making.

155 ORDER OF BUSINESS

There were no changes to the order of business.

156 CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk advised of the councillor vacancy in Lawrence Ward; a request for an election had to be received by Mid Devon District Council by Wednesday 29 January.

157 OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was agreed to amend a typographical error at item 116.

Decision: The minutes from the Oversight Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 10 December 2024, were **approved** as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

Decision: The minutes from the Oversight Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 17 December 2024, were **approved** as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

158 FINANCE**158.1 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE TRANSACTIONS BETWEEN 01 DECEMBER 2024 AND 31 DECEMBER 2024**

Decision: The transactions between 01 December 2024 and 31 December 2024 were **approved**. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

158.2 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

Decision: The bank reconciliation to 31 December 2024 was **approved**. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

158.3 TO NOTE BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

The bank account balances as of 31 December 2024 were **noted**.

158.4 TO NOTE YEAR TO DATE REPORT

The year-to-date report was **noted**.

159 BUDGET 2025/26

The draft budget for 2025/26 was reviewed, with consideration given to an increase to earmarked reserves for elections.

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the budget, as presented, for Full Council approval. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

160 DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL PENSION FUND

Cllr Backhouse provided a brief verbal report on the Devon County Council Pension Fund, noting that there was no significant update at this time.

Task: Agenda item to remain on future Oversight agendas.

161 CHRISTMAS IN CREDITON REVIEW**161.1 TO RECEIVE THE CHRISTMAS IN CREDITON 2024 REPORT AND CONSIDER AND APPROVE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN**

The report was received, with consideration given to all proposals.

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve proposals 3.1 – 3.12, withstanding 3.8. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

Decision: It was **resolved** to discuss staffing aspects of the report in Part II, which were discussed and noted at that juncture. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

161.2 TO RECEIVE THE CHRISTMAS IN CREDITON LATE NIGHT SHOPPING REPORT AND CONSIDER AND APPROVE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN

The report was received. Consideration was given to:

- The need for a stronger presence and support from the Chamber of Commerce
- CTC not running Late Night Shopping Events next year, with support being provided to high street traders to run the event independently
- Lack of communication from traders despite attempts to email and information through social media channels.

Task: Collect feedback from traders regarding the late-night shopping events. @Jo Davey

162 HIGH STREET BRACKETS

The report was received, and consideration was given to the proposals therein.

It was **noted** that a collaborative approach with the Crediton Heart Project (CHP) was required but noted that the flags were a separate project and the requirement of the brackets was different to that of the Christmas infrastructure.

Decision: It was **resolved** to investigate options for displaying flags and to communicate with businesses about the potential changes, in collaboration with CHP. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

Decision: It was **resolved** to investigate new infrastructure options for Christmas lighting. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

Task: Discuss new infrastructure options for displaying flags with CHP. @Rachel Avery

Task: Communicate with businesses about the potential changes to the High Street brackets. @Rachel Avery

Task: To investigate new Christmas lighting infrastructure. @Jo Davey

163 MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

Members debated the practicality of allowing extended introductions, with concerns about potential misuse and the risk of discussing non-agenda items. Cllr Backhouse suggested limiting introductions to 40 seconds and ensuring they were relevant to the agenda or the town. The discussion on member introductions focused on the appropriate use of this agenda item. Cllr Brookes-Hocking suggested councillors be allowed to briefly explain their motivations and interests, emphasizing the importance of keeping it concise.

Decision: It was **resolved** to maintain the current practice of allowing councillors to introduce themselves and briefly share their motivations or interests, provided it remained concise and relevant. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

164 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Decision: It was **noted** that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday, 11 February 2025.

165 PART II

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the exclusion of the public and press were from the meeting under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

166 COUNCIL OFFICES

The council received the document and agreed amendments as required.

167 REPORTS PACK

Signed

Dated.....