

**CORPORATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGULATORY SERVICES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

10 May 2022

Present:-

Councillors A Dewhurst (Chair), C Slade (Vice-Chair), Y Atkinson, M Asvachin, J Berry, J Brook, P Bullivant, R Chesterton, P Crabb, M Hartnell, I Roome and J Wilton-Love

Apologies:-

Councillors J Hodgson and R Radford

Members attending in accordance with Standing Order 25

Councillors A Connett, A Davis, R Gilbert, J Hart, R Hannaford, S Randall Johnson and C Whitton,

* **46** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no matter raised as a matter of urgency.

* **47** **Public Participation**

In accordance with the Council's Public Participation Rules, the Committee received and acknowledged oral representations made by Councillor Kevin Smith (Exminster Parish Council) (attending remotely) on this matter to be considered by the Committee, namely the Call-in of Cabinet Decision 146 (a-d) and 147 (d) and in particular the need to ensure appropriate and timely GP/community facilities in Exminster as part of the South West Exeter proposals.

The Chair responded, thanking Councillor Smith for his attendance and presentations which would be taken into account by the Committee during its subsequent deliberations.

* **48** **Call-in of Cabinet Decisions (Cabinet Minutes 146 (a-d) and 147 (d))**

Councillors A Connett, R Hannaford, C Whitton and S Randall-Johnson attended in accordance with Standing Order 25 (i) and the first three members spoke to this item in support of the Call-in; and Councillor Randall-Johnson spoke in support of the proposed additional resources for facilities in Cranbrook; and Councillors A Davis, R Gilbert and J Hart attended in

accordance with Standing 25 (ii) and spoke with the consent of the Committee in support of the Cabinet resolutions in regard to the call-in.

In accordance with Paragraph 17 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the requisite number of Councillors had invoked the call-in Procedure in relation to the decisions of the Cabinet on 13 April 2022 in regard to the South-West Exeter Housing Infrastructure Fund (Minute 146 - resolutions a, b, c and d) and also the proposals relating to the construction of a community facilities building in Cranbrook Town Centre (Minute 147 - resolution d).

The Call-in in the name of Councillors Hannaford, Aves, Asvachin, Adams and Whitton cited the following reasons for the call:

- 1) These decisions create a concerning, unacceptable, divisive approach and precedent, to delivering community facilities and infrastructure in Devon, that conflicts one new emerging community against another.
- 2) That these decisions will mean that the South West Exeter development will not receive adequate community infrastructure investment commensurate with its scale, density and scope.
- 3) That these matters be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee, for further debate, scrutiny and recommendations, before being implemented.

The Call-in in the name of Councillors Connett, Brazil, Cox, Dewhurst, Leaver, Letch, Roome, Thomas and Wrigley gave the reasons below:

- 1) These decisions demonstrate the principle of 'Robbing Peter to Pay Paul' created in major new housing developments and undermine the confidence of communities in planning processes.
- 2) The decision with regard to South West Exeter exposes this new community to real and significant uncertainty about the delivery of the essential community facilities including hall and sports space and capacity for a GP/Primary Care surgery.
- 3) The Cabinet, with regard to South West Exeter, relied on alternative sports facilities being made available for community use at the yet to be built Matford Brook Academy in its decision making, without any certainty the school provider would agree to such an arrangement and with no other alternative plan.
- 4) Cabinet agreed that £5.5m of HIF (Housing Infrastructure Fund) money could be used for an electricity substation which is of such capacity to serve not only the South West Exeter development but also future, as yet unplanned, developments without considering if that funding (in whole or part) should first be used to fulfil the planning obligations for community and primary care facilities and essential bus services at South West Exeter.

The Committee also considered the original reports of the Cabinet relating to the South West Exeter Housing Infrastructure Fund - Update on project including approval for submission of planning application and to approve tenders (Minute *146/13 April 2022) and the Construction of a community facilities building in Cranbrook Town Centre providing flexible space for County Council services including children's, youth and libraries (Minute *147/13 April 2022) as well as the relevant minutes from the Cabinet meeting.

A number of proposed recommendations had been made by the Members supporting the call-in which had also been circulated to Members of the Committee with the agenda for the meeting, in order to inform and assist them in making any recommendations to the Cabinet.

Members asked questions and discussed the following matters:

- the need for appropriate infrastructure provision across both new communities South West Exeter and Cranbrook;
- the Housing Infrastructure Fund (of £55.14 m awarded to Devon County Council) to enable the early delivery of infrastructure to support the planned housing development at South West Exeter;
- the proposed allocation of £2m of recovered funding towards a new community building at Cranbrook; and
- the need for early consultation with local members (County Councillors) in regard to individual proposals.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor M Hartnell, **SECONDED** by Councillor R Chesterton that that the Cabinet resolutions (in regard to the South-West Exeter Housing Infrastructure Fund (Minute 146 - resolutions a, b, c and d) and also the proposals relating to the construction of a community facilities building in Cranbrook Town Centre (Minute 147 - resolution d) be endorsed.

Councillor Y Atkinson then moved an amendment, and seconded by Councillor M Asvachin: (a) that Homes England be requested to support community facilities in South West Exeter; and (b) that the County Council consider alternative sources of funding for the completion of community resources/infrastructure as envisaged for report back to a future meeting.

The amendment was put to the vote and declared **LOST**.

The Motion (as detailed above) was then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

CORPORATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGULATORY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
10/05/22

The Meeting started at 2.15 pm and finished at 3.31 pm