

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2018

Present:

Councillor Haines (Chairman)
Councillor Ford (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Clarence, Colclough, Connett, Dennis, Dewhirst, Golder, Hayes, Hocking, J Hook (was Brodie), Jeffery, Keeling, Kerswell, Morgan, Nutley, Peart, Prowse, Thorne and Winsor

Other Members in Attendance:

Councillors Bullivant, Christophers, Goodey and Hockin

Apologies:

Councillors Cox, Eden, Gribble and G Hook

Officers in Attendance:

Graham Davey, Housing Enabling Manager
Martin Flitcroft, Finance Manager

302. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15 January 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record.

303. MINUTES OF THE STRATA JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Strata Joint Executive Committee were noted.

304. MINUTES OF THE SOUTH EAST DEVON HABITAT REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the minutes of the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee meeting of the 24 January 2018.

The Committee raised the following concerns:

- a financial report every 6 months was too infrequent for adequate scrutiny of any over or underspend;
- at the Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager's advice that 'any significant overspend would be brought to the Committee'. Teignbridge Members questioned what 'significant' meant and who would make that decision;
- regard 'Any Other Business' – Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) – the resolution advised that a report on delivery costs of SANGS and the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan would be made to a future meeting of the Partnership.

- Members requested that exact dates be provided to Members, this would give a clear timeframes enabling clearer scrutiny.

The Committee requested that the Leader take these views forward; should greater clarity not be provided by South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee consideration be given to appointing a separate tri-authority scrutiny committee.

Resolved

That the Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny write to the partnership requesting clarity in their reports, particularly with financial reporting and proposed dates for actions. That the Partnership receive quarterly financial reports.

305. FINAL FINANCIAL PLAN PROPOSALS 2018/19 TO 2020/21

The Committee considered a report which detailed the Executive's final financial plan proposals 2018/19 to 2020/21 following a period of public consultation. The Council's Chief Finance officer reported that the budget proposals:

- £5 council tax rise for 2018/19 equating to 3.12%
- Reserves would be at 11% of the net revenue budget (just under £1.9 million);
- supported housing, business and infrastructure and town centre investment;
- included the proposed 2% pay offer over 2 years with higher increases for those on lower grades;
- Rural Aid to continue at £40,000;
- there were no proposed changes to the council tax support scheme;
- a proposed minor increase to the tariff for car parking charges;
- investment in town centres and employment land;
- contributions to capital from revenue of £2.3 million 2018/19 and £1.3 million in 2019/20.

Members were advised that the assumptions were based on the provisional local government settlement figures; the final figures were expected prior to the full Council meeting on 22 February 2018. Papers for this meeting would include detail of the precept for Police, Fire and Parish & Town councils.

During discussion, particular reference was made to:-

- (a) car parking tariffs. A Member questioned if there had been an increase in parking permit and car parking income over the last 3 years. It was agreed this information would be provided outside of the meeting;
- (b) Building Control. Members noted all building control staff were employed by the Partnership, all income being retained by the partnership resulted in a balance to the accounts;

- (c) Appendix 5 earmarked reserve transfer for BID. It was agreed that the detail of the earmarked reserves transfer would be provided in the Members' Newsletter;
- (d) Council Tax income, it was noted that part of the reason for the increase in income was due to additional homes in the district;
- (e) A Member requested increased funding to facilitate planning enforcement work.

Resolved

That the Executive be asked to note the Committee's comments.

306. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

The Executive Forward Plan was noted.

307. WORK PROGRAMME

The planned item for the next Committee was noted. The Vice Chair requested that an Enforcement Review Group be set up to scrutinise whether earlier enforcement action would reduce overall costs to the Council. The Chairman of the Enforcement Review Group (Cllr Prowse) advised there was such a group already in existence and would inform Members via the Newsletter of the next meeting. The Vice Chairman requested a report of the current findings to date.

308. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING

Resolved

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12a of the Act.

309. TEIGNBRIDGE HOUSING COMPANY

Consideration was given to a report which provided background information on social housing provision within the district.

Members thanked the 3 Executive Portfolio Holder's for being in attendance and asked that their comments be considered at the Executive meeting on Thursday, 8 February 2018, as follows:

- the report provided a useful summary of the current position;

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- there was not enough detailed financial information to enable the Committee to support any detailed recommendations;
- any future detailed financial implications on future proposals to be brought to the Committee for consideration.

Resolved

That the Executive note the comments made by Overview & Scrutiny.

Cllr Mike Haines
Chairman