

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

MONDAY, 10 JANUARY 2022

Present:

Councillors H Cox (Chair), Jenks, D Cox, Hocking, Orme, Parker and Rollason
Councillor Thorne (remotely)

Members in attendance:

Councillors Connett, Dewhurst, J Hook, Keeling, Purser, Wrigley and Nutley

Apologies:

Councillors Clarence, Foden, MacGregor, Mullone and Parker-Khan

Officers in Attendance:

Amanda Pujol, Head of Community Services and Improvement
Martin Flitcroft, Chief Finance Officer & Head of Corporate Services
David Eaton, Environmental Protection Manager
Rebecca Hewitt, Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager
Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer
Trish Corns, Democratic Services Officer

68. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the chair with the amendment to Minute 63, resolution (b): delete *officer group* and insert *Action Climate Teignbridge*.

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69. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Hocking declared an Appendix 2 interest in agenda item 8, initial financial plan proposals in his capacity as Trustee of Newton Abbot Community Transport Association. He spoke but did not vote on this item.

70. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

71. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

None.

72. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

The Executive Forward Plan listing items to be considered by the Executive over the next few months including to which overview and scrutiny committee remit each issue fell, was noted.

73. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee's work programme as circulated with the agenda was noted.

74. INITIAL FINANCIAL PLAN PROPOSALS 2022/23 TO 2024/25

Councillor Keeling, the Executive Member for Corporate Resources referred to the agenda report and the Executive recommendation to Council on 13 January 2021 to approve the council tax base of 49,633 for 2022/23 as set out in appendix 2 to the agenda report. He thanked the Chief Finance Officer and staff for producing a balanced budget amongst the financial pressures and challenges of the covid pandemic.

The Chief Finance Officer presented the Council's budget proposals and the way forward for the Council as far as could be predicted given uncertainties regarding the pandemic and future government funding.

The impact of covid had been significant but the financial situation was better than at March 2020. Only one year government financial settlement had been granted and future funding streams were difficult to predict. The impact of Brexit was difficult to calculate and understand because this had been masked by covid. The predicted budget gap for 2024/25 was £2.7 million.

As the Council's Section 151 Officer he had a statutory responsibility to present a balanced budget.

The budget proposals included:

- An increase in the Band D council tax of £5 to £185.17 for 22/23(2.78%)
- £5 increase in Band D was below the Devon average for Districts
- Fees and charges/rents income continue to be lower than pre covid levels
- Continued funding for a climate change officer and enhanced planning enforcement, more temporary resources
- Maintaining revenue reserves at just above £2 million (circa 13.0% of net revenue budget)
- Increasing climate change projects within the capital programme
- Increased support for Housing including the Teignbridge 100
- Provision for employment sites
- Tidy Teignbridge fund.
- Rural aid fund of £26,000

Key issues to resolve included:

- Heavy use of earmarked reserves to balance the books
- Significant savings in 21/22 and continuing into future years

- Revenue contributions to support capital programme remain at zero
- Staff savings where possible and vacancy management
- Communications with Government to clarify our predicament
- Inflationary increases in fees and charges in line with last years MTFP
- Service reviews to deliver savings options
- Continuing with income generating projects where viable
- Significant service delivery was statutory

In response to questions the Chief Finance Officer advised that: there was no limit imposed on Parish and Town Council precepts; and a report regarding funding for community groups was due to be presented to the Executive in the near future.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RECOMMENDED

That Council resolves to approve the council tax base of 49,633 for 2022/23 as set out in appendix 2 of the agenda report for the Executive meeting on 4 January 2022.

The full presentation can be found at:

<https://democracy.teignbridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=391&MId=2977&Ver=4>

75. PSPO (CONTROL OF DOGS) TASK AND FINISH GROUP - REVIEW OF THE CURRENT ORDER

Consideration was given to the report of the Task and Finish Group which was tasked in December 2020 to review the current order for improvements, and to consult with Town and Parish Councils, Councillors, the public and interested parties.

The agenda report summarised the results of the consultation and the considerations of the Task and Finish Group.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RECOMMENDED

That the Executive consider and approve the continuation of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Responsible Dog Ownership under ss59 to 75 of the Anti-Social Crime and Policing Act 2014, taking into account the following recommendations of the Task and Finish Group;

1. That the lead length should be reduced to 1m and it should be a fixed type lead and
2. Officers increase the signage in key locations to inform the public of the controls.

76. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Consideration was given to a proposed Equality and Diversity Policy as circulated with the agenda. The policy reflected the Council's commitment to provide equality in every area of its work delivering quality services in a fair and equitable way that promoted equality, diversity and inclusion.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously,

RECOMMENDED

The Executive adopt the Equality and Diversity Policy and the proposed equality objectives contained within the document circulated with the agenda.

77. COMMUNITY SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

The Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager referred to the circulated report which set out the background of the Community safety Partnership (CSP), its work over the past year and its priorities for the forthcoming year.

The statutory partnership worked collaboratively across Devon and the Peninsula to tackle issues such as child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, drug misuse, prejudice related crime, and to prevent violent extremism, domestic violence and abuse.

In 2021/22 the CSP received a £25,000 grant of Safer Communities funding from the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, and £900,000 over four years for the delivery of the Turning Corners Programme.

RESOLVED

The report be noted and that Councillors submit any questions to the Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager by 11 January 2022 that they wish to be raised at the next Community Safety Partnership meeting.

78. EXECUTIVE MEMBER BIENNIAL UPDATE HOMES AND COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR WRIGLEY

The Executive Member for Housing, Communities and IT updated the Committee on progress of services within the portfolio which included community engagement, customer services, community safety and access to services.

The update included the following:

- Progress with the Teignbridge 100 developing affordable housing.
- 13 units completed of the 155 community led affordable housing programme, with 65 having been granted planning consent.
- Rough sleepers reduced from 7 last quarter to 4 this quarter

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- The purchase of a property to provide emergency accommodation for homeless households.
- Additional COVID funding (£115k) for rough sleepers used to deliver health assessments including vaccinations.
- Empty homes target met and a reduction to 344 empty homes.
- Funding of Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) to address poorly energy efficient private rented accommodation.
- Delivery of Air Source Heat Pumps to the target of 180 homes through 2 funding sources - Warm Homes Fund (Deadline May 2022) and Green Homes Grants Local Authority Delivery (Deadline, March 2022).
- Disabled Facility Grant spend was on track assisting the community with disability adaptations.
- Review of voluntary sector funding by Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- Distribution of the Household Support Fund in collaboration with Citizen Advice Bureau -£145k has been allocated, £85k has been spent (over 500 applications received).
- Proposals were being worked on to introduce a Teignbridge Lottery for Communities.
- Town and Parish councils were consulted on the budget proposals.
- Moving from Windows 10 to m365 for the Council which would improve agile working and bring efficiencies.

The full presentation can be found at:

<https://democracy.teignbridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=391&MId=2977&Ver=4>

COUNCILLOR H COX
Chairman