

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

WEDNESDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2022

Present:

Councillors Bullivant (Chair), Swain (Vice-Chair), Austen, D Cox, Gribble, Hayes, G Hook, Morgan, Nuttall, L Petherick and Tume

Members in attendance:

Councillors Jefferies and Keeling (virtually)

Apologies:

Councillors Daws and Eden

Officers in Attendance:

Martin Flitcroft, Chief Finance Officer & Head of Corporate Services
Trish Corns, Democratic Services Officer
Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

90. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

91. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr Bullivant declared an Appendix 2 interest in relation to Minute 96 by virtue of his position as a Trustee of Newton Abbot Transport association. He spoke but did not vote on the matter.

92. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

93. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

None.

94. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

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

95. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee's work programme as circulated with the agenda was noted. The report of the Newton Abbot cultural task and finish group would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting. The car park review group would be reformed following the approval of the report later in the agenda.

It was proposed by Councillor Bullivant, seconded by Councillor Swain, and unanimously

RESOLVED

That *matters arising from the Minutes* be added as an item to future agendas.

96. FINAL FINANCIAL PLAN PROPOSALS 2022/23 TO 2024-25

Consideration was given to the final financial plan proposals 2022/23 to 2024/25 for recommendation to Council on 22 February 2022. The proposals included recommended revenue and capital budgets for 2022/23 and planned in outline for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

In his presentation the Executive Member for Corporate Services, Councillor Keeling thanked the Chief Finance Officer and staff for producing a balanced budget amongst the financial pressures and challenges of the covid pandemic. In addition to consulting the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in January and currently, the consultation on the budget proposals had included Parish and Town Councils December 2021 and January 2022 and a 6 week public consultation.

Teignbridge Council as the District Council would receive only 9% of the £5.00 council tax increase for Band D property. The proposed budget would result in reserves of just over £2 million and a budget deficit forecast of £2.6 million for 2024/25. The final government settlement was still awaited. The council tax provided just £9.3 million towards the £57.2 million revenue required to run services. The remainder of the revenue was sourced from other resources.

Councillor Keeling advised of the intention to: continue allocated voluntary grants at 2021-22 levels for 2022-23 and ensure no funding cuts in 2022/23 for the CVS, CAB, East Teignbridge and Newton Abbot Community Transport; increasing the Councillors community fund to £1,200 each; maintaining rent subsidies; and no further grant for Carn 2 Cove.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that as the Council's Section 151 Officer he had a statutory responsibility to present a balanced budget. Achieving continued allocated voluntary grants at the 2021-2 levels and other issues as presented by the Executive Member as detailed above could be achieved by approving the recommendation as detailed in the agenda report with amendments of the deletion of: the re-introduction of rural aid at £26,000 for 2022/23; and a provision for voluntary and community sector small grant scheme for 2022/23.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 (2.2.2022)

In response to questions the Committee was advised: that the fee for beach huts was complete to market rates and reflected the true cost of insurance and maintenance. Previous years fees had not done so and had been subsidised; future Capital Programs could detail completed projects; 5 affordable homes had been completed under the Council's T100 project. 17 homes were being constructed and 87 were in the pre planning stage. The project would provide long term savings for the Council; and it was difficult to assess the true effects of Brexit and separate from the effects of the covid pandemic. A report on the effects of Brexit would be brought to a future meeting.

it was proposed by Councillor Swain and seconded by Councillor G Hook that the proposal as detailed in the agenda report be approved subject to the deletion of: the re-introduction of rural aid at £26,000 for 2022/23; and a provision for voluntary and community sector small grant scheme for 2022/23. in addition: funding for CVS, CAB, East Teignbridge and Newton Abbot Community Transport be maintained at 2021-22 levels for 2022-23; the Councillors community fund be increased to £1,200 each; rent subsidies be maintained; and no further grant for Carn 2 Cove.

This was carried by 7 for, 0 against and 2 abstentions.

RECOMMENDED

The proposals as set out above be considered together with any subsequent consultation comments for approval by Council as the final budget for 2022/23 and the outline plan for the subsequent years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The proposed budget includes:

- An increase in council tax of £5 or 2.78% to £185.17
- Continued funding for a climate change officer (with increased temporary resources) and enhanced planning enforcement
- Increased provision in the capital programme for climate change projects
- The continuing reduction in new homes bonus
- Other central funding reductions – in particular provisional assumptions for business rates for future years and reset of the baseline
- Reserves at 12.8 % of the net revenue budget or just over £2.0 million
- Increased support for housing including the Teignbridge 100 whilst backing business and bringing people and organisations together for local neighbourhood planning
- Infrastructure delivery plan investment funded by community infrastructure levy and external sources where available
- Continuation of grant funded South West Regional Monitoring Programme
- Town centre investment in infrastructure and employment
A new two year pot of £40,000 per annum for 'Tidy Teignbridge' initiatives to improve cleanliness for town and parish councils
- Paying £1 million off our pension deficit in 2022/23 to reduce ongoing contributions

- Additional temporary resources to deliver expediently the significant projects and proposals identified above and within the capital programme, service reviews and processes to identify business and system improvements/developments, estate management, governance and communications

The full presentation can be found at the following link:

<https://democracy.teignbridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=393&MId=2980&Ver=4>

97. EXECUTIVE MEMBER BIENNIAL UPDATE - CLLR JEFFERIES (JOBS AND ECONOMY)

The Executive member for jobs and economy provided an update on the progress of services within the portfolio. The update included:

- Statistics on Teignbridge's economy showing that: the largest employment sector is wholesale and retail at 20%; over 5.5k businesses are registered for business rates; since April 2022 there have been 14,000 grants worth £73m to businesses; the unemployment rate of 4.6% is lower than the UK average of 6.5%; and the average weekly wage of £493 is lower than the UK average of £548.
- Local businesses were also being supported through several grants including Small Firms Employment Fund and Kickstart apprenticeships.
- 20 acres of employment land will be brought forward in Teignbridge in 2022.
- The Teignbridge Jobs Plan 2021 was also supporting local businesses and the economy.
- The Newton Abbot market quarter regeneration will increase footfall to the town and boost economic activity.

The full presentation can be found at the following link:

<https://democracy.teignbridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=393&MId=2980&Ver=4>

98. NEWTON ABBOT CULTURAL QUARTER REPORT OF THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP (TO FOLLOW)

The Chair advised that this item was deferred until the next meeting when a report of the Task and Finish Group would be presented.

99. SOUTH AND EAST DEVON HABITATS REGULATIONS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the South and east Devon habitats regulations executive committee held on 28 October 2021 were noted.

100. CAR PARKS TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Consideration was given to the agenda report setting out the terms of reference for the task and finish group.

RESOLVED

The report be approved.

CLLR P BULLIVANT
Chairman