

FULL COUNCIL

30 SEPTEMBER 2020

Present:

Councillors Austen, Bradford, Bullivant, Clarence, Colclough, Connett, Cook, D Cox, H Cox, Daws, Dewhirst, Evans, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Gribble, Haines, Hayes, Hocking, G Hook, J Hook, Jeffries, Jenks, Keeling, Kerswell, MacGregor, Morgan, Mullone, Nutley, Nuttall, Parker-Khan, Parker (Vice-Chair), Patch, Peart, J Petherick (Chair), L Petherick, Purser, Rollason, Russell, Taylor, Thorne, Tume and Wrigley

Apologies:

Councillors Eden, Jeffery, Orme, Phipps and Swain

Officers in Attendance:

Neil Blaney, Head of Place & Commercial Services
Martin Flitcroft, Chief Finance Officer & Head of Corporate Services
Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer
Fergus Pate, Principal Delivery Officer
Sarah Selway, Democratic Services Team Leader & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Phil Shears, Managing Director
Beth Tipton, Administrative Assistant
Paul Woodhead, Solicitor & Deputy Monitoring Officer

46. MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Council 28 July 2020 and Adjourned Annual Council 3 September 2020 were approved as a correct record and would be signed at a later date.

47. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced that the Managing Director had been notified of the following changes to committee membership:-

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee (2) – Cllr Cook replaced by Cllr D Cox
- Standards Committee – Cllr Foden replaced by the Leader.

The Leader would address Full Council between agenda items six and seven.

48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

49. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

The member questions and responses are attached to the agenda.

In response to Cllr Daws supplementary question regarding the Standards Committee procedures and decisions the Leader stated that these were matters for the standards committee, the committee had looked at a number of issues and came to a judgement of their peers as councillors.

In response to Cllr Daws supplementary question regarding the NSN Cllrs outstanding FOI request, the Leader advised that the redaction was a manual process and very time consuming for the quantity of documents involved. The Council could have considered declining the request on these grounds due to the cost of compliance retrieving and redacting such a large quantity of information. All the information would be released by 16 October 2020.

50. THE LEADER'S ADDRESS

The Leader of the Council addressed Full Council and expanded on the three priorities for Teignbridge under his administration climate change, homes, and jobs. He outlined the challenges with the £2 million the savings that the Council had had to make to offset the loss of income and additional costs as a result of the impact of COVID 19. The Leader thanked staff for their work during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and highlighted the achievements of the Council during the pandemic.

51. BUDGET MONITORING - REVENUE & CAPITAL, REALIGNMENT OF REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21

The Executive Member for Corporate Resources presented the report to update Members on the principal areas where there were likely to be departures from the 2020/21 budget, summarised those variations to the end of August 2020 and the realignment for 2020/21 based on assumed Government support together with assumptions on the medium term financial plan for future years. He explained that it would be difficult to predict future incomes and expenditure pressures due to the uncertainty around government actions, possible future lockdowns, potential vaccines and the action of the general public. This realignment of the budgets set in February 2020 were addressed by Government funding and from savings that the Council was making to meet the gap that had arisen.

The Chief Finance Officer advised Members of the changing financial position as a result of the impact of the COVID 19 on the Councils' funding streams. The Council had received from Central Government emergency funding £1.4 million by May 2020 and a subsequent additional £200,000. There was an offer of a further funding package to assist with certain income losses although this ignored rental income and losses from Council Tax and Business rates, this would be recovered over the subsequent three financial years. There was a budget deficit of £5.1 million, savings of £2 million had been identified and these

included vacancy savings, eliminating revenue contributions to capital, some natural occurring savings as operations were reduced or closed and ledger spending including a reduction in Rural Aid of £25,000.

During debate Members raised the following points:-

- Thanked staff for their efficient and hard work during the pandemic in particular the prompt payments of the business grants and work with the communities
- Concern with the proposal to remove the rural skip service and impact this could have on an increase in fly tipping
- The need to work with Towns and Parishes with regards to services that the council may not be able to support due to its budget constraints going forward
- The need for all members be involved in any proposed cuts in budgets.

The Leader recognised that there would be difficult decisions ahead, explained the budget consultation and setting process which would include considered of the proposed budget by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

It was agreed that the Chair of the Council would write to staff to thanks them for their support and hard work during the pandemic.

The recommendation was proposed by the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, seconded by Councillor H Cox and carried.

RESOLVED that the:-

- (1) revised revenue budget summary as shown at appendix 1 be approved;
- (2) updated capital programme as shown at appendix 2 be approved; and
- (3) treasury management results for 2019/20 as shown in appendix 3 be noted.

A roll-call was taken.

For

Cllrs Austen, Bullivant, Clarence, Colclough, Connett, Cook, D Cox, H Cox, Dewhurst, Evans, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, Gribble, Haines, Hayes, Hocking, G Hook, J Hook, Jeffries, Jenks, Keeling, Kerswell, MacGregor, Morgan, Nutley, Nuttall, Parker-Khan, Peart, L Petherick, Purser, Rollason, Russell, Thorne, Tume, Wrigley, Parker and J Petherick

(37 members)

Abstain

Cllrs Bradford, Daws, Mullone

(3 members)

Absent

Cllrs Eden, Jeffrey, Orme, Phipps, Taylor and Swain
Cllr Taylor was not present during the vote

(7 members)

52. NOTICE OF MOTION

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change in presenting her Notice of Motion, stated that the protection and conservation of nature here and overseas was paramount, the detrimental impacts of which were being felt around the world. The harm that humans were causing through the goods consumed could not be ignored. Members by supporting this Notice of Motion would be building upon the work the Council was already doing through declaring its Climate Change Emergency and pledging to be Carbon Neutral by 2025.

This was seconded by the Executive Member for Sport, Culture and Recreation.

Two- thirds of Members agreed to debate the Notice of Motion.

During debate Members agreed that the protection and conservation of the environment and nature was vital and the council should look at all the work it does to ensure this was addressed locally, nationally and globally.

RESOLVED that this Council believes that:-

- (1) All governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts of Climate and Ecological Breakdown, and local governments that recognize this should not wait for their national governments to change their policies. It is important for Teignbridge Council and other Councils to commit to carbon neutrality and address the ecological emergency as quickly as possible.
- (2) Towns, Cities and Local Authorities at all tiers are uniquely placed to lead the world in reducing carbon emissions and tackling the ecological emergency; as they have closer links with their residents.
- (3) The Climate and Ecological Bill deserves the support of government as it reassesses the urgency of the twin climate and ecological emergencies.

Consequently, Teignbridge District Council will,

- (a) Declare an 'Ecological Emergency' alongside the Climate Emergency it has already declared. In doing so the Council commit to:
 - Working with partners locally and regionally to drive coordinated leadership and collaborative action to aid the recovery of nature and natural environments and identify areas for habitat restoration.
 - Ensuring irreplaceable habitats are protected, the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy is followed, and that net biodiversity gain is implemented appropriately.

- Lead by example and promote the good work the Council is currently and will in future be doing.
 - Finalising an ambitious Tree Strategy.
 - Reviewing the Teignbridge District Council Green Infrastructure Strategy
- (b) Register our support for the CEE Bill and write to our 2 MP's to urge them to sign up to support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill.

The vote was unanimous.

Absent

Cllrs D Cox (lost connection), Daws, Eden, Jeffrey, Orme, Parker-Khan (lost connection), Phipps and Swain.

(8 Members)

53. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Leader proposed, seconded by the Executive Member for Sport, Culture and Recreation that because of financial sensitivity the Council go into Part II session and exclude the press and public. This was carried.

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that press and public be excluded from the meeting of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12 A of the Act.

54. SOUTH WEST EXETER DISTRICT HEATING SUPPORT

The Executive Member for Planning presented the report to approve a funding contribution, take forward the contract negotiations and the future establishment of a company in order to facilitate successful District Heating Network delivery and its ongoing operation at South West Exeter. He advised of the business case, the viability and the risks.

The Executive Member for Planning proposed the revised recommendation (as circulated to all Members), this was seconded by the Executive Member for Climate Change.

The Principal Delivery Officer gave a presentation on what was needed for the overall for the scheme, the heating plant at Exeter capacity, government support, funding including the Council's funding requirement.

During debate Members raised issues regarding the long term sustainability of the scheme in particular with global ambition to reduce waste, the viability of the plant, the impact on householder fuel bills and their fuel choice and the requirement to ensure that Heat Trust Standards were complied with.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) a financial contribution of up to £50,000 be approved towards South West Exeter District Heating Network early infrastructure works required before contracts for delivery of the main project have been agreed;
- (2) Delegated authority be granted to the Head of Place and Commercial Services (subject to prior consultation with the Executive Member for Planning) to compile and implement agreements to facilitate the funding of the early infrastructure works;
- (3) Delegated authority be granted to the Head of Place and Commercial Services to participate in negotiating the District Heating Network commercial framework including but not limited to the matters identified in recommendation 4 below; and
- (4) Subject to a future report and decision from Executive Committee, approve:
 - a. Funding of up to £2 million as a contribution towards the South West Exeter District Heating Network as described in Section 2 of the circulated report.
 - b. Completion of a District Heating Network commercial framework including but not limited to matters associated with:
 - (i) the up to £2 million financial loan from the Council to the District Heating Network operator
 - (ii) operating standards associated with customer service, tariffs and environmental performance of the network
 - (iii) expansion of the network into other development areas in the Exeter area (such as Marsh Barton).
 - (iv) Associated legal agreements
 - c. Establishment of the Southern Exeter Heat Company.

A roll call was taken

For

Cllrs Bullivant, Clarence, Connett, Cook, D Cox, H Cox, Dewhirst, Evans, Foden, Goodman-Bradbury, G Hook, J Hook, Keeling, MacGregor, Morgan, Nutley, Purser, Rollason, Taylor, Thorne, Wrigley and J Petherick.

(22 Members)

Against

Bradford, Mullone and Patch.

(3 Members)

Abstain

Cllrs Parker-Khan and Peart.

(2 Members)

Absent

Cllrs Austen, Colclough, Daws, Eden, Jeffrey, Jefferies, Jenks, Gribble, Haines, Hayes, Hocking, Kerswell, Nuttall, Orme, Parker, L Petherick, Phipps, Russell, Swain and Tume.

(20 Members)

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 2.20 pm.

Chair