

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2**

### **THURSDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2023**

#### Present:

Councillors Bullivant (Chair), Gribble, Hayes, G Hook, Morgan and L Petherick

#### Members Attendance:

Councillors Jeffries, Keeling, Nutley, Taylor and Wrigley

#### Apologies:

Councillors Swain, Austen, D Cox, Daws, Eden, Nuttall and Tume

#### Officers in Attendance:

Martin Flitcroft, Chief Finance Officer & Head of Corporate Services

Trish Corns, Democratic Services Officer

Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

#### **14. MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor Bullivant, seconded by Councillor Gribble and

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **15. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **16. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

None.

#### **17. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS**

None.

#### **18. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN**

The executive forward plan detailing issues to be considered over the next few months was noted.

#### **19. WORK PROGRAMME**

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

It was proposed by Councillor G Hook, seconded by councillor L Petherick and

RESOLVED

That a special meeting be held to consider the report of the car parks strategy plan task and finish group.

**20. EXECUTIVE MEMBER BIENNIAL UPDATE, JOBS AND ECONOMY, COUNCILLOR JEFFRIES**

Councillor Jeffries updated the Committee on services within the portfolio which included the following:

- Average weekly pay for full time workers is lower £531 compared to £642 national average.
- Sectors with the highest employees remain retail, accommodation and social industries.
- Funds supporting local businesses included £1.6m UK shared prosperity fund investment plan and businesses are encouraged to apply for funding.
- 2023 will see over twenty acres of employment land coming forward in Teignbridge.
- The goals of the covid 19 recovery Teignbridge jobs plan 2021 continue in helping local businesses and creating jobs. However, the cost of materials are still increasing and the bank of England base rate has increased today from 3.5% to 4%.
- In addition to Teignbridge, economic development support is sourced from Devon County Council, the local enterprise partnership, and colleges deliver training and skills programmes, including for adult learners.
- The future high street funding (FHSF) will enable the provision of more economic activity through modernisation and vibrancy to attract greater footfall and spend in Newton Abbot.

In response to questions, it was noted:

- The delay in the FHSF implementation is a concern.
- The former Beachcomber building at Teignmouth would be back in use from Easter as a café/restaurant.

**21. FEEDBACK FROM TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

The Executive Member for Planning updated the meeting on the progress of recommendations of the planning enforcement task and finish group since approval by the Committee on 14 November 2022 and by the Executive on 3 January 2023. The Executive approved the recommendations of the task and finish group and made the following amendments. All recommendations were being progressed and the Committee would be updated with progress.

a) Recommendation 7 - Drone trial - the possible benefits of the use of drones be investigated further and consideration be given to identifying an operator to

run a trial, the Executive Member for Planning to provide a verbal update at Executive's next meeting;

b) The following be added to Recommendation 9 – Review progress: The Executive update the O&S2 at their next meeting following the February 2023 meeting on the progress of implementation of the recommendations and via the Members Newsletter;

c) The Chair of Planning Committee be asked to consider the suggestion of a Planning Enforcement matters report (Part II) on a quarterly basis;

d) Business Manager - Development Management be asked to look at the viability and resourcing of virtual planning cafes for Town and Parish Councils specifically with regards to planning enforcement matters;

e) The Executive Member for Planning to write to the relevant Government Minister regarding enforcement regulations; and

f) Officers be asked to expand on the Members enforcement notification report to state why no breach or no further action would be taken in each case.

## **22. FINAL FINANCIAL PLAN PROPOSALS 2023/24 TO 2025/26**

The Chair referred to the agenda report on the final financial plan proposals 2023/24 to 2025/26 to be considered by the Executive on 7 February 2023.

The Executive Member for corporate resources presented the proposals including draft revenue and capital budgets for the three years 2023/24 to 2025/26. The budget was balanced using earmarked reserves. The main issues taken into account were detailed in the report.

Parish and Town councils had been consulted, along with a public survey on the council's website. The results of the survey would be circulated as an appendix to the final budget papers for Council on 21 February 2023. In summary: 78.33% agreed with generating more income to reinvest in council services; 34.71% agreed with making more budget savings; 8.43% agreed with reducing services; and 23.04% agreed with increasing the council tax further.

In response to questions it was noted:

- The work of scrutiny over the next couple of years in reviewing the budget and coming up with recommendations to reduce the deficit would involve comparisons with the private sector and investing to save or generate more income.
- Full results of the consultation survey would be circulated as an appendix to the Council agenda for the meeting on 21 February 2023.
- 42% supported the cost of living crises payment to all households of £5.54 at a cost of £330k. A majority did not vote for it.
- The £5.54 would be paid to households automatically for those paying through direct debit. The 20% households not paying by this method would be contacted to enable the payment.
- The lido in Teignmouth was scheduled to open for the 2023 season.

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

RECOMMENDED

- a) That the proposals set out in the agenda report be considered together with any subsequent consultation comments for approval by Council as the final budget for 2023/24 and the outline plan for the subsequent years 2024/25 and 2025/26.

The proposed budget includes:

- An increase in council tax of £5.54 or 2.99% to £190.71
- Providing a one-off cost of living payment of £5.54 to households liable to pay council tax on their main home on 1 April 2023 in 2023/24
- Maintaining 100% council tax support
- Continuing to react to the climate change emergency by maintaining ongoing revenue budgets for a climate change officer and associated spending, temporary staffing resources in revenue and provision in the capital programme, including ongoing provisions for corporate decarbonization schemes as per agenda report paragraph 5.5
- A £2 million provision for employment sites funded by borrowing
- Provision for an Emergency Planning officer
- Temporary funds for a Scrutiny Officer to assist Members with the Scrutiny function and working groups; appointment of a Digital transformation Manager and other temporary resources including for facilitating the Modern 25 work
- Support for housing including the Teignbridge 100 as per agenda report paragraph 5.3, whilst backing business and bringing people and organisations together for local neighbourhood planning
- 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 13.0% of the net revenue budget or £2.3 million
- Infrastructure delivery plan investment funded by community infrastructure levy and external sources where available
- Continuation of grant funded South-West Regional Monitoring Programme as per agenda report paragraph 5.6
- Town centre investment in infrastructure and employment as per 5.7
- Re-establishing revenue contributions to capital initially at £300,000 per annum
- Continuation of enhanced Planning funding
- Councillors community fund set at £1,000
- Provision of £20,000 for year 2 of the 'Tidy Teignbridge' initiative to improve cleanliness for town and parish councils
- Paying £500,000 off our pension deficit in 2023/24 to reduce ongoing contributions
- An additional document - the Financial Plan 2023 – 2028 for adoption (at Appendix 8) and to facilitate Member progression of work plans by Overview & Scrutiny to address the budgetary position and deliver savings

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 (2.2.2023)

- b) That Council notes the mid-year review of Treasury Management at appendix 9 of the agenda report.

CLLR P BULLIVANT  
Chairman