

EXECUTIVE

7 FEBRUARY 2019

Present:

Councillors Christophers (Leader), Bullivant, Golder, Goodey, Lake and Russell

Members in Attendance:

Councillors Clarence, Connett, Dewhirst, Haines and Prowse

Apologies:

Councillors Clemens and Barker

Officers in Attendance:

Martin Flitcroft, Chief Finance Officer

Tony Watson, Interim Head of Commercial Services

Michelle Luscombe, Principal Policy Planner

Sarah Selway, Democratic Services Manager (Exeter City Council)

5. MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting on 8 January 2019 were confirmed and approved and signed as correct record.

6. MATTERS OF URGENCY/MATTERS OF REPORT BROUGHT FORWARD WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIRMAN

The Leader brought to Members attention the job's fair that the Council had held on 6 February 2019 at Old Forde House to support the employees of the British Ceramic Tile factory at Bovey Tracey which had suddenly closed. It had been a successful advent with 10 to 12 different employers turning up. He thanked the Council's Economic Development Team for hosting this event, commenting that it was important that the Council supported the local communities in difficult times.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

8. FINAL FINANCIAL PLAN PROPOSALS 2019/20 TO 2021/22

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report on the Final Financial Plan Proposals 2019/20 to 2021/22. He brought Members attention to the cuts in the

Revenue support grant since 2015/16, the reduction in management costs and gains from the Strata partnership and investment returns from Market Walk. He highlighted the significant funding and cost changes affecting the Council in future years. The proposal was to increase council tax in Teignbridge by 3.03% or £5 to £170.17 for an average Band D property. The Chief Finance Officer made reference to the business rates retention scheme, general reserves, the capital programme including funding the infrastructure delivery plan investment.

The Chief Finance Officer advised of the results of the public consultation on the Budget:-

Continue to increase council tax - to help maintain essential services. The current recommendation is a 3.03% increase, (£5 per year, for a Band D property taking the council tax to £170.17 for the year) –

- 57% agree
- 34% disagree
- 9% unsure

Back business and improve town centres –

- 69% agree
- 13% disagree
- 18% unsure

Invest in infrastructure for employment, education, transport links and sports and open spaces –

- 79% agree
- 7% disagree
- 14% unsure

Continue to support housing as a priority by enabling affordable housing and improving poor quality homes –

- 53% agree
- 24% disagree
- 23% unsure

To balance the councils budget in the future, which of these would you expect us to consider?

Generating even more income to reinvest in council services – 59%

Making more budget savings – 19%

Reducing the services we provide – 5%

Increasing council tax further – 17 %

Following on from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 4 February 2019 the Chief Finance Officer clarified the following:-

- The burial fee increase has been due to a significant increase in wages and contractors costs and it was proposed to limit this increase to a 3% rise to reflect the comments from Overview & Scrutiny 4 February 2019
- KG 8 - cycle schemes - clarification was made that these monies had not been changed in total - just the allocations over the financial years

- The Bid 300 planning Section 106 agreement provision for Kingsteignton open space at £60,000 was clarified as being available for investment in Clifford Park and awaiting proposals to be worked up in conjunction with the town council
- Savings had come from the Strata partnership, increased income from New Homes Bonus, small asset disposals and renovation grants repaid, the impact of the increase in interest rates on investments and quick win changes with regards to seaweed removal costs, subscriptions, purchase of supplies and equipment, bank charges and savings in printing and stationery.

During discussion Members raised the following:-

- issue of the maintenance of cemeteries in particular closed cemeteries; there was a need to review the impact of the rising costs with the cemeteries. The Council had to pick up the cost of the closed cemeteries and there should be a holistic review of the cemetery service and costs
- investment in play areas and how Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 monies were allocated as some parishes were at a disadvantage whilst acknowledging some parishes had benefited particularly those with a neighbourhood plan
- why had the budget for the removal of seaweed been made?
- In the past there had been rural aid available to support parishes.

The Chief Finance Officer stated he would ask the capital review group to look at the investment for play areas as there was a programme of works for the updating of play areas. He also advised that the budget with regards to seaweed removal had been taken out as it had not been an issue in the last few years.

The Leader commented, that with regards to play areas it was essential to prioritise safety. There was a need to look at the maintenance of cemeteries, closed church yards and the different options now available to residents, a working group should be formed to examine this service. The Leader highlighted the fact that the Council no longer received a support grant and that the tax payers of Teignbridge were now benefiting from the Strata partnership and the investment in Market Walk.

RESOLVED that Executive proposed a budget as set out as in appendix 4 for revenue, with the Burial Fees to be amended to 3%, and appendix 7 for capital and that these proposals be considered together with any subsequent consultation comments for approval by Council as the final budget for 2019/20 and the outline plan for the subsequent years 2020/21 and 2021/22.

9. GREATER EXETER STRATEGIC PLAN AND TEIGNBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW TIMETABLES AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Principal Policy Planner presented the report to agree an updated timetable for the preparation and adoption of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan and Teignbridge Local Plan Review as set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) in Appendix A.

Members were informed of the background and the updated timescales. The delay with the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) had deferred publication of the Draft Teignbridge Local Plan with the timescales for the Plan Review subsequently affected.

During discussion, Members raised issues with regards to difference in the timescales of both plans, with reference being made to the Wolborough Development Plan Document in respect of which a planning application had been submitted. There was a need to ensure that the District had a five year housing supply particularly in light of the uplift in housing numbers from central government. A Member queried the decision taken by East Devon District Council which had pushed back the GESP timetable.

In response to Members, the Principal Policy Planner advised that it was intended that both plans should progress as quickly as possible and that, should there be any further slippage, then the timescales could be revisited and action taken to bridge the gap to meet any central government uplift in housing numbers should that be necessary. Work was also being undertaken to ensure that the Council was protected in the case of any slippage in the timetable.

The Leader commented that the GESP would help to secure central government funding for the infrastructure that the region would require to take development forward.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The revised timetable for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan and Teignbridge Local Plan Review is agreed; and
- (2) The Local Development Scheme attached as Appendix A is to have effect from 14th February 2019.

10. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

11. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

12. LAND AT STAPLEHILL ROAD, FORCHES CROSS, NEWTON ABBOT

The Portfolio Holder for Economy, Skills & Tourism presented the report to grant an option to buy land owned by the Council.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the grant of an option as outlined in the circulated report to purchase land owned by the Council with a two year time limit be approved; and
- (2) the details of the option agreement and disposal are delegated to the Chief Finance Officer, Interim Head of Commercial Services and the Portfolio Holder for Economy, Skills & Tourism.

Chairman