

WEST DEVON HUB COMMITTEE



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Hub Committee** held
on
Tuesday, 28th January, 2020 at 2.00 pm at the **Chamber -
Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Jory
Vice Chairman Cllr Samuel

Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Leech
Cllr Moody
Cllr Sellis

Cllr Mott
Cllr Cheadle
Cllr Pearce

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Crozier
Cllr Heyworth
Cllr Musgrave
Cllr Yelland

Cllr Davies
Cllr Moyse
Cllr Renders

Officers:

Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Place & Enterprise
Section 151 Officer
Head of Development Management
Senior Specialists – Car Parks
Senior Specialist – Democratic Services

62. **Declarations of Interest**

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be discussed and the following were made:

Cllr Jory declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 '*Revenue Budget Proposals for 2020-21*' (Minute HC 68 below refers) as he is employed by Business Information Point and remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and vote on this matter.

63. **Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 17 December 2019 were confirmed, and signed by the Chairman, as a correct record.

64. **Public Question Time**

There were no questions submitted by the Public

65. **Forward Plan**

Members were presented with the Hub Committee Forward Plan setting out items on the agenda for Hub Committee meetings for the next four months.

The contents of the Forward Plan were agreed. By way of an update, the Chairman advised that he had agreed that the next Committee meeting on the 17 March 2020 would be cancelled.

66. **Revenue Budget Monitoring**

The Lead Member for Performance and Resources presented the Committee with a report that enabled them to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved budget for 2019/20, and provided a forecast for the year end position.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2019/20 financial year and the overall projected underspend of £46,000 be noted
- (ii) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to transfer £30,000 of the Homelessness Prevention under-spend into the Homelessness Prevention Earmarked Reserve at the end of the 2019/20 financial year.

67. **Capital Budget Monitoring**

Members were presented with a report that advised them of the financial position as at 31 December 2019 for the purposes of budget monitoring. All capital projects were within the individual capital budgets approved by Members. The total capital budget for 2019/20 was £7,532,193 of which £861,955 had been spent to date (as set out in Appendix A of the presented agenda report).

It was then **RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be endorsed.

68. **Revenue Budget Proposals**

The Leader presented Members with a report that set out the latest budget position for the Revenue Budget for 2020/21 and highlighted specific points for consideration. The Leader and S151 Officer responded to a number of questions of clarity. Members requested that a draft Press Release on the Council's budget is emailed to all Members ahead of the Full Council meeting on 18th February.

Members discussed the role of the proposed new Economy Officer post and how it would have clear outputs to be measured against, thus ensuring the post aimed to generate enough income to cover its costs. A Job Description would be emailed to all Members, which Members requested include a reference to agriculture and diversification.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Hub Committee **RECOMMEND** to Council:

- i) The increase in Council Tax for 2020/21 of £5 (Band D of £236.63 for 2020/21 – an increase of 10 pence per week or £5 per year – equates to a 2.16% increase).
- ii) The financial pressures shown in Appendix A of £663,500
- iii) The contributions to Earmarked Reserves of £87,500
- iv) The savings of £530,200 as shown in Appendix A
- v) The use of £228,135 of New Homes Bonus funding to fund the 2020/21 Revenue Budget as set out in 2.20 of the report
- vi) To maintain the deficit recovery period of the Pension Deficit at 17 years (as per 2.26)
- vii) The inclusion of an Economy post (shared with South Hams District Council) within the staffing establishment, as set out in section 1.7.
- viii) To delegate to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader to agree the final amount of New Homes Bonus funding for the Dartmoor National Park Sustainable Community Fund for 2020/21.
- ix) That a collection fund surplus of £67,000 is utilised in 2020/21.
- x) That the Total Net Expenditure of the Council is £7,211,895 for 2020/21.
- xi) That the level of reserves as set out within this report and the assessment of their adequacy and the robustness of budget estimates be noted. This is a requirement of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The Hub Committee also **RECOMMEND** to Council the Fees and Charges below which form part of the Revenue Budget Proposals for 2020/21:

- xii) To approve the proposed Environmental Health charges in Appendix D.
- xiii) To approve the proposed unchanged fees and charges set out for Development Management in Appendix C.
- xiv) To approve that charges be introduced for the use of the existing electric charging points at Kilworthy Park.
- xv) To approve the introduction of Proof of Life charges with immediate effect, once approval from Members has been received as set out in paragraph 5.13.
- xvi) To approve the changes to S257 Footpath Diversion Orders charges with immediate effect, once approval from Members has been received as set out in paragraph 5.14.
- xvii) To approve the proposals to increase charges to Parish and Town Councils for the emptying of dog waste and litter bins as set out in paragraph 5.15.
- xviii) Delegated authority is given to the Section 151 Officer and the Portfolio Holder to set the Local Land Charges as appropriate for cost recovery.

69. **Capital Budget Proposals**

Members were presented with a report that set out the Capital Programme proposals for 2020/21.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Hub Committee **RECOMMEND** to Council that approval be given to:

- i) The Capital Programme for 2020/21, which totals £910,000 (Appendix A);
- ii) The Capital Programme for 2020/21, which totals £140,000 (Exempt Appendix C); and
- iii) The funding of the 2020/21 Capital Programme of £1,050,000 from the funding sources set out in Section 4.

70. **Write Off Report**

Members were presented with a report that informed them of the debt written off for revenue streams within the Revenue and Benefits service. Debts up to the value of £5,000 were written off by the s151

officer under delegated authority. Permission was sought to write off any individual debts with a value of more than £5,000, if there were any.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Hub Committee note that:

1. in accordance with Financial Regulations, the S151 Officer has authorized the write off of individual West Devon Borough Council debts totalling £55,318.18 as detailed in tables 1 and 2; and
2. there were no write offs for individual debts in excess of £5,000 to be approved this time.

71. **Pre Application Process Report**

Members were presented with a report that recommended the introduction of the new pre application process. The Lead Member for Environment, along with the Head of Development Management (DM), responded to questions.

Members were supportive of the proposal particularly with the ability to measure improvements to performance for both the Council and applicants. It was confirmed that General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) would be complied with as pre-application advice will be in the public domain from commencement of Service. The Lead Member for Environment confirmed that the scheduled Member DM training on Tuesday, 4th February 2020 would cover the new service.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Hub Committee **RECOMMEND** to Council that the Pre-Application process, as detailed in Appendix 1, be approved.

72. **Electric Charging Points**

Members were presented with a report that informed them of the proposal to provide electric charging points in some of the Council's car parks. Members sought confirmation of the comparison of the carbon footprints of electric vehicles compared to petrol/diesel vehicles. Other Towns and Parishes not in the first tranche for electric charging points provision were advised to contact Devon County Council who would be interested in exploring options further.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Hub Committee **RECOMMEND** to Council:

- (i) That the Council signs up to the collaboration agreement with Devon County Council for the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points;
- (ii) That the potential sites where the Electric Vehicle Charging Point should be installed are as listed in paragraph 1.3 of the report;
- (iii) That the Council enters into a lease with the appointed supplier for a 10 year period; and
- (iv) That funding (£8,000) for the charging points is obtained from the Car Park Maintenance Reserve.

73. **Exclusion of Public & Press**

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act is involved.

74. **Future IT Procurement**

Members were presented with an exempt report by the Lead Member for Performance that outlined the process of procurement undertaken to look at future IT system for the Council.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) That the Hub Committee agree the contract be awarded for the future Case Management technology to the selected supplier as outlined in the exempt agenda report;
- (ii) The Hub Committee resolve to **RECOMMEND** to Council to approve the use of £65,000 from the IT Development earmarked reserve and £18,000 from the Budget Surplus Contingency earmarked reserve for the Future IT project implementation.
- (iii) Delegated authority be granted for the contract award of a Document Management system, to the Strategic Director of Customer Service Delivery in consultation with the Lead Member for Performance and Resources and the Leader of the Council

75. **Re-Admittance of Public & Press**

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting

76. **Lead Member Update -Cllr Sellis: Homes**

With the Chairman's agreement, the Lead Member Update was deferred to the next Hub Committee meeting.

77. **Reports of Bodies - Overview and Scrutiny Minutes**

Following a review of the Minutes from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 14 January 2020, it was **RESOLVED** that:

O&S 72: Safeguarding: Annual Update

That Council be **RECOMMENDED** to Council that the revised Safeguarding Policy (as attached at Appendix A of the presented agenda report) be adopted.

(NOTE: THESE DECISIONS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HC66, HC68, HC69, HC71, HC72, HC74 and HC77 WHICH ARE RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL ON 18 FEBRUARY 2020, WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM WEDNESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2020 UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 18).

The Meeting concluded at 3.39 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
