

SOUTH HAMS JOINT DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL



Minutes of a meeting of the **South Hams Joint Development Management Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Panel** held on **Thursday, 14th January, 2021 at 10.00 am** at the **Via Teams**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Birch
Vice Chairman Cllr Smerdon

Cllr Brazil
Cllr Hodgson
Cllr Pennington
Cllr Rowe
Cllr Austen
Cllr Jackson
Cllr Long
Cllr O'Callaghan
Cllr Reeve
Cllr Sweett
Cllr Thomas

Cllr Brown
Cllr Holway
Cllr Pringle
Cllr Abbott
Cllr Chown
Cllr Kemp
Cllr McKay
Cllr Pannell
Cllr Spencer
Cllr Taylor

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Baldry
Cllr Hawkins
Cllr Pearce

Cllr Bastone
Cllr Hopwood

Officers:
Senior Leadership Team
Head of Finance
Democratic Services Manager

12. **Minutes of Joint Meeting held on 3 September 2020**

OSDM.12/20

The minutes of the last Joint Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Development Management Committee meeting held on 3 September 2020 were confirmed as a true and correct record.

13. **Declarations of Interest**

OSDM.13/20

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting but there were none made.

14. **Public Forum**

OSDM.14/20

In accordance with the Public Forum Procedure Rules, the Chairman informed that no questions had been received for consideration during the agenda item.

15. **Draft Revenue Budget Proposals for 2021/22**

OSDM.15/20

Members considered a report that asked for their views on the content of the draft Revenue Budget Proposals report for 2021-22.

In her introduction, the Leader of Council outlined the main changes to the draft Revenue Budget Proposals for 2021/22 since the matter was last reported to the Executive meeting held on 17 December 2020 (Minute E.51/20 refers). The Leader proceeded to thank the Section 151 Officer and her Finance colleagues for incorporating them into the revised report for this meeting.

In the ensuing discussion, particular reference was made to:-

- (a) the business rates loophole for second homes. In reply to a question, the Leader informed that lobbying to close the loophole was ongoing and it was hoped that this would be implemented as part of the Business Rates Reform during the Spring of 2021;
- (b) individual town and parish council precept information. The Section 151 Officer advised that this information was contained within the published agenda papers for the annual Council Tax Setting Panel meeting;
- (c) bad debt provision during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Members acknowledged that, whilst Central Government had committed to compensating for 75% of irrecoverable losses, there would still be a significant budgetary impact on all precepting authorities;
- (d) the consultation on reforms to the Public Works Loan Board. When questioned, the Section 151 Officer informed that the deadline for Member approval of the Capital Strategy; Investment Strategy; and Treasury Management Strategy was 31 March 2021. As a result, these Strategies would be included on the Council agenda for the meeting to be held on 25 March 2021;
- (e) the vacant Economy Officer post. Members noted that, following a recent recruitment and selection exercise, it was envisaged that the post would be filled imminently;

- (f) an additional recommendation to the presented agenda report. An additional recommendation (that was considered as 'number 2') was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** that read as follows:

2. *That the Joint Meeting support the allocation of £500,000 for funding for the Recovery and Renewal Plan and a further £200,000 funding for the Climate Change Action Plan, to be funded by:*
- a. *withdrawing the contribution to the Planning Earmarked Reserve in 2021-22 of £50,000;*
 - b. *utilising £200,000 of New Homes Bonus funding from 2021-22 (instead of using £200,000 of New Homes Bonus funding for the 2021-22 Capital Programme); and*
 - c. *using £450,000 of funding from the Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve;*

In support of the recommendation, the proposer stated that it would help to demonstrate the commitment and emphasis that the Council was placing on both its Recovery and Renewal Plan and Climate Change Action Plan.

At this point, an amendment to the recommendation (as set out in red font) was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** that read as follows:

2. *That the Joint Meeting support the allocation of £500,000 for funding for the Recovery and Renewal Plan and a further £322,274 funding for the Climate Change Action Plan, to be funded by:*
- a. *withdrawing the contribution to the Planning Earmarked Reserve in 2021-22 of £50,000;*
 - b. *utilising £200,000 of New Homes Bonus funding from 2021-22 (instead of using £200,000 of New Homes Bonus funding for the 2021-22 Capital Programme);*
 - c. *using £450,000 of funding from the Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve; and*
 - d. *using £122,274 of the remaining unallocated New Homes Bonus monies for 2021-22;*

The proposer of the amendment felt that the recommendation could go a step further and also include the £122,274 of the remaining unallocated New Homes Bonus monies for 2021-22 towards funding the Climate Change Action Plan.

In debate, other Members urged caution over approving what were considered to be arbitrary figures and highlighted the uncertainty around future funding provision. As a result, some Members stated that they could not support this amendment.

In the subsequent vote on the amendment, it was declared **CARRIED**, by virtue of the Chairman's Casting Vote, and was therefore included as part of the substantive motion.

It was then:

RECOMMENDED

That the Executive **RECOMMEND** to Council that the Joint Meeting supports:-

1. the proposed increase in Council Tax for 2021/22 of £5 (Band D of £175.42 for 2021/22 – an increase of 10 pence per week or £5 per year – equating to a 2.93% increase);
2. the allocation of £500,000 for funding for the Recovery and Renewal Plan and a further £322,274 funding for the Climate Change Action Plan, to be funded by:
 - a. withdrawing the contribution to the Planning Earmarked Reserve in 2021-22 of £50,000;
 - b. utilising £200,000 of New Homes Bonus funding from 2021-22 (instead of using £200,000 of New Homes Bonus funding for the 2021-22 Capital Programme);
 - c. using £450,000 of funding from the Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve; and
 - d. using £122,274 of the remaining unallocated New Homes Bonus monies for 2021-22;
3. the financial pressures amounting to £668,761 (as shown in Appendix A of the presented agenda report);
4. the net contributions to/from Earmarked Reserves amounting to £364,600 (as set out in Appendix D of the presented agenda report), including the proposed use of £746,000 of New Homes Bonus funding to fund the 2021/22 Revenue Budget (as set out in section 4.24 of the presented agenda report);
5. the proposed savings of £122,191 for 2021/22 (as shown in Appendix A of the presented agenda report);
6. the proposed funding levels (as set out in section 5 of the presented agenda report) and, in addition, a further £3,000 be added to the Partnership Funding Budget, to enable a £10,000 contribution to the South Hams CVS in 2021/22 and 2022/23.

16.

Review of Fees and Charges for 2021/22

OSDM.16/20

Consideration was given to a report that set out proposals for any changes to Fees and Charges for all services for 2021/22.

With no questions or debate forthcoming, it was then:

RECOMMENDED

That the Joint Meeting **RECOMMEND** that the Executive **RECOMMEND** to Council that:-

1. the level of fees and charges for Parks, Open Spaces and Outdoor Sports for 2021/22 be maintained at the current levels with no proposed increases (as set out in Appendix A of the presented agenda report);
2. the Environmental Health charges for 2021/22 be maintained at the current levels with no proposed increases (as set out at Appendix B of the presented agenda report);
3. the level of Fees and Charges for Planning Applications and Enforcement for 2021/22 be maintained at the current levels with no proposed increases (as set out at Appendix C of the presented agenda report);
4. the proposed fees and charges for Street Naming for 2021/22 be approved as set out at Appendix C of the presented agenda report;
5. the proposed Section 106 Monitoring fees for 2021/22 (as set out at Appendix C) be approved;
6. delegated authority be given to the Director of Place and Enterprise, in consultation with the lead Executive Member, to set the Dartmouth Lower Ferry Fees in order to take account of market conditions, including competitor charges;
7. the proposed changes to Boat Storage Charges (as set out in paragraph 3.10 of the presented agenda report) be approved;
8. delegated authority be given to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the lead Executive Member, to set the Local Land Charges as appropriate to ensure cost recovery; and
9. delegated authority be given to the relevant Head of Practice, in consultation with the relevant lead Executive Member, to adjust Fees and Charges within their service area by inflation at suitable periodic intervals, with reports being presented to the Executive as appropriate.

The Meeting concluded at 12.10 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
