

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 13 September 2016

Present:

Councillor Edwards (Chair)
Councillors Bialyk, Bull, Denham, Hannaford, Morse, Pearson and Sutton

Apologies:

Councillors Leadbetter and Owen

Also present:

Deputy Chief Executive, Assistant Director Customer Access, Assistant Director Public Realm, Assistant Director Environment, Corporate Manager - Legal, Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support, City Arts and Events Manager, Service Improvement Lead (Customer Support) and Democratic Services Manager (Committees)

94

MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 14 June and 12 July 2016 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

95

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made.

96

DELEGATED DECISION - IMPROVEMENTS TO RAILWAY ARCHES

The Assistant Director Environment updated Members on the need for the urgent capital funding for the improvements to the Railway Arches at Riverside. The works to progress the project were currently out to tender.

The Portfolio Holder for Place stated that this work was welcome by local residents and business, and leisure centre users.

RESOLVED that the delegated decision of the Assistant Director Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Place to approve emergency capital funding of £50,000 from this year's (2016/17) general capital fund for improvements to the Railway Arches at Riverside, Cowick Street be noted.

97

LEISURE COMPLEX AND BUS STATION PROGRAMME BOARD - MINUTES 12 JULY 2016

The minutes of the Leisure Complex and Bus Station Programme Board meeting held on 12 July 2016 were submitted.

The Portfolio Holder for Sport, Health and Wellbeing commented that a meeting of the Programme Board has taken place on 12 September 2016 and to improve efficiency the Leisure Complex and Bus Station Steering Groups meetings would now be combined.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure Complex and Bus Station Programme Board meeting held on 12 July 2016 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

98

REVIEW OF LATE OPENING

The report of the Assistant Director Customer Access was submitted reviewing the extended opening on Mondays and Thursdays in the Customer Service Centre and Call Centre.

Members were advised that over the last three years various opening hours for access to the Customer Services Centre and Call Centre had been trialled. The data collected on the current opening hours of Monday and Thursday 5pm to 6pm showed that footfall and telephones was very small in relation to the minimum number of staff required to keep the Centre open for this extended time. It was considered that resources should be used more efficiently to protect and increase the Council's income by Customer Service Officers undertaking the complex case working, pursuing debt owed to the Council, processing council tax changes and reviewing discounts and exemptions.

In response to Members' questions, the Service Improvement Lead (Customer Support) clarified that the peak time for customers was Monday morning slowing down about midday. There was increase in customers with money problems and mental health and drug issues and, at times, two Security Officers were required to be in attendance to intervene with customers.

Members welcomed the proposal and acknowledged that, given the increasing complex nature of the issues presented by customers, resources could be used more efficiently.

People Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 1 September 2016 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that, for the efficiency of the service, the amendment of opening hours to 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday from 31 October 2016 be approved.

99

TRANSFER OF EXETER'S VALLEY PARKS TO DEVON WILDLIFE TRUST

The report of the Assistant Director Public Realm was submitted for Members to consider whether to transfer the City Council's Valley Parks to Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT).

Members were advised that the transfer of the valley parks was a transformation plan objective, as the Council's operating costs and risks would be reduced, supported by a financially sustainable plan. There was also the opportunity for greater enhancement of the Valley Parks, which included land owned or leased by the City Council at Riverside, Ludwell, Mincinglake, Belvedere and Duryard, Barley Valley and Withycombe Way to encourage even greater use. This approach would support the delivery of the Exe Valley Parks masterplan and the City Council's responsibility to provide Sustainable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs) to address the demands that development places on protected habitats.

Place Scrutiny Committee had received a presentation from Harry Barton, Chief Executive of DWT on the aspirations and visions of the Trust to enhance the Valley Parks.

In response to Members' questions, the Assistant Director Public Realm commented that the DWT would work towards the objectives in the Exe Valley Parks Masterplan; it was intended that a community forum would be set up to engage with the work of the DWT in relation to the management of the Valley Parks; the terms of the lease would be agreed in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder Support Services; and the arrangements for the dog and litter bins would remain the responsibility of the Council.

Members welcomed the way forward, recognising that the DWT would have the opportunity to access additional funding. It had considerable volunteer support and a good track record of protecting open space.

Place Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 8 September 2016 and its comments were reported.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the:-

- (1) final business case for the transfer of the City Council's Valley Parks to Devon Wildlife Trust in accordance with the Council's Organisational Change Policy be approved;
- (2) transfer by lease of land owned and leased by the City Council in Exeter's Valley Parks, namely Riverside, Ludwell, Mincinglake, Belvedere and Duryard, Barley Valley and Withycombe Way, to Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) for a period of 30 years be approved, with the detailed terms to be agreed by the Corporate Manager Property in consultation with the Leader and the Portfolio Holder Support Services;
- (3) disposal of land in accordance with the provisions of Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 be advertised;
- (4) principle of the grant of a development agreement and ground lease for a period of 99 years on any land identified between the Council and the Devon Wildlife Trust as suitable for a Visitor Centre be approved;
- (5) a financial contribution of £425,000 to the Devon Wildlife Trust on transfer be approved; and
- (6) principle of the Council making an additional £100,000 contribution in 2022 in the exceptional circumstance where additional investment is required that cannot be found within the Trust's existing resources be approved, and that an agreement between the Council and the Trust setting out the specific conditions for the additional payment be delegated to the Assistant Director Public Realm, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Place and the Leader of Council.

DELIVERING THE PARKING STRATEGY: TARIFFS, DESIGNATIONS AND PERMITS

The report of the Assistant Director Public Realm was submitted updating Members on car park tariff, designation and permit changes to be introduced with effect from January 2017.

Members were advised of the background which included a new strategic approach to off-street parking which was adopted in March 2016, following a detailed parking

review by consultants, and a number of Spotlight Reviews during 2014/15. The approach was to deliver the optimum impact on each of the four City Council's strategic objectives outlined in the 'New Strategy for Parking 2016 – 2026' including economic growth; maximising capacity, reducing congestion and maintaining income. The proposed tariff structure should provide a more gradual and even rise in price with a clearer 'per hour' rationale. Proposed changes to the evening parking offer and the extension of the day time linear tariff into the evening would provide more clarity, and additional staff would be needed to support an extension of the opening hours of the Guildhall and John Lewis car parks. Any evidence of a significant adverse change in car parking habits and footfall in the city centre would be monitored.

Members discussed the designation of the car parks, signage and the need for a co-ordinated approach across all platforms including the web site to direct people to the car parks across the city.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture stated that further work would be undertaken on signage and usage of the car parks in the city.

Place Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 8 September 2016 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that the following be approved:-

- (1) the adoption of a linear approach to parking tariffs in order to simplify the pricing structure and encourage increased visitor dwell time, as set out in table below:-

Premier Car Parks (Guildhall, Mary Arches, John Lewis)		
Stay	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff
1 hour	£1.80	£2.00
2 hours	£2.60	£3.00
3 hours	£3.50	£4.00
4 hours	£6.50	£5.00
5 hours	£8.80	£6.00
6 hours	£11.80	£7.00
7 hours	£11.80	£8.00
All day	£11.80	£12.00
Short Stay Car Parks (Bampfylde Street, Bartholomew Terrace, Harlequins, King William Street, Magdalen Road, Magdalen Street, Matthews Hall, Princesshay 2, Princesshay 3, Smythen Street)		
Stay	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff
1 hour	£1.20	£1.00
2 hours	£2.20	£2.00
3 hours	£3.30	£3.00
4 hours	£5.70	£4.00
5 hours	£7.70	£5.00
6 hours	£10.80	£6.00
7 hours	£10.80	£7.00
All day	£10.80	£10.00
Long Stay Car Parks (Belmont Road, Bystock Terrace, Cathedral & Quay, Haven Road 1, Howell Road, Richmond Road, Parr Street, Topsham Quay)		

Stay	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff
1 hour	£0.80	£1.00
2 hours	£1.20	£2.00
3 hours	£1.80	£3.00
4 hours	£3.20	£4.00
5 hours	£5.00	£5.00
All day	£6.20	£6.00
Local Car Parks (Gordons Place, Haven Road 2 & 3, Holman Way, Okehampton Street, Tappers Close)		
Stay	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff
1 hour	£0.60	£0.50
2 hours	£0.80	£1.00
3 hours	£1.00	£1.50
4 hours	£1.20	£2.00
All day	£1.80	£2.50
Coach Parking at Haven Road 3 (per day)	£5.00	£5.00
Quarterly Commuter Season Ticket	£260.00	£300.00
Residents Annual Season Ticket	£125.00	£125.00
Bartholomew Terrace Business Permit	£205.00	£205.00
Cathedral & Quay Business Bays	£565.00	£565.00

- (2) the extension of the new linear tariff to midnight at Mary Arches, Guildhall and John Lewis Car Parks, replacing the current £2.00 evening parking charge at Mary Arches Street after 6pm, subject to approval of the business case to extend staffed evening parking facilities at these sites;
- (3) the operation of Mary Arches Street and Guildhall Car Parks until midnight and the John Lewis Car Park until 9pm, demand at John Lewis to be monitored to ensure closing time remains proportionate to demand;
- (4) the re-designation of Topsham Quay as a long stay car park;
- (5) the re-designation of Haven Road Car Park to offer both long stay and local rate parking options;
- (6) to facilitate, and better advertise, long stay parking (up to 3 days) at Tappers Close Car Park to encourage rail use at adjacent station;
- (7) to maintain, but not extend, existing resident and business annual season ticket schemes to support city centre living and smaller businesses;
- (8) to increase the cost of an annual season ticket from £260 to £300 per quarter to help encourage commuter use of public transport;

- (9) to continue to offer free parking support to Blue Badge holders in all Pay & Display car parks and to consult with appropriate groups to better understand why certain disabled parking areas are underused; and
- (10) with the exception of Mary Arches Street, Guildhall and John Lewis Car Park, the current charging hours of 8am to 6pm in all Exeter car parks and 9am to 5pm in all Topsham car parks be maintained.

101

CLEAN STREETS STRATEGY

The report of the Assistant Director Public Realm was submitted which sought adoption of the new Clean Streets Strategy.

Members were advised that the Strategy was a new strategic approach to the street cleaning service provided by the City Council, with a focus on resourcing against demand, behaviour change, improving productivity and community engagement. The Action Plan and the initial focus was to ensure there was a baseline standard for the measurement of performance, and establishment of a business case with the aim of increasing productivity through mechanisation and business case for increased enforcement.

The Portfolio Holder for Place stated that this proposal was a positive way forward and supported the objectives in the Action Plan.

In response to a Member, the Assistant Director Public Realm clarified that it was anticipated that the digital reporting of litter, graffiti and dog fouling would be brought on-line in the first six months of 2017.

Members discussed the problem of trade waste on the High Street particularly on weekend evenings. The Portfolio Holder for Place stated that this issue was being addressed and that a new operating model was being discussed to help tackle this problem and bring business on board.

Place Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 8 September 2016 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that the adoption of the Clean Streets Strategy 2016 be approved and that work commences towards the delivery of the Strategy's Action Plan.

102

ANNUAL ARTS AND EVENTS REVIEW

The report of Economy and Enterprise Manager was submitted reviewing the performance of the Arts and Events portfolio for 2016/17 and setting out a programme for 2017/18.

The City Arts and Events Manager advised Members that a Creative Industry event, would be hosted by Radio One on 1 November, which was testament to the operational success of the Big Weekend event.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture stated that the Unexpected Festival would take place on 4 November and would include a celebration of the 450th anniversary of the Exeter Ship Canal.

Members thanked the City Arts and Events Manager and team for all their hard work to ensure the success of the events that had been held in and around the City over the past few years.

Place Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 8 September 2016 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that the following be approved:-

- (1)
 - a) proposals to deliver a new festival of performance in 2017 working in partnership with Exeter Bikeshed Theatre, Exeter Phoenix and Exeter Northcott pending successful application to Arts Council England's Ambitions for Excellence Fund by Bikeshed Theatre, and
 - b) pending the successful application to Arts Council England as set out in paragraph 2.2a of the report and confirmation of Council budgets, the use of the £50,000 arts budget in 2017 as match funding for the delivery of a new festival of performance.
- (2) in the event that external funding support for a new festival is not forthcoming, the continuation of the Unexpected Festival in 2017; and
- (3) the budgets for project grants and other project support as outlined in paragraph 4.1 of the report pending confirmation of Council budgets for 2017/18.

103

REVIEW OF STAFFING - LEGAL SERVICES, COMMERCIAL CONVEYANCING AND PLANNING

The report of the Corporate Manager Legal Services, Corporate Manager Property and Assistant Director City Development was submitted which sought approval for the deletion of the unfilled full time Conveyancer and Planning Solicitor post and the creation of a new full time Commercial Property Lawyer and a new part time Planning Lawyer post.

Members were advised that a post of Conveyancer and Planning Solicitor had been created in 2015 following approval by Council but although this post had been advertised on two occasions no suitable qualified applicants had applied. Whilst locum solicitors had been recruited this was only a short term as it was an expensive overhead. Therefore this proposal sought to address the short fall in resources to provide an effective and efficient commercial conveyancing service and respond to City Development's request for additional legal support.

Members supported the way forward whilst acknowledging the challenge to recruit staff with specialist skills.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

- (1) the post of Conveyancer and Planning Solicitor be deleted from the establishment;
- (2) a new full time post of Commercial Property Lawyer and a new part time post of Planning Solicitor be created with immediate effect; and
- (3) the Legal Services budget be increased by £17,056 to account for the two new posts.

104

REVIEW OF STAFFING - DEMOCRATIC AND CIVIC SUPPORT

The report of the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support was submitted providing Members with a business case which examined the need to increase the staffing provision within both the Democratic Services (Committees) and Mayoralty teams to ensure that the services provided by both teams could be delivered in the most effective and efficient way.

Members supported the proposal recognising the increasing number of Committee meetings some as a result of joint working with other local authorities and the advantages of promoting the Guildhall for private functions and weddings.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

- (1) two new posts be added to the Council's establishment as identified within the report; and
- (2) the Council's budget be adjusted accordingly.

105

BUSINESS CASE FOR ADDITIONAL PARKING STAFF

The report of the Assistant Director Public Realm was submitted providing Members with a business case which examined the need to increase staffing to provide a new evening staffed parking service in specific car parks in the City Centre.

Members welcomed that car park users would now have a choice of manned or unmanned car parks of an evening.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

- (1) two new posts be added to the Council's establishment as identified in the report; and
- (2) the budget be increased by £45,568 in respect of these two new posts.

106

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

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act.

107

TRANSFER OF EXETER'S VALLEY PARKS TO DEVON WILDLIFE TRUST - IMPLICATIONS FOR STAFF

The Assistant Director Public Realm advised on staffing matters relating to the earlier report (Minute 99) considered by Members on the transfer of the valley parks to the Devon Wildlife Trust and detailed the implications for staff who currently manage the Valley Parks.

RECEOMMENDATION as per minute 99 above.

EXETER HEART OF DEVON GROWTH BOARD MINUTES

Place Scrutiny Committee considered the minutes at its meeting on 8 September 2016 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Exeter Heart of Devon Growth Board meeting held on 28 June 2016 be noted.

(The meeting commenced at 5.34 pm and closed at 6.45 pm)

Chair

The decisions indicated will normally come into force 5 working days after publication of the Statement of Decisions unless called in by a Scrutiny Committee. Where the matter in question is urgent, the decision will come into force immediately. Decisions regarding the policy framework or corporate objectives or otherwise outside the remit of the Executive will be considered by Council on 18 October 2016.