

EXETER CITY COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE

Statement of Decisions

Monday 1 July 2013

Present:-

Councillor Peter Edwards (Chair)
Councillors Denham, Fullam, Hannaford, Mrs Henson, Martin, Sheldon and Sutton

Also Present

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Deputy Chief Executive, Acting Assistant Director Finance, Corporate Manager - Legal, Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support, Property Manager, Service Manager, HR Business Manager, Project Manager (RAMM) and Democratic Services Manager (Committees)

Declarations of Interest

(Minute 70)

No declarations of interest were made.

Capital Monitoring 2012/13 and Revised Capital Programme for 2013/14 and Future years

(Minute 71)

The report of the Acting Assistant Director Finance was submitted, advising Members of the overall financial performance of the Council for the 2012/13 financial year, in respect of the annual capital programme. Approval was also sought for the 2013/14 revised capital programme, including commitments carried forward from 2012/13.

Members were advised that Capital expenditure in the year amounted to £15,859,107, a reduction of £2,287,763 on the planned figure of £18,146,870. The actual expenditure during 2012/13 represented 87.4% of the total approved for the revised Capital Programme, which meant £2.4 million would need to be carried forward to be spent in future years.

The Acting Assistant Director Finance referred to further funding requests including a budget of £300,000 for the purchase of temporary accommodation and £120,000 to be added to the 2013/14 Capital programme to meet costs of essential repairs to four council dwellings.

Discussion took place regarding the kitchen and bathroom replacement programme and the need to ensure that the Council's housing stock was maintained to a good standard. The replacement programme for kitchens was currently on a 25 year cycle although replacements were not undertaken if kitchens and bathrooms were in good working order.

Consultation with the Local Ward Members had been undertaken on the future of 22 St David's Hill and this property would be now sold and the monies reinvested in other temporary accommodation projects.

Scrutiny Committee – Resources considered the report at its meeting on 19 June 2013 and the comments of the members were noted.

Executive recommended that Council notes and approves:-

- (1) overall financial position for the 2012/13 annual capital programme;
- (2) amendments to the Council's annual capital programme for 2013/14;
and
- (3) further funding requests as set out in Section 7 of the report.

Overview of Revenue Budget 2012/13

(Minute 72)

The report of the Acting Assistant Director Finance was submitted, advising Members of the overall financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Fund Revenue Budgets for the 2012/13 financial year. Final accounts showed an overall increase in the HRA working balance from £5,764,423 to £6,290,297, an increase of £525,874 as compared with the planned increase of £2,320,270. The General Fund Service Committees showed an overall underspend of £353,970 against a revised budget of £13,718,210.

Members were updated on the Earmarked Reserves position, which included potential costs in respect of the compensation claims for the RAMM project, Exeter Business Against Crime and the Exe Harbour Review.

Scrutiny Committee – Resources considered the report at its meeting on 19 June 2013 and the comments of the members were noted.

Executive recommended that Council:-

- (1) approves the net transfer of £1,128,348 to Earmarked Reserves, as detailed in paragraph 3.11;
- (2) approves the supplementary budgets of £287,860, as detailed in paragraph 3.16;
- (3) notes the Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2013;
- (4) notes the Council Tax account and collection rate;
- (5) notes the outstanding sundry debt, aged debt analysis and debt write-off figures;
- (6) notes the creditor payments performance;
- (7) by taking into account the overall financial position of the Council, as set out in paragraph 3.14, approves the General Fund working balance at 31 March 2013 at £3,358,047; and
- (8) approves the Housing Revenue Account working balance at 31 March 2013 at £6,290,297 and the Council Own Build working balance at £73,498.

Treasury Management 2012/13

(Minute 73)

The report of the Acting Assistant Director Finance was submitted, reporting on the overall performance for the 2012/13 financial year and the position regarding investments and borrowing at 31 March 2013. Members were updated on the final net interest position, investment interest and current situation with regards to the Icelandic Banks repayments.

The Acting Assistant Director Finance advised that the Council continued to use short term borrowing to manage its cashflow and whilst the interest rates remained very low this could be converted to longer term borrowing should the interest rate start to rise. The Council undertook short term investment of funds whilst the return was minimal it did mitigate the risk of having funds placed in one institution.

Scrutiny Committee – Resources considered the report at its meeting on 19 June 2013 and the comments of the members were noted.

Executive recommended that Council notes and approves the Treasury Management report for the 2012/13 financial year.

Consultation and Negotiation Framework

(Minute 74)

The report of the Human Resources Business Manager was submitted, which sought to establish a framework for undertaking effective, timely and meaningful consultation and negotiations at the Council for incorporation into the Council's Constitution. This arrangement would seek to incorporate the consultation and Health and Safety elements associated with the existing Employee Liaison Forum as a more frequent and effective means of undertaking consultation at the Council, as well as introducing a means of conducting negotiations and collective consultations.

Scrutiny Committee – Resources considered the report at its meeting on 19 June 2013 and the comments of the members were noted.

Executive recommended that Council notes and approves:-

- (1) the proposed constitution for a joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be agreed for adoption in place of the Employee Liaison Forum, following agreement with the recognised Trade Unions; and
- (2) to delegate to the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support all consequential amendments required to the Constitution.

Pay by Phone Parking

(Minute 75)

The report of the Assistant Director Public Realm was submitted, seeking Members' approval to introduce phone 'cashless' parking in City Council Pay & Display car parks.

Members were advised that this means of payment had, over recent years, become a well established payment option that was seen to have significant advantages for customers, avoiding the need for them to carry large amounts of loose change and providing the facility for parking periods to be topped-up remotely. The system would extend the flexibility of payment options beyond what was already provided in some locations by pay-on-foot, with the result that people's shopping and visiting times would not be curtailed by concerns about overstaying their parking periods. The system was already in operation in most on-street locations in the city and had also been introduced in a number of neighbouring local authorities.

Executive resolved that:-

- (1) approve the introduction of 'pay by phone' to City Council pay & display car parks from 1 October 2013 (or as soon as possible thereafter) and authorise officers to tender and let an initial contract until December 2015 (with the option of extension for a further year);
- (2) approve an Amendment to the City of Exeter (Civil Enforcement Off Street Parking Places) Order 2012 to enable 'pay by phone' parking and authorise the Assistant Director Public Realm, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for City Development, to consider any objections to the amended Order; and
- (3) agree that, subject to consideration of any objections, the Order be made and sealed.

Honorary Freeman of the City Status to Saxon Spence C.B.E.

(Minute 76)

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to confer on Saxon Spence Honorary Freeman of the City Status in recognition of the eminent service to the City of Exeter as a member of Devon County Council during which she supported and promoted the interests of the City and its residents.

Members welcomed this recognition of the dedicated service that Saxon Spence had given to the City of Exeter and its residents.

Executive recommended that Council notes and approves:-

- (1) the title of Honorary Freeman of the City Status be conferred on Saxon Spence C.B.E.; and
- (2) the Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor be requested to convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to be held on the rising of the ordinary meeting on 16 July 2013, for the purpose of passing the appropriate resolution under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Freedom of the City to the Royal Air Force

(Minute 77)

The report of the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support was submitted in response to a request that had been received from a member of the public to consider the granting of the Freedom of the City to the Royal Air Force to recognise and acknowledge the Force's role in the City and County, particularly during World War Two. It was considered appropriate that RAF Brize Norton be bestowed the honour of the Freedom of the City in recognition of the important role that the RAF had and continued to play in military involvement in the City and County.

Members fully supported the bestowing the honour of the Freedom of the City of Exeter on the Royal Air Force.

Executive recommended that Council approve that the Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor be requested to convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to be held on the rising of the ordinary meeting on 16 July 2013, for the purpose of considering the matter of bestowing the honour of the Freedom of the City of Exeter on the Royal Air Force, and in particular RAF Brize Norton.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public

(Minute 78)

Executive 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 items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act.

Royal Albert Memorial Museum Update

(Minute 79)

The report of the Corporate Manager Legal Services was submitted, looking to agree a budget to further progress the Council's case in relation to the RAMM re-development Project.

Members supported the way forward.

Executive recommended that Council notes and approves a reserve of £500,000 to fund the costs to bring the claims against third parties in relation to the RAMM re-development Project and that any expenditure over £150,000 be delegated to the Corporate Manager – Legal Services in consultation with three Group Leaders.

Exeter Bus and Coach Station Re-development

(Minute 80)

The Chief Executive & Growth Director presented the report to update Members on the current position regarding the redevelopment project for the Bus and Coach Station site and to consider mechanisms by which the City Council could proceed to deliver a new leisure centre on part of the site in isolation of any wider regeneration. Members were updated on the on-going discussions with Land Securities and the Crown Estate Commissioners regarding an extended exclusivity arrangement and heads of terms for a delivery agreement with a view to bringing forward a comprehensive re-development of the site.

Members discussed the impact that the current economic climate had on the redevelopment of the Bus and Coach Station site and the options that were available for the Council to consider in order to pursue a leisure facility on the site.

Executive resolved that:-

- (1) the current position as regards the re-development of the Exeter Bus & Coach Station site be noted ;
- (2) the Property Manager (Strategy), in consultation with the Chief Executive & Growth Director, be authorised to seek to negotiate an agreement with Stagecoach regarding the termination of their existing bus station lease; negotiation of a new lease of the operational bus station; to assist in seeking to mitigate the impact on Stagecoach's operations from the loss of the stabling facilities and, if a negotiated settlement cannot be reached, to arrange service of the necessary notices to terminate the Stagecoach tenancy; and

- (3) to authorise the Property Manager (Strategy), in consultation with the Chief Executive & Growth Director, to negotiate terms for a new exclusivity agreement with Land Securities and the Crown Estate Commissioners along the lines set out in the report.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.23 pm)

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 16 July 2013