

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 21 January 2014

Present:

Councillor Sutton (Chair)
Councillors Denham, Fullam, Hannaford, Mrs Henson, Owen and Pearson

Apologies:

Councillor Edwards

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Deputy Chief Executive, Assistant Director Economy, Assistant Director Housing, Assistant Director Finance, Museums Manager and Democratic Services Manager (Committees)

1

MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of Executive held on 29 November and 10 December 2013 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct records.

2

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

3

RUGBY WORLD CUP 2015

The Assistant Director Economy updated Members on the host city responsibilities which formed the Host City Agreement. The responsibilities included provision of a Fanzone, City Dressing, Commercial Rights Protection, Transport Management Support and Volunteers Support. A City Steering Group with all key agencies met monthly to work through the detail to prepare for the programme of activities. The legacy was split broadly into five themes which were aimed at benefits to the local community. Members were updated on the outline budget although this did not take into account any potential income raised through sales of food and drink or other income earning activities.

In response to Members, the Assistant Director Economy advised that it was anticipated that the Newcourt rail halt would be in place by the start of the Rugby World Cup and that experienced stewards/games markers would be utilised to marshal spectators.

Members noted the update.

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HOUSING RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES 2014/15

The joint report of the Assistant Director Finance and Assistant Director Housing was submitted, recommending a rent and service charge increase from 1 April 2014 for Council dwellings and garages.

The Assistant Director Housing advised that the proposal was for an average increase in rents of Council Houses of 6%, service charge increases of 3.7% (with the exception of those charges as set out in 5.3 of the report) and a garage rent increase of 3.7%. The average rent for a two bed council property after the proposed increase would be £71.50 per week compared with £96 per week for a two bed housing association property and £167.00 per week for a two bed private rented property. This showed that Council rents remained very competitive.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Access clarified that the increase was necessary to facilitate rent convergence. The funds would be used for maintenance and investment in the current stock and the building and purchasing of new stock.

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at its meeting on 14 January 2014 and the comments of the Members were noted.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) rents of Council dwellings are increased by an average of 6% from 1 April 2014 which includes a general inflationary increase of 3.7% together with the phased introduction of the Government's rent restructuring proposals;
- (2) service charges are increased by 3.7% with the exception of those charges set out below:-
 - (a) 3.2% increase in respect of cleaning communal areas in line with anticipated rises in cleaning contract costs;
 - (b) 0% increase in respect of communal electricity at Weirfield House;
 - (c) 0% increase in respect of water at Magdalen Gardens; and
 - (d) the restructuring of charges in respect of communal gas at Sheltered Sites to reflect the number of properties per site and ensure an equitable apportionment of costs to better reflect consumption. No inflationary increase was proposed; and
- (3) garage rents are increased by 3.7%.

NEW RAMM COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2014-19

The report of the Assistant Director Economy was submitted, seeking approval for a proposed new RAMM Collections Development Policy, to cover the period 2014-19.

Councillor Shiel spoke on this item under Standing Order no.44. He supported the recommendation although raised concerns regarding the ethical disposal of any of the museum's collection.

The Assistant Director Economy advised that an approved Collections Development Policy was a requirement of Museum Accreditation and would ensure a more strategic approach to shaping RAMM's acquisitions and disposals. Any disposal must be carried out in strict accordance with the Museums Association Code of Ethics and these disposal procedures specifically requested that artefacts were transferred to other collections in the first instance.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture clarified that this policy was an important document that would allow RAMM to manage their collection and that RAMM had won the Collection Best Practice Award in 2013.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting on 16 January 2014 and the support and comments of Members were noted.

Members welcomed and supported this RAMM Collections Development Policy.

RECOMMENDED that the new RAMM Collections Development Policy 2014-2019 be formally adopted by Council.

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STORAGE OF ARCHIVES RESULTING FROM DEVELOPER-FUNDED ARCHAEOLOGY

The report of the Assistant Director Economy was submitted, recommending a new mechanism for dealing with the storage of archaeological finds and records resulting from excavations funded by developers within the city, and recommending an approach for dealing with the legacy of past archaeological collecting.

Councillor Shiel spoke on this item under Standing Order no.44. He stated that as Chair of the Museums Storage Facilities Working Group he was in full support of the recommendation and option proposed.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting on 16 January and the comments of the Members were noted.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the new mechanism for dealing with developer-funded archaeological archives since 1 January 2011 and any future archaeological archives be approved; and
- (2) option 2, as set out in the report, be pursued.

7

A COMMITMENT TO LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

The joint report of the Assistant Director City Development and Assistant Director Economy was submitted, outlining the mechanism that could be applied in Exeter to help residents achieve financial independence, by working with employers and training providers to give employees and young people a competitive edge in going for local jobs. The proposal was to use opportunities in the planning process through supplementary planning guidance to encourage the use of the local work force.

Whilst the majority of Members welcomed the progression of Local Labour Agreements by working with employers to encourage the employment of the local labour force, one Member raised concerns regarding how any Supplementary Planning Document could be enforced and that it could be viewed as discrimination.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture advised that further work was required to be undertaken on Local Area Agreements and that a report would be brought back in due course with more detail on how employers could be encouraged to utilise the local labour force. Any proposals would not be to the detriment of housing supply in the city.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting 16 January 2014 and the comments of Members were noted.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the progression of the application of Local Labour Agreements to new development proposals of an appropriate scale and size, through the preparation and adoption of a Supplementary Planning Document facilitated by the emerging Draft Development Delivery Development Plan Document be approved;
- (2) the Exeter and Heart of Devon Employment and Skills Board be encouraged to promote the adoption and application of Local Labour Agreements by developers, employers, local authorities and other stakeholders within and beyond the sub-region.
- (3) this approach is promoted to the Growth Board partners and developed in partnership with them; and
- (4) an approach is established to develop and promote the supply of local goods and services to the construction industry alongside local employment, recruitment, apprenticeships and skills training.

(In accordance with Standing Order no.43, Councillor Mrs Henson requested that her abstention from voting be recorded)

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2014/15 COUNCIL TAX BASE AND NNDR1

The report of the Assistant Director Finance was submitted, looking to set the 2014/15 Council Tax base in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base)(England) Regulations 2012. The report also sought approval to delegate to the Assistant Director Finance (Section 151 Officer) the Council's estimate of Business Rate Income (NNDR1) for the next and following financial years for subsequent circulation to all Members.

The Assistant Director Finance advised that the amount calculated as its council tax base for the year 2014/15 would be 34,344, which amounted to a 1.5% increase in the council tax base.

Members expressed disappointment that the DCLG required the estimate for the NNDR1 figures by 31 January 2014 with the Council having only been given the return on 20 January 2014.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Exeter City Council as its tax base for the year 2014/15 shall be 34,344; and
- (2) responsibility to approve the Council's NNDR1 return by 31 January 2014 be delegated to the Assistant Director Finance (Section 151 Officer).

DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR ACQUISITION OF NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING FROM S106 RECEIPTS (COMMUTED SUMS)

The report of the Assistant Director Housing was submitted, seeking approval for the delegation of authority to the Assistant Director Housing to acquire suitable housing properties using receipts generated through the negotiation of the affordable housing provision on Section 106 sites. This would enable the Council to purchase new affordable housing where opportunities were presented.

The Assistant Director Housing advised that affordable housing purchased was reported to Members via the capital programme report.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Assistant Director Housing be given delegated authority to approve the use of commuted sums, as required, to acquire new affordable housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Access and Finance and Estate Officers; and that the Constitution be amended to that effect.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY - USE OF SPECIALIST CONSULTANTS FOR THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The report of the Assistant Director Housing was submitted, seeking approval for the delegation of authority to the Assistant Director Housing to employ consultants, as required, to assist the Housing Development Team in the provision of affordable housing in the City where external expertise is required. The cost of this work would be covered by commuted sums negotiated from Section 106 sites and there would be no additional costs to the Council.

The Assistant Director Housing clarified that there would be an open and transparent procurement process for the employment of consultants.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Assistant Director Housing be given delegated authority to approve the use of consultants to assist the Housing Development Team in undertaking viability appraisals and the appraisal of new forms of affordable housing delivery in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Access, and that the Constitution be amended to that effect.

RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND PROPOSED ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT: 'HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (INCLUDING CLASS C4 USES)'

The report of the Assistant Director City Development was submitted, looking to consider the results of the recent public consultation and whether to adopt the proposed Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) with or without amendment. The SPD contributed to meeting the Council purpose 'Deliver Good Development'.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the amended Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD at Appendix 2 be adopted;
and

- (2) delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder City Development and Assistant Director City Development to agree any minor editorial changes that may prove necessary.

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APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The schedule of appointments to outside bodies was circulated.

RECOMMENDED that the appointments be agreed by Council.

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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.

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MINUTES OF EXETER AND HEART OF DEVON GROWTH BOARD - 16 OCTOBER 2013

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Exeter and Heart of Devon Growth Board of 16 October 2013 be noted.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.40 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 25 February 2014.