

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 7 February 2012

Present:

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

Also present:

Chief Executive, Strategic Director, Director Corporate Services, Assistant Director Finance, Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support and Member Services Manager

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

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GENERAL FUND REVENUE ESTIMATES AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13

The report of the Assistant Director Finance was submitted, seeking approval to the General Fund revenue estimates for 2012/13 and recommending the Band D level of Council Tax for 2012/13. The report also included the proposed Capital Programme for 2012/13 and future years, and a note of the proposals in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

The Assistant Director Finance reported that the final local government finance settlement for 2012/13 had been announced and was in line with previous forecasts. He drew attention to Exeter's position in relation to other Devon authorities in respect of Formula Grant and Revenue Spending Power Decreases as set out in the appendices to the report. He identified the factors and key assumptions that had been made in producing the Council's medium term financial plan and annual revenue budget. He confirmed that the precept of Devon County Council would be set on 16 February and that of the Devon and Cornwall Police Authority and Devon and Somerset Fire Authority on 17 February.

Members welcomed the proposal to freeze Council Tax at this time of financial pressure on households but noted that the additional grant of £120,000 to compensate the Council was available for one year only. They were pleased to note that balances remained at a relatively healthy level and that the Council was on track to deliver the proposed savings of £2.4 million in its revenue budget for 2011/12. They welcomed the opportunities presented by the New Homes Bonus whilst acknowledging the uncertainty regarding the amount of funding that may be top-sliced from the mainstream Formula Grant in future years.

The Chair thanked officers for their work in constructing the estimates and capital programme. He was pleased to note the level of savings that had been achieved overall, including through the senior management restructure, and looked forward to further savings being delivered through the systems thinking review. He reminded members of the on-going Capital Programme including major development in the City and enhancement of the parks. He was pleased that no major spending cuts had been made this year and commented on the need to ensure that spending on essential services continued.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

- (1) the Council's overall spending proposals in respect of both its revenue and capital budgets be approved;
- (2) the council tax for each band be recommended to the Council as set out in section 24.3 of the report, subject to Devon County Council, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority and the Devon and Somerset Fire Authority confirming their Band D levels respectively;
- (3) when the actual council tax amounts for Devon County Council, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, and the Devon and Somerset Fire Authority are set, then the revised council tax levels be submitted to Council on 21 February 2012 for approval; and
- (4) the statement given by the chief finance officer as required under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 be noted.

(Report circulated)

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TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2012 - 2013

The report of the Assistant Director Finance was submitted, seeking adoption by the Council of the Treasury Management Strategy Report, incorporating the Annual Investment Strategy 2012/13, as required under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003 and seeking adoption of revised clauses in respect of Treasury Management as part of the Council's Financial Regulations.

Scrutiny Committee – Resources considered the report at its meeting of 25 January 2012 and members' support and comments were noted.

RECOMMENDED that Council adopt the new Treasury Management clauses for inclusion in Financial Regulations and the Treasury Management Strategy and delegations contained therein be approved.

(Report circulated)

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THE PRUDENTIAL CODE FOR CAPITAL FINANCE IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The report of the Assistant Director Finance was submitted, setting out the proposed 2012/13 prudential indicators for capital finance for adoption by the Council and setting the annual statement of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).

RECOMMENDED that Council approve the adoption of:

- (1) the Prudential Indicators set out in Appendix A-C of the report; and
- (2) the Annual Statement of Minimum Revenue Provision for the Council.

(Report circulated)

BUS AND COACH STATION AREA DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

The report of the Strategic Director was submitted, looking to consider the Development Principles that have been prepared to guide development of the Bus and Coach Station area and seeking to approve the Principles for engagement with key stakeholders.

The comments of Scrutiny Committee – Economy which considered the report at its meeting of 19 January 2012 were noted. The Director outlined the consultation process and reported that, in response to the request of members of the Scrutiny Committee, he would circulate to all members a list of the stakeholders who would be invited to the briefings. A further report including feedback from the consultation would be made to Scrutiny Committee – Economy before being considered by Executive in June.

Members acknowledged the significance of the bus and coach station area in relation to the John Lewis Partnership development and emphasised the importance of creating a favourable first impression for visitors arriving in the City. They welcomed the extensive preparation that had gone into the Development Principles for the area and looked forward to a further exciting project in the City.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the Development Principles for the Bus and Coach Station area be approved for the purpose of an engagement exercise with key stakeholders and the public; and
- (2) a progress report, including feedback from the consultation, be made to Scrutiny Committee – Economy prior to Executive in June.

(Report circulated)

CONSULTATION ON STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENTS: TEIGNBRIDGE AND EAST DEVON

The report of the Assistant Director City Development was submitted, seeking to formulate a response to the consultation documents recently published by Teignbridge District Council and East Devon District Council as part of ongoing preparation of their Local Development Frameworks.

The Strategic Director introduced the report which concentrated on the proposals for growth in areas adjacent to the City Council boundaries. The Teignbridge Strategy included a single urban extension of some 2000 additional houses and 6 hectares of employment land, adjoining the south west boundary of the City. The East Devon Plan proposed substantial development in the West End of the District, namely 6000 homes at Cranbrook, 800 homes to the north of Pinhoe together with 3 hectares of employment and 600 homes north of Blackhorse. The Director reported that the Planning Member Working Group had discussed the Plans that day and had expressed reservations in respect of the adequacy of the transport infrastructure proposed to support the developments. Members had commented specifically in relation to the third phase access strategy for the Pinhoe and Blackhorse proposals. A number of developments have been approved and the delivery of key highway infrastructure could be problematic.

Councillor Ruffle attended the meeting and spoke on this item under Standing Order 44. He reported that the impact of the Teignbridge development raised a number of issues for the residents of Alphington. Of particular concern was the impact on the already heavy traffic in Alphington and specifically the funnelling of traffic towards the Alphinbrook roundabout. The topography of the area made the road system particularly challenging. He would encourage residents to respond to Teignbridge District Council by the consultation deadline of 2 March. He hoped that the Localism Act would provide the opportunity for significant community involvement in the development.

Councillor Newcombe attended the meeting and spoke on this item under Standing Order 44. She also reported the concerns of local residents regarding the adequacy of the infrastructure in relation to the density of the development. Concern had also been expressed as to whether the schools would be ready on time. The impact of traffic generation was a significant area of concern particularly since Alphington Road and Bridge Road were already at capacity. It was hoped that the creation of the Park and Ride facility would go some way toward easing the traffic problems in the area. She hoped that a forum would be set up with a view to creating a Neighbourhood Plan to provide an effective way for the community to be involved in the planning of the area.

The Strategic Director responded to the points raised and urged the community to meet with the developers to enable input into the development at an early stage. He acknowledged that the transport issues in the area were challenging and it was vital for the strategic authority to ensure the budget was in place to deliver the necessary infrastructure. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was a new and untried mechanism and this authority was at the forefront of its introduction nationally. The creation of the Park and Ride facility was a critical factor in relation to traffic management in the area.

Members commented on the benefits of community involvement in creating Neighbourhood Plans which could help to smooth the planning process and avoid piecemeal development. They supported the Alphington community's proposal to form a Neighbourhood Forum which would straddle the District boundaries.

Executive emphasised the importance of an adequate infrastructure in respect of all the developments and was particularly concerned to ensure that the strategic authority allocated sufficient budget in respect of the necessary transport infrastructure. Members proposed that Teignbridge District Council be requested to ring-fence the receipt of any CIL funding for the Alphington Growth Point, to be used in this area.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) Devon County Council be requested to present to Members an update on the implications of the approved developments in and around the Pinhoe area together with proposals in East Devon's "West End" for the phase three access strategy; and further, that East Devon District Council reflect on the conclusions of this update in considering the location and phasing of developments for the West End;
- (2) the proposed response to Teignbridge District Council set out in paragraph 5.1 of the report and the response to East Devon District Council outlined in paragraph 8.1 be agreed; and

- (3) both Councils be informed that this Council views the adequacy of the transport infrastructure as an issue of great importance and requests that any CIL funding received by Teignbridge District Council in respect of the Alphington Growth Point be ring-fenced for use in this area.

(Report circulated)

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NEW HOMES BONUS - LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

The report of the Strategic Director was submitted, recommending arrangements for the establishment and allocation of the proportion of New Homes Bonus that is to be used to provide a Local Infrastructure Fund.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) a New Homes Bonus Panel to administer a Local Infrastructure Fund be established reflecting the principles set out in Appendix Two of the report;
- (2) the New Homes Bonus Panel takes on the responsibilities of the Grants Committee following its next meeting on 23 February that will also receive a report on future arrangements for other grants;
- (3) any consequential amendments to the Constitution, financial and procurement regulations be made to the next appropriate Council; and
- (4) the effectiveness of the new arrangements be reviewed after 12 months of operation.

(Report circulated)

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DEDICATION OF RIGHT OF PUBLIC HIGHWAY THROUGH TRIANGLE CAR PARK

The report of the Assistant Director Economy was submitted relating to a proposal to improve the existing public footpath through the City Council's Triangle car park, to enable its use as a combined footpath and cycleway. This would require dedication of additional land as public highway to widen the path. Members were requested to consider the dedication of this land at less than best consideration, namely at no cost to Devon County Council, on the basis that the proposal is in the interests of the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the community.

Executive welcomed measures to encourage sustainable modes of transport in the City and supported the proposal.

RESOLVED that the dedication of land to Devon County Council at less than best consideration be approved on the basis of the economic, social and environmental benefits arising from the scheme.

(Report circulated)

**AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES FOR COUNCIL AND JOINTLY FUNDED
AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEMES**

The report of the Acting Assistant Director Housing and Contracts was submitted seeking approval to signatories to enable the Council to administer, validate, authorise and allow the payment of Other Public Subsidy (OPS), Recycled Capital Grant Fund (RCGF), Social Housing Grant (SHG) and Affordable Rent Tenancy Grants (ARTG) to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), Registered Providers (RPs) and developers through the Homes and Communities Agency's (HCA's) online Investment Management System (IMS).

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the following officers be designated as authorised signatories for the purposes set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 and that the Homes and Communities Agency be informed:

All Financial Grant Claims	Assistant Director Finance (A Stark) or Service Finance Manager (B Steer) or Corporate Finance Manager (D Hodgson) Strategic Housing Manager (R Mayers) Housing Development Manager (E Osmundsen) Senior Housing Development Officer (C Massey)
Scheme-work Approvals	Assistant Director Housing and Contracts Strategic Housing Manager (R Mayers) Housing Development Manager (E Osmundsen), Senior Housing Development Officer (C Massey) or Housing Development Officer (G Stenning)
Monitoring	As per scheme-work approvals plus Strategy and Development Assistants (D Brownlie and N Suckley)

- (2) the Housing Development Manager (E Osmundsen) and the Strategic Housing Manager (R Mayers) be designated as Systems and Security Administrators for these purposes on the IMS Computer System.

(Report circulated)

PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The report of the Assistant Director Business Transformation was submitted setting out the Pay Policy Statement for Exeter City Council which had been written to comply with the requirements of Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2012. This legislation requires English and Welsh local authorities to produce a statutory pay policy statement for 2012/13 and for each following financial year.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Pay Policy Statement attached to the report be adopted and delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make any necessary amendment to reflect any final guidance issued by the government.

(Report circulated)

26

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2012/13

The report of the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support was submitted setting out the report and recommendations of the City Council's Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to Members' Allowances for 2012/13.

RECOMMENDED to Council to agree the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel that:-

- (1) the basic structure and principles of the current Members' Allowances scheme be retained for 2012/13;
- (2) the principle that any Member qualifying for more than one Special Responsibility Allowance is paid the higher allowance only, should be retained;
- (3) the Councillors' Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances should continue to be linked to and updated in line with the Local Government Employers (LGE) staff pay award for the previous year. Therefore, for the year 2012/13, the level of Councillors' Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances should remain unchanged in line with the zero increase offered by the LGE in respect of the annual local government staff pay award for 2011/12;
- (4) the expenses allowance paid to the Lord Mayor be set at the same level as the Basic Allowance paid to Councillors and the expenses allowance paid to the Deputy Lord Mayor be set at 25% of the Lord Mayor's revised allowance;
- (5) the Travel and Subsistence allowances provisions for staff continue to apply to Exeter City Councillors, where appropriate;
- (6) the current Dependants' Carers' Allowance scheme be maintained and the level of allowance, currently £6.08 per hour, continues to be linked to and updated in line with the minimum wage; and
- (7) to note that, following the implementation of the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, the role of the independent member(s) of Standards Committee will be the subject of a future report to Council and to recommend that, in the interim, payments remain unchanged.

(Report circulated)

27

RE-ALLOCATION OF OFFICER DELEGATIONS

The report of the Chief Executive was submitted seeking approval to the re-allocation of delegations to officers to reflect the new organisational structure of the Council in which officers were appointed to their new posts on 1 February 2012.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the proposed amendments to the Responsibility for Functions, Delegations to Officers and Deputies for Delegated Powers as set out in the appendices to the report be agreed for adoption together with the other minor, consequential changes to the Constitution referred to in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

(Report circulated)

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RETIREMENT OF GLYN BELLERBY

Executive recorded their good wishes to Glyn Bellerby, Director Corporate Services, on the occasion of his retirement and their appreciation for the significant contribution he had made to the Council over many years.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.00 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 21 February 2012.