

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 18 March 2014

Present:

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

Apologies:

Councillor Edwards

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Deputy Chief Executive, Assistant Director Economy, Assistant Director City Development, Assistant Director Public Realm, Housing Enabling Manager, Scrutiny Programme Officer, Projects and Business Manager and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (HB)

28

MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 21 January and 4 February 2014 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made.

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MAJOR GRANTS AND NEW HOMES BONUS PANEL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Major Grants and New Homes Bonus Panel held on 27 February 2014 were submitted.

The Projects and Business Manager updated Members on the recommendations of the Panel.

In relation to the proposed rent grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau in order to meet the rental cost of new accommodation at the Civic Centre at no additional cost to the CAB, the grant would be increased by £6,180 to £36,790. It would cover the cost of both Wat Tyler House until the day of departure from these premises and that of the Civic Centre for the remainder of the financial year.

In relation to New Homes Bonus Local Infrastructure Fund, the Projects and Business Manager advised that some £40,000 remained in the budget for the 2014/15 financial year.

Executive Members welcomed the significant investment in community initiatives enabled by the use of the New Homes Bonus Local Infrastructure Fund and noted the quality and range of projects coming forward. The support given through the grants process helped pump prime valuable community initiatives. To ensure a fair and realistic distribution of the funds throughout Exeter, it was noted that a mapping exercise of community facilities in the City would be undertaken

RESOLVED that, subject to the amended amount of grant for CAB of £36,790, the minutes of the Major Grants and New Homes Bonus Panel held on 27 February 2014 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

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RUGBY WORLD CUP 2015

The Assistant Director Economy reported that £50,000 of the agreed budget to ensure Exeter met the host city responsibilities for the Rugby World Cup would be allocated towards legacy work, the five main themes of which were:-

- promotion of strong and sustainable communities
- maximising economic benefits to Exeter
- increasing participation in sport and physical activity
- increased involvement of women and children in rugby
- increased participation in rugby for all

An outline plan for arrangements for the Fan Zone would be in place by the end of this month in consultation with the Police, Health and Safety etc. to ensure the delivery of an enjoyable and quality event. A Production Manager had been appointed and a Catering/Trading manager was to be recruited, tasked with generating income from the Fan Zone to help offset the overall costs of hosting the event. The following details were provided of the games Exeter would be hosting:-

- Tuesday 29 September 2015 : Tonga v Africa I (to be confirmed)
- Wednesday 7 October 2015 : Africa I (to be confirmed) v Georgia
- Sunday 11 October 2015 : Italy v Romania

With Italy, a 6 Nations competitor, Georgia and Romania possessing sizable communities in the UK and an agent engaged to market tourist packages abroad, it was hoped that the impact on the City would be significant. City Dressing activity would include erection and display of banners throughout the City which was being co-ordinated by Devon County Council and the City Council's Unexpected Festivals in both 2014 and 2015 would reflect and complement the event. The City Council would be involved in the recruitment of some of the 300 volunteers to be engaged by England Rugby to support organisation and delivery of the event.

In response to Members, he advised that security arrangements for the Fan Zone covered 24 hour protection of equipment and crowd control management on the day of the games. Police and local authority officers would liaise in respect of illegal trading of tickets to prevent this occurring as far as possible. A Member referred to a move to introduce legislation to address the activity of "ticket touts".

The Chair remarked that a recent Express and Echo front page headline had highlighted the overall economic benefit the event would bring to the City at £5 million.

RESOLVED that the position be noted.

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COST OF LIVING WAGE FORUM - INTERIM REPORT

Councillor Denham presented the report to establish whether Council funding would be available to conduct and requisition specific research to further work being undertaken by the Cost of Living Forum and whether the extent of any available Council funding would be sufficient to cover the full cost of the proposed research.

The Forum had requested the University of Exeter to present a Research Proposal with costs for consideration. The University's costs proposed had been set out in the sum of £12,400 and she reported that the University had now adjusted that figure to £9,950, exclusive of VAT, following further negotiation.

Responding to Members Councillor Denham explained that Exeter possessed a high proportion of jobs in the lower paid sector and that greater encouragement of jobs in the knowledge based economy would help attract higher paid opportunities. It was also hoped that employers could be encouraged to understand the overall benefit of increasing low wages to both the economy as well as their own companies. She advised that data at a local authority level was not sufficiently robust and that research was therefore necessary to gather evidence to establish an accurate and reliable baseline for wages and cost of living in Exeter. The University involvement was from a social policy perspective and would not simply act as a data collection body.

The report had been considered at the Scrutiny Committee - Economy on 6 March 2014 and the support and comments were noted.

Members broadly welcomed this initiative, one Member stating that it would be helpful for the Forum to dovetail its deliberations with the Council's "One View of Debt" policy and another Member referred to the importance of individuals prioritising their spending.

RESOLVED that Executive approve funding of up to £9,950 exclusive of VAT, as set out in the report, and with consideration to the University's revised costing.

33

MID DEVON LOCAL PLAN

The report of the Assistant Director City Development was submitted, informing Members of the strategic options for development contained in the emerging review of the Mid Devon Local Plan, being prepared by Mid Devon District Council, and to agree the basis of a proposed response.

The report had been considered at the Planning Member Working Group on 4 March 2014 when the proposed representations to Mid Devon District Council had been supported.

The Assistant Director City Development informed Members of the strategic options for development contained in the emerging review of the Mid Devon Local Plan including options seeking to deliver approximately 8,400 dwellings and 154,000 square metres of commercial floor space between 2013 and 2033, one option incorporating a suggested new community. The City Council considered a study identifying the development needs of the sub region should be undertaken by the Autumn which would inform decisions on the spatial strategy for the sub region and the next version of the Plan.

Members considered that the Plan could have benefited from a wider and more robust consultation process. They had significant reservations in respect of the proposed retail development at Junction 27/M5 which would have potentially major adverse effects on existing town centres in adjoining Districts as well as Exeter itself. It was felt that such a proposal should be informed by a full retail assessment and one Member proposed that the wider business community should be appraised of the likely impact such a commercial development would have.

A Member stated that the priority should be the delivery of more homes and not focus on additional commercial provision. It was noted that the sub region is a single housing market area. Councils had commissioned a revised housing market assessment to update the last one agreed in 2010 which was to be published shortly, however, the Local Plan had been published without the evidence base.

It was also suggested that it would be appropriate for Mid Devon and the Environment Agency to consider identifying a flood storage consultation area in the new plan to allow consideration of whether planning approvals might prejudice the long term creation of any flood storage area. A Member felt that the identification of flood relief solutions up stream of Exeter should also be considered.

RESOLVED that:-

- 1) the following representations be made to Mid Devon District Council:-
 - (a) the next "submitted" version of the Plan be informed by a sub regional study of longer term development needs and options for the Exeter area and an updated housing market assessment;
 - (b) in the absence of this evidence base, the City Council is unable to comment on the appropriateness of the proposed level of housing and employment development or the two distribution options;
 - (c) the Council expresses strong concern that the development proposed involving major retail and leisure development at Junction 27 of the M5 motorway, has been put forward for consultation without a full retail assessment being available and is concerned that this scale of development is likely to have major impacts on the vitality and viability of existing towns and city centres in the sub region and represents an unsustainable, car dominated development strategy; and
- (2) Mid Devon District Council and the Environment Agency be asked to consider identifying a flood storage consultation area in the new plan to allow consideration of whether planning approvals might prejudice the long term creation of any flood storage area; and
- (3) the Assistant Director City Development, subject to prior approval by the Portfolio Holder for City Development be authorised to add any other issues as appropriate to the above response.

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LORD MAYORALTY

Councillor Prowse was nominated as Lord Mayor Elect and Councillor Newby as Deputy Lord Mayor Elect for the 2014/15 Municipal Year.

RECOMMENDED to Council that Councillor Prowse be nominated as Lord Mayor Elect and Councillor Newby as Deputy Lord Mayor Elect for the 2014/15 Municipal Year.

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URGENT ITEM

The Chair agreed to take the following item as urgent business in order to note and confirm the emergency release of funds for the necessary works to repair flooding damage in Topsham.

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BOWLING GREEN ROAD, TOPSHAM - DAMAGED FLOOD DEFENCES

The Assistant Director Public Realm presented the report seeking approval for emergency works to repair flood damage to coastal defences affecting City Council owned land at Bowling Green Marshes, Topsham.

Responding to Members, she confirmed that the bid met the Bellwin scheme criteria and that, having explored the matter with Government officials, a full repayment of the costs to the Council could be expected. Although it was not possible to predict future weather patterns, the works undertaken would be sufficient to withstand weather challenges in the foreseeable future.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) emergency works to repair flood damage to coastal defences affecting land at Bowling Green Marshes, Topsham be approved; and
- (2) the cost of these works be reclaimed from the Government's Bellwin Scheme for emergency financial assistance to local authorities

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

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ST LOYES EXTRA CARE SCHEME

The report of the Assistant Director Housing was submitted, seeking approval to enter into a funding agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) following the successful allocation of £1.41 million under the Care and Support Specialised Fund 2013-18 programme towards the capital costs of developing an Extra Care scheme, and seeking Members' approval to allocate up to £2.7 million from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to enable the construction of the St. Loyes Extra Care Scheme.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) a funding agreement be entered into with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for £1.41 million; and
- (2) up to £2.7 million pounds be allocated from the HRA Capital Programme to enable the construction of the St Loyes Extra Care Scheme.

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MINUTES OF EXETER AND HEART OF DEVON GROWTH BOARD - 16 JANUARY 2014

The Chief Executive & Growth Director reported that, following an unsuccessful bid in Round 1 to the Department of Energy and Climate Change Heat Network Development Fund for support to establish an Energy Services Company a further bid had been made in Round 2 in January. This had been successful and it was understood that a grant of £250,000 had been agreed. The funding would help undertake the feasibility work to set up the Energy Services Company and would combine the role of a commercial partner with the public sector to help roll out the central district heating network.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Exeter and Heart of Devon Growth Board meeting held on 16 January 2014 be noted.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.05 am)

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