

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 10 October 2017

Present:

Councillors Bialyk, Brimble, Denham, Gottschalk, Morse, Pearson and Sutton

Apologies:

Councillors Edwards and Packham

Also present:

Deputy Chief Executive, Director (BA), Director (DB), Director (JY), Director of Communications and Marketing, Chief Finance Officer, City Surveyor, Service Lead Housing Customers, Programme Manager - Communities and Democratic Services Manager (Committees)

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CHAIR

In the absence of the Leader, the Deputy Leader, Councillor Sutton, took the Chair.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made.

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SOUTH STREET REGENERATION

The City Surveyor presented the report regarding the future of South Street and the Corn Exchange block including feedback from the Public Consultation held in February. The report proposed to action priorities in an incremental way and would provide an opportunity to enhance the connectivity and bridge the gap between the city centre and the Quay. It was proposed that an Urban Designer be appointed to facilitate this work. This would be within existing resources.

The City Surveyor clarified that the key public highway issues would be addressed through a joint forum with the City and County Council.

Members supported the way forward and, in particular, any improvements to the links between the Quay and South Street acknowledging that there was a need to ensure that stakeholders were fully consulted on any suggested proposals.

The City Surveyor stated that he would circulate the brief to Members before the procurement of the Urban Designer.

Place Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 14 September 2017 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the results of the South Street public consultation exercise held in February 2017 (Appendix 1) be noted;
- (2) an incremental approach to improvement focussing on individual areas where development opportunities present themselves be supported; and
- (3) an Urban Designer be appointed to be given a realistic brief based on the priorities identified in the public consultation to give context for current and future development opportunities.

CAPITAL MONITORING STATEMENT TO 30 JUNE 2017

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report on the current position in respect of the Council's revised annual capital programme and to advise Members of the anticipated level of deferred expenditure into future years. The report also sought Member approval to amend the annual capital programme in order to reflect the reported variations.

He advised that the performance of the revised Capital Programme for the current financial year was that £1.478 million had been spent during the first three months which was lower than normal. This was mainly as a result of the delay of three significant schemes.

The Chief Finance Officer highlighted the expenditure variances for 2017/18 which included an under spend on the improvements to Exhibition Way bridge as the scheme could not proceed within the existing budget and needed to be reconsidered and Smoke/Fire Alarms in Older Persons accommodation. Members were updated on the achievements of the Riverside Arches Fencing and the St Nicolas Priory Structural Improvements Works.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that the world culture galleries improvement works recommendation would be amended to request approval subject to a satisfactory business case being agreed by the Chief Executive & Growth Director and Leader using the balance of the Museum of the Year funding to reduce the amount of borrowing required. He also informed Members that the Beacon Heath marital arts and boxing club project had been deferred pending the outcome of the Leisure Services Review. The additional funds were required to replace lifts at the Mary Arches multi-storey car park, as outlined in the circulated report.

The Portfolio Holder for City Transformation, Energy and Transport proposed that the approval for the world culture galleries should also be in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture. This was agreed by Executive Members.

Members discussed the need to ensure that the caveats of the Museum of the Year funding were met.

Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 28 September 2017 and its comments were reported.

RECOMMENDED that Council approves the:-

- (1) revision of the annual capital programme to reflect the reported variations detailed in paragraphs 8.4 and 8.5 of the circulated report; and
- (2) addition to the capital programme:-
 - (a) for the world culture galleries improvement works be subject to a satisfactory business case being agreed by the Chief Executive and Growth Director, the Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture with the Museum using the balance of the Museum of the Year funding to reduce the amount of borrowing required; and
 - (b) for the replacement of the lifts at Mary Arches Multi-Storey Car Park (£100,000)

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OVERVIEW OF THE GENERAL BUDGET 2017/18

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report advising Members of the overall projected financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Fund Revenue Budgets for the 2017/18 financial year after three months and to seek approval for a number of supplementary budgets.

Members were advised that the Housing Revenue Fund expenditure was significantly lower than the £2,487,615 planned due to delays in the capital programme projects. The General Fund had an over spend of £217,024 against its revised budget, this was related to predicted service income that had not been delivered. Services were working on addressing this short fall and progress would be reported in the next quarter.

The Chief Finance Officer discussed the supplementary budgets which would provide money to pay for temporary staff contracts to assist with cleaning graffiti around the city.

Members acknowledged the need to address the issue of graffiti within the City whilst recognising that it came at a cost.

Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 28 September 2017 and its comments were reported.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes and approves the:-

- (1) General Fund forecast financial position for the 2017/18 financial year;
- (2) HRA forecast financial position for 2017/18 financial year;
- (3) additional supplementary budgets listed in Appendix C;
- (4) outstanding Sundry Debt position as at August 2017; and
- (5) creditors' payments performance.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PORTION OF CIL/ GRANTS ROOTS GRANTS
RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Programme Manager – Communities presented the report recommending awards to be made to five community organisations in this third round of the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)/Grass Roots Grants funding. Members were updated on the projects recommended for capital and revenue funding. The revenue funding grants would be for a period of 12 months. From the grant applications received there were two that were not recommended for approval these were art based and not community led and another which was deferred for further work on its application.

In response to a Member, the Programme Manager – Communities commented that the grants were advertised in the Exeter Citizen, through community networks and promoted by local Councillors. It was acknowledged that more work was needed to promote the grants available to smaller community groups and to give support to enable them to apply for this funding. It was anticipated that once the 'Community Builders' were in position they would be able to provide some of the promotion of the grants and some support in making applications.

Councillor Owen, having given notice under Standing Order no.44, spoke on this item. He welcomed the funding for the Exeter St James Community Trust to help the regeneration of Queen's Crescent Garden. This garden would benefit all the community of St James and the wider residents of Exeter. The monies would be used to complete the renewal of some of the major infrastructure including wall, railings and paths.

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, Sport and Communities supported the recommendations and welcomed the introduction of Community Builders. He continued that it was important that the smaller and new community groups were offered training in how to get their organisations started and to enable them to apply for funding.

Members welcomed the recommendations whilst acknowledging that support was needed to those smaller and new community groups to enable them to apply for funding which could unlock other match funding sources.

RECOMMENDED that Council approves the recommendation made by the Grass Roots Grants Panel which met on the 6 September 2017 to support the following applications:-

- (1) Wonford Community Learning Centre – Exeter Parent Carer project – Community Collaboration grant of £6,913.07;
- (2) Digby Community Association – Community Action Project grant of £11,000;
- (3) Exeter St James Community Trust – Community Action Capital grant of £42,500 and Revenue grant of £7,500;
- (4) Exeter Community Centre Trust Ltd – Community Action Capital grant of £50,000; and
- (5) Estuary League of Friends – Community Action Capital grant of £50,000.

STAFFING TO SUPPORT NEW HOUSING IT SYSTEM

The Service Lead Housing (Customers) presented the report setting out the business case for increasing the staffing provision (on a fixed term basis) to ensure that the new Housing Management I.T. system is introduced and implemented effectively.

In response to a Member's question, the Service Lead Housing (Customers) clarified that the new IT system was an integrated software system that would enable all the tenants' details to be held on one data base which would help officers to work more effectively.

RECOMMENDED that Council approves three new posts were added to the Council's establishment to include the additional posts of a Housing System Team Lead and Housing System Officers (x two) on a 23 month fixed term basis.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.10 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 17 October 2017.