

EXECUTIVE
(HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING)

Tuesday 6 October 2020

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)
Councillors Sutton, Foale, Ghusain, Harvey, Morse, Pearson, Williams, Wright and Wood

In attendance:

Councillor Leadbetter in his capacity as an Opposition Leader.

Apologies:

Councillor K. Mitchell in his capacity as an Opposition Leader.

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Director City Development, Housing & Supporting People, Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management, Director Communications, Culture & Leisure Facilities, Director Finance, Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support, City Surveyor, Principal Project Manager (Strategic Infrastructure Planning), Principal Project Manager (Development) (HS), Democratic Services Officer (MD) and Democratic Services Officer (HB)

Councillor in attendance under Standing Order No. 44

Councillor Hannaford speaking on item 8 (Min. No. 98)

93

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2020 were taken as read and approved for signing as correct at the earliest possible convenience.

94

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

95

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No questions from members of the public were received.

96

CHANGES TO EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIOS AND PRIORITIES 2020/21

Councillor Bialyk proposed and Councillor Foale seconded that Councillor Morse be nominated as Chair of Planning Committee, for recommendation to Council on 20 October 2020.

RECOMMENDED to Council that Councillor Morse be nominated as Chair of the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED that the list of Portfolio Holders Responsibilities and Priorities 2020/21 be noted.

97

EXETER CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT

The Executive received the report which sought approval for the publication of the Infrastructure List, as part of an Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (AIFS). The AIFS regulations dictated that the AIFS must be published by 31 December 2020 and include other, purely factual, information about CIL and Section 106 Agreements.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Culture moved an amendment to the recommendations, to include the following words in Appendix 1 of the report presented at the meeting:-

- Supporting and embedding culture as part of Liveable Exeter infrastructure projects;
- Supporting Major cultural investment projects as identified by the Cultural Compact; and
- Delivering on the aims and objectives of Exeter's Cultural Strategy.

Members noted that the statement helped inform the public that spend on infrastructure improvements was vital to enhance and support ongoing developments across the city.

Following the discussion, Councillor Ghusain moved, seconded by Councillor Sutton, the amended recommendation with the inclusion of the additional wording for Appendix 1 in the report, which was voted upon and unanimously supported.

RECOMMENDED that Council: -

- (1) approve the publication of the Infrastructure List presented in Appendix 1 of the report, along with the other requisite information in the Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement;
- (2) note the Scheme of Delegation review, as set out in Min. No. 102 below, for the proposed delegated arrangements for reviewing and publishing the Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement; and
- (3) support the inclusion of the following words in Appendix 1 of the report:-
 - Supporting and embedding culture as part of Liveable Exeter infrastructure projects;
 - Supporting Major cultural investment projects as identified by the Cultural Compact; and
 - Delivering on the aims and objectives of Exeter's Cultural Strategy.

98

2020/21 GENERAL FUND CAPITAL MONITORING STATEMENT – QUARTER 1

The Executive received the report on the current position in respect of the Council's revised annual capital programme. The report sought to advise Members of the anticipated level of deferred expenditure into future years and required approval to amend the annual capital programme in order to reflect the reported variations.

Councillor Hannaford, having given notice under Standing Order No 44, spoke on this item. He made the following points:-

- welcomed the proposal to repair the roof of the Pinces (spelling corrected from Princes in the report) Gardens Gatehouse, the original revenue budget approval of £16,500 being replaced with a capital budget of £85,000;
- as well as the historical importance of the Gatehouse to St. Thomas, its repair was a health and safety requirement; and
- this enhancement would encourage greater use of the Gardens which would hopefully help reduce litter, graffiti etc.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve:-

- (1) the revision of the annual capital programme to reflect the reported variations as detailed in paragraph 8.1 and Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (2) the additional budget requests, as detailed in paragraph 8.7 of the report.

99

OVERVIEW OF GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21 – QUARTER 1

The Executive received the report on the overall financial position of the General Fund Revenue Budgets for the 2020/21 financial year after three months.

The Director Finance advised Members that, following approval of the Emergency Budget at the July Council meeting, the first quarter showed an £850,000 improvement against the budget as a result of car parking income being ahead of projection and the release of £200,000 as the third tranche of Government emergency funding support in response to the Covid-19 crisis. He advised however, that the former had levelled off and that the Government deferral of a reduced settlement for Local Government for this financial year may or may not be carried forward for another year. A decision on this and the announcement on Business Rates and an anticipated cessation of New Homes Bonus scheme was awaited.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes and approves (where applicable):-

- (1) the General Fund forecast financial position for the 2020/21 financial year;
- (2) the self-financing supplementary budgets as detailed in paragraph 8.7 of the report;
- (3) the outstanding Sundry Debt position as at June 2020; and
- (4) the creditors' payments performance.

100

2020/21 HRA BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - QUARTER 1

The Executive received the report on the overall financial position of the HRA Revenue and Capital Budgets for the 2020/21 financial year after three months. Members noted the identified vulnerable budgets and the budgetary over/under-spends detailed in the report. The budgets marked as at risk were explained as factors beyond the control of the Council, which may result in deviations from budget and were subject to close monitoring by officers.

Particular reference was made to the Council taking out a loan of £15.4 million from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) to support its social housing programme. The Council was therefore taking advantage of the new, discounted PWLB rate enabling it to borrow at 1% below the normal borrowing rate.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing Development and Services announced that the Council had successfully bid for a Government grant of £600,000 to roll out a retrofit programme for Council houses which would commence within the next two weeks and thanked the housing team for their work on the bid.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes and approves (where applicable):-

- (1) the HRA forecast financial position for 2020/21 financial year; and
- (2) the revision of the HRA Capital Programme to reflect the reported variations detailed in Appendix 4 of the report.

101

GOVERNANCE REVIEW UPDATE

The Executive received the report which provided Members with an update on the new governance arrangements which were agreed by Council on 15 October 2019. It was highlighted that, due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the Council's decision making process, it was too early to fully appreciate the changes that were made and, accordingly, a further review would be brought back to the Executive in 12 months.

Councillor Leadbetter, speaking as an Opposition Leader, welcomed the report.

RESOLVED that the Council's revised governance arrangements be noted with a further report to be brought to the Executive in 12 months.

102

AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Executive received the report which set out the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers to match operational arrangements. The report also sought a minor change to the Terms of Reference for the Licensing Sub-Committee, to provide Licensing Authorities the power under section 132A of the Licensing Act 2003 to revoke or suspend personal licences.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve:-

- (1) the changes to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers as set out in the Appendix to the report; and
- (2) the following addition to the Terms of Reference for the Licensing Sub-Committee:-
 - To determine whether to revoke or suspend a personal licence where convictions come to light after grant or renewal.

103

CORPORATE ASSET MAINTENANCE

The Executive received the report on the identified asset maintenance priorities following an asset inspection programme. A summary of the various projects was given together with an overview of the scale of the investment required. An indicative programme of works was also provided.

Members noted that:-

- the identified assets did not include properties within the leisure contract that had now been brought in-house. These properties were in the process of being surveyed;
- the definition of a level B assessment for a property being satisfactory and performing as intended and being fit for purpose but with minor deterioration; and
- property assessments were based on reports of condition surveys and structural engineers.

RECOMMENDED that Council:-

- (1) approve the identified budgets for each project to ensure good asset management;
- (2) approve the additional budget required for 2020/21 and note the annual funding requirements for future years, forming the basis of the capital programme for the next four years as detailed in the report, for approval in February 2021; and
- (3) note the significant overall cost of £37.5 million and approve an asset review programme to identify potential surplus assets, which may be made available for sale in order to finance the programme of works.

104

EXETER CHIEFS

The Leader congratulated the Exeter Chiefs on reaching the Final of the Heineken Champions Cup.

105

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.

106

SUPPORT FOR DISTRICT HEATING NETWORK TO SERVE THE ALPHINGTON STRATEGIC ALLOCATION AND SOUTH WEST EXETER

The Executive received the report on the delivery of the District Heat Network at South West Exeter, including making a site for an energy centre available on Exeter City Council land at Matford and acquiring unregistered land titles at Mutton Lane.

The Portfolio Holder for Net Zero Exeter 2030 welcomed the report which would help the City Council meet its carbon reduction target and to become carbon neutral by 2030.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve:-

- (1) the City Council continuing to support the delivery of a Heat Network to serve Developments in Alphington, Exeter and in Teignbridge district at South West

Exeter and the connection of that network to the Energy Recovery Facility including the application of third party funding;

- (2) making land available at Matford on a commercial basis for the purposes of an energy centre to provide supplemental and backup heat generation for the District Heat Network at South West Exeter, providing that the Council is satisfied that the network operator has used reasonable endeavours to secure a suitable alternative site and has been unable to do so, and also provided that existing third party rights on the land can be successfully re-negotiated; and
- (3) assisting the delivery of the network by acquiring unregistered titles in the vicinity of Mutton Lane, on the basis that its costs will be recovered from the network operator.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.29 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.