

WEST DEVON HUB COMMITTEE



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Hub Committee** held
on
Tuesday, 26th January, 2016 at **2.00 pm** at the **Chamber -
Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Sanders
Vice Chairman Baldwin

CLlr M J R Benson
Moody
Parker
Samuel

Cann
Oxborough
Sampson

In attendance:

Councillors:

Officers:

Sophie Hosking
Steve Jordan

Helen Dobby
Ross Kennerley
Lisa Buckle

Executive Director
Executive Director Head of Paid
Service
Group Manager Commercial Services
Section 151 Officer

45. **Declarations of Interest**

(*HC 45)

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be discussed but none were made

46. **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

(*HC 46)

At his discretion, the Chairman advised that Item 10: 'Affordable Housing – Alternative Models' had been withdrawn from the agenda as this report related to an operational matter that did not require Committee approval.

47. **Draft Revenue Budget Proposals and Draft Capital Programme Proposals for 2016/17**

(HC 47)

The Chairman presented a report that set out the budget proposals for both the revenue budget and capital programme for 2016/17.

The Chairman and the s151 Officer responded to questions and Members had a brief debate on how best to ring fence the predicted budget surplus for maximum gain but at the same time debating whether the funds were needed to support any budget deficit in future years.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED:**

- (i) To increase Council Tax by 1.99% (which equates to a Band D council tax of £212.53 for 2016/17, an increase of £4.14 per year or 8 pence per week). This equates to a Council Tax requirement of £4,193,941 (as shown in Appendix B1))
- (ii) That the financial pressures as illustrated in Appendix A of the presented agenda report of £836,000 be accepted
- (iii) That the proposed savings of £845,000 as set out in Appendix A of the presented agenda report be adopted
- (iv) That the Collection Fund surplus of £280,000 be agreed
- (v) That £1,000,000 of New Homes Bonus funding be used to balance the 2016-17 Revenue Budget.

- (vi) That the Budget Surplus of £304,678 be ringfenced for future income generation opportunities and held in an Earmarked Reserve for that purpose, in accordance with Minute HC 29 (paragraph 1.10 of the presented agenda report refers)
- (vii) That the Total Net Expenditure of the Council for 2016/17 be £7,253,325 (Appendix B1 and B2 of the presented agenda report refer)
- (viii) That the 2016/17 Capital Programme projects totalling £651,000 be approved as set out at paragraph 8.1 of the presented agenda report
- (ix) That the 2016/17 Capital Programme of £651,000 be financed by using £412,000 of New Homes Bonus funding and £239,000 of Better Care Funding (as set out at paragraph 8.1 of the presented agenda report)
- (x) That the Council transfers £24,136 of its allocation of New Homes Bonus for 2016/17 to an Earmarked Reserve called 'Community Investment Fund – Dartmoor National Park', to be applied for and drawn down by Dartmoor National Park as required. This amount is a one-off payment and the position will be considered annually by the Council as part of the budget process. The condition is that this is for use within the boundaries of the Borough Council only.
- (xi) That the Council Tax Support Grant of £77,509 be passed onto Town and Parish Councils for 2016/17. (This is a reduction of 11.2% from 2015/16) as per Appendix D of the presented agenda report
- (xii) That the minimum level of the Unearmarked Revenue Reserves be maintained at £750,000 as per Section 9 of the presented agenda report
- (xiii) That the level of reserves as set out within the presented agenda report and the assessment of their adequacy and the robustness of budget

estimates be noted. This is a requirement of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003.

48. **Devolution Draft Proposal**

(HC 48)

The Chairman introduced an update report that set out the detail of a shared Devolution Statement of Intent from the authorities within the Heart of the South West Bid and the opportunities that would arise for West Devon Borough Council from devolution.

Members raised questions on some of the detail within the circulated appendix document that would form the basis of future negotiations with central Government on the devolution of powers and funding.

The Chairman and the Executive Director (Strategy and Commissioning) responded to the questions raised by Members, and outlined the next steps in the process. Members generally expressed the view that this proposal was the best opportunity for West Devon Borough Council to have an input into matters of a more strategic nature that affect the South West.

One Member asked how the aspirations within the document would be linked with the practicalities of delivery. In response, the Chairman drew Members attention to the six individual workstreams that were in place, and explained that for the proposal to be successful it would be important for each of the workstreams to link to each other and to work across all authorities.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to:

1. endorse the Leader's current approach to devolution and the drafting of proposals, their submission and negotiation of a deal for the Heart of the South West, namely:

Working with local authorities, National Parks and the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver full proposals for devolution which will seek a formal agreement with Government on a formal

devolution deal as set out in Appendix 1 of the presented agenda report;

2. note that full Council will consider and be asked to approve the final devolution proposal; and
3. in the event of government timescales changing, or minor amendments becoming necessary, delegate authority to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to approve the final proposal.

49. **Establishing a Trading Company**

(HC 49)

The Chairman presented a report that proposed the establishment of a company jointly owned by West Devon Borough Council and South Hams District Council.

The representatives from Grant Thornton were introduced and responded to specific queries within their reports that they had been asked to produce on the merits of the Waste Contract and the Local Authority Controlled Company.

The Executive Director (Service Delivery and Commercial Development) responded to questions raised by Members. These questions covered a number of areas such as Member input into the company and the challenging timescale that was being proposed.

A number of Members spoke on this item and the majority agreed that the proposed timescale whilst challenging, should be a focus. Members also supported the recommendations but did note that the risks need to be managed.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED**:

1. To establish a Local Authority Controlled Company jointly with South Hams District Council to deliver services for West Devon Borough Council and South Hams District Council, and to other organisations as contracts are won, subject to the further approval of a detailed business case and implementation plan;
2. That the Council's waste collection and street cleansing services are delivered by the newly formed company when the current contract ends in March

2017, subject to the further approval of a detailed business case and implementation plan;

3. That the Councils' costs for the preparation of the detailed business case and implementation plan of £300,000 be met from the cost pressure built into the 2016/17 Revenue Budget for each Council (£150,000 for each Council).

50. **Our Plan - Local Plan Arrangements**

(HC 50)

The Lead Member for Strategic Planning and Housing presented a report that updated Members on a refreshed approach to the Local Plan element of Our Plan and sought approval of the principle of a Joint Local Plan within the Housing Market Area.

Members queried whether this approach would assist in a more joined up relationship in terms of infrastructure assets, particularly to the north of Plymouth.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED**:

1. The principle of a Joint Local Plan within the Housing Market Area (HMA) be agreed as set out in Option 2 of the presented report, subject to appropriate arrangements being put in place with neighbouring planning authorities;
2. A detailed Collaboration Agreement establishing the operation of the Joint Local Plan be developed with neighbouring planning authorities (and any other relevant organisations);
3. The Collaboration Agreement include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following matters
 - a. Strategic Context
 - b. Objectives and Priorities
 - c. Joint Spatial Framework
 - d. Governance and working arrangements
 - e. Local Development Scheme and timescales
 - f. Evidence
 - g. Infrastructure

- h. Policies
 - i. Allocations
 - j. Engagement and Consultation
 - k. Resources and Staffing
 - l. Examination
 - m. Assessments
 - n. Monitoring and Review
4. That a further report be submitted to Hub and Council setting out the detailed policy and allocation proposals that are to be subject to consultation, consideration and submission within the Joint Local Plan element of *West Devon - Our Plan*
 5. That those contents which are to be agreed under recommendations 1, 2 and 3 be delegated to the Lead Specialist – Place and Strategy, in consultation with the Hub Lead Member and Leader.

51. **Community Right to Build Orders - delegated procedure**

(HC 51)

The Lead Member for Strategic Planning and Housing presented a report that set out the case for adoption of a delegated process to enable Community Right to Build Orders to be processed through delegation to lead officers with the relevant and necessary safeguards and referral to the lead Member Strategic Planning and Housing in consultation with the ward member(s) as and when required.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED**:

1. That the authority to approve the Community Right to Build Orders Procedure (as set out in Appendix 2 of the presented report), be delegated to the Lead Specialist, Place and Strategy in consultation with the Lead Member for Strategic Planning and Housing and the local ward member(s) for the relevant neighbourhood area.
2. Subject to approval of recommendation 1 above, that the appropriate changes be made to the Council's Neighbourhood Planning Protocol.

52. **Safeguarding Policy**

(HC 52)

The Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing presented a report that sought to adopt the Safeguarding Policy.

A number of Members spoke on the importance of safeguarding and having appropriate training in place for Members and for staff. The Lead Specialist Housing Revenues and Benefits advised that the Devon County Council website contained helpful information on this subject.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the Safeguarding Policy.

The Meeting concluded at 4.25 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
