

WEST DEVON HUB COMMITTEE



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Hub Committee** held
on
Monday, 19th December, 2016 at **10.30 am** at the **Chamber**
- Kilworthy Park

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Sanders
Vice Chairman

Cllr Benson
Cllr Parker
Cllr Samuel

Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Sampson

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Cheadle
Cllr Evans
Cllr McInnes
Cllr Pearce

Cllr Cloke
Cllr Leech
Cllr Musgrave
Cllr Yelland

Officers:

Darren Arulvasagam

Group Manager Business
Development

Lisa Buckle
Helen Dobby
Sophie Hosking
Steve Jordan

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

42. **Declarations of Interest**

***HC 42**

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

43. **Confirmation of Minutes**

***HC 43**

The Minutes of the Hub Committee Meeting held on 29th November, 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

44. **Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals Report 2017-18 (Cllr Sanders)**

***HC 44**

Members were presented with a report that set out how the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy was based on a financial forecast over a rolling five year timeframe to 2021/22 which would help to ensure resources were aligned to the outcomes in Our Plan. The forecast was intended to provide a framework within which decisions could be made regarding the future service provision and council tax levels whilst building an approach that guaranteed West Devon Borough Council's longer term viability.

The Leader presented the report, and the s151 Officer outlined how the presented report should now be updated, following receipt of information from central government in relation to the Funding Settlement and New Homes Bonus. The s151 Officer took Members through the report and noted how the information specifically affected West Devon Borough Council. For example, in respect of the changes to the New Homes Bonus, whereby the sixth year of funding dropped off from next year, the cost to the Council was in the region of £568,000 for 2017/18. The proposed changes to the New Homes Bonus scheme nationwide would net the government £241m, which would be used to support the Adult Social Care Support Grant.

Further, from 2018/19, the government would consider withholding payments from local authorities who fail to plan effectively and make positive decisions on planning applications that would support housing growth.

The Specialist Affordable Housing advised the Committee how the revised figures for the Capital Programme may affect the Affordable Housing Bid in the Capital Programme. The Committee also discussed the Village Halls and Community Projects Bid in more detail and Members were keen to ensure that, in light of the recent decision to reduce funding to Villages In Action, that funds to support Community Projects remain in place. The Lead Hub Member for Health and Wellbeing advised the Committee that work would take place in the New Year to assess how the Council supported the Arts and whether this support was appropriate and could be more effective.

Members noted their concerns that comments made to government during the consultation phase for reviewing the New Homes Bonus Scheme did not appear to have been taken on board. As a result, the Council would be severely financially impacted. Members agreed that

discussions should be held with local Members of Parliament, and that the Local Government Association should be approached to lobby on behalf of this and other Councils, particularly in respect of losing the sixth year of New Homes Bonus funding in 2017/18.

Finally, Members agreed that, in the future, the Council may need to support more radical schemes to cut expenditure and generate income that would require taking risks and taking more difficult decisions.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the contents of the latest Budget Report for 2017-18 be noted.

The Meeting concluded at 12.35 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
