

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Budget Setting and Capital Allocations Panel held online on 18 June 2021

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 9.30 am and ended at 10.54 am

11 Minutes from the previous meeting held on 1 December 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 1 December 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

12 Declarations of interest

Cllr J Rowland; Minute 13; Personal interest: Seaton Ward Member

Cllr P Hayward; Minute 17; Personal interest: Clerk to the parishes of All Saints, Chardstock, and Newton Poppleford and Harpford; whom will be impacted by future budgets set by EDDC

Cllr N Hookway; Minute 13; Personal interest: Exmouth Littleham Ward Member and Chair of Exmouth Queens Drive Delivery Group

Cllr G Jung; Minute 14; Personal Interest; Chair of Sidmouth and East Beach BMP Project Advisory Group

Cllr G Pook; Minute 14; Personal Interest: Seaton coastline falls within his Ward

Cllr A Moulding; Minute 17; Personal Interest: President of Cloakham Lawns Association.

13 Project progress summary

The summary report provided was supplemented with updates from officers:

- Long Lane Enhancement scheme project had some slippage, but was under control and still within budget;
- Queens Drive Phase 3, as reported by the Chair of the Queens Drive Delivery Group, has tenants trading in that area. He praised the work of the Events Team in helping to deliver this project. The Group were now reviewing the design of the site, including accommodating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022. In response to questions, the Chair of the Delivery Group clarified that the site would focus on delivering fitness activities, as that was the demand. The area would also be developed as a cultural quarter for the town.

RESOLVED that the Progress Report be noted.

14 Sidmouth and East Beach BMP Outline Business Case; Seaton BMP

The Service Lead for Streetscene updated the Panel on the progress in the delivery of the beach management plans for Sidmouth and Seaton. Whilst Seaton's BMP was with the Environment Agency for review through their assurance service, funding changes by Defra had brought about the opportunity to revisit elements of the BMP for Sidmouth. Work continued by officers, including liaison with the Sidmouth and East Beach BMP Project Advisory Group, to complete the revised outline business case.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

15 **New Feniton Flood Alleviation Scheme**

The Service Lead for Streetscene updated the Panel on the funding gap for the alleviation scheme reported to Cabinet in July, whereby changes in Defra funding had led to a resubmission of the scheme in May. The outline business case was now going through the Environment Agency's assurance service; if achieves full funding, will restart discussions with Network Rail to look at appropriate window for undertaking the scheme.

In response to a question, the location of culverts was under review and more information would be provided in due course. As work progressed, local residents were kept informed through the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that the updated on the alleviation scheme be noted.

16 **Whimpe Flood Alleviation Scheme**

The Service Lead for Streetscene updated the Panel on the variation to the deliver this alleviation scheme. DEFRA funding changes, as per other schemes, had meant that the scheme needed a review to establish if the scheme can now be fully funded and a revised OBC submitted. Resources were such that the number of schemes ongoing currently impacted on how quickly that could be progressed.

RESOLVED that the update on the scheme be noted.

17 **Preparing for 2022/2023 budget and beyond**

The Strategic Lead Finance presented the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), prepared excluding possible income reduction from proposed Government changes in Business Rates and New Homes Bonus funding.

His report set out factors for the Panel to consider in how to balance the £1.2m funding gap for 2022/23, and continued budget pressures in future years. He outlined some working scenarios for closing that immediate gap, and the need to consider increasing the Council reserve to mitigate the impact of Government proposals, which may occur with little warning.

The Panel were also reminded of previous work undertaken prior to the pandemic, under the Careful Choices banner, in March 2020, which set out the priorities indicated from the public consultation on local government spending.

Cost pressures were set to increase on the budget for Refuse and Recycling because of the uplift in the number of properties being services, and the MTFP would need to be revised further to accommodate this increase in cost in future years.

Work would take place over the next few months through workshops with Portfolio Holders to consider options for dealing with the longer term gap; further consultation with the public may also be considered.

In discussion, the Panel debated a number of areas that would require further development, whilst keeping economic prudence.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

J Rowland (Chair)
M Armstrong
P Arnott
P Hayward
G Jung
A Moulding
G Pook
M Rixson
N Hookway

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

P Faithfull
P Millar
B De Saram

Officers in attendance:

Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Andrew Hancock, Service Lead StreetScene
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Wood, Service Lead - Growth Development and Prosperity
Mark Williams, Chief Executive

Councillor apologies:

D Barrow
K Blakey

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