

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Capital Strategy and Allocation Group held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 12 September 2019

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.03 am and ended at 11.07 am

11 Notes of the previous meeting

The notes from the previous meeting held on 10 July 2019 were agreed.

12 Review of prioritisation process for capital projects

The Strategic Lead Finance outlined the current process involved with submission, assessment, prioritisation and evaluation of projects submitted for the Capital Programme.

He explained the documentation and the elements contained within that. The main focus for the Group was the existing scoring matrix used for appraisal and prioritisation. The matrix had to be updated to reflect the new Council Plan priorities, and under a new administration, it was felt timely to review the scoring and weighting of the matrix prior to the Group receiving and discussing submissions in December.

The process had been in place for some time, although there were some existing projects that were underway before this process was in place. The process did include evaluation of a project once it was completed. Only projects classified as “medium” or “large” were put before the Group for monitoring.

Suggestions for amending the current process included:

- Ensuring that relevant Portfolio Holders were kept informed as project submissions were being drafted. This highlighted the current process of lifting information on a project from existing data to the submission documents, and a concern that this may increase the burden on staff in the addition of PH involvement at that stage. The Chairman made clear that there was no intention to increase the workload of officers, only that a means of keeping the relevant PH informed be implemented. Examples included copying in on emails, and briefings in person when time permitted. The issue of protracted reporting would be taken up by the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services;
- Increase the scoring level for the council plan elements, as it was felt that this was more important than other factors in the matrix that currently had the same scoring;
- Although reference to reducing the Council’s carbon footprint was in the emerging Council Plan, it should be an individual item in the matrix with a score of 25. The individual levels within that scoring would be discussed between officers after the meeting;
- Any project scoring well under the criteria of carbon footprint would be likely to have higher cost implications, so the matrix needs to reflect that;
- The current criteria of the Asset Management Plan objectives was not required, as that was part of the Council Plan;
- Review the weighting overall once the suggested changes had been made.

In other discussion, it was confirmed that:

- The process used was similar to that used by other authorities;
- The outcome of the scoring matrix – the overall score – assisted the Group in ranking the projects to then consider firstly the statutory projects, then other projects and the associated funding they may or may not have;
- Documentation was separated out to handle the different elements of the process, differentiating seeking approval from the detail of running the project.

RESOLVED

1. that the scoring matrix used for appraisal and prioritisation be amended to reflect the discussion by the Group, with delegated authority to the Chairman and the Strategic Lead Finance to agree the scoring matrix to be adopted prior to the submission of bids prior to the December in 2019.
2. that the revised version will be circulated to the Group members present at the meeting prior to adoption.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

I Thomas (Chairman)
M Armstrong
J Bailey
D Barrow
K Blakey

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

Councillor apologies:

G Jung
F King
S Bond

Chairman

Date: