

## CABINET – DECISION NOTICE

9 February 2024

### Present:-

Councillors R Croad, R Gilbert, J Hart (Chair), S Hughes, A Leadbetter, J McInnes (Vice-Chair), L Samuel, A Saywell and P Twiss

### Apologies:-

Councillors A Davis

### Members attending in accordance with Standing Order 25

Councillors A Dewhirst, C Leaver, F Letch MBE and C Whitton

Councillor F Biederman and J Hodgson (remote attendance)

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### Minutes

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2024 and the special meeting of 2 February 2024, be signed as a correct record.

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### **Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 - 2027/2028 and the Capital Programme for 2024/2025 - 2028/2029**

### **RESOLVED**

that Cabinet:

(i) has given full regard to the responsibilities placed upon the Authority in the exercise of its Public Sector Equality Duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 (as set out in the 'Budget 2024/25 Impact Assessment' circulated previously for the purposes of this meeting, and specific impact assessments undertaken as part of the budget's preparation) in considering the proposals and their impact, before making a decision;

(ii) has given due regard to the views of the Authority's Scrutiny Committees, the Devon Education Forum, the Business Community, the Voluntary Sector, and the Trades Unions and other consultees on the budget (set out elsewhere on the agenda);

(iii) that the Provisional Finance Settlement Funding of £111.1 million be noted, and that the Final Finance Settlement is anticipated to be confirmed on 7 February 2024;

(iv) that the Revenue Budgets, (pages 44 to 92), be approved;

(v) recommends to the Authority the Net budget of £637.5 million as set out in Key Table 1 on page 13, and gives delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Public Value to reflect any changes to the Net Budget resulting from the Final Settlement, in consultation with the Leader and Lead Member for Finance;

(vi) recommends to the Authority that the Council Tax requirement be set at £523,974,264.98 as set out in Key Table 2 page 14, and that the Council approves a tax rate increase of 4.99% comprising 2.99% increase for the general rate and 2% increase for the Adult Social Care Precept, as set out in Key Table 2 (page 14).

(vii) recommends to the Authority the precepts required from each District Council and the levels of county Council Tax for each of the eight property valuation bands consequent upon the budget as amended by adjustments in collection in the current year, as set out in Key Table 2 (page 14);

(viii) notes there are no new Fees & Charges proposed for 2024/25;

(ix) notes that in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, changes to existing fees and charges will be agreed by the appropriate Cabinet Member and Chief Finance Officer via a Delegated Decision;

(x) notes the Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 – 2027/28 as summarised in Key Table 4 (page 16) and set out in detail on pages 96 to 123;

(xi) takes account of the risks outlined on pages 166 to 189 in determining the final service budgets, levels of reserves and Council Tax figure to be recommended to the Authority;

(xii) notes the County Fund Balance and Earmarked Reserves 2024/25, as set out on pages 124 to 130;

(xiii) recommends to the Authority the Capital Programme Overview 2024/25 - 2028/29, set out on pages 25 to 42;

(xiv) recommends to the Authority the Capital Programme for 2024/25 of £155.2 million and how it is financed as shown in Summary Table D on page 34;

(xv) approves, for planning purposes, the indicative Capital Programmes for, 2025/26, 2026/27, 2028/29 and 2029/30 shown in summary Table D on page 34 and agrees these levels will be reviewed in the light of the overall level of revenue and capital resources available to the Authority for each year.

(xvi) recommends to the Authority that it adopts the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25 - 2027/28, as set out on pages 131 to 153;

(xvii) recommends to the Authority the Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 to 2028/29, contained on pages 135 to 140;

(xviii) gives delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Public Value to effect movements between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long term liabilities;

(xix) recommends to the Authority the Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2028/29 contained on pages 154-164, as amended by the Addendum for the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy; and

(xx) recommends the Authority gives delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Public Value to agree in principle to the application of Flexible Use of Capital Receipts, if required, in concluding a SEND Safety Valve agreement with Government, with specific details to be subsequently presented to Council to update the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy as required by statutory guidance.

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### **School Admissions Policies for 2025/26**

#### **RESOLVED**

(a) that the Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Admissions Policies, as set out in section 3 of the Report be adopted for September 2025;

(b) note that the approved admissions policies for September 2024 were used as a basis of consultation with schools and others for formulating the relevant admissions policies from September 2025/26 onwards;

(c) that the Published Admissions Numbers as set out in Appendix One, noting the reduction for West Croft School from 90 to 60, be approved;

(d) that the reduction in the catchment area of Stoke Canon Church of England Primary School be approved;

(e) that the normal round co-ordinated admission scheme and the in-year co-ordinated admissions scheme for 2025-26 be agreed; and

(f) that the admissions timetable as set out in Appendix Five also be agreed.

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### **Integration of the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership**

#### **RESOLVED**

(a) that the proposed Integration Plan for the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HOTSW LEP) and transfer of functions into the County Council by 1st April 2024 be endorsed;

(b) that delegated authority be given to the Director of Performance and Partnerships in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Skills, the Director of Finance and Public Value and Director of Legal and Democratic Services responsibility for:

(i) Finalising the HotSW LEP Integration Plan and;

(ii) Concluding the transfer arrangement and agreements with Somerset Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council covering: operational implementation of HOTSWE LEP functions, and the allocation of HOTSWE LEP residual funding, resources, and assets;

(c) that the submission of a business case for Devon, including Plymouth and Torbay to bid for transition funding from Government up to £240,000 be approved; and

(d) that the dissolution of the HOTSWE LEP Joint Scrutiny Committee, by the end of March 2024, also be approved.

\* **9**      **Matford offices - Public Open Space**

The Leader of the Council **MOVED** and Councillor McInnes **SECONDED** that the Report of the Director of Transformation and Business Services (TBS/24/1) which sought approval to proceed with the disposal of the former Matford offices site, including necessary curtilage, be deferred.

The Motion was put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

\* **11**      **Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the following be endorsed and any recommendations to Cabinet therein be approved:

Farms Estate Committee (Interviewing) - 18 January 2024

Farms Estate Committee (Interviewing) - 19 January 2024

Devon Education Forum – 24 January 2024 (the Cabinet had previously noted minute 118(e) relating to the transfer of 0.25% (£1.3 million) between blocks for 2024-25) to support the Safety Valve plans under agenda item 7.

\* **13**      **Forward Plan**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet reviewed the [Forward Plan](#) and determined those items of business to be defined as key and framework decisions and included in the Plan from the date of this meeting onwards reflecting the requirements of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.