

CABINET

12 January 2022

Present:-

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

Apologies:-

Councillors A Saywell

Members attending in accordance with Standing Orders 8 and 25

J Brazil, R Hannaford - In Person Attendance

F Biederman, A Connett and J Hodgson - Remote Attendance

* 96

Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2021 be signed as a correct record.

* 97

Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* 98

Announcements

There was no announcement by the Chair at this meeting.

* 99

Petitions

The Leader was presented with a petition organised by local residents containing 301 signatures seeking the Torridgeside Link Centre to remain open as a community centre for all mental health service users.

The petitioner could not be present but the Chair indicated that the Cabinet Member or Head of Service would be asked to respond direct to the petitioners on the issues raised, within 15 days.

* 100

Question(s) from Members of the Council

There was no question from a Member of the Council.

* 101 **Budget Monitoring (Month 8) and Target Budget and Service Targets 2022/2023**

(Councillors Biederman, Connett and Hannaford attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Director of Finance (DF/22/4) on the Budget Monitoring Position in the current financial year at Month 8 and an updated position on the Target Budget and Service Targets for 2022/2023, circulated prior to the meeting in accordance with regulation 7(4) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

At month 8 it was estimated that budgets would overspend by just over £8.3 million, an increase of £1.3 million from month 6. The Dedicated Schools Grant projected deficit, relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), was forecast to be £39.0 million. In line with Department of Education guidance this deficit would not be dealt with this financial year but carried forward to future years.

Adult Care and Health Services were forecast to overspend by just over £5.1 million, a reduction of £71,000 from month 6 and the position included £3.2 million of budgeted savings.

Children's Services were forecasting an overspend of £9.1 million, an increase of £1.8 million from month 6 (not including the projected deficit of £39.1 million on Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)).

Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste was forecasting an underspend of £290,000 an improvement of £76,000 from month 6, the result of additional overheads being funded from the highways permitting scheme.

Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity (COPHEP) were forecasting an underspend of £1.5 million and Corporate Services were forecasting an underspend of £671,000, and small reduction of £13,000 from month 6. Non-service items, which included capital financing charges and business rates pooling gain, were forecast to underspend by £3.5 million.

The approved capital programme was £216.7 million, including amounts brought forward from 2020/21, and other prior year approvals, of £46.2 million, and in year additions of £23.1 million. The year-end forecast at Month 8 was £184.4 million with slippage forecast at £32.3 million. The main areas of net slippage could be attributed to scheme variations and programme delays in Planning, Transportation and Environment, which reflected the complexity of the major schemes within this service area.

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak the Government had continued to put in place a number of grant funding streams to help support Local Authorities in responding to the pandemic and the Council was in direct receipt of pandemic related grants with a confirmed value of £50.7 million. In addition to the funds received this year the Authority was able to carry forward £25.6 million of funding received last year, mainly related to Contain Outbreak Management Funding, Test and Trace Funding and the Covid Support Grant.

The Report outlined that on the 16 December 2021, the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP, released a written statement to Parliament on the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23 which was for one year only and based on the Spending Review 2021 (SR21) funding levels.

The Chancellor had announced an additional £1.6bn per annum (2022/23 to 2024/25) for Local Government as part of SR21 and the majority of this amount had been included in the Core Spending Power figures.

Based on the figures in the Core Spending Power amounts, there had been a net increase in funding (excluding the multiplier adjustment and Adult Social Care reform funding) of £1.526bn. A breakdown of the change was shown in the Report.

The council tax referendum limit would be 2% for local authorities, with social care authorities allowed an additional 1% social care precept. No papers had been published relating to the Fair Funding Review or the Business Rates Reset.

The table in the Report set out Devon's Core Funding of £103.2 million and shows the other grants that had been announced so far. Other grants were expected to be announced in the coming weeks and months

The provisional settlement had been very close to what was expected, and no change was therefore proposed to the Budget Targets for 2022/23 that had been agreed by Cabinet in December 2021.

Although the Provisional Settlement represented an increase to the Authority's funding next year it was not sufficient to meet the demand and cost pressures being faced and savings would need to be made to balance the budget.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors as set out in the Director of Finance's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

it was **MOVED** by Councillor Twiss, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Month 8 budget monitoring forecast position be noted;
- (b) that progress on the delivery of the Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan be noted; and
- (c) that the Provisional Settlement for 2022/23 also be noted.

* **102** **A Clean Growth Vision for Development**

(Councillors Biederman, Brazil, Connett and Hannaford attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Head of Economy, Enterprise and Skills (EES/22/1), circulated prior to the meeting in accordance with regulation 7(4) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Report sought Cabinet endorsement of the Clean Growth Vision for the West of East Devon and the Strategy, and that be submitted as part of the Council's evidence into the East Devon District Council local plan consultation.

The vision document and supporting strategy focused on low carbon economic growth in the West of East Devon (WoED) and the Report outlined a vision for the area, recommended a series of actions that reflected priorities for growth and contained an Annexe of implementation projects that fitted with the vision and could be used as a framework for funding bids. The study was being submitted to East Devon District Council's Strategic Planning Committee for their endorsement as evidence for the production of the local plan.

The Clean Growth Vision for the WoED was in three parts – a Vision document, a supporting technical report and an Annexe of anchor opportunities, set out in the appendices of the Report.

The proposals were in line with a number of objectives including the Governments Net Zero Strategy, the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership's Blueprint for Clean Growth and this Council's climate emergency. The study considered the West of the District, including Cranbrook, nearby employment sites, including Exeter Science Park and Skypark, and the Clyst Valley regional park and other potential areas for growth. The vision also considered opportunities from the move to home

working and covered other climate change aspects, such as transport, energy generation, skills requirements and building standards.

Following a procurement process, City Science had been appointed to undertake the work, which outlined the vision and made a series of 11 delivery recommendations and provided an Annexe of 8 catalytic example projects that could deliver clean growth objectives and net zero outcomes.

The WoED was a place of exceptional assets - a special combination of natural capital, skilled innovators, ambitious local partnerships, energy resources, and ample space for business growth. The vision was based on the idea that long-term job growth would be focused on knowledge-based assets and increased innovation.

Key themes identified were:

- Redefining how we work and live well;
- A Thriving Innovation Ecosystem;
- World-Class Demonstrators in Core Technologies;
- Zero-Carbon Place-making;
- Restoring Nature Connections;
- Powered by Nature; and
- A Place for Creative Minds

The Report included 11 recommendations for delivery and provided some relevant case study examples from other locations.

The Annexe of Anchor Opportunities provided 8 catalytic projects that could be a focus for future funding bids or private investment, with an idea of costs, jobs, skills and GVA increases they would support and provided some examples from other areas where appropriate:

An Impact Assessment was also attached to the agenda for the attention of Members at the meeting, noting there were no equality considerations impacting on the decisions sought from the recommendations in this report.

The Report promoted a positive environmental message regarding the ability to carry out clean growth in Devon. There was no direct environmental benefit or impact from the study itself, however if the vision and recommendations were implemented there would be a significant positive environmental impact for the area and the Devon Carbon Plan overall.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, sustainability (including carbon impact), risk management, equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) set out in the Head of Service's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

it was **MOVED** by Councillor Gilbert, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED

(a) that the West of East Devon Clean Growth Vision and a supporting Clean Growth Strategy Report be endorsed for submission to the East Devon District Council local plan consultation;

(b) that Cabinet note this is a pilot study that can be replicated elsewhere in Devon to fit in with local planning cycles and support sustainable development and the Devon Carbon Plan; and

(c) that amendments to the Clean Growth Vision be delegated to the Head of Economy, Enterprise and Skills in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Skills and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport.

(NB: The Impact Assessment referred to above may be viewed alongside Minutes of this meeting and may also be available on the [Impact Assessment Webpages](#)).

103

Notice(s) of Motion

(a) Restoring Railway Resilience (Councillor Hannaford)

(Councillor Hannaford attended in accordance with Standing Order 8 and spoke to this item). The wording of the Motion is outlined below:

Council warmly welcomes and celebrates the restoration of the Okehampton to Exeter daily rail services after an absence of forty-nine years.

After many years of strong cross party support at Devon County Council, we are especially pleased and proud that the first reopening under the governments "Restoring Your Railway Programme" has taken place at the heart of Devon.

Hopefully heralding a national railway service revival across the whole country, that will see a transformational change in commuter movements, and a substantial reduction in harmful emissions.

Council also welcomes the £50,000 to develop a business case to reinstate passenger rail links between Tavistock and Plymouth, and the new additional funding to reopen Cullompton Railway Station.

However, council is greatly concerned, that there is still an estimated huge gap in regional railway service investment of 4.5 billion for the South West Region, based on its ONS projected population over the period to 2045.

Therefore, in order to continue to build upon the restoring your railway programme, increase the far South West's general connectivity, secure our railway resilience, and crucially assist with the climate emergency, council commits its active support, working with others to lobby, help facilitate, and advocate for the following projects;

- The completion of the Great Western electrification programme.
- The development of the North of Dartmoor line, connecting Plymouth, via Okehampton and Tavistock.
- Additional passing loops, and an increase in line speeds, between Exeter and Salisbury to improve journey times between Exeter and Waterloo Station.
- Encouraging and working with the logistics sector to commit to a serious switch to rail freight for the distribution of consumer goods, food, and industrial products.

Furthermore, Council resolves to make formal representations to the Government, national and regional transport bodies, the business sector, and our local Devon Members of Parliament, to secure the necessary funding and investment to progress these much needed and long awaited improvements.

Members considered the Officer's factual Briefing Note on the matter (CSO/22/01) which referred to the partnership with Peninsula local authorities to make the case for investment in rail, including the publication of a 20-year plan for rail in 2016. Since that Report, over £300m investment had been secured to improve the railway (listing the specific projects). The Briefing Note also referred to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and how that affected rail priorities (fewer commuters for example) and other impacts on the industry such as the decarbonisation of transport and tackling climate change as well as the Levelling Up agenda. Against this backdrop, the Peninsula Transport Sub National Transport Body would refresh its Rail Strategy. The Note also covered the *Restoring Your Railway* Ideas Fund monies secured by the Council (Tavistock to Plymouth rail line, Cullompton Railway Station, Dartmoor Line reopening).

The Council had previously made the case for passing loops west of Honiton and the infrastructure had been identified in the industry's *West of England Line Study 2020* and with the South West Sub National Transport Bodies had jointly commissioned a freight strategy, which was nearing completion.

The Cabinet considered the recommendation now before them and the actions now proposed and already undertaken and any other relevant factors:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

RESOLVED that Council be recommended to:

(a) continue to work collaboratively with the Peninsula Transport Sub National Transport Body authorities to develop a Peninsula Rail Strategy to inform future rail investment priorities; and

(b) through the Peninsula Transport Sub National Transport Body, work closely with rail partners and key stakeholders to make the case for future funding in line with the industry's Delivery Plan process.

(b) After COP 26 (Councillor Atkinson)

The wording of the Motion is outlined below:

The final draft of the COP26 agreement recognises "the urgent need for multilevel and cooperative action." which is understood by those negotiating on behalf of local government to refer to governance, and mean that action should include all levels of Government from local to central.

This Council

- will work with Government and Local Government networks, to make sure the COP26 text is translated into meaningful local and national programmes to reduce carbon which are supported by agreed and sufficient financing by Government;
- demands that national plans formulated by the Government are discussed and negotiated between local and devolved Governments and not imposed centrally by Government;
- demands that when the Government promotes new financial measures addressing climate change, these should be discussed with local governments and associations before implementation to ensure that the resources are used effectively at a local level and provide value for money; and
- considers the current national Government competitive approach introduced in 2010, which has introduced an array of short-term and one-off funding pots for which Councils have to dedicate resources to bidding for to access to often small pots of money is not an effective way to address action to reduces global warming.

Members considered the Officer's factual briefing note on the matter (CSO/22/01) which referred to the Devon Climate Emergency partnership

which had the aim of “Creating a resilient, net-zero carbon Devon – where people and nature thrive.” The Devon Carbon Plan being prepared provided the strategic overview and would nest with similar plans being developed at district and town & parish level. Carbon emissions data and activity-planning toolkits had been provided for town and parish councils to start acting alongside the strategic actions in the Devon Carbon Plan.

The Interim Devon Carbon Plan, made it clear that cooperation with national Government to develop new funding streams and regulatory mechanisms would be vital to achieve net-zero and the Authority regularly communicated with Government on matters relating to the climate emergency.

The Cabinet considered the recommendation now before them and the actions now proposed and already undertaken and any other relevant factors:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

RESOLVED that Council be recommended to endorse the Notice of Motion and continues to work with national government to provide the resources necessary to meet the Paris Agreement commitments.

(c) Behaviour Change and Phasing Out Fossil Fuels (Councillor Hodgson)

(Councillor Hodgson attended in accordance with Standing Order 8 and spoke to this item).

The wording of the Motion is outlined below:

Further to the outcomes of COP26, which failed to secure strong commitments to phase out fossil fuels, this council will seek to support behaviour change in residents and businesses in the County by implementing initiatives modelled on the Welsh Government’s One Planet Standard and associated Policies. This will include a commitment to switch funding from fossil fuel intense (e.g. new road building) projects to alternative (e.g. Active Travel) projects that will support low carbon, and healthier lifestyles.

Background information at this link -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSDnAnpaGHs>

Members considered the Officer’s factual briefing note on the matter (CSO/22/01) which referred to the aims of the One Planet Standard in encouraging organisations to respect planet Earth’s natural boundaries and capacities by adjusting the impacts of their activities to a level that one planet could provide for. The Devon Climate Emergency partnership recognised this ‘overshoot’ and the interlinked nature of the climate and ecological emergencies and the Interim Devon Carbon Plan contained actions to increase residents’ and organisations’ awareness of how they could reduce

their impact on climate change and the natural environment. The Plan also described how investment needed to occur in technologies and approaches that would enable the transition to net-zero, alongside behaviour change, and create healthier lifestyles. The Cabinet noted that funding for public infrastructure from Government came with specific spending priorities and outcomes, however, attitudes were changing.

The Cabinet considered the recommendation now before them and the actions now proposed and already undertaken and any other relevant factors:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Davis, and

RESOLVED that Council be recommended to endorse the spirit of the Notice of Motion, continues to help residents and businesses reduce their environmental impact, and continues to take opportunities to invest in low-carbon infrastructure for the people of Devon.

(d) Community Composting Initiatives (Councillor Hodgson)

(Councillor Hodgson attended in accordance with Standing Order 8 and Councillors Biederman, Brazil and Hannaford attended in accordance with 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The wording of the Motion is outlined below:

In the spirit of COP 26 to reduce the carbon footprint of waste recycling, this Council will encourage and support community composting initiatives that are supported by Parish Councils in the County.

Members considered the Officer's factual briefing note on the matter (CSO/22/01) which referred to the Council's support for Community Composting for a number of years, the composting credits currently paid and work through Community Action Groups (CAG) Devon, funded by this Authority, in terms of supporting composting events (e.g on the 16th October the Dr Compost event had been attended by 20 people and a second session on 20th November attended by 22 (including 3 NT staff)). There were plans to update the Recycle Devon community composting guidance which currently signposted the Devon Community Composting Network site and planned to offer simple advice with regards to planning issues.

The Cabinet considered the recommendation now before them and the actions now proposed and already undertaken:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

RESOLVED that Council be recommended to note the current position and the planned work on community composting and no further action be taken on the Notice of Motion.

* **104** **Question(s) from Members of the Public**

There was no question from a Member of the public.

* **105** **Minutes**

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

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

Farms Estate Interviewing Committee - 13th December 2021

Farms Estate Interviewing Committee - 14th December 2021

Farms Estate Interviewing Committee - 15th December 2021

* **106** **Delegated Action/Urgent Matters**

The [Registers of Decisions taken by Members under the urgency provisions or delegated powers](#) were available for inspection, in line with the Council's Constitution and Regulation 13 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. [Decisions taken by Officers](#) under any express authorisation of the Cabinet or other Committee or under any general authorisation within the Council's Scheme of Delegation set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

* **107** **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.

NOTES:

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

* **DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 11.48 am

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CABINET
12/01/22