

CABINET

11 May 2022

Present:-

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

Members attending in accordance with Standing Orders 8 and 25

C Whitton attended in person

F Biederman, A Connett and A Dewhirst attended remotely.

* 157

Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2022 be signed as a correct record.

* 158

Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* 159

Announcements

There was no announcement by the Chair at this meeting.

* 160

Petitions

There was no petition received from a Member of the Public or the Council.

* 161

Question(s) from Members of the Council

In accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules, the Leader and relevant Cabinet Member responded to two questions from a Member of the Council on the following issues;

- 20mph Zones, numbers of applications and timescales for roll out of new schemes; and
- Policy in relation to goods and services bought directly or indirectly from Russia.

A copy of the questions and answers had been sent to Councillor Bailey who was not present at the meeting.

[NB: A copy of the questions and answers are available on webpage]

* **162** **Bid into Government Levelling Up Fund: Round 2**

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

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (designate) (PTE/22/19) which outlined proposals for a bid into the Government 'Levelling Up Fund: Round 2', 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 Cabinet noted that the Department for Transport, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Treasury were planning to invest in high-value local infrastructure. The Levelling Up Fund (LUF) was to be distributed as a capital grant, as part of the Government's broader offer to level up opportunity across the UK.

Working with key stakeholders, a programme of schemes had been identified which covered a range of transport modes and spread the bids over a wide geography covering a number of key Market Towns.

The Report identified five projects including a rail station, a strategic cycle scheme and three other schemes, with associated highway, pedestrian/cycle improvements aimed at reducing the impact of traffic on sensitive residential areas and town centres. Each scheme would aim to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity, a reduction in carbon and air quality improvements.

The eligibility was complex as the Government had categorised all authorities based on the need for economic recovery and growth; improved transport connectivity and regeneration. The table in the Report showed the categories for Districts in Devon, with the guidance stating that preference would be given to bids from higher priority areas.

Members of Parliament were also allowed to back one bid they saw as a priority.

After numerous discussions and consultations, the proposed programme was ambitious but deemed deliverable.

- Okehampton - working with West Devon Borough Council who would submit a bid for a West Devon Transport Hub in Okehampton.
- Cullompton - working with Mid Devon District Council to submit a bid for Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road (CTCRR).
- Exmouth – with East Devon District Council and the submission of a package bid which included the Dinan Way extension.
- Newton Abbot to Torbay Cycle Route – with Teignbridge District Council to submit a bid to enhance the cycle connectivity, appeal and safety between Newton Abbot and Torbay.

- Lee Mill – work with South Hams District Council for a new Lee Mill A38 eastbound slip road, and bus interchange, including improvements to the cycle connections between Ivybridge and Langage Freepport/Plympton.

Various consultations had taken place on every scheme at the appropriate level and all schemes have a high level of support. The Report also outlined how the proposals met the Strategic Plan priorities and actions.

The table in section 6 of the Report highlighted that the funding from the LUF was generally limited to £20 million per scheme. It further highlighted the contributions from both the County Council and the Districts and the Levelling Up Fund Bid.

All schemes were expected to have a valid permission by the end of the year which would demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity, a reduction in carbon and air quality improvements. There was a wide range of schemes including a rail station, a strategic cycle route and transport schemes aimed at reducing the impact of traffic on sensitive residential areas and town centres.

The Cabinet also noted that Impact Assessments had either previously been prepared or were in the process of being developed and would be reviewed as bids were advanced. Successful schemes would be subject to a further Cabinet report and the inclusion of an Impact Assessment at the appropriate time.

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 Directors Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

it was **MOVED** by Councillor Davis, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hughes, and

RESOLVED

(a) that the Council work with the District Councils to submit bids to the Government's "Levelling Up Fund" (LUF) in July 2022, for the following schemes:

- i. Okehampton - new rail station & transport hub;
- ii. Cullompton - Town Centre Relief Road;
- iii. Exmouth – Destination Exmouth Completion of Dinan Way and improved cycle and pedestrian links to the Town Centre;
- iv. Newton Abbot to Torbay Cycle Route; and
- v. Lee Mill - Slip road, cycle/pedestrian improvement (potential linkage to the Freepport) and bus interchange improvements;

(b) that the Levelling Up Fund bids be submitted with a total estimated cost of £92 million and approve the increase in the capital programme of up to £6.3 million as a contribution from Devon County Council;

(c) that where approval is granted, delegated authority be given to the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Climate Change, Environment and Transport and Finance to negotiate the terms of any funding agreements required to secure the funding or any part of it; and

(d) that delegated authority be given to the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Local Member and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport, to make minor amendments to the bid submissions.

* **163** **Exeter Highways and Traffic Orders Committee - Bus Services in Exeter**

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

The Cabinet noted that at its meeting on 12 April, the Exeter Highways and Traffic Orders Committee had considered a briefing paper from the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment (Minute *45), and had RESOLVED;

(a) that after listening to members and the public statements today, the Exeter Highways and Traffic Orders Committee concludes that the bus service in Exeter and its travel to work area is currently not fit for purpose for the following reasons:

- impact on vulnerable users of buses being cancelled without notice and for safety of women and girls where the last bus of the day fails to turn up;
- failure of the Stagecoach 'App' to provide reliable up to date real time bus information;
- lack of zero emission buses, particularly on routes within the city centre and heavily trafficked arterial routes;
- disappointing level of funding allocated to Devon under the Government's bus improvement strategy;
- ongoing bus driver recruitment and retention issues; and
- recently reduced timetable that has drastically cut the scheduled bus service for many areas of the city;

The Committee therefore concludes that the Service cannot be made fit for purpose under the current legislative framework, and believes that local councils must have power to set local requirements on timetables, routes and fares for the benefit of its residents and therefore calls for Devon County Council to press for a bus franchise arrangement to be an essential part of any Devon Devolution deal; and

(b) that in addition to the above, the Cabinet be requested to see how it can work on a marketing campaign in partnership with Stagecoach and other local bus operators to increase patronage on local services following the reduction in patronage after the pandemic restrictions.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and **RESOLVED** that a full Report be presented to the Cabinet on 13 July 2022.

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

There was no question from a Member of the public.

* **165** **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.

* **166** **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 11.03 am