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To: The Chair and Members of the
Farms Estate Committee

County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
Devon
EX2 4QD

Date: 17 September 2021

Contact: Wendy Simpson, 01392 384383
Email: wendy.simpson@devon.gov.uk

FARMS ESTATE COMMITTEE

Monday, 27th September, 2021

A meeting of the Farms Estate Committee is to be held on the above date at 2.15 pm
at Committee Suite, County Hall, Exeter to consider the following matters.

Phil Norrey
Chief Executive

A G E N D A

PART I - OPEN COMMITTEE

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Minutes

Minutes of the meetings held on 14 June 2021 and 31 August 2021 (previously
circulated).

3 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Items which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered at the meeting
as matters of urgency.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

4 Revenue Monitoring (Month 5) 2021/22 (Pages 1 - 6)

Report of the County Treasurer (CT/21/83) on the County Farms Estate Revenue
Monitoring Statement (Month 5) 2021/22, attached.

- 5 Capital Monitoring (Month 5) 2021/22 (Pages 7 - 10)
Report of the County Treasurer (CT/21/84) on the County Farms Estate Capital Monitoring (Month 5) 2021/22, attached.
- 6 The Veterans Farm Able Foundation
Verbal Report of the Head of Digital Transformation and Business Support and the Chief Executive of the Veterans Farm Able Foundation on the potential for the County Farms Estate and its tenants to support Veterans.

PART II - ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- 7 Exclusion of the Press and Public
Recommendation: that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to, and which is likely to reveal the identity of, tenants and information relating to the financial or business affairs of tenants and the County Council and, in accordance with Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, by virtue of the fact that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

- 8 Holdings, Tenancies etc
(An item to be considered by the Committee in accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules and Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, no representations having been received to such consideration taking place under Regulation 5(5) thereof)
 - a Management and Restructuring (Pages 11 - 16)
Report of the Head of Digital Transformation and Business Support (BSS/21/07), attached.
 - b Request for Landlord's Consent for proposed Tenant's Improvements (Pages 17 - 20)
Report of the Head of Digital Transformation and Business Support (BSS/21/08), attached.
 - c Outstanding Debts (Pages 21 - 28)
Report of the County Treasurer (CT/21/85), attached.

Members are reminded that Part II Reports contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). They need to be disposed of carefully and should be returned to the Democratic Services Officer at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.

MEETINGS INFORMATION AND NOTES FOR VISITORS

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Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so,

as directed by the Chair. Filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible without additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard to the wishes of others present who may not wish to be filmed. Anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance.

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Declarations of Interest for Members of the Council

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Induction Loop available



2.

The County Farms Estate

Revenue Monitoring (Month 5) 2021/22

Report of the County Treasurer

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: that the Committee endorse the report

1. Revenue Monitoring for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021
 - 1.1 The Revenue Budget presented to Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee on 28 January 2021 and approved at County Council on 18 February 2021 included a target surplus of £464,000 for the County Farms Estate.
 - 1.2 Appendix A provides details of income and expenditure to date.
 - 1.3 Minimal income has been invoiced so far this year. Most rent is paid in arrears with the first payments due at the end of month 6 and the balance to be invoiced at the end of month 12. Forecasts indicate that income is expected to exceed budget by £94,000.
 - 1.4 Included in the additional income is a one-off licence fee of £25,000 which is being ring fenced for commissioning consultants to commence calculating the base line net carbon footprint of individual farm businesses and the estate as a whole.
 - 1.5 Three Tenant Right Valuation accruals are still not yet capable of being released as the end of tenancy valuations are not concluded. There are at least 10 farms being relet in 2021/22 which will generate a significant Compensation Liability and it is proposed allocating £69,000 of the extra revenue generated to cover as much of the end of tenancy compensation liabilities as possible.
 - 1.6 Total unforeseen maintenance expenditure and commitment at month 5 is £24,348. The year-end forecast remains £100,000, as per budget.
 - 1.7 The revenue funded maintenance programme has been set with both the budget and forecast of £237,000 being proposed at month 1 now being reduced back to £210,000 as a more realistic year end figure given the minimal expenditure achieved to date.

Agenda Item 4

- 1.8 At month 5 £8,417 has been spent on redundant buildings, asbestos removal and health and safety improvements works. The year-end forecast remains £61,000, as per budget.
 - 1.9 Spend on testing and inspection works (service term contracts for private water supplies, boilers, fixed wiring systems, sewage treatment plants, radon fans etc) is £3,116 at month 5. The year-end forecast remains £20,000, as per budget.
 - 1.10 The programmed tree survey work has a budget of £13,000 with the expectation that this will be fully spent by year end. Inspections have been carried out and more Ash Die Back found. The remedial works are being priced and programmed for this coming winter season.
 - 1.11 It is anticipated the building maintenance survey budget of £10,000 will be fully committed. The programme has been agreed and some condition surveys have commenced.
 - 1.12 On the understanding the revenue funded repair and maintenance programme will be carried out as per year end forecast, the NPS fees are expected to be as per the year end forecast of £230,000.
 - 1.13 A new line of expenditure has appeared to track £25,000 of planned costs 'ring fenced' for the important task of auditing and benchmarking individual farms net carbon footprint. This will establish a baseline assessment for the estate after which targeted training and development can be implemented to help tenants work towards achieving net zero as quickly as possible.
 - 1.14 It is currently anticipated that the forecast year end level of income and expenditure will be achieved, and the target surplus delivered, albeit there may be some fluctuations within income and expenditure items.
2. Options/Alternatives
 - 2.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.
3. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data
 - 3.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.
 - 3.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations have been received
 - 3.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

Agenda Item 4

4. Financial Considerations

4.1 The Author is not aware of any financial issues arising from this report.

5. Legal Considerations

5.1 The Author is not aware of any legal issues arising from this report.

6. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

6.1 The Author is not aware of any environmental impact (including climate change) issues arising from this report.

7. Equality Considerations

7.1 The Author is not aware of any equality issues arising from this report.

8. Risk Management Considerations

8.1 The Author is not aware of any obvious risks to manage.

9. Public Health Impact

9.1 The Author is not aware of any public health impact.

10. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

10.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010).

Name

Mary Davis – County Treasurer

Electoral Divisions: All

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for Enquiries:

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Contact: 01392 351066 or dan.meek@nps.co.uk

Agenda Item 4

Name: Lisa Beynon, Head Accountant for Corporate Services, County Treasurer's, County Hall, Exeter
Contact: 01392 382876 or lisa.beynon@devon.gov.uk

| Background Paper | Date | File Reference |
|------------------|------|----------------|
|------------------|------|----------------|

Nil

The above mentioned Reports are published on the Council's Website at:
<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

COUNTY FARMS ESTATE - FINANCIAL REPORTS FINANCIAL STATEMENT - (MONTH 5) 2021-22

| <u>INCOME</u> | <u>YEAR TO DATE</u> | <u>ANNUAL TARGET</u> | <u>CURRENT FORECAST</u> |
|--|---|--|--|
| | <u>£'000</u> | <u>£'000</u> | <u>£'000</u> |
| Rent | (33) | (1,124) | (1,213) |
| Other | (18) | (40) | (45) |
| TOTAL INCOME | <u>(51)</u> | <u>(1,164)</u> | <u>(1,258)</u> |
| | | | |
| <u>EXPENDITURE</u> | | | |
| <u>STATUTORY COSTS</u> | | | |
| Tenant Right Valuation | (47) | 20 | 89 |
| SUB - TOTAL | <u>(47)</u> | <u>20</u> | <u>89</u> |
| | | | |
| <u>PREMISES COSTS</u> | | | |
| Building Maintenance - unforeseen | 8 | 100 | 100 |
| Building Maintenance - programmed | (13) | 210 | 210 |
| Building Maintenance - Surveys | 0 | 10 | 10 |
| Building Maintenance - STC | 3 | 20 | 20 |
| Building Maintenance - other (incl. land agents initiatives, redundant buildings, asbestos and health & safety) | 8 | 61 | 61 |
| Grounds Maintenance | (3) | 13 | 13 |
| Rents & other landlord charges | 0 | 11 | 11 |
| Rates, Electricity and Water Charges | 3 | 6 | 6 |
| SUB - TOTAL | <u>6</u> | <u>431</u> | <u>431</u> |
| | | | |
| <u>SUPPLIES & SERVICES</u> | | | |
| Insurance | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Adverts | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| NPS Fees | 68 | 230 | 230 |
| Legal Fees | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Professional Fees | (7) | 6 | 6 |
| Carbon Footprints Audit | 0 | 0 | 25 |
| Other Fees & Charges (DFYF, SHLAA, GPDO) | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| SUB - TOTAL | <u>61</u> | <u>249</u> | <u>274</u> |
| | | | |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | <u>20</u> | <u>700</u> | <u>794</u> |
| | | | |
| NET OPERATIONAL (SURPLUS) | (31) | (464) | (464) |
| | | | |
| FARM IMPROVEMENTS inclusive of fees | | | |
| Revenue funded Restructuring (BM other) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| SUB - TOTAL | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| | | | |
| TOTAL COSTS SURPLUS | (31) | (464) | (464) |

The County Farms Estate

Capital Monitoring (month 5) 2021/22.

Report of the County Treasurer

Recommendation: that the Committee endorse the report

1 Capital Monitoring for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021

1.1 The approved budget for 2021/22 stands at £1,215,019

1.2 As at month 5 there is minimal expenditure to report.

2 Nitrate Vulnerable Zone Compliance

2.1 Retention monies are left to pay on only two slurry stores constructed in the previous financial years. No new slurry store schemes are being designed or programmed for this financial year.

2.2 Forecast spend stands at £152,946 on retention monies associated with NVZ compliant schemes for 2021/22.

3 Compensation Payments (Tenants Improvements, etc..)

3.1 Forecast spend currently stands at nil, but this excludes any liability that may fall due in year or at 25 March 2022 which cannot be funded through the revenue budget.

4 Enhancements and Improvements

4.1 The 2021/22 programme has been agreed and there are 9 primary farmhouse improvement schemes being designed, specified and tendered. In addition, further works are being carried out to other dwellings as either priority works in advance of carrying out the main programme of improvements, or additional works following earlier farmhouse improvements. There is sufficient work in the programme to ensure the full budget is committed.

4.2 Actual spend at month 5 is just £152,048 with a further £174,907 committed (orders placed) to date. A total of £1,061,544 is forecast to be spent by year end.

Agenda Item 5

5 Land Acquisitions

- 5.1 One land acquisition opportunity is currently being explored.

6. Budget 2022/23 – 2026/27

- 6.1 As part of the Authority's medium term capital program, the Farms Estate intend to submit bids for additional funding to:

- Improve, modernise and make the remaining stock of farmhouses and cottages more energy efficient.
- Cover slurry stores to comply with the clean air strategy.
- Invest in slurry store covers that can capture and harvest methane to provide a return on investment and reduce CO2e emissions.
- Provide SSAFO compliant infrastructure such as silage clamps.
- match fund any grants DEFRA may provide Local Authorities to improve and retain new farming entrant opportunities.
- Invest in life expired and inefficient farm infrastructure.
- Pay statutory end of tenancy compensation for tenant's improvements.
- Purchase replacement land.

- 6.2 The value of bids will be brought back to the November 2021 Committee.

7. Options/Alternatives

- 7.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.

8. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

- 8.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.

- 8.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations have been received

- 8.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

9. Financial Considerations

- 9.1 The Author is not aware of any financial issues arising from this report.

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11. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

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12. Equality Considerations

12.1 The Author is not aware of any equality issues arising from this report.

13. Risk Management Considerations

13.1 The Author is not aware of any obvious risks to manage.

14. Public Health Impact

14.1 The Author is not aware of any public health impact.

15. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

15.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010).

Name

Mary Davis – County Treasurer

Electoral Divisions: All

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for Enquiries:

Name: Dan Meek, Director of Property Management, NPS South West Ltd, Venture House, One Capital Court, Bittern Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7FW

Contact: 01392 351066 or dan.meek@nps.co.uk

Name: Lisa Beynon, Head Accountant for Corporate Services, County Treasurer's, County Hall, Exeter

Contact: 01392 382876 or lisa.beynon@devon.gov.uk

Agenda Item 5

Background Paper

Date

File Reference

Nil

The above mentioned Reports are published on the Council's Website at:
<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

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