

## CABINET

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:-

Councillor 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)

\* 469

### Minutes

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

**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.

\* 470

### Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

\* 471

### Announcements

There was no announcement by the Chair at this meeting.

\* 472

### Petitions

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

\* 473

### Question(s) from Members of the Council

There was no question from a Member of the Council.

\* **474**      **Question(s) from Members of the Public**

In accordance with the Council's Public Participation Rules, the Leader and relevant Cabinet Member responded to thirteen questions from Members of the public on the following matters.

1. The Matford site, the value of County Hall site as a community asset and clarity around any sale, proceeds, planning permission and plans for other parts of the site.
2. Intended sale of the public open space at Matford Offices, elements not addressed in the report, strength of feeling of local residents and requesting a delay.
3. Discussions as to whether the land could be put to other use, e.g community use / outdoor activities/ community hub.
4. Whether the Council will commit to working with local community groups to explore fundraising and a preferential sales process for community benefit.
5. Consideration of alternative options other than disposal of this land and the undertaking of a review and public consultation of the site, alongside the county hall grounds as a whole.
6. Enjoyment of the green space and the importance of this and suggestion for a review of the whole site.
7. Concern about possible development of the buildings and the detriment to the city and consideration of a planned review of the site, in consultation with local residents.
8. Clarity as to whether the budget was discontinuing the contribution to Homelessness contract in the coming financial year and funding for the contract for quarters 2, 3 and 4 of 2024–2025.
9. Impact of proposals on people with disabilities, the role of the disability act and freedom of movement for disabled people.
10. Legal obligations regarding disposal of an 'asset of community value' and whether the Council had fully considered this.
11. Development would dramatically impact on the feel, fabric, flora and fauna of the space and whether Members of Council or Cabinet had entered in formal or informal discussions with potential developers, regarding sale and / or value or extent of development.
12. Pausing of the homelessness cessation of contracts and no published impact assessment or document describing how the service would work in the future. When would it be available?
13. Proposal of securing funds to 'support sustainable economic recovery', and clarification of use of how the capital receipt would be deployed.

The Leader and Cabinet Member responded orally to supplementary questions arising from the above and a copy of the questions and answers had been sent direct to those questioners who were not present in the meeting.

(NB: A copy of the questions and answers are available on webpage for meeting and any supplementary questions and answers may be observed through [the livestream of the meeting](#))

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

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

The Cabinet considered and had regard to:

- a 2024/25 Budget Impact Assessment, which had been circulated to all Members of the Council prior to the meeting and was available at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/budget-2024-2025> undertaken as part of the budget's preparation;
- the Report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services (LDS/24/11) summarising the outcomes of, and comments/observations made at consultation meetings with representatives of Devon's Business Community, Trades Unions and Representatives of the Voluntary Sector;
- the discussions of the Council's Scrutiny Committees (LDS/24/10) held on 18th January 2024, 24th January 2024 and 25th January 2024, the recommendations being summarised and attached to the agenda;
- The Cabinet also noted Minute 118(e) of the Devon Education (Schools) Forum, held on 24 January 2024, that the transfer of 0.25% (£1.3 million) between blocks for 2024-25, to support the Safety Valve plans to manage the high needs funding sustainably and meet the needs of children and young people earlier had been approved by the Forum; and
- the Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value (DFP/24/15) on the Revenue Budget for 2024/25, Medium Term Financial Plan to 2027/28 and Capital Strategy 2024/25 to 2028/29. This included a statement on the robustness of the budget estimates, an assessment of the adequacy of reserves, the affordability of the Capital Strategy, the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25, a range of prudential indicators concerning the financial implications of the capital programme and an assessment that identified risks associated with the budget strategy, together with how the risks would be managed.

The Cabinet noted that the budget book contained details of the County Council's revenue and capital budgets together with associated financial and operational information. The Leadership commentary highlighted this was a time of significant challenge for local government as a whole and preparing for

the financial year 2024/25 had meant a continuation of plans to make savings by getting best value from all contracts, maximising income, reducing the number of employees, and selling Council owned property.

The overriding focus was to meet the needs of the young, old and most vulnerable across Devon, working closely with NHS partners to support and develop the local health and care system. Work would also continue with Team Devon to help support the local economy, improve job prospects and housing opportunities for local people, respond to climate change, champion opportunities for young people, and address the impacts of the rising cost of living for those hardest hit.

The detail of the budget book included:

- Strategic Leadership Team Introduction
- Revenue Budget Overview;
- Statement on the Robustness of the Budget Estimates, the Adequacy of Reserves and Affordability of the Capital Strategy;
- Capital Programme Overview 2024/25 - 2028/29;
- Service Budgets;
- Fees & Charges;
- Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 - 2027/28;
- County Fund Balance and Earmarked Reserves;
- Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25 - 2027/28 and Prudential Indicators 2024/25 - 2028/29;
- Capital Strategy 2024/25 - 2028/29;
- Risk Analysis of Volatile Budgets; and
- Abbreviations.

The Director also highlighted an amendment to Key Table 1 (Council Tax Requirement) in the Budget Book, following its publication arising from workforce inflation and savings contingency. The final budget book would be amended prior to publication for the Council meeting.

The Cabinet then noted the role of the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee on 25th January 2024 (Minute \*151) in reviewing and endorsing the Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value (DFP/24/06) on the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2024/25. The Treasury Management and Investment Strategy had been prepared in accordance with the revised Treasury Management Policy Statement. The Treasury Management and Investment Strategy set out the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy, capital expenditure funding, prudential indicators, the current treasury position, debt and investments; prospects for interest rates; the borrowing strategy; and the investment strategy.

The Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee had endorsed and commended the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to the Cabinet, also recognising the significant work of the Treasury Team.

By way of an introduction, the Autumn Statement of 22 November 2023 and the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement that followed on 18 December 2023 indicated an increase in overall funding and confirmed the council tax referendum principles for 2024/25. The Core Spending Power, that included general grants and the Government assumption that full council tax increases would be applied, provides for an average 6.5% increase in funding in 2024/25. Whilst the favourable Settlement was welcomed, it was not enough to set a balanced budget for 2024/25 without making significant budget savings and generating additional income. Building on the Financial Sustainability Programme, a further focus on costs and income was embedded in the Stronger and Sustainable Council Strategy and savings and new income of £49.6 million were reflected within service budgets to ensure services remained affordable.

The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25 represented the final year of the Government's current 3-year Spending Review, despite local authorities having only received a one-year settlement each year for 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25. Whilst the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25 was issued on the 18th December 2023, the Secretary of State issued a further Written Statement on 24 January 2024 indicating that a further £600 million of funding will be provided for local government, with details provided in the Final Settlement.

Key information provided in the Settlement included (outlined in full on pages 6 onwards):

- a) Core Spending Power
- b) Council Tax (County Councils could increase Council Tax up to the referendum limit at 2.99% and social care authorities could increase this by a further 2% specifically to fund adult social care costs, therefore 4.99% overall without a referendum being required)
- c) Revenue Support Grant
- d) Business Rates
- e) New Homes Bonus
- f) Rural Services Delivery Grant
- g) Services Grant
- h) Social Care Grant
- i) Improved Better Care Fund
- j) Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund
- k) Adult Social Care Discharge Fund

A breakdown of the key funding streams published within the Provisional Settlement were set out in the tables on page 9, setting out the Authority's Core Funding of £111.1 million and showing the government grants that had been announced so far.

Scrutiny Committees had met during January to review the draft budget proposals, with Members recognising the scale of challenges faced and risks associated with budget assumptions, delivery of service redesign and achievement of budgeted savings.

The additional funding announced on 24 January 2024, provided the opportunity to further manage the risks and provide additional funding to invest in service delivery and improvement, for example, drainage, homelessness, redesign and contingency for the risks around the delivery of savings plans.

Directorate Budget Targets had been set by Cabinet on 10th January 2024, totalling £743.4 million, a net increase of £43.8 million or 6.3% compared to the 2023/24 adjusted budget. Details of the directorate budgets analysed by service was set out on pages 43 to 92. The targets set for each service area had been subject to different pressures and influences and the table on page 11 showed the 2024/25 Budget Targets by service area.

In addition to general Core Funding, the Authority received specific grants, detailed in Key Table 5 on pages 15 and 16, the most significant grant being the Dedicated Schools Grant which must be spent on schools and related expenditure. This Grant had increased by £38 million to £714 million.

Key Table 1 on page 11 showed the estimated level of total spending on services and other items such as capital financing, interest income, costs met centrally and funded from specific reserves, and contingencies and provisions for additional costs not included in service budgets. Capital Financing Charges were dependent on the Authority's Capital Programme explained in pages 25 to 42. Factors that influenced the income gained from investing cash balances were set out on pages 131 to 153 that explained the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy.

District Councils had reported their final tax base for 2024/25 and estimated surpluses on collection up to March 2024. Key Table 2 sets out the Council Tax Requirement, Tax Base, Council Tax by band and individual District Precepts. These assumed a 4.99% increase to Council Tax (yet to be determined).

Pages 124 to 130 explained the authority's strategy for its reserves and balances, and it was recommended that general balances were maintained at or above £15.8 million. Key Table 3 summarised the authority's Reserves and Balances and included planned use of reserves to meet costs for which the reserves were intended in 2024/25.

Key Table 7 provided a summary of the latest staffing estimates, which showed budgeted full-time equivalent staffing (excluding schools) reducing to just over 5,200 from 5,300.

The Authority's approach to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was detailed on pages 95 to 123 and Key table 4 was the financial representation of the current MTFP for 2024/25.

The Capital Strategy was outlined at pages 154 to 164 in the Budget report, however, an addendum to this had been published to the website and circulated to Members regarding the flexible use of capital receipts. Government had introduced the scheme on 1 April 2016, with statutory guidance, which had been most recently updated in August 2022. It was noted that whilst the priority for capital receipts was to support SEND Safety Valve financing options, it could be advantageous for the Council to apply this flexibility with certain transformation costs, subject to the necessary approvals.

The Leader and Cabinet Members joined with other Members speaking under Standing Orders and paid tribute to the exceptional hard work of the Finance Team in putting together a budget, with added complexity in these challenging times.

In conclusion, it was a clear priority of both political and officer leadership that the Council must "live within its means" and in doing so include affordable expenditure plans that strike an appropriate balance of service delivery, risk management and financial sustainability.

The matter having been debated and the options and alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, sustainability and carbon impact, risk management, equality and legal considerations and alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan) set out in the Director's Report having been considered:

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

### **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;

(xix) 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.

\* 476

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

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

The Cabinet considered the Report the Deputy Director, Education and Learning (CS/24/05), which outlined the School Admission Policies for 2025/2026, 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 Local Authority (Devon LA) had a statutory responsibility to annually propose, consult on and determine admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled (VC) schools and co-ordinated admission schemes for the normal round of admissions to all state-funded schools.

Consultation on the Local Authority admissions arrangements, detailed in the Report, were held ahead of the statutory deadline for consideration by Cabinet. Schools which were their own admissions authority (Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Academies and Free schools, University Technical Colleges, and Studio Schools) were responsible for their own arrangements and determined by the governing boards and academy trusts.

Devon had consulted annually on co-ordinated admissions schemes for primary and secondary schools; the proposed scheme for 2025-26 was a combined scheme for the normal round of admissions into all state-funded schools. It brought forward the arrangements from the previous academic year with some minor amendments, detailed at Appendix Four. The Cabinet noted that the percentage of children who received a place at the school preferred by the parent remained significantly above the national average see below:

Whilst Local Authorities were not legally required to co-ordinate in-year admissions to all state-funded schools., the Devon LA managed in-year applications for community and VC schools and extended this facility to all state-funded mainstream schools.

Published Admission Numbers (PANs) were proposed for community and VC schools, taking into account the accommodation available, expected local demand, sensible organisation, a strategic overview of the number of places in an area, the constraints of Key Stage One Class Size Legislation and the flexibility to increase PANs where this becomes necessary. The proposed PANs were listed at **Appendix One** and formed part of the admissions policy document for each school at <http://devon.cc/schoolpolicy>. Changes in PANs for 2025 demonstrated the impact of a falling early years cohorts compared to upper years groups in Primary Schools and the continued pressure in Secondary schools. Proposed catchment areas for community and VC schools were brought forward from the previous academic year with the exception of Stoke Canon Church of England Primary School.

Admissions Officers also provided support to own-admission authority schools regarding their policies for **2025-26**, which also needed to be determined by the end of February to ensure compliance with the School Admissions Code.

The primary and secondary co-ordination schemes had statutory deadlines and must be determined by the end of February 2024 ahead of normal round applications in September 2024 for admission in September 2025. This had been taken into account in a timetable for the admissions process which was detailed at Appendix Five in the Report..

LAs had a responsibility to collate and publish the admission arrangements of all schools. Devon met this requirement by publishing a copy of all policies at <http://devon.cc/schoolpolicy> and reviewed the policies of all schools to ensure they were legally compliant and meet the potential need from the community.

Section 5 of the Report outlined the detailed consultation on the proposed admission arrangements for community and VC schools and on the proposed co-ordinated admission schemes for all primary and secondary schools, including how this was publicised, the website, targeted emails and links with groups such as the Devon Education Forum. Feedback from schools suggested they were largely content with matters such as oversubscription criteria, Published Admission Numbers, catchment areas and the application process. Responses were received regarding specific local admissions issues, detailed at **Appendix Three**, which was common with neighbouring Local Authorities.

An Impact Assessment had also been prepared for Members at the meeting, which was available at [Published Impact Assessments - Impact Assessment \(devon.gov.uk\) / https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/published/](https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/published/). Cabinet noted that equality of access to education opportunities was a fundamental feature of school admission arrangements and all policies for consideration had been subject to an Equality Impact Needs Assessment, available at [www.devon.gov.uk/admissionarrangements](http://www.devon.gov.uk/admissionarrangements).

In summary, the Council had a broad and constantly changing role in school admissions with a priority for ensuring timely access to statutory aged education and the recommendations in the Report would ensure the Council met its statutory responsibilities with regard to school admissions as well as its broader role in supporting children and young people.

The matter having been debated and the options and alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, sustainability and carbon impact, risk management, equality and legal considerations and alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan) set out in the Deputy Director's Report having been considered:

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

### **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.

\* **477**      **Integration of the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership**

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

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Director of Performance and Partnerships (PP/24/1) on the integration of the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), 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 approval of the proposed HOTSW LEP Integration Plan and the transfer of functions to the Council by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

The Report highlighted how Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) had played an important role in supporting local economic growth since 2011, bringing together businesses, educators, and local government, working towards the Government's ambitions to support regional growth. The HOTSW LEP had been established in 2011 covering Somerset, Devon, Plymouth, and Torbay and incorporated as a Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2014. The Governance of this body was further outlined in the Report, including an assurance framework, the Standing Orders of Somerset Council, DLUHC and the role of the HOTSW LEP Joint Scrutiny Committee, administered by Devon.

The Cabinet noted that the [Spring Budget Statement 2023](#) set out Government's intentions regarding the future of LEPs and in December 2023, the Government wrote to local authority leaders and LEP chairs to confirm that it would provide up to £240,000 to upper tier local authorities in 2024/25 to deliver the functions previously delivered by LEPs.

Agreements between Somerset, Torbay and Plymouth Councils would underpin the transfer of functions and a fair distribution of assets and resources to ensure that no Council was disadvantaged or was required to deliver additional responsibilities without the necessary revenue and capital resource.

The proposed Integration Plan had been agreed with Government and developed through engagement with the HOTSW LEP and reflected the technical guidance issued by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). This was attached at Appendix 1 of the Report and provided for a collaborative and smooth transition, within the Government timetable. It also recognised the development of a devolution deal for part of the area.

The functions to be transferred covered business voice, economic planning, and specific government programmes such as the Growth Hub and Careers Hub. The HOTSW LEP Board had developed other significant projects and programmes and these would also transfer. Section 4.2 of the Report outlined the functions transfer in more detail and how delivery would continue. The four upper tier authorities had considered alternative options as set out in the Report and the recommended approach was considered to achieve a smooth transition that met Government's stated timescales.

The Cabinet had considered the proposed Devon and Torbay devolution deal and draft proposal to establish a Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (DT CCA) at its meeting on 2 February 2024. Subject to the outcome of the public consultation, Cabinet and Council decisions and secondary legislation, the majority of HOTSW LEP functions would transfer to the DT CCA once established.

Section 6 of the Report outlined the next steps in terms of milestones to prepare for the transition of functions as set out in the proposed Integration Plan.

The HOTSW LEP Executive and Board had opportunities to comment on the Integration Plan and proposals from the local authority partners. The Board had not endorsed the Integration Plan and had asked to see strengthened collaboration across the proposed Economic Growth Boards / Shadow Business Council on regional strategic issues, such as transport, housing and skills and an oversight role on LEP legacy programmes including Growing Places Fund and recycled funds from current loans. However, since the Report had been drafted the LEP Chair had endorsed the Plan.

The LEP Board would also set out their perspective on the use of any assets transferred to the upper tier local authorities, and the history and intent of previous funding decisions, to be considered by the local authorities.

An Impact Assessment was a requirement from Government as part of the completion of the Integration Plan, therefore a **draft** Equality Impact Assessment had been prepared and was available at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/published/>. It was noted that the Equality Reference Group's (ERG) views on the impacts of the proposed HOTSW LEP Integration into the Council would be invited in order to inform the **final** Impact Assessment.

The matter having been debated and the options and alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, sustainability and carbon impact, risk management, equality and legal considerations and alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan) set out in the Director's Report having been considered:

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

**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 HOTSW LEP functions, and the allocation of HOTSW 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 HOTSW LEP Joint Scrutiny Committee, by the end of March 2024, also be approved.

\* **478**      **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**.

\* **479**      **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 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.

\* **480** **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.

\* **481** **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 10.31 am and finished at 11.33 am