

## **AGENDA ITEM No. 8**

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of **BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE** held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 at 5.30pm at **Tavistock Town Hall, Bedford Square, Tavistock**

### **PRESENT**

Councillor A Hutton (Mayor)

Councillor Mrs U Mann (Deputy Mayor)

Councillor Mrs A Johnson (Immediate Past Mayor)

Councillors J Ellis, Mrs M Ewings, Mrs G Parker, H Smith

Ward Members – Councillors Ms L Crawford, G Parker, B Smith, P Squire, P Williamson (Observers)

**IN ATTENDANCE** Town Clerk, General Manager, Assistant to the Town Clerk

### **24. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Nominations were invited for the Election of Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee for the 2021-2022 Civic Year.

A nomination, duly seconded, was received in respect of Councillor H Smith.

RESOLVED THAT Councillor H Smith be appointed Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee for the ensuing Civic Year.

### **25. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Nominations were invited for the election of Vice Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee for the 2021-2022 Civic Year.

A nomination, duly seconded, was received in respect of Councillor Mrs U Mann.

RESOLVED THAT Councillor Mrs U Mann be appointed Vice Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee for the ensuing Civic Year.

### **26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received as all members of the Committee were present.

**27. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

RESOLVED THAT The Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1).

**28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this point in the Meeting.

**ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**

**29. GRANT SCHEME 2021-2022**

Amended arrangements for the operation of the Council's Community Grant Scheme (Coronavirus Health and Social Emergency Fund (CHSEF) during 2020-21) were outlined, together with the associated emphasis on support to organisations providing pandemic relief. Looking to 2021-22 the opportunity arose to consider how best to constitute the grant scheme for the current financial year.

During the ensuing discussion it was noted that:

- £17,500 had been allocated in the budget;
- not all organisations which had applied for COVID-related Grant funding had yet used all the funds made available;
- there had been insufficient applications to allocate the full funding available;
- some applications had not been successful as they had not met the qualifying criteria;
- the previous Community Grant Scheme had benefitted many clubs/organisations in the town, delivering a variety of activities and support to a wide range of residents

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Town Council replace the CHSEF with the normal operation of the Community Grant Scheme in 2021-22 enabling applications from clubs and organisations across the community.

Noted That it was confirmed that, in view of the foregoing, the previous process for scoring applications, and allocating funds, would be re-visited by the Grants Panel prior to the next Grant Application round later in the year.

**30. PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)**

The Committee was advised that the formerly applicable Tavistock PSPO (affording controls to the Police regarding the consumption of

alcohol by adults in designated public places) had expired in January 2021 after a decision by West Devon Borough Council, in consultation with the Police, not to renew it. This had subsequently come to the attention of the Town Council when reporting escalating alcohol related anti-social behaviour/criminal damage in The Meadows to the Police. A subsequent meeting with the Police had led to confirmation that the Police would, in light of the most recent nature and frequency of alcohol related problems in that area, support a PSPO specifically in the Meadows (the previous Order had applied to a wider area).

However, following a change in personnel the Police, rather than supporting the Order, had advised of a new position of 'no objection in principle'. The full text of an email from the Police to that effect was reported to the Meeting which acknowledged that the case for intervention via a PSPO was finely balanced.

In the ensuing discussion particular reference was made to:-

- the developing views expressed by the Police;
- the extent to which a PSPO was the correct instrument to deal with the current problems and associated evidence;
- the significant damage which had been caused including to The Sensory Garden, play equipment in The Meadows (estimated iro £10,000 – £15,000), a broken lamppost (iro £3,000) and the amount of broken glass and alcohol related debris being collected during regular litter picks (there being understood to be 26 incidents logged by the Police in a 3 month period);
- the powers a PSPO afforded Police to deal with the drinking of alcohol by adults (under-age drinking being addressed through other legislation);
- that the final decision on whether to proceed with a PSPO fell to West Devon Borough Council.

Notwithstanding that the case for/against a PSPO was finely balanced it was the view of the Committee, having regard to the recent (and growing) trend, the pattern and level of alcohol related incidents, and prior support of the Police, that a PSPO (if successful on consultation) would represent an appropriate tool in the prevention of crime and disorder in the Meadows worthy of recommendation to WDBC.

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Town Council endorse and commend to West Devon Borough Council and the Police the progression of a Public Spaces Protection Order, as not objected to by the Police locally, on the accumulated evidence, affording the

Police the power to control alcohol consumption in The Meadows, with a view to implementation at the earliest opportunity so as to address the significant and growing alcohol related problems/antisocial behaviour in that location.

### **31. TAVISTOCK BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)**

The Committee received, for consideration, the Tavistock BID Business Plan (Appendix 2) in anticipation of the ballot which would take place from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 for the BID Company's 3<sup>rd</sup> 5-year term.

In the ensuing discussion particular reference was made to;

- An update from the representative of the Town and Borough Councils on the BID Co;
- Operation of the levy (1.75%) funding arrangements;
- Commendation of the renewal prospectus;
- The area covered (to be slightly extended into Plymouth Road);
- the ongoing collaborative working relationship between the Town Council and the BID Company over a range of activities including:
  - events such as Dickensian Evening;
  - the Christmas Lights across the town;
  - the attractive hanging baskets erected on business premises in the town centre;
  - 'reopening' the town centre.
- the operation of the ballot arrangements;
- the particular nature, responsibilities and funding of BID's which could not be replaced by other means;
- the importance of the BID Company in supporting the business community, managed and led by it, in ways that other organisations could not fund (or not to the same extent) in helping the town remain vibrant, for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Town Council support the Tavistock BID Company to achieve a further 5-year term and exercise its votes in the upcoming renewal ballot accordingly.

### **32. SERVICE PLANS 2021/2022**

a) The Committee considered the Draft 2021/22 Corporate Service Plan and Organisational Risk Register (Appendix 3) together with the Annual Summary (Appendix 4).

By way of context particular reference was made to the role of the (service plan) document as the core organisational planning tool incorporating, amongst others, the Council's adopted work

programme for the following year, the organisational (other services and projects had their own operational registers) risk register, performance indicators and consultations planned. It served to link the Councils Strategic Plan to operational goals and objectives and, alongside the Annual Summary, afforded the opportunity to agree the work of the Council for the next year and review that of the past year.

More generally in the past year a number of risks had been significantly impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic and the progress of major projects. It was now anticipated that, over the following months (and subject to progress in both those areas), those risks could reduce to more 'normal' levels.

In the ensuing discussion reference was further made to:

- i. Agreement regarding the incorporation of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 in the legislation listed;
- ii. Working arrangements with other organisations;
- iii. The deferral of consideration of Risk C6 to the confidential part of the Meeting;
- iv. The re-numbering of the index page.

RECOMMENDED THAT subject to the further consideration of the organisational Risk Register (and in particular C6), at a later point - in the confidential part of the Meeting, Tavistock Town Council endorse and adopt:

- i) the Corporate Service Plan 2021-22 (subject to the amendments listed above (iii-iv refer)) as the basis for the delivery of Council Services 2021-22; and
- ii) the Annual Summary 2020-21.

b) Community Service Plan (Appendix 5)

The Committee considered the Draft 2021/22 Community Services Plan. In the ensuing discussion reference was further made to:

- The dependence on/relationship of, a number of initiatives on the progress of the government 'Road Map' out of Covid;
- Review of completion dates in the Service Risk Register;
- Clarification regarding delivery arrangements for the Guildhall.

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Town endorse and adopt the Community Service Plan and Service Risk Register.

### **33. OPERATION LONDON BRIDGE**

The Committee considered the Briefing Note of the Assistant to the Town Clerk (Appendix 6) in connection with the national Operation London Bridge Plan.

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Town Council adopt the local plan, and the arrangements included therein.

Noted That when the Plan was initiated a decision would need to be made as to whether planned Council events, which might be deemed to be inappropriate to deliver during the mourning period, would need to be cancelled.

### **ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

#### **34. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

The Committee received and noted the Report of the General Manager (Appendix 7), which provided an update on the Guildhall Public Conveniences.

Reference was made, in particular, to:

- arrangements agreed to allow cleaning of the facilities later each day and thereby spread the two cleaning periods more efficiently to provide a better service for the community. To facilitate that the Town Council had offered to open certain other public conveniences served by the contractor during the arrangement;
- the cleaning contract was subject to ongoing review with the contract administrator - West Devon Borough Council;
- anticipated refurbishment work, including to the immediate environs, was outlined.

#### **35. GUILDHALL**

##### **a) Guildhall Gateway Centre**

The Committee was advised, for information, that:

- gas had now been connected in the Guildhall, with the heating having been on for 2 weeks;
- as a result, moisture levels had fallen below the threshold which would allow for final re-decoration works to be undertaken, and the engineered flooring to be laid;
- flooring would be laid in the Robing Room and Court Room in the coming weeks;
- it was anticipated that all works, apart from door linings, would be completed within the next 4 weeks;
- the Interpretation 'fit-out' would be undertaken from the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in June;

- it was anticipated that a 'soft-launch' of the Guildhall Gateway Centre would take place in early Autumn 2021, with a formal opening in 2022.

#### **b) Public Realm**

The Committee was advised, for information, that:

- the Public Realm works were nearing completion, with the resin motifs being completed on 26<sup>th</sup> May (weather permitting);
- there was a national shortage of resin available for the remainder of May, and possibly into June;
- a small amount of works were required to the grassed area near the public conveniences;
- a Licence had been processed by Devon County Council which would allow for modifications to the entrance to the car park. It was anticipated these modifications would be completed from 14<sup>th</sup> June, and entailed approximately one week's work.

#### **36. URGENT MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN**

There were no matters to report, it being noted a request from a tenant might be received in due course (the associated information was awaited).

#### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

#### **37. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was: -

RESOLVED THAT the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business.

#### **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**

#### **38. ORGANISATIONAL RISK REGISTER**

(**CONFIDENTIAL** by virtue of relating to information of a nature affecting persons other than the Council)

The Committee further considered the Organisational Risk Register (Minute No 32 refers) and, in particular, Risk C6. In the discussion arising particular reference was made to the role of service planning in organisational performance management, links to other documents, plan format/content/style/purpose, detail and review. Also the remit of the Committee in reviewing risk and how best to do it, together with

relationships with other organisations in light of past events, how best to move forward together and related matters.

RECOMMENDED THAT subject to

- i) agreeing to a further review of Risk C6;
- ii) the Council endorse and adopt the Tavistock Town Council Organisational Risk Register.

Noted That in response to a question the Town Clerk undertook to circulate a copy of a prior initiation report regarding organisational performance management arrangements.

## **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

### **39. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

(**CONFIDENTIAL** by virtue of relating to matters of a legal, financial and contractual nature affecting persons other than the Council)

No updates were brought forward.

The Meeting closed at 7.57pm

Signed:

Dated:

CHAIRMAN