

MINUTES

of the Meeting of the **BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Drake Road, Tavistock on **TUESDAY 4th June, 2019 at 6.30pm.**

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs A Johnson (in the Chair)

Councillors Ms L Crawford, Mrs M Ewings, A Hutton, H Smith, P Ward, P Williamson.

Councillor J Ellis (Ward Member).

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk, General Manager.

36. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Nominations were invited for the Election of Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee for the ensuing Civic Year.

A nomination was received in respect of Councillor A Hutton.

RESOLVED THAT Councillor A Hutton be elected Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee for the ensuing Civic Year.

37. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

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

A nomination was received in respect of Councillor P Williamson.

RESOLVED THAT Councillor P Williamson be elected Vice-Chairman of the Budget & Policy Committee for the ensuing Civic Year.

38. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received, all Members were present.

39. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee held on Tuesday 2nd April, 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

41. SERVICE DELIVERY PLANS

A) CORPORATE SERVICES

The Committee considered

- the draft Tavistock Town Council Corporate Service Plan 2019-2020 (Appendix 1) which formed the Council Work Programme for the following year, including the Organisational Risk Register, together with:-
- a précis of performance against goals set in relation to the past (2018/19) year (Appendix 2 – Annual Summary refers).

Attention was drawn, in particular, to:-

- i. The role of service plans in co-ordinating activity consistent with the organisational Strategic Plan, the scheduling of resources and the prioritisation of activities over the course of the next year.
- ii. Current and anticipated (up to 18 months) intense pressure upon a relatively small number of key workers and associated concern regarding health/wellbeing and the sustainability of workload. The staffing establishment was smaller than sector comparators in relation to the approved work programme with consequential adverse impacts - most noticeably in disciplines such as management, policy and compliance;
- iii. Challenges in the area of funding:
 - Revenue - the projected need to raise the Precept by (as a minimum) in the region of 10%-20% in the next financial year to meet commitments the Council had already entered into around increased revenue costs. In particular with regard to assuming responsibility for public conveniences and revenue support for the anchor partner to the Guildhall Project;
 - Capital - reserves were committed in full. The tender process for the Guildhall Project could cause additional challenges which might not be wholly foreseeable;
 - The Council was committed to rebuilding capital reserves to adequate levels (minimum £500,000) over the next five years which would need to be resourced;

- The need to make appropriate financial provision to cover potential other, unforeseen or unbudgeted costs ranging from works to legal proceedings, projects to services.
- iv. Inclusion of activities previously raised by the new Council;
- v. Remedial measures being introduced in connection with staff absence;
- vi. Risks - most especially C1 & C8 and associated concerns;
- vii. The potential resource/delivery implications of new projects eg the co-location of council services and acquisition of public conveniences.

In the ensuing discussion particular reference was made to:-

- a. Recognition of the impact of current and legacy projects upon organisational capacity to deliver;
- b. Issues and pressures on staff, aligned to acknowledgement that the intensity of the project schedule also meant aspects of other/routine activities were falling behind/not being addressed and associated current and future risks;
- c. The nature of delivery arrangements for the THI project - blending external resources with those of Council staff;
- d. The principles underpinning operation of the Council's Absence Policy;
- e. Risks identified, including acknowledgement that in the short term at least, it would be necessary to accept an appreciably higher level of risk than would normally be acceptable in order to deliver an ambitious critical work programme. Arising therefrom the need to keep risks under review;
- f. Anticipated arrangements for the recruitment of a management resource into a vacancy in the Works Department;
- g. A wide ranging discussion around the opportunities and challenges facing the Council, most particularly now and over the next 12-16 months.

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Town Council:-

- Endorse and adopt the Corporate Service Plan as a basis for the delivery of related Council Services 2019-2020;
- Endorse and adopt the Tavistock Town Council Organisational Risk Register.

B) COMMERCIAL/COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN

The Committee considered the draft Tavistock Town Council Commercial/Community Service Plan 2019-2020 (Appendix 3) which formed the work programme for related services for the following year, together with a précis of performance against each target in relation to the previous year (Appendix 4 – Annual Summary refers).

In the ensuing discussion particular reference was made to:-

- i. the need for a review of targets and service efficiency gained in the next (2020-2021) Service Plan;
- ii. progress made in connection with Council ICT systems, together with potential next steps and organisational capacity/resources allowed;
- iii. community initiatives such as re-wilding and the extent to which they could/not appropriately be accommodated in normal operational practice;
- iv. the comprehensive nature of the service planning process;
- v. the extent to which, when resources allowed, a review might be undertaken both of the usage/layout of Market Road and that of the newly improved Pannier Market Surround. More specifically arrangements put in place for loading/unloading within the Pannier Market Surround designed both to meet the needs of traders and reduce the potential for conflict between pedestrians and vehicles in a safe and managed manner;
- vi. work to be shortly undertaken in accordance with the Public Realm Strategy, to work up the final design for use of the Guildhall Car Park Public Realm Scheme;
- vii. the associated outcome of discussions with key businesses.

RECOMMENDED THAT Tavistock Town Council endorse and adopt the Commercial/Community Service Plan as the basis for the delivery of related Council Services 2019-2020 and the accompanying Service Risk Register.

ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

42. UPDATES

The Committee received oral updates in connection with;

- a. Public Conveniences - the Borough Council had been requested to provide draft Heads of Terms as a basis for negotiations/taking the matter forward. In the ensuing discussion it was mooted that, when more details became available, a group of Councillors might wish to be formed to

- review associated issues and ensure a timely and orderly transition of facilities;
- b. Co-location of Council facilities -the Borough Council had been requested to provide information on the facilities it might need/want in order to take the matter forward;
 - c. Capital Works update - the Committee was advised of progress in relation to the Pannier Market Surround works. Also, following tenderer requests an extension of one week had been granted for the completion and return of tenders in connection with the Guildhall Gateway Centre Project (the return date for the separate public realm project being unaffected).

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

43. 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.

44. WORKS DEPARTMENT- STAFFING

(**CONFIDENTIAL** by virtue of relating Personnel matters).

The Committee considered the Report of the General Manager (Appendix 5) in connection with the above and reviewed and discussed the issues and options arising in depth. In particular, role configuration, team/organisational fit, past practice/anticipated future requirements etc.

RECOMMENDED THAT Option 3.1(ii) be adopted and endorsed.

Noted That reference was made to the associated job evaluation process.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

45. MAJOR PROJECTS

(**CONFIDENTIAL** by virtue of relating to the financial affairs or business of persons other than the Council or information of a commercially sensitive nature)

The Committee noted the following Progress Reports:-

- a. The Guildhall Gateway Centre Project- 1st Quarter 2019 (Appendix 6);
- b. Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme (Progress Report - 1st Quarter 2019 – Appendix 7).

The Press and Public were readmitted to the Meeting.

The Meeting closed at 8.38pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....

CHAIRMAN