

## **MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of a **MEETING** of the **CABINET** held on 14 January 2016 at 2.15 pm

### **Present**

#### **Councillors**

C J Eginton (Leader)  
R J Chesterton, N V Davey, P H D Hare-  
Scott, C R Slade, Mrs M E Squires and  
R L Stanley

### **Also Present**

#### **Councillor(s)**

R Evans, Mrs J Roach, F J Rosamond and R Wright

### **Also Present**

#### **Officer(s):**

Jill May (Interim Chief Executive and Head of HR and Development), Andrew Jarrett (Head of Finance), Amy Tregellas (Head of Communities and Governance and Monitoring Officer), Nick Sanderson (Head of Housing and Property Services) and Sally Gabriel (Member Services Manager)

## **117. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

## **118. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from members of the public present.

## **119. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00-01-21)**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 December 2015 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## **120. CAR PARKING CHARGING PROPOSALS (00-02-44)**

The Cabinet at its meeting on 17 December 2015 made the following decision that

- a) Subject to: the parking charges in the Multi-Storey Car Park in Tiverton, and the car parks in Station Road, Cullompton and St Saviours Way, Crediton being raised to £2 for 24 hours or part of; the recommendations of the Policy Development Group be approved.
- b) These recommendations will form the basis of the new off street Parking Places Order (Road Traffic Act 1984) which will be advertised and consulted upon and therefore delegated authority be given to the Head of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment to act on feedback from this consultation process and agree any necessary amendments required

before finalising the 2016/17 car park charges to be incorporated into the final order.

This decision had been called in to the Scrutiny Committee by Councillor Mrs J Roach supported by Councillors R M Deed, R J Dolley, F W Letch, J L Smith, Mrs N Woollatt and R Wright for the following reasons:

- There had not been a business case to clearly weigh up the effects of these increases on the economic viability of the three towns.
- The decision was contrary to stated aims of regenerating the three towns and the aim to improve the economy of the whole district. It was therefore against Council policy.
- No provision had been made for the people who might want to use the long stay car parks for one or two hours. This could well include people who wanted to visit MDDC offices. The Phoenix House car park was frequently full of people making use of the 'free' period thus forcing people into the multi storey.
- The charging structure as proposed had inconsistencies.
- The impact on the short stay car parks had not been factored into the equation. It was likely to result in an increased use of the short stay car parks and a subsequent and significant reduction in income in the multi storey.
- The multi storey was for many years underused because of the fear of vandalism to cars, some people also found it intimidating as there were so few cars using it, over the past twelve months there had been an increase in the number of cars using the multi storey and it no longer had the feeling of desolation.
- In Tiverton, people may also go back to using the M&S car park thus resulting in a loss of retail sales in the town centre and a loss of income to MDDC.

The Scrutiny Committee had met on 4 January 2016 and recommended that the Cabinet review its decision.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee outlined the reasoning behind the call in stating that it was not a challenge to the authority but a way of reflecting the work that had taken place by the Car Parking Working Group and the need to capitalise on the success of the pricing in the Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) which was felt to have increased footfall in the town.

Consideration was given to:

- Whether the higher the cost the less people would use the facility
- Free car parking for Councillors
- The current income from the MSCP and the popularity of a £1 for 5 hours, allowing local people to shop at their leisure
- The additional free parking proposed in various car parks
- The cost of parking in car parks in other districts in Devon

- Consideration of discounts for some permit holders

The Cabinet Member for the Environment stated that he had considered the comments made by the Scrutiny Committee and other Members regarding this issue and felt that a day rate of £2 was very good value for money for the long stay car parks in the area and urged Members to approve this amendment to the recommendations put forward by the Policy Development Group.

Discussion followed with regard to:

- The cost of parking in other areas of the county
- Maintenance costs in the MSCP
- Concerns regarding the effect on footfall in the main towns
- The publication of a revised Traffic Road Order

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) Subject to a day rate of £2.00 being introduced in all 3 of the long stay car parks – St Saviours/High Street, Crediton between 8.00am and 6.00pm, Station Road, Cullompton between 8.00am and 6.00pm and the Multi-Storey Car Park, Tiverton between 6.00am and 8.00pm, the recommendations of the Policy Development Group be approved.
- b) These recommendations will form the basis of the new off street Parking Places Order (Road Traffic Act 1984) which will be advertised and consulted upon and therefore delegated authority be given to the Head of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment to act on feedback from this consultation process and agree any necessary amendments required before finalising the 2016/17 car park charges to be incorporated into the final order.

(Proposed by Cllr N V Davey and seconded by Cllr R L Stanley)

Notes:

- i) Cllr R J Chesterton requested that his vote against the decision be recorded;
- ii) Original Papers circulated copy attached to minutes.

## 121. **FINANCIAL MONITORING (00-45-46)**

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED** a \*report of the Head of Finance presenting financial monitoring information for the income and expenditure of the 2015/16 financial year.

The Cabinet Member for Finance outlined the contents of the report highlighting the projected deficit of £427k and outlining the most significant service movements within the last month:

MMI asbestos insurance levy (covered by earmarked reserve)  
 Various redundancy costs  
 Maintenance on cemetery walls (covered by earmarked reserve)

Double glazing industrial units (£10k covered by earmarked reserve)  
Private sector housing restructure  
Vacant units - industrial unit income down  
Improvement in Housing Benefit subsidy  
Lower costs of funding housing DARS scheme

There had been some slippage in the Capital Programme and it was requested that the programme be split in reporting terms between the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

Consideration was given to the costs of elections, the reduction in the price for recycling and leisure centre staffing.

Note: \*Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

#### 122. **BUDGET UPDATE (00-54-46)**

The Cabinet had before it a \* report of the Head of Finance outlining options available in order for the Council to move towards a balanced budget for 2016/17.

The Cabinet Member for Finance stated that the Council had received formal confirmation of its Formula Grant Settlement. The provisional formula grant award for 2016/17 amounted to £3.04m. This was unlikely to change significantly and was approximately £130k lower than first estimated. As a direct consequence this increased the draft 2016/17 General Fund budget deficit but other savings proposals had helped to reduce the deficit to circa £405k. He suggested that the New Homes Bonus could be used to settle the deficit but stated that this was not sustainable for future years as there was no guarantee that this funding would continue.

The Head of Finance explained that Councils were able to use the New Homes Bonus at their discretion.

Consideration was given to the possible reduction in the New Homes Bonus and the Government consultation that was taking place at the present time.

**RESOLVED** that the updated budget proposals for 2016/17 outlined in appendix 1 of the report be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr P H D Hare-Scott and seconded by Cllr R L Stanley)

Note: \*Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

#### 123. **CABINET MEMBER DECISION (1-00-47)**

The Cabinet **NOTED** that the following decision had been made by the Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being: to note and accept that both the Email (v7) and Internet (v5.3) Policies had been reviewed and updated. The only changes made were to the amending of the dates and job titles.

#### 124. **NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS (1-01-14)**

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED**, its rolling \*plan for January/February 2016 containing future key decisions.

Members were informed of the following movements:

- Ageing Well Strategy would be moved to August 2016
- Annual Monitoring Report to March 2016
- Masterplan – Area B – Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension moved to March/April 2016
- Gas Service Contract moved to June 2016

The Interim Chief Executive highlighted some amended officer contact details within the plan.

Note: \*Plan previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

#### 125. **ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (1-01-03)**

Prior to considering Item 10 on the agenda discussion took place as to whether it was necessary to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 12 12.02(d) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution. The Cabinet decided that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

It was therefore:

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the next item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

(Proposed by the Chairman)

#### 126. **STRATEGIC LAND HOLDINGS**

The Cabinet had before it a \* report of the Head of Housing and Property Services regarding strategic land and property matters.

The Cabinet Member for Housing outlined the contents of the report.

**RESOLVED** that subject to the inclusion of the wording “and others” after Tiverton Town Council, the recommendations within the report be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr R L Stanley and seconded by Cllr R J Chesterton)

Notes:

- (i) Cllr N V Davey declared a personal interest as a Member of Tiverton Town Council;
- (ii) Cllr C R Slade declared a personal interest as a Member of Tiverton Town Council and Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee;
- (iii) \*Report previously circulated.

(The meeting ended at 4.08 pm)

**CHAIRMAN**