

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE** held on **TUESDAY 8th APRIL, 2025 at 6:30pm at the COUNCIL CHAMBER, DRAKE ROAD, TAVISTOCK**

PRESENT

Councillor S Hipsey Chairman and Deputy Mayor (ex-officio)

Councillor Mrs A Johnson Vice Chairman

Councillor P Ward (Mayor) (ex-officio)

Ward Member(s) – Councillor B Smith

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk

378. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Ms M Ewings, A Hutton, U Mann and R Poppe.

379. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget & Policy Committee held on Tuesday 4th March, 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman (Appendix 1).

380. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

381. DEVOLUTION/REORGANISATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN DEVON

Pursuant to recent correspondence with Members of the Working Group established to consider matters in connection with Devolution/Local Government Reorganisation, the Committee was advised of:-

- i. Land holdings of West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) and Devon County Council in the Town - Maps having been previously circulated;
- ii. An extensive programme of work previously undertaken by West Devon Borough Council (commencing in approximately 2012), reviewing potential methods of working with Town and Parish Councils including the options of:
 - delegation of services;
 - transfer of assets;

- contracting of services;
 - top-ups for enhanced services;
 - enabling more influence on service standards and delivery.
- iii. Areas identified for potential action by WDBC at that time included grass cutting and grounds maintenance, street cleaning, public toilets, refuse collection/recycling, street scene, enforcement, car park management, licencing and affordable housing. Consideration was also given to options for land ownership/transfer and for community asset transfer, the potential to give more influence on development management, devolving carparks and expressions of interest sought from town/parish councils.
- iv. WDBC then had suggested a “packaging” approach to support successful and sustainable transitions, the use of service level agreements or memorandums of understanding where statutory services were concerned, and overall flexibility of approach.

More generally, the particular challenges associated with Local Government Reorganisation in Devon, not least by virtue of lack of consensus amongst principal authorities were noted, alongside substantial uncertainty regarding the potential window for action if they were willing to act prior to statutory orders being made. The Government deadline for initial submissions having passed (with final submissions to be made by 28th November, 2025), it was also to be hoped that greater certainty would emerge following local government elections on 1st May.

To progress matters a Meeting of the Working Group would be held before the next Budget and Policy Committee, at which Members would have opportunity to reflect upon the information previously circulated and begin a process which could inform asset/service selection and prioritisation in the form of prospective package-based offers.

382. TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE

The Committee noted that re-construction of the Council website so as to secure WCAG 2.2AA compliance had been completed and would be implemented shortly.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

383. 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

384. HEARINGS PANEL

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

The Committee received, for information only, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Hearings Panel held 5th March 2025 (Appendix 2).

It then proceeded to consider the further recommendation of the Hearings Panel, as set out in the report of the Town Clerk and General Manager. This item was required to come before the Committee by virtue of involving a potential change to the staffing Establishment and associated resource implications.

RECOMMENDED THAT the Committee and Council endorse/approve the proposed change to the staffing Establishment so as to enable the offer to proceed.

Noted That: by way of context and preamble the Chairman of the Hearings Panel outlined the request as made, material considerations and the basis for the recommendations as submitted above.

385. TENANCY MATTER – CORN MARKET

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

The Committee received an oral update regarding progress to date in connection with rent reviews in general and, more particularly, that presently outstanding for the period 2021-2024.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

386. LAND AT SANDY PARK

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

The Committee received an oral update in connection with the above. It was further advised that, in view of statutory deadlines, a submission for rent review would now take place in the 2025/2026 financial year.

The Meeting closed at 7.02pm

Signed:

Dated:
CHAIRMAN