

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of a meeting of the Capital Strategy and Allocation Group held in Committee Room, Knowle, Sidmouth on Monday, 1 December 2014

Attendance list is at the end of the document

The meeting started at 9.35 am and ended at 10.50 am.

1 Chairman

Councillor David Cox was elected Chairman of the Group

2 Report of the meeting of the Group

The report of the meeting held on 2 December 2013 was noted.

3 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

4 Remit of the Group

Members noted the remit of the Group which had been agreed by Cabinet on 2 October 2013 – namely to recommend capital budget allocation; the number and cost of capital bids was not matched with resources available in the Capital Budget.

5 Capital programme – general update

Members had been sent the Capital Budget 2015/16 as at October 2014 as a separate attachment to the agenda and this was displayed on the screen during the meeting.

The Strategic Lead – Finance gave an overview of the current Capital Programme which included strategic schemes, previous approvals, details of externally funded projects, the rolling programme and ICT schemes. Certain adjustments would be made including the Thelma Hulbert Gallery boiler replacement (to be put on hold awaiting the Council's decision on the gallery's future) and the Exmouth Town Hall boiler plant and roof (would also be put on hold to await the outcome of current discussions on EDDC Headquarter relocation).

It was noted that a report would be referred to a future meeting of Cabinet on workshop provision in general and would include specific details of Riverside (Seaton) and Manstone, (Sidmouth) workshops and whether any extension of facilities on these sites would be viable.

The current programme included a £80,000 contribution towards Seaton Youth provision which had been carried over from previous years. However, the deadline for the submission of plans needed to be confirmed..

It was noted that the 5 year Capital Programme was 'front loaded' with most focus on early schemes; it was suggested that more phasing should be planned and Members were assured that this was increasingly the case as it helped with cash flow predictions and planning.

6 Capital scheme bids

Capital bids for consideration included details, justification, scoring and any revenue implications. The cost of capital bids was not matched with resources available in the Capital Budget. Strategic projects would be prioritised. In previous years, the Council had funded its capital programme in the main through use of Capital Reserves. As a result, these Reserves had reduced year on year; if all the bids presented were accepted, the Reserve would be depleted and the Council would be obliged to borrow to support the future Programme. The Council's present position would be helped when the New Homes Bonus was factored in for future years.

Although not included as a bid, the Group noted that the football pitches and facilities in Seaton were inadequate. Rationalising and improving the provision would be considered by the Asset Management Forum which would take into account the potential use of S106 monies.

Also not included as a specific bid was the future of Seaton Town Hall - those present asked for this to be flagged up for future consideration.

a) Sidmouth Connaught Gardens railings

Replace a section of stone wall (already removed due to fears of its stability) with a concrete plinth and rails to match existing. The alternative will improve the view, enable the footpath to be reopened and minimise the impact on cliff stability - £24K

RECOMMENDED: that the bid be supported due to the importance of the gardens to local people and in attracting tourists.

b) Imperial Recreation Ground Play Area – Exmouth

Bid to upgrade equipment and surfacing - £70K - should be the net of £20k (£50K of S106 contributions available to spend in this area of Exmouth to off-set the capital bid requested). The project had been on hold whilst Exmouth Regeneration plans were being finalised but could now go ahead as a separate project. There was local drive for improvement.
£20K

RECOMMENDED: that the bid be supported.

c) Resurfacing of yards/compounds at workshops - Manstone, Millwey Rise, Riverside and Salterton.

As landlord, the Council has a duty of care and responsibility for maintenance. Total cost of the project - £230,175 less revenue savings.

RECOMMENDED: To resurface yards/compounds at Manstone and Millwey workshops as a priority. (Workshop provision was currently being reviewed by the Asset Management Forum with potential for some disposal. The outcome of this review would be taken into account before any work on Riverside and Salterton workshops was progressed.)

d) Refurbishment of Allhallows Pavilion (changing rooms) 2017

The works would comprise new floor and wall finishes, doors, sanitary-ware, plumbing, heat source and electrics. To also look at the possibility of transferring ownership of the asset either prior to or following refurbishment. An alternative would be to demolish the building and re-use the site.

An email in support of this bid from Councillor Phil Twiss was noted. (He had intended being present at the meeting had been obliged to give his apologies for personal reasons.) Councillor Twiss advised that the playing surface was damaged.

£60,500

RECOMMENDED: that the project detail be referred to the Asset Management Forum for wider consideration. (As the playing pitch is more urgent than the changing rooms).

e) Exmouth Pavilion reception alterations

This project bid was in response to a request from Leisure East Devon and was part of a wider project of improvement of the Exmouth Pavilion. The proposed adaptations to the reception area would facilitate an improved service - £30,500. (In addition to a budget of £120K already used to convert the function kitchen into a new bar and the refurbishment of female toilets.)

Members noted and appreciated the LED's recent investment in the facility. Re-figuration and improvement of the reception area would better reflect the works already carried out on the facility and the regeneration of Exmouth as a whole.

RECOMMENDED: that the bid be supported.

f) Whimble flood defence improvement scheme – late bid

Bid to lower the invert of the existing railway culvert to reduce the risk of flooding to 53 properties. The works would also include the trimming of the water course banks up stream to increase the flow and the installation of individual property protection to increase the level of protection by the Environment Agency (EA). Devon County Council was to contribute £50K and the EA was seeking a contribution from South West Water and Network Rail. EA was also submitting a bid to Defra for a Flood Defence Grant in Aid.

EDDC's contribution to the scheme would be £30K.

RECOMMENDED: that the bid be supported.

g) Resurfacing and replacement floodlighting at Ottery Leisure Centre all weather pitch 2016

A pitch inspection had given the pitch and lighting an estimated remaining life of 18 months. Resurfacing will give the all weather pitch another 15 years of life. The replacement floodlighting will give another 20 years, will be more energy efficient and cause less light pollution. The proposed works will also incorporate raising the fence height at the goal ends of the pitch, replacement of goal posts and re-lining.

£295K (£177K)

(Less 40% (£118) = a balance of £177K as the Council's required contribution towards this dual use facility. A funding bid for 60% will be made to Sport England (England Hockey).

RECOMMENDED: that the bid be supported.

h) Reroofing of Broadclyst and Ottery Leisure Centres 2017

The bid is to replace the profiled metal roofs which are reaching the end of their lives. The replacement will bring the roofs up to modern standard in terms of thermal insulation and will also incorporate natural light. The works will reduce maintenance costs and disruption caused by existing roof leaks. Despite earlier speculation about the future of Clyst Vale College, it is to continue to be a viable school/college despite the construction of a new secondary school in Cranbrook. £296K (less college 40% contribution) = £177.6K

RECOMMENDED: that the bid be supported.

i) Exmouth Tennis Centre mechanical and electrical refurbishment 2017

Certain elements of the existing building services, such as electrical distribution, ventilation, boilers and water heaters are reaching the end of their lives and will require replacement or refurbishment – anticipated date of 2017 - £85K

RECOMMENDED: that the proactive programming be noted and welcomed; the bid to be considered at next year's meeting of the Capital Strategy and Allocation Group.

j) Replacement of Magnolia Centre public clock

The Centre public clock is reaching the end of its life. The proposal is to seek local funding and to hold a design competition. The alternatives are to do nothing, decommission the clock and remove it or look at the possibility of transferring ownership of the asset and/or to seek a funding contribution from the private sector and Exmouth Town Council - £35K

RECOMMENDED: that the matter be referred to the Asset Management Forum for consideration – in the meantime for officers to check that the clock is not listed.

k) Overflow car park at the Underfleet in Seaton (council owned)

Bid to construct an overflow car park for approximately 70 cars near to the new Seaton Jurassic and existing tramway terminus – to be available at busy times during the season. It would help compensate net loss of 217 spaces in the existing Harbour Road car park as a result of the new Seaton Jurassic - £295K

RECOMMENDED: to give priority to this bid to compensate for loss of car park income due to the Seaton Jurassic construction and to ensure that residents and visitors are not inconvenienced.

l) Creating access to Seaton Marshes from Seaton Jurassic car park

To create an access from the Seaton Jurassic car park on the Underfleet through to the new Seaton Marshes in order to provide vehicular access to the Countryside Services Team as well as pedestrian access for both visitors to the Seaton Jurassic and those wishing to access the new Wetlands by foot from the town centre. The proposal would create a clear link between the 2 sites. £98K

RECOMMENDED: to phase-in this work and to ensure that it links with the proposed official opening of the Jurassic Centre in Spring 2016.

Councillors:

Ray Bloxham
David Cox
Andrew Moulding
Ian Thomas

Officers:

Simon Davey, Strategic Lead - Finance
Laurelie Gifford, Financial Services Manager
Diana Vernon, Democratic Services Manager

Apology:

Councillor Phil Twiss

Chairman: Date:.....