

SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE ADVISORY MEETING

**Minutes of the Executive Advisory Meeting held via Microsoft Teams on
Wednesday 30 November 2022 at 10.00am**

**This meeting considered the reports listed on the agenda with the final decisions being taken
by the Leader of Council under powers vested to the Leader as set out in the Council's
Constitution**

Councillors

Present:

Duncan McGinty	Leader of Council (Chairman)
Mike Caswell	Infrastructure & Transportation
Lance Duddridge	Customer Access & Digital Delivery
Andrew Gilling	Housing
Mark Healey MBE	Commercial & Asset Management

**32. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
(Agenda Item 1)**

Councillors Gill Slocombe and Janet Keen gave their apologies.

**33. MINUTES
(Agenda Item 2)**

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council to confirm the minutes of the Executive Advisory Meetings held on 4 December 2019, 18 December 2019 and 5 August 2020 as correct records.

**34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
(Agenda Item 3)**

None.

**35. URGENT BUSINESS
(Agenda Item 4)**

None.

**36. PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME
(Agenda Item 5)**

No members of the public had registered to speak.

**37. CORPORATE DASHBOARD – QUARTER 2 (2022/2023)
(Agenda Item 6)**

The Executive considered a report which gave Members key performance management data on Actions, Audit Recommendations and Performance Indicators for the 2022/23 year.

It was noted that there were 5 Overdue Actions for Customer Services however there had been a very level of calls; these actions were being worked on and notes entered to update members with one having been completed. Business As Usual group has been very useful and work areas have been monitored.

Recommendation to Leader of Council

To note the report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

**38. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER 2 (2022/2023)
(Agenda Item 7)**

Members of the Executive considered that the report was very positive on the whole and there were many areas where services were performing well, including Planning and the Northgate Development was busy with further units coming on-line shortly.

During discussions, Members spoke about the following areas:

- Housing voids,
- Customer services,
- rent arrears and impact of the cost of living crisis
- survey of mould in properties undertaken and will be reassessing again shortly but there were robust processes in place and were being proactive in their approach.
- Appointment of Warm Homes Co-Ordinator

Recommendation to Leader of Council

To note the report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

**39. BRIDGWATER TOWN FUND – BUSINESS CASE SIGN OFF – BRIDGWATER DOCKS/CYCLING LINKS
(Agenda Item 8)**

This report was presented to the Executive to approve the funding for a combined project as part of the Town Fund, these projects have been combined and will address the demand for a leisure/tourism activity facility at the Docks, restoring the operation of the docks and to develop more walking and cycling links within the town centre.

The Executive agreed that this project would compliment other areas in the town. In response to a question about the Bowerings Feed Mill, it was confirmed that the Council were assisting the owner with possible projects for redevelopment.

Recommendation to Leader of Council

To approve the Docks Regeneration and Walking & Cycling Business Case for submission to government to allow the drawdown of £5.2m (£4.2m for Docks and £1m for active travel improvements) of Town Fund investment into Bridgwater.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

**40. BRIDGWATER TOWN FUND – BUSINESS CASE SIGN OFF – CARNIVAL
(Agenda Item 9)**

This project was to address the need for updated facilities to protect and enhance future community events, this would include the development of quality workshops including power source, heating, water and lighting and also supporting the training with the college of apprentices. It was noted that the planning application for the new units would be submitted shortly.

Recommendation to Leader of Council

To approve the Carnival Business Case for submission to government to allow the drawdown of £3m of Town Fund investment into Bridgwater.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

**41. FOOTBRIDGE – GRANT OF EASEMENT HIGHBRIDGE
(Agenda Item 10)**

This was for agreement of a small section of land at Highbridge to a local developer for the development of a pedestrian and cycle bridge as part of the consented Brue Farm housing development. This bridge would provide access to Highbridge Railway Station and the town.

Recommendation to Leader of Council

That an easement be entered into with Hallam Land Management Ltd to enable the development of the footbridge to complete.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

**42. DISPOSAL OF LAND – EXPRESS PARK
(Agenda item 11)**

This report was seeking consent for approval to dispose of land at Express Park, Bridgwater to the Environment Agency. This site was specially purchased for the Bridgwater Tidal Barrier and the transfer of this land forms part of the Council's partnership funding commitment for the delivery of this strategic flood defence project. The Executive were advised that this decision would need approval under S24 as over £100,000 but it was noted that County were involved in the project as so should not be an issue.

Recommendation to Leader of Council

That the freehold title of the land at the Express Park is transferred to the Environment Agency to enable the development of the flood defence.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

43. EXEMPT REPORTS

The Executive Advisory Meeting unanimously recommended the Leader of Council to approve that the Press and Public are excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involves information which relates to the financial or business affairs of the Council defined as exempt by paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**44. TRANSFER OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION TO HOMES IN SEDGEMOOR
(Agenda Item 12)**

The report updated the Executive on the transfer of staff within the SDC Development and Enabling function to Homes in Sedgemoor. There had been a pilot for 6 months and this had been reviewed including informal consultation with the staff affected. It was agreed that this was an effective way of working with communication and results improving benefits for advancing council house development.

During discussion, the Chief executive of Homes in Sedgemoor confirmed that their board had approved the recommendations and fully supported the proposals. It was noted that the Enabling function would remain seconded to HiS until a decision was made where the function would sit within the new council.

Recommendation to Leader of Council

1. For SDC to transfer the Housing Development function to HiS permanently, with the associated uplift in their Management Fee.
2. That the Enabling function to remain seconded to HiS until such time as a decision is made as to where the Enabling roles will sit in the new Council's organisational structure.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

**45. REPLACEMENT OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES AT CROSSES PENN & OXFORD STREET, BURNHAM-ON-SEA
(Agenda Item 13)**

This report was coming to Executive as an update as costs for the project to replace public conveniences at Crosses Penn and Oxford Street, Burnham-on-Sea had come in above the original capital budget. It was explained that this was due to an increase in materials and costs.

Recommendation to Leader of Council

That an additional budget as detailed within the report is made available to ensure the new toilet blocks can be completed.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

**46. CAPITAL INVESTMENT TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF NEW COUNCIL HOMES – NORTH PETHERTON WARD
(Agenda item 14)**

The proposal was for the council to purchase 3 new build homes on a subsidy free basis at Carrots Farm in North Petherton. The executive were provided with a breakdown on the costings and project description.

It was confirmed that HiS Board were in support of the proposal and that due diligence had been undertaken and the project was supported by Management Team.

Recommendation to Leader of Council

1. Approve the business case and acquisition and recommend to Full Council to commit a budget as detailed within the exempt appendices of the report for the purchase of three (3) new build homes on a subsidy free basis at Carrots Farm in North

Petherton as set out in this report.

2. Subject to Full Councils approval of the budget, to delegate authority to Teresa Harvey (Assistant Director) in consultation with Melanie Wellman (Monitoring Officer) to agree the terms of the acquisition
3. To waive the requirements of contract standing orders in relation to the acquisition of the properties

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

The meeting ended at 11.25am.

CHAIRMAN