



Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team)

6 November 2017

-: Present :-

Councillor Haddock (Chairman)

The Elected Mayor Oliver and Councillors Amil, Excell, King, Mills and Parrott

(Also in attendance: Councillors Barnby, Brooks, Bye, Darling (S), Ellery, Hill, Morey, Robson, Stockman, Stubley, Thomas (D) and Tyerman)

23. Minutes

The Minutes of the Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) held on 9 October 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24. Urgent Items

The Committee considered the item in Minute 25, and not included on the agenda, the Chairman being of the opinion that it was urgent by reason of special circumstances i.e. the matter having arisen since the agenda was prepared and it was unreasonable to delay a decision until the next meeting.

25. Grinagog Festival of Music and Contemporary Arts

The Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) made the following recommendations to the Elected Mayor:

- (i) that the Council supports the proposal for Grinagog Festival in 2018 in principle on the understanding that other funding sources are realised and the event does not exceed the stated budget; and
- (ii) that the event can be supported as part of the wider programme at Torre Abbey as long as any associated costs at the Abbey are covered by income for the event.

The Elected Mayor considered the recommendations of the Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) set out above at the meeting and the record of decision, together with further information is attached to these Minutes.

26. Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Risk Based Verification Policy 2018/19

The Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) made the following recommendation to the Elected Mayor:

that the amended Risk Based Verification Policy for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved.

The Elected Mayor considered the recommendation of the Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) set out above at the meeting and the record of decision, together with further information is attached to these Minutes.

27. New Burdens Business Rate Relief Scheme

The Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) made the following recommendation to the Elected Mayor:

that the New Burdens Business Rate Relief Scheme set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved.

The Elected Mayor considered the recommendation of the Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) set out above at the meeting and the record of decision, together with further information is attached to these Minutes.

28. Corporate Asset Management Plan 2018/2019 Revision

The Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) made the following recommendation to the Elected Mayor:

that the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2018/2019 Revision, set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be published for consultation as part of the consultation on the proposed budget for 2018/2019.

The Elected Mayor considered the recommendation of the Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) set out above at the meeting and the record of decision, together with further information is attached to these Minutes

29. Renewal of Neighbourhood Forum Status

Darren Cowell, Torquay Neighbourhood Planning Forum and David Watts, Paignton Neighbourhood Planning Forum attended the meeting and made oral representations in support of renewing the Forums.

Neighbourhood Forums were created by the Government under the Localism Act 2011. They were intended to “provide a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic priorities of the Local Plan” (NPPF 184).

Neighbourhood Forums were approved by Council for Torquay, Paignton and Brixham Peninsula on 6 December 2012. Forum designation lasts for five years. Applications for designation have been received from all three Forums. The Council is currently consulting on these proposals and will make a decision at the Council meeting on 7 December 2017.

Resolved:

- (i) that the Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Operations Team) notes the options in respect of the status of the Neighbourhood Planning Forums set out in the submitted report, and notes that it would be premature to make a final recommendation of the matter before the expiry of the consultation period on 20 November 2017. The PDDG also notes the concerns raised at the meeting in respect of the accuracy of the report submitted to the meeting and instructs Officers to liaise with the Chairmen of the Forums in advance of the submission of the report to Full Council. All Councillors and the public are encouraged to respond to the public consultation so as to help inform the final recommendation to Council; and
- (ii) that each of the three Neighbourhood Planning Forums be invited to submit up to two pages of A4 as to why the Forum status should be renewed to be included as appendices in the report to Council on 7 December 2017.

Chairman

Record of Decision

Grinagog Festival of Music and Contemporary Arts

Decision Taker

The Elected Mayor on 06 November 2017

Decision

- (i) that the Council supports the proposal for Grinagog Festival in 2018 in principle on the understanding that other funding sources are realised and the event does not exceed the stated budget; and
- (ii) that the event can be supported as part of the wider programme at Torre Abbey as long as any associated costs at the Abbey are covered by income for the event.

Reason for the Decision

To enable the 2018 Grinagog Festival of Music and Contemporary Arts to go ahead, subject to external funding being obtained.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on Friday, 17 November 2017 unless the call-in process is triggered (as set out in Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The submitted report provided a summary of the outcomes of the first Grinagog Festival held from 7 to 9 April 2017.

The first Grinagog Festival was successful in terms of the public response and audience involvement. The three day event which took place primarily at Torre Abbey and the Riviera International Conference Centre attracted some 3,315 paying visitors.

The event was a new initiative developed by the Council in partnership with Continental Drifts, working alongside local and regional promoters and arts practitioners to establish a substantive music festival for Torbay. Continental Drifts are a renowned nationally recognised arts company that is funded by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation. The company stages more than 40 events each year across the UK and internationally.

The event involved more than 100 promoters, musicians and arts practitioners, many of whom gave their time for free or just charged expenses to help to get this event off the ground. The overarching aims of the first Grinagog Festival were to:

- a) use culture and the arts to support Torbay's social regeneration; and
- b) develop more leisure and cultural activities with and for the local community.

The event was primarily supported financially by the Coastal Community Fund, the Mayor's Events Budget and Arts Council England with other support from the Torbay Culture Board and the Global Local PRS Youth Grants, as well as trader and sponsorship income and ticket sales income. The total cost of the event was £189,000.

The 2018 event is proposed to take place from 20 to 22 April which are the only available dates that are achievable at both Torre Abbey and the Riviera International Conference Centre.

The Elected Mayor considered the recommendations of the Policy Development and Decision Group made on 6 November 2017 and his decision is set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

Alternative options were set out in the submitted report but were not discussed.

Is this a Key Decision?

No – Reference Number: I035138

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

9 November 2017

Signed: _____
The Elected Mayor of Torbay

Date: 9 November 2017

Record of Decision

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Risk Based Verification Policy 2018/19

Decision Taker

The Elected Mayor on 06 November 2017

Decision

That the amended Risk Based Verification Policy for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved.

Reason for the Decision

The Risk Based Verification Policy must be reviewed annually but not changed in-year as this would complicate the audit process.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on Friday, 17 November 2017 unless the call-in process is triggered (as set out in Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

At present the Council receives 8,000 new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. Risk Based Verification (RBV) reduces the necessity for many customers to contact the Council through more expensive methods such as face to face, and decreases the need to produce original documents to support their claim resulting in a reduction in the number of customer contacts, lower volumes of scanning and indexing and less information requests.

The main reasons for continuing to undertake Risk Based Verification are as follows:

- An efficient administration that results in a reduction in officer processing time. This allows resources to be deployed to undertake other priority work and results in a reduction of administration costs.
- Significantly reduces the claim verification process for many customers, which also improves processing times.
- Reduces the volume of customer contact received by the Call Centre to chase the progress of applications due to claims being processed promptly.
- Ensures that Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support is paid promptly to ensure that customers remain up to date with their rent.
- Assists to identify potentially fraudulent cases and taking the appropriate action.

The Elected Mayor considered the recommendation of the Policy Development and Decision Group made on 6 November 2017 and his decision is set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

Alternative options were set out in the submitted report but not discussed at the meeting.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

9 November 2017

Signed: _____
The Elected Mayor of Torbay

Date: 9 November 2017

Record of Decision

New Burdens Business Rate Relief Scheme

Decision Taker

The Elected Mayor on 06 November 2017

Decision

That the New Burdens Business Rate Relief Scheme set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved.

Reason for the Decision

The Department of Communities and Local Government are keen for authorities to roll out their discretionary schemes as soon as practical in order to ease the burden of business rates on ratepayers.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on Friday, 17 November 2017 unless the call-in process is triggered (as set out in Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

In the Spring Budget on 8 March 2017 the Government announced they would make available a discretionary fund of £300m over four years from 2017-18 to support those businesses that faced the steepest increases in their business rates bills as a result of the 2017 revaluation.

The scheme will be administered by billing authorities discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. A discretionary policy has been designed within a Devon wide framework under the guidance of the Section 151 officers from across Devon. Each authority has adapted the framework policy taking into consideration the amount of money that has been allocated by central government.

The Elected Mayor considered the recommendation of the Policy Development and Decision Group made on 6 November 2017 and his decision is set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

Alternative options were set out in the submitted report but not discussed at the meeting.

Is this a Key Decision?

No – Reference Number: I035157

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the

Standards Committee)

None

Published

9 November 2017

Signed: _____
The Elected Mayor of Torbay

Date: 9 November 2017

Record of Decision

Corporate Asset Management Plan 2018/2019 Revision

Decision Taker

The Elected Mayor on 06 November 2017

Decision

That the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2018/2019 Revision, set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be published for consultation as part of the consultation on the proposed budget for 2018/2019.

Reason for the Decision

To ensure the requirements of the constitution are met and to start the formal consultation process.

Implementation

This decision will come into force immediately.

Information

The Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan was adopted in February 2015 to cover the period until 2019. The Plan is currently subject to an annual review.

The proposed Plan attached at Appendix 1 to the submitted report will be the last annual review. Work will commence next year, working alongside the TDA, to revise the Corporate Asset Management Plan. The revision will take account of the progress that has been made in meeting the actions within the current plan and will also reflect the changes to the Council's asset base over the course of the past few years. Moving forward, the Council's assets will be categorised which will enable a separate action plan to be developed for each category.

The Elected Mayor considered the recommendation of the Policy Development and Decision Group made on 6 November 2017 and his decision is set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

None

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes – Reference Number: I034580

Does the call-in procedure apply?

No

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the

Standards Committee)

None

Published

9 November 2017

Signed: _____
The Elected Mayor of Torbay

Date: 9 November 2017