

## **Executive – 28 April 2010**

Present: Councillor Henley (Chairman)  
Councillors Coles, R. Lees, Prior-Sankey, Slattery, Mrs Smith and  
A Wedderkopp.

Officers: Penny James (Chief Executive), Kevin Toller (Strategic Director), Tonya Meers (Legal and Democratic Services Manager), Maggie Hammond (Strategic Finance and Section 151 Officer), Alison North (Performance and Client Lead) and Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager).

Also present: Councillors Morrell and Stuart-Thorn.

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

### **45. Apologies**

Councillors Paul and Mrs Wilson.

### **46. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 31 March 2010 and 13 April 2010, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and were signed.

### **47. Public Question Time**

Councillor Stuart-Thorn referred to the matter he had raised at the Informal Council meeting in February 2010, concerning Councillors being allowed to use vacant spaces in The Deane House Staff Car Park when no spaces were available either in the circle outside the front entrance to the offices or in the Belvedere Road Public Car Park. He asked if anything had yet been decided on this matter.

In response, the Democratic Services Manager, Richard Bryant, confirmed that the matter had been referred to the Chief Executive for consideration, as use of the Staff Car Park fell outside the responsibilities of the Parking and Civil Contingencies Manager. He would inform Mrs James that the issue had again been raised.

Councillor Morrell raised concern about the current Leadership of the Council. He provided three examples which, in his view, did not reflect very well on the Council:-

- A recent visit to The Deane House Reception where a queue of people were awaiting to be served but there was only one member of staff on duty;
- Incomplete answers being given to questions raised at Full Council; and
- Six months to obtain information on the Sheltered Housing Service Charges.

Councillor Morrell went on to refer to the Core Council Review and asked what Councillor Henley had personally done to ensure services were functioning effectively? In addition to any meetings he had had with senior management, had Councillor Henley undertaken any personal audits?

He went on to say that he was aware of a number of issues at the middle management level of the Council where lack of communication appeared to be the problem.

In response, Councillor Henley stated that he and the Deputy Leader did have regular meetings with the Chief Executive and the senior Management Team and had every confidence that issues of concern with the delivery of services were being thoroughly discussed. If Councillor Morrell would like to be more specific about the other issues he referred to, he would ensure a written reply was sent to him.

**48. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Henley and Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Mrs Smith declared a personal interest as an employee of Somerset County Council. Councillor Coles declared a personal interest as a Director of Southwest One. Councillor Slattery declared personal interests both as a Member of the Somerset Waste Board and as an employee of Sedgemoor District Council.

**49. Community Engagement**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) recent review of community engagement. The LSP had proposed that the Community Partnerships should be disbanded, with future engagement being undertaken through the Partnerships and Communities Together (PACT) process, which would be led by the Police Authority.

The aim of community engagement was to build trust and confidence by dealing with issues that had the most impact. It involved communities and partners working together to bring about change by identifying and meeting the community's diverse needs.

Taunton Deane's LSP had established four Community Partnership Areas in 2007, but these had been indefinitely postponed in December 2008. Since then, the PACT scheme led by the Police had become established as a method of gaining community engagement.

There were currently in excess of 50 community, business and partner meetings titled under PACT. Partners were welcome to join PACT meetings, but it was accepted that the current number of PACT meetings would inhibit this.

The Police had recognised that the inclusion and engagement of partners provided a greater and improved response to communities and built high levels of confidence and satisfaction.

Bringing the Community Partnerships and PACTs together, would enable each partner to use the meetings for community engagement and reduce the resource impact.

A map of the areas to be covered by eight PACTs was submitted. The eight areas were:-

- Wellington, Wiveliscombe and surrounding parishes includes Wellington, Rockwell Green and West, Wellington East, Wellington North, Monument, Wiveliscombe and West Deane, Bradford on Tone, Milverton and North Deane, Halse, Ash Priors, Combe Florey, West Bagborough;
- West – includes Bishops Lydeard, Staplegrove, West Monkton, Norton Fitzwarren, Bishops Hull and Trull;
- East – Ruishton and Creech, North Curry and Stoke St Gregory, Neroche and Blackdown;
- Comeytrove, Manor and Wilton;
- Eastgate, Fairwater;
- Lyngford, Pyrland and Rowbarton;
- Halcon; and
- Blackbrook and Holway, Killams and Mountfield.

It was anticipated that the Police would organise meetings and would be the default Chairman. However, it was expected that members of the community would take on the role of Chairman in the future.

Each PACT would establish its own meeting schedule, which would be responsive to need. These would meet at least quarterly. Meetings would be open to the public and invites would be sent to Parish Councils, Borough and County Councillors, PCSOs and all LSP partners.

Each partner would deliver their level of agreement in undertaking, resolving or attempting to resolve and provide feedback on issues for which they were the nominated agency. The meetings would identify the top issues of concern for the local area and these would form the priorities for the LSP partners.

The panel of partners, in consultation with the community, would nominate a lead agency for each priority. The lead agency would then report back to the community and next PACT meeting as to progress with the priority issue.

Noted that Taunton Deane would provide senior officer support to each PACT meeting.

**Resolved** that the formal adoption of eight Partnerships and Communities Together across Taunton Deane be endorsed and that the Council be committed to supporting these meetings.

## 50. **Carbon Management Plan 2010-2011**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning a proposed Carbon Management Plan (CMP) for Taunton Deane.

The CMP provided a clear breakdown of carbon emissions from the Council's direct and indirect operations and contained an Implementation Plan that presented practical actions for reducing these emissions. The CMP covered the period 2008/2009 to 2010/2011 and would be reviewed annually to assess progress and priorities.

The Council had established a baseline figure for carbon emissions from its direct operations and indirect operations for the year 2006/2007. This baseline figure for carbon emissions totalled 4,774 tonnes, of which 3,952 tonnes came from Council buildings. This equated to 12,759,192 kWh. The financial cost for this energy in Council buildings was £658,479. Fuel costs through vehicle use were not however recorded.

Under the National Indicator 185: 'CO2 reduction from local authority operations', the Council had to report on its progress in reducing its own CO2 emissions to the Government Office for the South West on an annual basis. For 2010/2011, a 7.5% reduction of emissions from the Council's direct and indirect operations was anticipated against the Council's 2006/2007 baseline figure.

The Council had committed itself to reduce carbon emissions from its core business by 10% during 2010 through signing up to the '10:10 Challenge', although emissions from associated partners such as Tone Leisure would be excluded. Noted that the Council's 10:10 year would run in line with the financial year from 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

Actions on the Implementation Plan which was now in place were expected to produce a 4.5% reduction in CO2 towards the 10% target for the current year and a reduction of 18% of carbon emissions to be achieved at The Deane House. There were a number of significant projects planned but savings figures were not yet available. Further actions would need to be found during the course of the year to meet the Council's 10:10 commitment and the Carbon Management Steering Group would continue to oversee this.

Further reported that the Local Strategic Partnership had decided to also set up a Carbon Reduction Group involving all of its partners. This information was welcomed.

**Resolved** that the Carbon Management Plan 2010/2011 be approved and adopted.

#### 51. **Wellington Sports Centre Bid**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the proposed capital refurbishment project to develop the swimming provision at Wellington Sports Centre.

Wellington Sports Centre was well used but was in need of further investment to enhance and develop the facilities and improve the swimming experience, ensure sustainability of current usage and increase the number of new swimmers.

A refurbishment proposal had been submitted to Sport England for funding of a capital grant of £350,000. The formal decision and offer was expected after 6 May 2010.

The aim of the project was to increase swimming participation and to sustain the swimmers who had taken advantage of the Free Swimming initiative. Tone Leisure had set the following stretch targets:-

- To increase under 16 and over 60s participation by 30% from year 1 to 2, with a further growth of 10% from year 2 to 3; and
- Increase participation in other groups by 3% per year.

The following improvements to the swimming pool were anticipated if the bid to Sport England was successful:-

- Facilities more accessible to groups of young people and older people;
- Improved changing facilities;
- Improved water quality by the introduction of modern disinfection, circulation and filtration systems;
- Improved environment in the pool hall as a result of the introduction of natural light and better air handling; and
- Installation of a more efficient plant, which would reduce running costs and achieve carbon reduction targets.

The Council owned the freehold on the site and would benefit from the works, which would be delivered by Southwest One.

The estimated budget for the work was £600,000, which would mean that a contribution from the Council, of £250,000 would be needed. The Earmarked Asset Management Maintenance Reserve had been set up to meet the needs of Tone Leisure's 10 year maintenance programme and this currently stood at £580,579. The proposed project would reduce the reserve to £330,579.

Reported that this item had been discussed the previous evening at the Community Scrutiny Committee when it had been agreed to recommend to the Executive that a virement of "up to" £250,000 should be approved. This was considered by Members but it was decided not to alter the recommendation.

**Resolved** that subject to written confirmation from Sport England of £350,000 grant funding, it be recommended to Full Council that:-

- (a) the addition of the Wellington Sports Centre refurbishment to the 2010/2011 Capital Programme with a budget of £600,000 be approved; and
- (b) the virement of £250,000 from the Asset Management Earmarked Maintenance Reserve to the Capital Programme be also approved.

## 52. **Housing and Planning Delivery Grant**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG).

Notification had been received that the Council's allocation based on 2009/2010 would be £675,610. 32.5% (£219,573) of this amount was capital with £456,037 which could be used to fund revenue expenditure.

A further amount of revenue funding of £210,792 had been awarded for the previous year, making a combined total of £666,829.

Proposals for 2010/2011 were detailed as below:-

<b>Revenue items</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Retaining post of LDF Specialist until March 2012 if required	£60,000
Taunton Deane funding for consultancy advice on Project Taunton schemes (for example advice on financial impact on the Council of a proposed scheme - in the past this funding had come from the General Fund)	£50,000
Staffing requirement to ensure delivery of Core Strategy	£30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£140,000</b>

<b>Capital items</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Funding towards the purchase of a capital asset should the Council decide to proceed.	£216,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£216,000</b>

If the proposals were agreed, the unallocated amounts would be:

Revenue: £526,829  
Capital: £3,573

**Resolved** that the above allocation of the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant for 2010/2011 be approved.

53. **Executive Forward Plan**

Submitted for information the Forward Plan of the Executive over the next few months.

**Resolved** that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 7.06 pm.)