

NOTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22nd NOVEMBER 2023 AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT AT 7.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors A Hall (Chairperson) Presiding M Joyce
L Cooke C Parker
D Corney-Walker (Mayor) M Ryan
C Davieson L Wood

Councillor A Gibbs also attended the meeting.

In attendance: Philip Rowe – Town Clerk
Samantha Scott – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO
Sally Henley - Town Development Manager
Linda McGuirk - Principal Administrator
Nigel Canham - Communications Advisor

SP28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor P Bullivant.

SP29. INTERESTS

None declared.

SP30. MINUTES

The notes of the Strategic Planning Forum held on Wednesday 8th November 2023 were received and signed as a correct record.

SP31. GOLDEN LION SQUARE

It was agreed to discuss the refurbishment of Golden Lion Square as part of agenda items 5 Capital Projects and 6 Budget and Strategy for the period 2024/25.

SP32. CAPITAL PROJECTS 2024 to 2028

The Town Clerk introduced the Capital Projects report, as circulated prior to the meeting, which outlined the Council's current capital projects in accordance with priority and timescale. Members discussed the projects and noted those that could be funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or the Capital Fund.

Discussion took place about the refurbishment of Golden Lion Square. The Town Clerk advised that Newton Abbot Community Trust was considering options and investigating funding to support the project. It is anticipated that the Community Trust would submit a scheme and a request for financial support to the Council for consideration. Members asked who was responsible for the maintenance of Golden Lion Square? The Clerk confirmed the Council was responsible for cleansing and maintenance of the area.

It was **AGREED** to note the Capital Projects 2024 to 2028, as contained in the report.

SP33. BUDGET AND STRATEGY FOR THE PERIOD 2024/25

The Town Clerk introduced the draft budget report for the period 2024/25, as circulated prior to the meeting. In addition, the report was displayed on the screen. Members were advised that the County Council has confirmed £9,000 payment for grass verge cutting.

The Town Clerk advised that based on the draft budget of £1,397,815 as discussed, would lead to a proposed Precept in the region of £1,584,558. That equates to an increase of approximately 20.29% or 59p per week, £180.74 band D council tax. The RFO would now produce a report for consideration at the Finance & Audit Committee meeting scheduled for the 10th January 2024. Members were reminded of the Council’s statutory obligation to hold 25% reserves.

Members discussed the importance of ensuring positive media coverage to highlight the projects and services the Council would be providing in relation to the proposed increase in precept.

AGREED that the Strategic Planning Forum **recommend** the Budget and Precept for 2024/25, as set out below, and the Draft Budget Report for 2024/25 to the Finance and Audit Committee meeting to be held on 10th January 2024:

Precept £ 2024/25	Multiplier	Actual Band D cost	Actual Band D increase	Band D % increase	Band D cost per week	Band D cost per day	Difference in cost per week	Total Precept
£1,584,558	8,767	£180.74	£30.48	20.29%	£3.48	49.52p	.59p	£1,584,558

SP34. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 24th July 2024

The Meeting closed at 19:55 hrs.

Chairperson.....Date.....