

Joint Governance Committee

You are summonsed to attend a meeting of the Devizes Town Council Committee at the following, place and date.

Date: 11 August 2016

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, St John's Street, Devizes

Enquiries: Town Hall - Tel: 01380 722160

MEMBERS

Devizes Town Council:

Councillors: Hopkins
Nash
Parker
Smith
Parker

Roundway Parish Council:

Councillors: Callow
Geddes
Parsons
Rowland
Stevens

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 26 June 2016

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DISCLOSURE(S) OF INTEREST

To receive any disclosures by a Councillor(s) and/or Officers in matters to be considered at this meeting in accordance with the provisions of Sections 94 or 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the National Code of Local Government Conduct.

4. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

At the last meeting, the committee agreed a number of proposals regarding the setting up of the new Council, which have now been passed to Wiltshire Council. No subsequent questions have been raised by them and officers are informed the Wiltshire Council have now started to draft the Community Governance Orders.

5. REPORT FOR DECISION – TRANSFER OF ASSETS AND DELEGATION OF SERVICES

Recommendation

That the committee reviews the list of assets and services Wiltshire Council have now prepared which indicates which items they will consider negotiation on for transfer, and prepare an initial proposal.

Purpose of the Report

To prepare a Devizes/Roundway proposal for asset transfer negotiation.

Background

After some delay Wiltshire Council have forwarded a list of assets and services they are prepared to negotiate over for transfer and devolution.

From an officer's perspective the list is very disappointing as it provides little more in terms of information than the first list received late last year. Despite advice from the Town Council, there are still a number of items missing from the list which includes farm hinterland such as Nine Hills. These omissions have been passed back to Wiltshire Council.

Town Council officers have sought further clarity from Wiltshire Council on those items in the penultimate column titled "Transfer ?", as many assets are listed as No. The advice given is as follows.

"The absolute no's have already been removed from the spreadsheet such as School and Academy assets, to a certain extent, unless there is statutory responsibility such as highways where we can only delegate services much of the list is up for discussion".

Officers also express concerns that it is difficult to make an informed decision as there is no financial data provided. The advice given is as follows.

"Our finance team have done some work on the revenue costs etc but we're cleaning up the info to ensure it is clear how much it cost and what, if any budget implications, that would include and make it clear and as transparent as possible.

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A cost, where possible, is being worked out for each element on the list and our Strategic Assets Team are looking at the value of any buildings included in the list. I will be meeting with the project team in a couple of weeks to look at package options etc as well, apologies due to annual leave many are away”.

At the recent Forward Planning meeting, attended by both Devizes and Roundway members, it was agreed in principle that the following services areas should be included within negotiations.

- Market Services
- Market Place & Shambles
- Car Parks & Car Parking Services
- Retail Units
- Woodlands at Drew’s Pond and at Waiblingen Way
- Grounds Maintenance Service
- Urban Street Cleaning Service
- Emptying of Public Litter Bin Service
- Play & Recreation Land
- Closed Churchyards
- Wharf Theatre & Kennet and Avon Trust Building
- Farms
- Library

This list have was ratified by the Town Council on the 26 July and Roundway Parish Council have been asked to do the same. Also ratified by the Town Council was the agreed assets classification they were felt should not be taken on which are

- Children’s Centres
- Educational Establishments
- Highways Land
- Housing & Extra Care Housing
- Highways Depot
- Water Supply & Treatment.

Attached to this agenda (Doc 5/1 – Doc 5/3) is the list provided by Wiltshire Council and Town Council officers have scored through items that were agreed should not be taken on. All the other items are up for negotiation.

It is officers suggestion that whilst Wiltshire Council are looking to put together their own packages, it is clear from the discussion from this Committee, Joint Forward Planning Workshops and both Councils individually what the key priorities are, therefore this committee should come up with its own package which Wiltshire Council is asked to cost. This work can then focus any future negotiations.

Options Considered

The committee needs to decide if it wishes to put together a proposal for the transfer of assets and delegation of services as a basis of negotiation a final package from Wiltshire Council

Implications and Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

At the time officers are unable to provide any financial or resource implication for the Council associated with this decision, however the purpose of the decision is to provide Wiltshire Council with a proposal that they can then cost.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

Environmental Implications

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Officers are concerned that without the Joint Governance Committee putting a firm proposal forward, there is a risk that there will be limited progress with this project.

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

At the Chairman's discretion, members of the public attending the meeting will be allowed to ask questions, make a statement or address the Council upon a matter of concern to that person which is relevant to the Council. A time limit of 5 minutes per person will be permitted, but this may be extended at the Chairman's discretion and a maximum period of 20 minutes has been allocated by the Council for this item of business.

7. QUESTION TIME

A short time is allowed at the discretion of the Town Mayor for councillors to ask questions on matters which are not on the current agenda but which are related to matters which have been previously discussed on an agenda relevant to the committee.

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At least 24 hours' notice must be given to officers of the intended question. All other matters should be raised on an agenda and the request should be submitted through the Town Clerk

DEPUTY TOWN CLERK