

# SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA on Tuesday, 20 August 2019 at 10.00 am

- Present:- Councillors S. Haslam (Chairman), G. Edgar, C. Hamilton, E. Jardine, T. Miers, S. Mountford, M. Rowley, R. Tatler, G. Turnbull, T. Weatherston.
- Apologies:- Councillors S. Aitchison.
- Also present:- Councillors A. Anderson, H. Anderson, S. Bell, J. Fullarton, W. McAteer, N. Richards, H. Scott.
- In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Executive Director (R. Dickson), Service Director Customer & Communities, Chief Financial Officer, Neighbourhood Operations Manager, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (F. Henderson)

## 1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of 18 June 2019.

### **DECISION**

**APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.**

## 2. **WINTER SERVICE UPDATE**

- 2.1 With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of 4 December 2019, there had been circulated copies of an update report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure on the findings of a comprehensive Winter Services Provision review which had been undertaken at the start of the calendar year and related to the prioritisation and implementation, where appropriate, of the recommendations proposed in the review.
- 2.2 The report explained that SBC provided a winter service on nearly 3,000 km of roads across the Scottish Borders and an annual Winter Plan was prepared to outline the steps that would be taken to ensure that the roads network was safe, within available resources. As part of the proposal and the need to provide previously identified savings from the winter service an Independent review of the Council's winter service provision was undertaken comparing the Council's arrangements with that of peer Authorities. The Winter Services Provision Investigation Report had been received in a final draft form and a summary was attached as Appendix A to the report. The report discussed the findings and recommendations from that report and made further recommendations on the veracity of these along with suggested timing for their introduction or the trialling and/or further investigation of them. Financial analysis of the proposals remained ongoing due to the complexity. Adoption of some of the recommendations required amendment to the existing Winter Service Plan that the Council operated, and the SBC Winter Service Plan 2019/20, incorporating those changes was presented at Appendix B to the report. The report detailed the general findings from the Winter Service Provision Investigation and Peer Review and detailed the review of the recommendations from the Winter Service provision investigation report. Members discussed each of the 15 recommendations in turn and approved all with the exception of recommendation 8. Recommendation 8 proposed that footway treatment operations would in future only be undertaken during standard day hours (7:30 to 15:30 Monday to Friday) except in extreme weather events.

Members expressed concern in relation to this proposal as there had been many complaints received previously about gritting of footpaths from people walking to work and as many of the Council's schools were increasingly becoming community schools they were open to the public at weekends. The Neighbourhood Operations Manager, Mr Hedley advised that this approach had been informally trailed in some areas during the previous winter and there was the option to pre-treat footpaths the day before. With regard to complaints he advised the footpaths had not been gritted as the forecast had not highlighted changing weather conditions. Once primary routes had been treated local intelligence was used to direct resources and it was hoped to make more use of the resilient communities network. Assurances were given that there would be no change to the way that severe weather events were dealt with. Members still had misgivings regarding these changes and requested a further report specifically dealing with footpaths with detailed information on the impact of these proposals.

#### **DECISION**

**(a) NOTED the findings of the Winter Service Provision Investigation report.**

**(b) AGREED:-**

- (i) to approve the proposed amendments to the Winter Service Plan 2019/20 with the exception of Recommendation 8 relating to reducing the hours when footway treatment would be undertaken; and**
- (ii) that a further report detailing the consequences of this proposal together with detailed information with regard to those routes which would be affected be presented to the next meeting of Executive.**

### **3. COMMUNITY PURCHASE AND MAINTENANCE OF SOLAR POWERED SPEED INDICATOR SIGNS AND VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGNS**

There had been circulated copies a report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure which proposed allowing communities to purchase and erect their own solar powered indicator signs for 30mph and 40mph stretches of roads. The report explained that feedback from communities where similar speed indicator signs had already been installed had been positive and there were a number of communities who had requested these signs beyond the normal parameters the Council could justify installation. The efficacy of these signs as traffic calming features was not definite. However, many Local Authorities allowed installation due to the perceived 'comfort' they provided to communities. Members welcomed the proposal. The Traffic and Road Safety Team Leader advised that a bid had been made to Transport Scotland for a pilot scheme in Eddleston to test which was the best speed calming measure.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED to allow community organisations to purchase and erect solar powered electronic speed indicator signs subject to the following conditions:**

- (a) Council Officers would approve the location of the signs which would be on 30mph and 40mph stretches of road only;**
- (b) The signs (to standard BS12966) to be installed by an approved contractor;**
- (c) Appropriate maintenance of the signs to be arranged;**
- (d) Appropriate insurance for the signs to be arranged;**
- (e) End of life disposal of the sign to be arranged at the appropriate time;**
- (f) The cost, purchase, installation, insurance, maintenance and end of life disposal of the signs to be borne by the community organisation; and**
- (g) The Council reserved the right to remove and retain a sign for the community organisation to collect and repair or to dispose of if it was not maintained.**

#### 4. **MONITORING OF THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing the budgetary control statements for the Council's General Fund based on actual expenditure and income to 30 June 2019 and providing explanations of the major variances identified between projected outturn expenditure/income and the current approved budget. The report explained that after the first quarter of 2019/20 the Council was projecting a balanced outturn position whilst acknowledging significant financial risk of over £0.7m specifically within the Joint Learning Disability Service in H&SC. The Service was focusing on urgent management action on containing expenditure within budget and maximising income wherever possible. An updated position would be presented to the Executive Committee with the second quarter financial reporting papers. In addition, there were a number of further areas of risk and emerging pressures which had been identified that require ongoing management. The report further explained that the revenue monitoring process had been redeveloped over the first quarter 2019/20 in line with rolling out new reporting and forecasting functionality within Business World. The month 3 monitoring report represented the second cycle in which month-end forecasting tools were automatically emailed out to all budget managers directly from Business World. Whilst further progress had been made in engaging and training of managers, there were a number of areas where further work was still required to ensure universal ownership and engagement in the monitoring process and the robustness and accuracy of projections. Continuing to make steps forward during the second quarter would mean all managers would complete expenditure and income forecasts for their area of budget responsibility. Real time financial reporting with drill-down functionality to individual transaction level within Business World was also now available to Budget Managers. This additional financial information assisted Managers with the process of effective budget management. Training and support continued to be provided by Financial Services staff. As shown in Appendix 4, as at 30 June 2019 47% (£6.426m) of the savings required by the approved budget had been delivered within the current year. A further 46% (£6.156m) was profiled to be delivered during the remainder of 2019/20 and the remaining 7% (£0.982m) had temporary in-year mitigations to deliver alternative savings. Emphasis during the remainder of 2019/20 needed to be placed on delivering all outstanding savings permanently per the 2019/20 Financial Plan, including those for which only temporary solutions have been found. This was particularly important given the scale of the full year savings required (£13.564m), including those brought forward from 2018/19 requiring permanent solutions and the requirement to deliver ambitious savings plans in future financial years within the Financial Plan. Full details of pressures, risks and challenges and the significant majority of areas of the Council's operation where budget plans remained on track were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. The Health and Social Care function were experiencing pressures in the Joint Learning Disability budget which, if remedial action was to be taken, would result in expenditure exceeding budget by £0.7m. The service had identified financial risks of £0.7m, relating to increased care costs and clients transitioning from Children's Services (£400k) and income pressures including delays in billing (£300k). The service was undertaking an urgent review of all projected costs and income including a review of the assessment and billing process with a view to mitigating the risks and ensuring the service could operate within existing budgets. Members noted the position and expressed concern regarding the funding of health and social care which was only going to become more difficult.

#### **DECISION**

##### **(a) AGREED:-**

- (i) the virements as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report; and**
- (ii) to continue to actively promote a culture of sound financial; management across the Council, and that budget affordability be fully considered in service delivery decisions in order to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council.**

**(b) NOTED:-**

- (i) the projected corporate monitoring position reported at 30 June 2019, the pressures identified, the underlying cost drivers of this position and the identified areas of financial risk as reflected in Appendix 1;**
- (ii) the progress made in achieving Financial Plan savings in Appendix 4.**

**5. BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2019**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an analysis of the Council's balances as at 31 March 2019 and details of the projected balances at 31 March 2020. The report explained that the unaudited Council's General Fund useable reserve (non-earmarked) balance was £6.315m at 31 March 2019. The projected General Fund useable reserve was projected to remain at £6.315m at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 in line with the Council's Financial Strategy. The total of all useable balances, excluding developer contributions, at 31 March 2020 was projected to be £22.251m, compared to £27.799m at 31 March 2019. As the financial year progressed, earmarked balances to be carried forward to 2020/21 would increase. The projected balance on the Capital Fund of £7.166m would be affected by any further capital receipts, developer contributions, interest credited and any expenditure authorised to be financed from the Fund during the remainder of the financial year.

**DECISION  
NOTED:-**

- (a) the unaudited 2018/19 revenue balances at 31 March 2019;**
- (b) the projected revenue balances as at 31 March 2020 as contained in Appendices 1 & 2 to the report; and**
- (c) the projected balance in the Capital Fund as contained in Appendix 3 to the report.**

**6. MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL FINANCIAL PLAN 2019/20**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on the progress of the 2019/20 Capital Financial Plan and seeking approval for variations and the reallocation of funds. The monitoring tables in Appendix 1 to the report detailed actual expenditure to 30 June 2019. Key issues identified in these tables were summarised within the main report. The tables identified a projected net variance of £0.077m against the approved budget. The net in year budget decrease of £0.077m was primarily due to £2.602m additional external funding secured to fund projects, including the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme where the Council had been awarded an additional £0.699m for roads investment, Scottish Government Town Centre Fund £1.412m and Scottish Rugby Union funding towards the costs of the Melrose 3G Pitch totalling £0.400m. This was offset by net budget timing movements to future years of £1.620m, the most significant of which were Hawick Flood Protection £1.200m and ICT Transformation £1.249m which had required budgets to be brought forward to 2019/20. This was offset by adjustments to the Asset Rationalisation £1.164m and Hawick Regeneration Blocks £1.897m with project timing movements now requiring budget to be deferred to 2020/21. The final significant adjustment was associated with the Digital Learning Transformation following optimisation of the funding model for the Inspire Learning Programme (£1.059m). Appendix 2 contained a list of the block allocations approved for this year and the various approved and proposed projects to be allocated from them within the 2019/20 Capital Plan. Appendix 3 contained a list of estimated whole project capital costs for single projects which would not be completed in the current financial year.

## **DECISION**

(a) **AGREED** the projected outturns in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised capital budget and approved the virements required.

(b) **NOTED:-**

- (i) **the budget virements previously approved by the Chief Financial Officer and Service Director Assets and Infrastructure detailed in Appendix 2 under delegated authority;**
- (ii) **the list of block allocations detailed in Appendix 2 to the report; and**
- (iii) **the list of whole project costs detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.**

## **7. ANNUAL PROCUREMENT REPORT**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer presenting the Annual Procurement Report (APR), as required by the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. A copy of the APR for the period 2018/2019, developed in the format required by Scottish Government guidance, was attached to this report as Appendix 1. The report explained that organisations required to prepare a procurement strategy must also publish an annual procurement report. These documents were now part of the reporting landscape for public sector organisations to support increased transparency and visibility of public expenditure, and to embed sustainable procurement into public sector procurement. The purpose was to demonstrate to stakeholders that procurement spend was being used to best effect to achieve better public services, social, economic and environmental outcomes in the area and a range of local and national policies. The key ambition of the Procurement Strategy was to support the Borders local market and economy. During the 2018/19, and through delivering on the strategic objectives, the level of local spend continued to increase with £75.9m (45.2%) of the £168m Council spend (with third parties) being with businesses operating in the geographical boundaries of the Scottish Borders. Following approval, the report had to be submitted to the Scottish Government and, as a minimum, published on the internet. Members welcomed the progress being made. The glossary of terms was helpful and the report provided better transparency.

## **DECISION**

**AGREED** to approve the submission of the Annual Procurement Report 2018/19, as contained in the appendix to the report to the Scottish Government and its publication on the Council's website.

## **8. TWEED VALLEY TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT PROPOSAL**

There had been circulated copies of a report which outlined the Tweed Valley Tourism Business Improvement District (BID) proposal, which had been developed by a local business group, Tweed Valley Tourist Consortium (TVTC). The report highlighted the role of the Council and its contribution and recommended appropriate support. The report explained that the Tweed Valley BID Steering Group had developed an exciting vision for the future of tourism in the Tweed Valley. The BID business plan had a clear objective of growing a strong, sustainable tourism industry in the Tweed Valley. The Steering Group had engaged with a wide range of businesses during the consultation process and understood the ambitions of local businesses to develop and grow. The key aims of the Tweed Valley Tourism BID were to develop the Tweed Valley into a world-class activity destination; ensure the long-term sustainability of tourism in the area; improve the visitor experience; increase the number of visitors; give visitors more reasons to stay longer and spend more and Help create local jobs. The BID levy would provide an estimated income of £350,000 over 5 years to deliver a range of tourism development and marketing activity, potentially supplemented by other external funding opportunities.

**DECISION  
AGREED:-**

- (a) to support the Tweed Valley Tourism BID and noted the intended ballot date of 14 November 2019;
- (b) that the Council's Democratic Services Team manage the BID Ballot process and the Council's Customer Service Team provide the financial management of the BID levy on the basis of full cost recovery;
- (c) to note the financial implications of £280 per annum for the Council for their BID Levy contributions and agreed to support the BID initiative with a 'Yes' vote for the Council's respective property; and
- (d) that a local Elected Member be nominated to represent the Council on the BID Levy Board, along with a Council officer for advisory support.

**9. EYEMOUTH – PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR REGENERATION**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director which provided an update on the priority regeneration actions identified for Eyemouth and East Berwickshire. The report also sought approval to commit funding already allocated in the Council's Capital programme to progress specific priority projects in support of the economic regeneration of Eyemouth. The report explained that the Council's Executive previously agreed to focus economic regeneration activity on key towns, including Eyemouth, based on the Town Centre Resilience Index. To support the regeneration of Eyemouth, an allocation of £799,000 of capital funding had been approved within the Council's Financial Plan and a grant of £100,000 towards the installation of an ice plant at the harbour to support the fishing fleet was approved by the Executive Committee in April 2018 leaving an unallocated balance of £699,000. In 2018, the Council established an Eyemouth and East Berwickshire Economic Regeneration Group as an informal sub group of the Executive. An Eyemouth and East Berwickshire Economic Regeneration Action Plan had been drafted for the area with input from representatives from the sub-group. A range of priority activity areas had been identified to support the regeneration of Eyemouth and these were outlined in the report. Based on the priority areas identified, a number of indicative allocations were recommended from the Council's capital programme. These had been reviewed and agreed as recommendations by the Eyemouth and East Berwickshire Economic Regeneration Group.

**DECISION**

- (a) **NOTED** the priority regeneration actions identified for Eyemouth and East Berwickshire by the Eyemouth and East Berwickshire Economic Regeneration Group.
- (b) **AGREED** to approve the recommended project funding breakdown set out in Section 6.1 for the £699k capital funding that was allocated to Eyemouth in the Council's Financial Plan, in order to progress priority projects to support the regeneration of Eyemouth.

**10. OUR PLAN AND YOUR PART IN IT: SBC'S CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT REPORT QUARTER 1 2019/20**

- 10.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Customer & Communities which presented a high level summary of Scottish Borders Council's Quarter 1 2019/20 performance information with more detail contained within Appendices 1a and 1b attached to the report. The report included reporting on the progress of change and improvement projects across SBC within the four corporate themes. The report explained that in order to monitor progress against the four themes, a review of performance and context information would be undertaken quarterly and presented to Executive Committee

as well as an annual summary in June each year. Section 4 of the report referenced examples of Change and Improvement projects, with further information contained in Appendix 1a. These projects were monitored on a weekly basis by Corporate Management Team (CMT) and through the SBC Financial Plan and associated monitoring. A summary of any additions or changes made to SBC performance indicators was provided at Section 5 of the report, followed by a high level summary of performance in Section 6. To reflect the significant investment made by SBC, an overview of the work and impact of Police Scotland's Community Action Team was provided at Section 7 with Appendix 2. During Quarter 1 2019/20, SBC had continued to drive forward a range of innovative approaches including:

- The in-depth review of services, under the Fit for 2024 programme has commenced;
- A milestone in the roll-out of the Inspire Learning approach was reached, with the issue of iPad's to all secondary school teachers;
- The latest round of the Localities Bid Fund will see local projects benefit from over £300k of funding.

In response to a question on the poor rate of recycling it was noted that work was being undertaken by Communications and that the new waste contract should also help increase rates. With regard to the increase in complaint figures members were advised that a review of the more complex complaints was being undertaken and this was a priority for the DCA Project. Further information with regard to the Business Gateway Figures would be provided. With regard to the second CAT team it was noted that the Sergeant and 4 of the officer would be in place by the end of September with full staffing by the end of the year.

## **DECISION**

### **NOTED:-**

- (a) the progress update relating to Change and Improvement Projects, referenced in Section 4 and detailed further in Appendix 1a;**
- (b) the changes to performance indicators outlined in Section 5 of the report; and**
- (c) the performance summarised in Sections 6 and 7, and detailed within Appendices 1a, 1b and 2 and the action that was being taken within services to improve or maintain performance.**

10.2 Members moved on to consider the performance information presented for Live Borders activities in Quarters 3 & 4 2018/19). The report explained during 2018, Live Borders developed a new strategic plan for the period 2018 – 2023 which was approved by their Board in February 2018. The Strategy contained a new vision ("*Everyone living in, working in, and visiting the Borders will be healthier, happier and stronger*") and 6 strategic goals that are aligned to the outcomes specified in the contract:

- i. Expand levels of participation
- ii. Grow earned income
- iii. Develop plural funding streams
- iv. Build on reputation for great customer service
- v. Create a sustainable charity
- vi. Nurture staff to be proud of what they do

The table contained in the report showed how the Strategic Plan goals would assist Live Borders in working towards the 6 outcomes in the contract with SBC. A range of Key Strategic Indicators (KSI) had been developed under the 6 strategic goals, along with a range of financial measures presented in Appendix 1 to the report. Ewan Jackson, Chief Executive and Linda Ross, Director of Business Development were present to answer Member's questions.

**DECISION  
NOTED:-**

- (a) the changes that had been made to Live Borders' performance reporting; and**
- (b) Live Borders' performance and the action being taken to maintain and improve performance.**

**11. LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2017-22 YEAR 2 PROGRESS**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services which provided an overview on the Annual Progress report setting out what had been achieved in the delivery of year two of the Local Housing Strategy, a copy of which was appended to the report, and sought the Committee's endorsement to submit to Scottish Government. The report explained that the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 placed a statutory requirement on local authorities to develop a Local Housing Strategy, supported by an assessment of housing need and demand. The Strategy set out the strategic direction for housing investment and service delivery in the Scottish Borders for 2017-22 and was informed and developed through extensive research and consultation with partners and the wider community. The LHS was approved by Scottish Borders Council and submitted to the Scottish Government in September 2017. The Council and its partners had made good progress since the LHS was formally approved by Council. Work in 2018/19 included the delivery of 192 new affordable homes, the submission of a very ambitious Strategic Housing Investment Plan underpinned by up to £162m of investment, development of a new Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan, the establishment of a new Homelessness and Health Strategic Partnership and a Borders Home Energy Forum, the development of a new Housing Needs Action Plan for Young People, a draft Affordable Warmth Strategy and 94 major adaptations being completed, are just some of the main achievements over the last year. Members welcomed the good work being carried out

**DECISION**

- (a) NOTED the progress made in delivering on the Strategic actions as set out in the appended Annual Update Report and Monitoring and Evaluation Matrix.**
- (b) APPROVED the submission of the Annual Report and Matrix to the Scottish Government.**

**12. AFFORDABLE WARMTH AND HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY STRATEGY**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Services Director, Regulatory Services which sought endorsement of the Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy, which had been developed to support Local Housing Strategy Priority 2: More people live in good quality energy efficient homes. The report explained that the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 placed a statutory duty on Local Authorities to develop Local Housing Strategies that aim to ensure that, "so far as reasonably practicable, persons do not live in fuel poverty." This obligation related to housing in all tenures. The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-2022 was the Council's key strategic document for planning and delivering initiatives to reduce fuel poverty and improve home energy efficiency. Priority 2 of the LHS is that "More people live in good quality, energy efficient homes". The new LHS 2017-22 identified a need to develop a new Fuel Poverty and Home Energy Efficiency strategy to support the delivery of actions under LHS priority 2, in particular those which address the following policy issues:

- National fuel poverty target (2016) and links to energy efficiency
- Housing's contribution to climate change; and
- Meeting the Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (ESSH).

The Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy covered the period 2019-23. The vision was that 'more people live in energy efficient and affordably warm homes'.

## **DECISION**

- (a) **AGREED to endorse the Strategy and the implementation of the Action Plan where there were no additional financial resource implications.**
- (b) **NOTED that officers would bring back proposals relating to those actions identified as potentially having resource implications.**

### **13. IMPLEMENT THE USE OF MISSING SHARES TO ENABLE COMMON REPAIR**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services which sought approval to implement the missing share power under section 50 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 to enable essential common repairs to proceed. The Chief Planning Officer reported that there was a serious disrepair problem re-emerging within our built environment. Scotland's private housing stock was deteriorating because of the lack of regular and on-going maintenance and repair. The Scottish House condition survey reported that almost 60% of dwellings in the Scottish Borders had disrepair to 'critical elements' of their fabric, two thirds of which were in need of urgent attention (Scottish Government 2019). These covered building elements critical to ensuring weather tightness, structural stability and preventing the deterioration of the property. Scottish Borders Councils Scheme of Assistance promoted the Scottish Government principle that homeowners had the primary responsibility for maintaining and repairing their own homes. It was proposed to implement the scheme as a pilot project over a 2 year period, targeted on Hawick Conservation Area, which would supplement the approved Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme. The Council would seek to recover missing share payments including associated administrative expenses and interest. It was proposed to carry out a review at the conclusion of the pilot scheme to inform the potential for the Missing Shares Scheme being rolled out to the private sector throughout the Borders. Members welcomed the proposal but requested that an earlier update be provided as there was a desire to extend this more quickly than was suggested in the report. The Chief Planning Officer suggested that he could provide a progress report at the end of the financial year and this was accepted.

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED;-**

- (a) **the pilot project to implement the use of Missing Shares to enable essential repairs to proceed in Hawick, and**
- (b) **that a report be brought back to the Executive Committee at the end of financial year 2019/20 on the progress to allow consideration of a wider rollout of the project throughout the Borders.**

### **14. ANNUAL TAXI FARES REVIEW**

With reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of 16 April 2019, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director of Regulatory Services. The report advised Members of the recent public consultation undertaken in connection with the statutory review of the current scale of charges for taxi fares. The report explained that The Council as Licensing Authority was required in terms of Section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 ("the Act") to review the scales for fares and other charges in connection with the hire of a taxi at intervals not exceeding 18 months of the last review. The report presented in April recommended an increase in current taxi rates of 3.7% and that rate was determined by the application of the Council's established process/formula. Following agreement the Council had undertaken a public consultation on the newly proposed rates, details of which contained in the report. Members were

disappointed with the response to the consultation and some members felt that there should be no increase.

VOTE

*Councillor Weatherston, seconded by Councillor Mountford, moved that the recommendations contained in the report be approved.*

*Councillor Jardine, seconded by Councillor Tatler, moved as an amendment that the current charges remain in place.*

*On a show of hands members voted as follows:-*

*Motion – 5 votes*

*Amendment – 2 votes*

*The Motion was accordingly carried*

While agreeing the increase in fares it was noted that the fares structure was more complex than in other local authority areas. The Passenger Transport Manager advised that as reviews were carried out every 18 months this would give him time to engage with Taxi Operators on this matter. He also highlighted that there was no Taxi Officers Association which made engagement more difficult.

**DECISION**

**(a) NOTED the responses received.**

**(b) AGREED that:-**

- (i) the proposed increase of 3.7% remained appropriate; and**
- (ii) the fare structure be considered as part of the next review.**

*The meeting concluded at 12.30 p.m.*