

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee held remotely on
Wednesday, 8 July 2020 commencing at 4:00 pm**

Present:

Chair
Vice Chair

Councillor R A Bird
Councillor J R Mason

and Councillors:

G F Blackwell, M Dean, M A Gore, D J Harwood, E J MacTiernan, C Softley, M G Sztymiak and
R J E Vines

EX.10 ANNOUNCEMENTS

10.1 The Chair advised that the meeting was being held under the emergency provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and, specifically, The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. The meeting was being broadcast live via the internet, it was not being recorded by the Council but, under the usual transparency rules, it may be being recorded by others.

EX.11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

11.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R J Stanley. There were no substitutes for the meeting.

EX.12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

12.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.

12.2 There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

EX.13 MINUTES

13.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record.

EX.14 ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

14.1 There were no items from members of the public.

EX.15 FINANCIAL OUTTURN REPORT

- 15.1 The report of the Head of Finance and Asset Management, circulated separately at Pages No. 1-22, highlighted the Council's financial performance for the previous year, setting out both the general fund and capital outturn positions. Members were asked to note the general fund outturn for 2019/20, the financing of the capital programme and the annual treasury management report and performance; and to approve the transfers to and from earmarked reserves.
- 15.2 In introducing the report, the Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that table 1 on Page No. 3 of the report summarised the service performance which had generated the reported full year surplus of £516,851 – this was a solid outturn position but was reduced against predictions as a result of the need to pay a business rates levy to the government. The table highlighted the non-service-related activity as well as other aspects of the overall budget to provide a whole view of the Council's general fund. The table concluded with the budgeted transfer to reserves of £575,000 and the actual transfer totalling £1,091,851. The outturn position for direct expenditure and income showed a positive variance of £896,892 and was mainly attributable to major items including: the employees full year budget being underspent largely as a result of staff turnover and variances in a number of service groupings; an overspend on supplies and services which was mainly generated through expenditure on holding elections during the year – this was reimbursed by the government; an overspend on payments to third parties as a result of disbursement expenditure by One Legal which was recovered directly from clients; expenditure in Development Services which was reimbursed by government grant; an overspend on the Ubico contract; and the increased cost of disposal of recycle collected.
- 15.3 Treasury performance had been strong in 2019/20 with both investment and borrowing decisions contributing to an overall surplus of £250,867; of that surplus approximately £58,858 had been generated from investments and, whilst an increase in the portfolio balance and a slight increase in market rates had benefited the portfolio, the main reason for the surplus was the continuing investment in the CCLA pooled property fund and investment in additional investment vehicles within higher asset classes. The Council had failed to acquire a further commercial investment property in the year which had resulted in a deficit of rental generation against budget of £384,173. The loss of income was offset by the savings on borrowing and savings against the expected minimum revenue provision for the year. The unspent capital monies were carried forward into the 2020/21 budget.
- 15.4 The overall position on the retained business rates scheme showed a deficit of £331,229 for the full year. The underlying position of both the Council and the Gloucestershire business rates pool was good with surpluses reported on both; of note was Tewkesbury's share of the pool which was £841,786; however, the accounting impacts of the release of provisions within the scheme meant the position was reduced to a deficit in 2019/20. Tewkesbury had been able to recalculate its requirements for provisions against successful business rates appeals in the year after the withdrawal of several, potentially substantial, appeals. As a result of the release of those provisions, some of which dated back to 2010, a significant surplus was generated from which the Council would benefit after a levy to the government was paid. The levy payment was made in-year but the release of the gross surplus happened through the collection fund a year in arrears. This meant that at this year-end, the Council's business rates position was impacted and there was a negative effect on reserves but the Council would enjoy the release of approximately £3.5million of a collection fund surplus in 2020/21. As previously highlighted, the release of the surplus would be used to replenish reserves reduced to cover the impact at year-end with the balance used to fund the

likely financial impact of COVID-19. The surplus on the general fund revenue account, and the planned contribution to reserves, had been surpassed by the expenditure incurred in-year on reserves resulting in an overall reduction in the reserve levels. In order to manage the payment of the levy prior to receiving the gain from the actual release of provisions, the Medium Term Financial Strategy reserve of £1million had been completely withdrawn at year-end but would be replaced with the release of provisions money in 2020/21; and the planned increase in the vehicle replacement reserve of £400,000 had been limited to £139,954 with the balance added to the reserve during 2020/21 as the release of business rates provisions took place. Overall, the Council was able to transfer to reserves a gross total of £1.09million.

- 15.5 In terms of the capital programme, a small overspend against forecast levels was delivered from the Disabled Facilities Grants programme; however, all expenditure was covered by capital grant funding from the government which was administered by the County Council – Tewkesbury's allocation for the year was in excess of £1.2million so the total expenditure incurred could easily be met from that. The summarised capital programme was shown at Appendix C together with the sources of finance used. The Council had expended £1.08million on capital projects in 2019/20 utilising £156,280 of capital reserves, £571,561 of capital grants and £349,481 of revenue contributions. Following the allocation of capital receipts, primarily from some small asset sales such as the site next to Aldi in Tewkesbury, the balance on capital reserves, both receipts and grants, had reduced to £1.14million as at 31 March 2020.
- 15.6 Performance in treasury management was strong with income gains over 4.5% and borrowing requirements less than forecast; however, the year-end total of borrowing which stood at £44.3million was artificially inflated by £15million of borrowing taken at the end of March as a result of imminent recalls on other short-term borrowing to help ensure liquidity in light of the financial implications of COVID-19 – it was expected that borrowing would return to normal levels during 2020/21.
- 15.7 A Member commended the Head of Finance and Asset Management and his team for their work to date under the very difficult pressures the pandemic was placing on finances. He questioned whether there was an indication from the government about the support it would offer to Tewkesbury Borough Council. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that a funding package had been announced recently with £500million to support spending pressures; 75% of income losses would be paid by the government after the local authority paid 5% and apportioned over three years rather than the following years as normal. The detail of the package had not yet been received and he would be particularly interested in how income losses would be calculated so he could understand the financial benefit to Tewkesbury Borough Council. At the moment there was only a high level definition of the income the Council could claim – sales, fees and charges were included but commercial income was excluded; it was likely that there would be some exclusions in sales, fees and charges but this would not be confirmed until the detailed guidance was received. In response to a query about the Ubico overspend, the Head of Finance and Asset Management confirmed that this had been discussed by Members in the final quarter of 2019/20 when the problem had been discovered and the Interim Head of Ubico had spoken to the Committee. The overspend had been made up of several issues including historic underbudgeting. The Head of Finance and Asset Management confirmed that, overall, the position was very much improved now. The financial teams at Ubico and Tewkesbury Borough Council had a good relationship and the reporting and transparency from Ubico was greatly enhanced. In response to a query regarding internal audit, he explained that the team had been redeployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic response, but the Head of Corporate Services was now looking at the

audit plan going forward.

15.8 A Member questioned what interest rate the Council was able to borrow at in the current climate. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that the Council could borrow long-term from the government and short-term from the money markets. The money markets offered cheap borrowing whereas, in comparison, the government borrowing was based on gilt yields with an additional 1.8% which made it quite an expensive option. Local authorities were campaigning for the 1.8% uplift to be reduced as it would be better for borrowing for things like regeneration and housing schemes without affecting their viability. It was noted by a Member that, overall, the Council's strategy and approach to sound finance stood it in good stead. The Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that, as reported to Committee in June, the initial estimates in respect of COVID-19 had now increased to an impact of around £3.2million on the budget this year – including £500,000 set aside for recovery, which was well over one-third of the Council's budget. There were many unknowns in terms of financing and the Council could be facing a very significant deficit next year if funding such as New Homes Bonus was withdrawn. He would be presenting the Medium Term Financial Strategy to the Transform Working Group over the next couple of months when more detailed information was received but there would likely be many difficult decisions to be made going forward.

15.9 It was proposed, seconded and

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the general fund outturn for 2019/20, the financing of the capital programme and the annual treasury management report and performance be **NOTED**.
 2. That transfers to and from earmarked reserves be **APPROVED**.

EX.16 CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON REDUCTION AUDIT AND ACTION PLAN

16.1 The report of the Deputy Chief Executive, circulated at Pages No. 8-93, provided Members with detail on the climate change and carbon reduction audit and action plan as required by the Motion which was approved by the Council in 2019. The Committee was asked to recommend the audit report to Council as having established the current position and carbon baseline; and to note the action plan and agree that detailed work and feasibility studies commence in relation to the carbon reduction options set out within it.

16.2 The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Council had declared a climate emergency in October 2019 which included a commitment to doing all in its power to make Tewkesbury Borough Council Offices carbon neutral by 2030 as well as undertaking an audit of the Council's current position, together with the creation of an action plan that would set out how that aim could be achieved. The audit report set out the relevant government guidance and the detailed analysis that was undertaken in order to establish the current carbon footprint and the action plan set out the short, medium and long-term opportunities that could be explored further as part of detailed feasibility testing as ways the Council could seek to meet the ambition of carbon neutrality by 2030 in relation to its buildings. Members were advised that the Council's Climate Change and Flood Risk Management Group had been created to consider all aspects of climate change and was initially tasked with working with Officers to oversee the delivery of the audit and action plan. The discussion and key observations from the group were included at Paragraph 2.2 of the report, along with the key questions from Members and the responses received from the consultant.

16.3 In terms of next steps, the Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the report and action plan provided an excellent base on which to build - this met the first part of the climate emergency motion and was also reflected in the sustainable environment priority within the Council Plan. It was intended to use the Council's existing governance arrangements to monitor and manage the carbon reduction work which would be helpful given the competing priorities and additional impacts currently being felt as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The recommendations from the current meeting would go to Council on 28 July but be preceded by an all Member Seminar to be held on 23 July at 6pm.

16.4 The consultant was invited to make his detailed presentation on the report which set the context and covered the salient points as follows:

- The remit - production of a baseline from 2019/20 and the creation of an action plan based on a set of principles including demand reduction and renewable energy information. The report covered the Council's own buildings and transport except those buildings owned for commercial investment purposes. The approach had followed nationally recognised greenhouse protocol standards – scope 1, 2 and 3 – and used government advanced conversion factor data sets.
- Scope 1 – all gas consumption in buildings in scope and also owned transport – including Ubico.
- Scope 2 – electricity consumed.
- Scope 3 – everything else – extraction, refinement and transportation of 1 and 2, water, business travel in owned vehicles and public vehicles and waste disposal.
- Specifically, the base line data incorporated Council Offices (less the areas occupied by tenants), Tewkesbury Leisure Centre, Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury Cemetery, Cold Pool Lane sports pavilion, the five homeless properties, the waste fleet and the grey fleet. As a result of data being unavailable, office waste and business travel via public transport was not included at this stage but would be when possible.
- Significantly greater reductions in the electricity network than the gas network. It was highly likely improvements would be realised by 2050 with it being expected that electricity would have made significant inroads into decarbonisation by 2030 – the speed of progress was slow.
- Some of the internal factors included the age of equipment, control systems, observation of user engagement with energy. Around five times better energy performance was possible going forward which was a strong part of reassessing diversion away from gas powered systems to heat source pump options.
- The action plan was designed on the basis of five priorities: energy consumption controlled and managed; energy efficiency maximisation through 'low cost' and 'no cost' measures; replacement of end of life equipment with most appropriate low carbon technologies; offset through increasing the extent of renewable energy generation and therefore avoiding the need to import from the national grid; and the potential for a small amount of generated energy to be procured from green energy.
- As described in the action plan, the first series related to lowering the energy needed.
- Using gas was a combustion process that lost efficiency; the current gas system was at 60% efficiency whereas using a heat pump source would be at 300% to 400% efficiency which was a stark illustration of the potential

opportunity. Everything was being reviewed as the intention was that enough energy would be generated to meet demand and therefore avoid importing it. The Council had already started purchasing for its own sites with possible 50% savings across the electric vehicles.

- The need for implementation of a waste management system was understood and was something the Council was eager to do with the prospect of realising carbon neutrality being high. The actions needed for this were outlined in the report. There was a bit more work needed on the systems/processes to ensure the data was as robust as possible so the business case stacked up and the measures were implemented in appropriate priority order.

16.5 A Member thanked the consultant for his very thorough report. He questioned whether his understanding of the figures was correct that £160,000 savings per year could be realised from the changes with £22,000 revenue included. He also questioned whether the work could be done in a shorter timescale, i.e. five years, and whether the consultant had any idea as to the rough cost to making the savings. In response, the Member was advised that his understanding of the figures was correct. In terms of implementation of the action plan, this would see a reduction of around £55,000 plus further income generation e.g. bonuses from provision of electricity to the national grid and renewable heat incentives through air source heat pumps. In terms of the length of the plan, the consultant felt five years would be a difficult aspiration to realise given the Council's financial situation. It would be more prudent to demonstrate the revenue and get a 'green pot' to fund the more expensive measures e.g. solar costs would likely be around £950,000 for a system the size required. A full feasibility study was not in scope at this stage but in due course there would have to be structural surveys on buildings to check they could support the Panels etc. needed. In terms of approximate costs, the consultant was unable to provide this from the work to date as he had not undertaken full feasibility studies. The main unknown factor was the cost of retrofitting the refuse collection vehicles - early indications were that fitting end of life vehicles with batteries to make them last longer could be a cost effective option.

16.6 A Member noted the Council's difficult financial forecast for the next two years and felt it would make good sense to focus on easy quick returns in the first instance. Other Members agreed with that view and expressed their concern about the financial implications to the Council of both the climate change crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. It was generally felt the right approach was to implement the less costly options in the first instance. The consultant advised that the crises were not exclusive, and it should be possible to combine some good wins from both, the Council could then take stock and plan for the longer-term accordingly. In respect of the action plan, most of the short and medium-term actions could be implemented within seven years. Another Member was in agreement with the points made and felt the Council had given itself ten years to implement measures – it may be possible to do that ahead of schedule but it needed to ensure it had realistic timescales - and to reduce that to five years would not make sense at this stage. In response to a query regarding costs, the consultant explained that £193,000 was the annual cost and that would reduce to £55,000 after implementation of the actions which would be saving of £138,000. Within the action plan appendices there was a plan that provided more detail and showed a breakdown of each action point, along with the cost saving, so Members could see the scale of the opportunity e.g. if the Council looked at putting in place all energy efficient measures, time control and replacement of gas with air source heat pumps, savings of £603,000 could be realised. This was a carbon study so looked at zero carbon rather than zero cost, but he understood cost was a major influencing factor. In terms of costs, the Head of Finance and Asset Management confirmed that there were some early wins for which costs were already budgeted

e.g. replacement of boilers and changes to the server room were both contained in the asset plan meaning funding was already in place. The Chancellor had just announced money for green energy in public buildings so there may be some other funding sources available as well. In addition, the consultant noted that the Severn Wye Energy Agency was also running a scheme that the Council may be able to tap into depending on timescales. He further noted that, in terms of equipment replacement, there was a lot that was nearing end of life/obsolete, so needed to be replaced; it was a case of understanding the requirements and the cost saving equipment that could be used instead. A Member questioned whether it would make sense to borrow money to make the changes required, and therefore realise savings, rather than to invest in property in the current climate. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management indicated that there were competing priorities for borrowing and this needed to be considered carefully as, in some cases, the cost of expenditure before realising a return and income could be an issue and this was definitely a balancing act in ensuring it was affordable in the short/medium-term. The benefit from commercial property investment was the immediate payback but there was a risk in the loss of tenants. The climate and carbon reduction action plan had both different risks and income recovery, but he would be exploring the options to understand what worked best for Tewkesbury Borough Council.

- 16.7 Referring to Page No. 12 of the report, a Member noted that a countywide Climate Change Strategic Coordinator post was being established and he questioned whether this would be required by Tewkesbury Borough Council and how much it would cost. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive explained that there would be a big advantage to the Council in being part of the countywide initiative. This was a proposal that had been considered by Leadership Gloucestershire and it had been made clear that it would be better to work as a county to collaborate on climate change and carbon reduction. Money would be contributed to a funding pot and each district would get a share of the strategic coordinating role – that role would apply to government with proposals for the county to get grant funding etc. It would not dilute the local work but offered good economy of scale and it was anticipated the government would look more favourably on countywide bids rather than individuals – the post would be hosted by Gloucester City Council. The County Council would contribute around 35-40% of the overall total with the districts making up the rest. This was still under discussion, but it was hoped it would come forward soon as it would be helpful moving forward. The post was likely to be evaluated as a £65,000 a year position.
- 16.8 In response to a query about the timescales for other Councils in Gloucestershire, the consultant advised that, currently, over 400 Councils had declared a climate emergency and largely the timescales focused on 2030 even though the government target was 2050. The trend was gathering momentum and Tewkesbury Borough Council had joined it early. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that there was a variation across Gloucestershire in terms of the approaches taken e.g. Stroud District Council had resolved to be carbon neutral by 2030 for district wide emissions whereas Gloucester City and Cheltenham Borough Councils were looking at their own estates to be carbon neutral by 2030. He felt it was encouraging that so many Councils nationally were looking at a quicker timescale than 2050 and undertook to circulate a list to Members of what each District Council was doing along with the County Council's ambitions.
- 16.9 A Member expressed concerns about the timescale for delivery despite the good report and action plan, he was of the view that the timescale of ten years failed to recognise the importance of the impact of climate change even though the effects on the world could be equally as profound as the COVID-19 pandemic – the trend had to be turned around and this would not be easily achieved. He was of the view that, if the Council had to borrow to make savings and implement changes within five years instead of ten, that was what it should do. The Deputy Chief Executive

felt that the action plan gave the Council the foundation to look at the quick wins and to determine whether borrowing to generate income or savings would work. Ultimately, if there was a good business case, there was no reason that actions could not be taken sooner.

16.10 Accordingly, it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED:

That it be **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that:

1. the audit report be **AGREED** as having established the Council's current position and carbon baseline; and
2. the action plan be **NOTED**, and agreement given for detailed work and feasibility studies to commence in relation to the carbon reduction options set out in the action plan.

EX.17 GLOUCESTERSHIRE ECONOMIC GROWTH JOINT COMMITTEE - EXTENSION OF OPERATING PERIOD

17.1 The report of the Chief Executive, circulated at Pages No. 94-100, asked Members to consider a request from the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee to extend the operation of the Joint Committee for a period of 18 months from 4 September 2020 together with agreement to waive the 12 months' notice period set out in the Inter Authority Agreement between the partner authorities to enable the Joint Committee to continue. Members were asked to consider the report and make a recommendation to Council.

17.2 In introducing the report, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that this was a procedural issue. It was in the Council's interest to agree the extension of the Joint Committee as it meant that all Gloucestershire authorities could work together through an effective governance mechanism in respect of the county's economy, including economic recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In that regard, the Committee's operation of the countywide strategic economic development fund, which currently stood at £4.5million, would be vital.

17.3 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

That it be **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

1. That the notice period of 12 months, contained in the Inter Authority Agreement of the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee in respect of the extension of that agreement, be waived and removed.
2. That it works in partnership with all Gloucestershire local authorities to enable the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee to continue to operate for a further 18 months from 30 September 2020 until 31 March 2022, with Tewkesbury Borough Council as a member, under the terms of the existing Inter Authority Agreement.
3. That authority is delegated to the Borough Solicitor to conclude the necessary legal agreements associated with recommendations 1 and 2 above.

EX.18 RE-OPENING THE HIGH STREETS SAFELY FUND - ACTION PLAN

- 18.1 The report of the Interim Head of Development Services, circulated separately at Pages No. 23-28, and the amended Appendix circulated as an additional paper, explained the purpose of the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund launched by the government and set out how the funding may be spent. Members were asked to note the government criteria for the use of the fund; to agree the initial dynamic action plan; and delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of Council, to implement the action plan or vary it in response to circumstances which may arise as a consequence of the need to re-open the local economy safely, support social distancing or respond to business intelligence, including authority to enter into agreements, notices and other legal documents as necessary.
- 18.2 The Interim Head of Development Services advised that the report explained how the funding may be spent and that it could only be used to support business and for temporary public realm measures on High Streets. A high-level initial action plan had been circulated separately which identified the necessary actions to support the safe reopening of the local economy and the need to achieve social distancing. This was an early report to Members to ensure the Council could make decisions at the pace expected by the government. A significant amount of work had already taken place to support businesses and reopen the High Street safely, including the use of ambassadors and the introduction of signage, a risk assessment tool kit, social media campaigns and direct support from both the Growth Hub and Environmental Health team – all of which was over and above ‘business as usual’. It was clear that a cautious approach had been taken to reopening by many businesses and that the work put in by the Council and the ambassadors had been very welcome. The action plan was the next stage and, although narrowly focussed by government, it allowed the Council’s work to continue and expand.
- 18.3 Attention was drawn to Page No. 25 of the report which detailed the purpose of the fund and that government had indicated it would be available up to, and including, March 2021 although the use of the fund was encouraged by the end of the calendar year. The full details of the European Regional Development Fund would be covered in a funding agreement which was yet to be issued. The action plan identified themed areas in which allocations were currently evenly distributed; however, this may change as the work progressed if businesses and community engagements identified additional relevant actions which needed to take place.
- 18.4 Referring to the amended action plan, the Interim Head of Development Services explained that theme 1 – support for the public / community engagement - was allocated £30,000 and would include public facing social media and communications campaigns; social distancing signage and stickers/pavement stamps; and community engagement. Theme 2 – business support - was allocated £26,534 for business information and small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) guidance on safe reopening; business engagement and monitoring; business facing social media and communications campaigns; and establishment of retail business groups across three retail centres. Theme 3 – temporary public realm changes - was allocated £25,000 for the introduction of a pedestrian one-way system on Church Street, Bishop’s Cleeve with pavement stencils and signage; pedestrian one-way on either side of the High Street, Winchcombe with pavement stencils and signage; one-way for pedestrians either side of the street (similar to the High Street) in North Street, Winchcombe allowing for widening of footpaths and retention of current parking; keep left on the walkway through Bishop’s Walk, Tewkesbury and signage at the entrances of alleyways which explained that social distancing would be difficult; and further activity to support social distancing following business and community engagement. Also included was a budget of

£3,397 for project management, monitoring, evaluation and admin at 4%.

18.5 The Growth and Enterprise Manager outlined some of the business engagement and support which had been offered to date and the interventions being considered going forward. She explained that the Business team had been working closely with businesses through the crisis including getting grants out, providing wider business advice and offering targeted webinars. Most recently, they had been working with the retail sector in the two phases of reopening; circulating regular newsletters; making calls; appointing ambassadors to help shoppers on opening day; offering advice on the government guidance for retailers; and helping with safety measures. The experience had been a steep learning curve for all involved and a short survey targeted at businesses that had recently been reopening had helped the Council to understand what businesses were struggling with and how it could more effectively help and advise those that needed it. Businesses in the Borough had generally been good at getting the right measures in place and acting swiftly where necessary. To date, most had been implementing practical measures and some had opened in an adjusted fashion. The Growth Hub was working with the Local Enterprise Partnership and the National High Streets Task Force to ensure it was able to provide the ongoing support that businesses required at this time of uncertainty.

18.6 In response to a query regarding the funding agreement, the Interim Head of Development Services advised that there was not a huge amount she could say as the Council had not yet received the agreement. The use of this type of agreement was standard practice so she did not expect it to contain anything unusual. The grant action plan had been received from the government which provided some further guidance and this was helpful and welcomed by Officers; this included information like the signage and posters had to include the European flag in order that the fund could be accessed to pay for them. Members generally agreed that the work in getting the High Streets open again had been of an exceptionally high standard and the feedback they had received from businesses was that the Borough Council had been doing a great job and offering excellent support. One Member suggested that there was a role for local Members and Parish/Town Councils in what was happening in those areas and, in response, the Interim Head of Development Services offered reassurance that the team would be setting up discussions with Parish/Town Councils, Members, businesses and the Tewkesbury Town Regeneration Partnership to get feedback and understand whether any changes needed to be made. The Deputy Chief Executive reiterated that consultation would be fundamental to gaining useful intelligence that could be actioned effectively.

18.7 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

1. That the government criteria for the use of the Re-opening the High Streets Safely Fund be **NOTED**.
2. That the initial action plan be **AGREED** and that it be **NOTED** that it was a dynamic document which may change.

3. That authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make the decisions needed to implement the action plan or vary it in response to circumstances which may arise as a consequence of the need to re-open the local economy safely, support social distancing or respond to business intelligence, including authority to enter into agreements, notices and other legal documents as necessary.

EX.19 SEPARATE BUSINESS

19.1 The Chair proposed, and it was

RESOLVED That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EX.20 SEPARATE MINUTES

20.1 The separate Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record.

The meeting closed at 6:10 pm