

TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXTERNAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MEETING

Town Hall - Bridge Street, Bideford, EX39 2HS

Wednesday, 22 January 2020 - 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor P Pennington (Chair)  
Councillor C Cottle-Hunkin (Vice-Chair)

Councillors S Harding, C Hawkins, S Langford, J McKenzie and  
D Hurley

Mr P Topham – Non-Elected Member

ALSO PRESENT

S Kearney - Planning & Economy Manager  
S Cawsey - Democratic Services Officer  
K Brown - Democratic Services Officer  
S MacKney - Petroc  
M Baxter, H Newell  
and L Glover - 1610

Councillors P Hackett and N Laws  
Mr I Harper & Mr S Dengate – Non Elected Members

62. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Newton who was substituted by Councillor Hurley and J Williams The Environmental Health and Community Safety Manager.

63. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Pennington, seconded by Councillor Harding and –

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November be agreed and signed subject to the following amendment:

It was proposed by ‘Councillor Leather’

(Vote: For – 6, Abstention 2)

Matters Arising

Following an enquiry from Councillor Hunkin-Cottle the Planning and Economy Manager confirmed that currently there is no update on Appledore Shipyard however this will be available by the end of the month.

Minute 57 – Play Strategy - Councillor Langford enquired as to whether Bowden Green had been discussed at the previous meeting.

The Planning and Economy Manager explained that the Authority had no control of retaining Play Spaces in the transfer documents. He was unable to make any specific comments with regards to Bowden Green but through the Planning system would expect it to be maintained as a public open space unless an alternative open space is found. The Planning and Economy Manager suggested that any concerns raised by tenants be directed straight to Westward Housing.

Following an enquiry from Councillor Pennington the Planning and Economy Manager agreed to enquire as to whether there is a tenant representative on the Board of Westward Housing Board.

Following a brief discussion on the representation on the Board of Westward Housing.

It was proposed by Councillor Langford, seconded by Councillor Pennington and –

Resolved: that the Planning and Economy Manager make enquiries as to whether there is a tenant representative on the Board of Westward Housing.

(Vote: For Unanimous )

64. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no public contributions.

65. ACTION LIST

Minute 49 – in the absence of The Environmental Health and Community Safety Manager it was agreed that this be deferred to the next meeting on 4 March

66. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded that declarations of interest should be made as and when the specific agenda item to which they related was under discussion.

67. AGREEMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS PART I AND II

There were no Part II items

68. URGENT MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

There were no Urgent Matters Brought Forward with the Permission of the Chair

69. 1610 UPDATE

1610 had been invited to attend a meeting of the Committee to address the complaints and issues received by the Authority in the past 12 months.

Marci Baxter, General Manager, Leanne Glover, Assistant Manager for Holsworthy and Hannah Newell, Assistant Manager for Torridge and Torrington introduced themselves and delivered a presentation.

The presentation addressed the following:

Most frequent complaints to TDC over the past 12 months:

Cleanliness at Torrington Pool  
 Changing facilities, showers at Torrington Pool  
 Water temperature at Holsworthy  
 Grit in the pool at Holsworthy

Other less frequent complaints received:

Changes to public swimming hours at Torridge Pool  
 State of changing facilities at Torridge Pool.

The Authority in the first instance encourage the public who wish to complain about a matter related to their Leisure Estate to contact 1610 direct. Occasionally a complainant will also contact both 1610 and the Authority if they cannot achieve a resolution with 1610. Complaints received tend to be in relation to reoccurring issues.

All issues were discussed and the following matters were raised during the discussion:

The boilers at Holsworthy Leisure Centre are not working efficiently.

The Planning and Economy Manager reported that there is 2 years left on the contract and a report needs to be presented to Community and Resources setting out what to include and not to include in the contract and investments made.

Within the Strategic Priorities there is a need for a provision for Leisure Services. It was acknowledged by the Chair and Committee that the Authority has a major role to play in the provision of Leisure Services.

It was proposed by Mr Topham, seconded by Councillor Langford and –

Resolved: That the following recommendations be made:

- A review of the need for significant capital investment in partnership with outside agencies be undertaken
- Comments and opinions from an expert engineer and 1610 with regards to the boilers at Holsworthy Leisure Centre be included on the action list and

subject to a satisfactory conclusion, be discussed further at eh Property and Major Projects Working Group

(Vote: For - Unanimous)

It was proposed by Councillor Cottle-Hunkin, seconded by Councillor Hawkins and

–

Resolved: that the Constitution Working Group consider the setting up of an Environmental and Leisure Services Committee.

## 70. NORTHERN DEVON FUTURES GROUP

Councillor Pennington expressed a personal interest as his son works in the IT department at Petroc.

Mr Sean MacKney, Principal and CEO of Petroc College, thanked the Committee for the invite to attend the meeting and gave a presentation on Education and Skills.

Mr MacKney advised of his career history and gave an overview on Petroc as a whole. He advised that last year Petroc was voted best College in the Country, 3 out of 10 students gain and A or A\* result which puts Petroc in the highest 10% Nationally. They have also recently undertaken an Ofsted review where they were awarded a Good Standard.

Most 16 year olds attend Petroc however 20% prefer to attend Exeter. Factors for this could include living closer, Exeter being a City and more appealing and having more sporting facilities.

Petroc also work closely with businesses and organisations to ascertain what particular requirements maybe needed within the local area. Next month they are opening a new Centre of Excellence for innovations for people with inventions, ideas and products for testing and production and explained the new Centre's purpose.

The presentation also included:

- The introduction of Midwifery and Nursing courses.
- Close working with Bolton University.
- 25% reduction in their carbon footprint and a compulsory sustainable programme has been introduced into students tutorial timetable.
- The need to provide education and skills within the area.
- The need for partnership working.

The presentation then moved from the Education and Skills to Northern Devon Future Group which included the following:

The need for partnership working across all of Northern Devon to push forward our own agenda for this part of the world. Mr MacKney will be chairing the first meeting of the board of the Northern Devon Future Groups where both Councils are to be represented. The purpose of the group is to develop a confident and long term vision for Northern Devon that can be taken out as investible propositions to Central Government. He expressed an interest to attend future Council meetings for further input.

Councillor Hackett declared a personal interest as a director on the board of North Devon Plus for the Council.

Issues and challenges with regards to funding in Further Education

Vision for the future they are working on a 5 strategy and confident that Petroc will become an outstanding institution.

They are working towards becoming a more sustainable academy.

The Planning and Economy Manager stated we have not worked previously in partnership with educational bodies. The Northern Devon Futures programmes is a great example of joint working and feels positive about it.

Mr MacKney put the two following questions to the meeting for consideration by Members.

- 1) What do we as a Council want from Petroc?
- 2) Where do we see opportunities in us working together?

Further questions asked by the Committee were addressed and discussed with Mr MacKney.

The Committee thanked Mr MacKney for attending the meeting.

## 71. FIRE SERVICE UPDATE

Councillor Pennington wanted to pay special thanks to both Councillor Ford and Councillor Hackett for all their hard work on this matter.

The following verbal update was given by Councillor Hackett

After the Safety Together – service delivery consultation it was decided at the Fire Authority Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> January to defer the decision to implement the day crewing at Barnstaple, Exmouth and Paignton subject to a revised 24/7 crew model being agreed with the Fire Brigades Union before the end of the current financial year.

It was also decided to introduce variable fire engine availability dependant on risk.

The Fire Authority asked that existing performance measures be reviewed, and that any necessary additional measures are developed, to monitor against expected

improvements. For example on-call fire engine availability, emergency response standards and levels of prevention and protection activity.

The Chair of the Devon and Somerset Authority said that it was important that Fire Fighters and residents now had more certainty about the future. People made it very clear how much they value the Fire Service. Although there were difficult conversations at times, it was pleasing to hear how strongly the public and staff felt connected with their local fire stations.

3818 responses were received for the Service Delivery Consultation along with 5 petitions with a total of 43,644 signatures.

Indebted to Councillor Ford, a retained Fire Fighter between 1982 – 92, for all the work he has done with in depth dialog with local Fire Fighters and the support of various TDC Councillors including Councillor Laws and Councillor Bright.

Please see the following link recognising all Councillor Ford's hard work on this matter:

<http://budeandbeyond.co.uk/devon/appledore-fire-station-saved-from-closure/>

72. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Due to the absence of The Environmental Health and Community Safety Manager this item been deferred to 4 March 2020.

73. STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN LOCAL AND COMBINED AUTHORITIES

Councillor Pennington circulated information from Torridge Profile on the life expectancy of residents within Torridge.

A brief discussion followed on how the statistics were gathered and whether they need investigating on how they were obtained.

Councillor Pennington advised he had brought this matter to the Committee to show the role of the External Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the various items that should be discussed.

Members noted this item.

74. CONSIDERATION OF THE FORWARD PLAN

NHS Consultation - this item had been included for further information on the joining of North Devon Health Trust and Exeter Health Trust. The Committee requested an invite be sent to Dr John Wormsley and Mr John Finn (who gave a presentation at a joint meeting of the two authorities in October 2019)

Play Strategy to be moved to April meeting and be the only item on the agenda.

It was proposed by Councillor Langford, seconded by Councillor MacKenzie and –

Resolved: That the amendments to the Forward Plan be approved.

(Vote: For - Unanimous)

The meeting commenced at 6pm and closed at 8.45pm

Chair:

Date: