

TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXTERNAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MEETING

Town Hall - Bridge Street, Bideford, EX39 2HS

Wednesday, 3 October 2018 - 6.00 pm

PRESENT Councillors R Boughton, P Christie (substitute for Councillor Simmons), T Johns, N Laws, I Parker, R Boughton and K James (substitute for Councillor Pennington)

Phillip Topham

ALSO PRESENT Councillor P Hackett  
Councillor T Inch

S Kearney - Planning & Economy Manager  
J Williams - Environmental Health & Community Safety  
Manager  
M Richards - Democratic Services Officer

Members of the Public - 1

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, the Planning and Economy Manager asked Members to nominate a chair for the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor T Inch, seconded by Councillor James and –

Resolved:

That Councillor Parker chair the meeting.

(Vote: For – unanimous)

Councillor Parker took the Chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended a special welcome to Councillor Boughton, who was new to the Committee.

33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Pennington, Councillor Boundy, Councillor Eastman and Councillor Simmons.

34. MINUTES

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

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 August 2018 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

(Vote: For 4, Abstentions 3)

### **Matters Arising**

#### Item 30 – Flood Risk Management

Members discussed the feedback received from the Property & Procurement Manager in respect of Environment Agency funding. It was agreed that the Environment Agency should be invited back to a future meeting to address the concerns around the Kenwith Dam.

It was proposed by Councillor James, seconded by Councillor T Inch and –

Resolved:

That Item 9 on the agenda, Health, Wellbeing and Social Care, be brought forward as requested by the Lead Member.

(Vote: For – unanimous)

#### List of those Present

Councillor T Inch was not on the list of attendees but had been present and asked that the minutes be amended accordingly.

#### Item 31 – Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

Mr Topham referred back to the attendance of the representative from the Suicide Alliance in November 2017 and asked whether northern Devon had a strategy for Zero Tolerance Suicide. The Environmental Health and Community Safety Manager arrived at the meeting at 18.30 and responded that a lot of work on suicide had been undertaken in partnership with One north Devon and the police. Full details of the Zero Tolerance Suicide were not yet available and although it would be very health organisation centred, rather than a local authority function, TDC would be fully behind any initiative which supported and improved the response to suicide.

### 35. HEALTH, WELLBEING & SOCIAL CARE (STANDING ITEM)

The report by the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing commenced with an update on the proposed merger of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary with Dorset Constabulary. At a meeting on 5 October the Police and Crime Panel will review the summary of the business case, which, if unanimously agreed, will be submitted to the Home Office. However, the PCC for Devon & Cornwall is currently minded to say no to the merger and will confirm or amend her “minded to” decision by 8 October.

The Holsworthy Community Involvement Group had extended the deadline for returns of its survey to 10 October and the results will then be examined by Healthwatch. A paper showing the results of the survey so far was circulated.

(Councillor Laws arrived at the meeting.)

The plan for the reopening of inpatient beds remained unchanged with the recruitment of medical cover locally reflecting the challenging environment nationally.

Members discussed the proposed merger of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary with Dorset Constabulary and the survey relating to the proposal. The Lead Member cautioned that there were many unknowns at this stage, particularly relating to costings, however, it was hoped there would be an opportunity to get a better understanding of this at the meeting on 5 October and to question the Police & Crime Commissioner about her “minded to” decision.

There was also further discussion on suicide.

The Chair thanked the Lead Member for his report.

Councillor Hackett left the meeting.

### 36. ACTION LIST

The Action List was updated as follows:

Minute 18	Urgent Matters Brought Forward – Resignation of Mr Bines. Letter of thanks to be written to Mr Bines.	Also required for D Mason. Letters drafted and awaiting signature.
Minute 30	Flood Risk Management  Letter to be written asking for further Information re funding for Brunswick Wharf wall	Completed
Minute 32	Forward Plan  Letters to be written to CCG, NDHC Trust, SWAST – cancelling their attendance at 3 October meeting and explain why.  Email Members inviting them to ND Council meeting on 15 November.  Invite Miss Tracey Polak, Public Health to meeting 3 October	Completed  Completed  Completed – but can only attend 14 November.

	Agriculture Business – Jt meeting with ND Council. Find further information, date etc.	Completed
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#### Minute 32 – Forward Plan

Councillor James asked that when scheduling the meeting to which the health providers will be invited that an invitation be extended to the Holsworthy Community Involvement Group also.

Councillor James spoke about the Holsworthy Community Involvement Group, the survey and health care provision within the Holsworthy area. He welcomed the opportunity of welcoming Dr Womersley to the meeting in January, particularly as the results of the survey would be quiet clear by then.

(Councillor T Inch left the meeting.)

#### Minute 32 – 1610

Complaints were still coming in about the leisure facilities managed by 1610, particularly cleanliness. This was disappointing having received such a positive presentation from 1610 in May 2018 and the question was raised whether it would be possible to have TDC led inspections of the buildings. The Planning and Economy Manager confirmed that the Community Engagement Officer monitored outcomes from a leisure perspective and the Property and Procurement Team undertook inspections of buildings. There had been concerns throughout the year and these had been taken up with a succession of managers about cleanliness, broken benches etc. The contract was in year 6 of its 10 year term.

#### Minute 32 – Empty Buildings Plan/Policy

To be added to the Forward Plan.

#### 37. 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.

#### 38. AGREEMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS PART I AND II

There were no Part II items.

#### 39. URGENT MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

There were none.

#### 40. PLAY AREA STRATEGY SCOPING

The Planning & Economy Manager circulated the Council's Play Strategy for the period 2007 – 2012, a document which set out the policy direction, rather than focusing on specific sites. There was a lot of the work in the strategy document which was still relevant but out of date or no longer valid.

The Authority's framework had changed to reflect changes in government, regional development, Sport England policies and austerity. The Council's role was currently that of facilitator/enabler.

Members put forward views about the state of the parks owned by TDC and decried the policy of removing rather than replacing damaged equipment. It was suggested funds should be ring-fenced for the replacement of equipment. The Committee rigorously defended the need for children to be outside and active, highlighting the benefits provided by parks and calling for the areas to be protected. The Planning & Economy Manager explained that there were different types of protection, ranging from conditions applied to planning applications to covenants and trusts. Furthermore, not all protections were imposed in perpetuity.

The Planning & Economy Manager told Members that the Council needed to consider whether:

- to be directly involved in the provision of play areas
- to be facilitators and assist others
- to be a combination of the above

Consideration was given to setting up a Park Committee whereby TDC could work with communities. Grant funding was discussed and the Environmental Health and Community Safety Manager gave details about Crowd Funder Devon, a social media based initiative.

The Planning and Economy Manager reiterated that TDC had no statutory obligation to provide play areas but a responsibility to ensure the safety of facilities and equipment already in place. This was a policy decision of the Council and if Members were minded to change it, there was a need to understand and justify the value of play; to know what provision was in place; and to be clear as to the Council's role.

A qualitative assessment was requested as the basis for the construction of a strategy and it was acknowledged that this would take time. It was considered useful for the Working Group to obtain a terrier of play areas be obtained from the Property and Procurement Manager.

It was proposed by Councillor James, seconded by Councillor Laws and –

Resolved:

That a working group be set up to formulate a strategy.

(Vote: For – unanimous)

Councillors Laws, James and Cottle-Hunkin were nominated to sit on the working group.

41. CONSIDERATION OF THE FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan was updated with the following items being added for consideration:

- Environment Agency – update ref Kenwith Dam
- Update from Play Areas Working Group

The Planning and Economy Manger suggested the November meeting was looking very busy and it might be better to invite the North Devon Marketing Bureau along to give a broader overview, rather than individual invitations to each of the Tourist Information Centres. Mr Topham reminded the Committee that it had been agreed to allocate a 5 minute presentation slot to each of the business enterprises invited to the November meeting. This, he felt, would allow enough time for the Tourist Information Centres to give brief presentations and the North Devon Marketing Bureau could be invited at some future point. He asked that this be considered by the Chair when setting the agenda.

It was noted that the External Grants Working Group had met but there was still further work to be done.

Councillor Christie requested an update on Route 39 at some stage.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 5.34 pm.

Chair:

Date: