

TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCILCOMMUNITY & RESOURCES MEETINGTown Hall - Bridge Street, Bideford, EX39 2HSMonday, 20 January 2020 - 6.00 pm

## PRESENT

Councillor R Hicks (Chair)  
Councillor D McGeough (Vice-Chair)

Councillors C Bright, P Christie, A Dart, K James, N Laws,  
R Lock, R Wiseman, M Clarke and S Langford (substitute for  
Councillor Brenton)

## ALSO PRESENT

J Wallace	- Head of Paid Service
S Hearse	- Strategic Manager (Resources)
S Dorey	- Senior Solicitor
S Kearney	- Planning & Economy Manager
H Bond	- Estates Manager
A Redwood	- Property and Procurement Manager
S Cawsey	- Democratic Services Officer
K Brown	- Democratic Services Officer

Councillors C Hodson, C Leather and P Pennington  
Mr S Dengate – Non Elected Member

Approximately 50 members of the public

65. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hutchings and Brenton.

66. MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2019

It was proposed, seconded and -

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2019 be signed as a correct record.

(Vote: For 9, Abstentions 2)

Matters Arising:

Minute 59 – Notices of Motion

Councillor Lock stated that following the good news with regard to Appledore Fire Station, clearly the contribution of £2,500 would not now be required.

Minute 63 – Homelessness

Councillor Christie agreed to forward a link to a BBC 3 film made by a Bideford Town Councillor who works with homelessness. The film itself is based on Rough Sleepers within the Bideford area. Democratic Services to forward the link to all Members.

## 67. ACTION LIST

The Strategic Manager (Resources) responded as follows to the two items stated on the Action List:

### Grants Scheme offered for property owners to repair properties

This Scheme had been in operation many years ago and enabled private owners to access grants for home improvements. Towards the end of the Scheme the monies received had been put in to “Wessex Investment Trust” .

Now administered by Wessex Resolution CIC who are still offering Home Improvement Loans with the Council’s original funds. The website highlights all the work they undertake.

The Strategic Manager (Resources) agreed the following:

- To circulate a link to the website
- To speak to the Environmental Health & Community Safety Manager for an update

The Chair, Councillor Hicks, requested that further information be presented at the next meeting.

### Payment of additional Council Tax on empty properties

The number of long term empty properties subject to additional Council Tax at 1.1.19 was 75, at 1.1.20 the number was 63.

Although the figure was reduced there was no way of determining if it was as a direct result of the implementation to the change of Council Tax.

## 68. PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS

A statement regarding the Part II item “Hotel Site Westward Ho” had been prepared by Mr Alan Smith, but due to ill health the statement was read out by the Vice Chair, Councillor McGeough. The statement included details of the purchase of the site from the Local Authority, the terms of the Contract, the planning history and the financial implications.

69. FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan was noted.

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were made when the specific agenda items to which they related were under discussion.

71. AGREEMENT OF AGENDA BETWEEN PARTS I AND II

Following an enquiry from Councillor McGeough, the Senior Solicitor clarified the reasons as to why Agenda item 14 had been included in Part II. The Committee were advised that the information related to the financial affairs of an individual/business and therefore must not be discussed in a public forum.

The Chair stated that due to the number of members of the public who had attended the meeting, Agenda item 10 "Avon Lane Westward Ho! Community Transfer" will be brought forward.

72. URGENT MATTERS OF INFORMATION TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR AND THE COMMITTEE

There were no urgent matters brought forward.

73. AVON LANE WESTWARD HO! COMMUNITY TRANSFER

Councillor Laws declared a prejudicial interest – predetermination – did not leave the room and did not vote.

The Estates Manager presented the report, the purpose of which was for Members to consider the transfer of the freehold interest of the park and associated property to Northam Town Council.

During the brief discussion that followed, the hard work carried out by the late Mr Durkin was acknowledged by Councillor Laws and Councillor Christie.

It was proposed by Councillor McGeough, seconded by Councillor Christie and -

Resolved:

That the disposal of the freehold interest to Northam Town Council for the Financial Capital Receipt of £100,000.00, exclusive of costs, be approved. This to be subject to the inclusion of restrictive covenants as detailed in the report attached to the Agenda.

The decision to be conditional on there being no further expressions of interest received during the period of advertising. Should any expressions of interest be received then this will need to be reported back to Community and Resources Committee to consider alongside that of Northam Town Council.

(Vote: For 10) – Councillor Laws did not vote on this item

74. NORTH DEVON AND TORRIDGE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - RURAL WORKERS' DWELLINGS

The Planning and Economy Manager presented the report, the purpose of which was for Members to consider the adoption of the North Devon and Torrridge Rural Workers' Dwelling Supplementary Planning Document.

Councillor Hicks addressed the Committee and gave an update on the document. Having been involved in this matter, he was of the opinion that it was a fair document and one that did not favour either side.

A brief discussion took place on perceived crime levels being put forward by applicants, as reasons for requiring a house in a rural area. Due to the low level of rural crime, the approval of a house on that basis cannot be justified.

It was proposed by Councillor Hicks, seconded by Councillor James and -

Resolved:

That the Rural Workers' Dwelling Supplementary Planning Document as attached to the report be adopted, and that it be treated as a material consideration in determining relevant planning application.

(Vote: For – Unanimous)

75. MISCELLANEOUS FEES & CHARGES

Councillor Wiseman declared a prejudicial interest – with an interest in a camp site - left the room and took no part in the debate and decision making.

Councillor Dart declared a prejudicial interest – interest in building control – left the room and took no part in the debate and decision making.

The purpose of the report, presented by the Strategic Manager (Resources) was for Members to review the level of the miscellaneous fees and charges.

When presenting the report the following points were made:

- The report did not cover car parking as there are no proposals to change the car parking fees for the current year
- The Crematorium fees are set by the Joint Crematorium Committee

- Harbour Board charges are set separately

The Strategic Manager (Resources) confirmed that no questions had been submitted prior to the meeting.

When discussing this matter, the Property and Procurement Manager addressed concerns raised with regard to the exclusive rights of burial – pre booking no longer being available at Northam and Torrington due to the limited amount of spaces available. A report to be presented to the Committee in due course when further details are available on the acquisition of land in Torrington.

In respect of Northam, there are no extension spaces and the intention would be to utilise the Bideford Cemetery. All other sites looked at in Northam had not been deemed suitable.

Beach Huts – Councillor Hicks enquired as to whether the huts were on an annual or five year lease - the Property and Procurement Manager to make enquiries and to report back.

It was proposed by Councillor Lock, seconded by Councillor James and -

Resolved:

That the charges for services to be effective from 1 April 2020 be agreed.

(Vote: For – Unanimous) – Two Members out of the room

76. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

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

Resolved:

That under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business because of the likely disclosure of exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 and Paragraph 10 of Part 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

(Vote: For – Unanimous)

77. PART II (CLOSED SESSION)

78. HOTEL SITE WESTWARD HO!

Councillor Hicks declared a prejudicial interest – left the room and took no part in the debate and decision making.

Councillor Laws declared a prejudicial interest – did not leave the room

The report was presented by the Estates Manager who explained the reasons as to why this matter had been brought to the Committee. A brief overview of the report was given which included the history to the site, the role of the Authority and an update on the Scheme.

A lengthy debate then followed,

It was proposed by Councillor Lock, seconded by Councillor James and -

Resolved:

That the recommendation not to vary or remove the Restrictive Covenants on the site be agreed.

(Vote: For 8, Against 1, Abstentions 1) - One Member out of the room

79. STRATEGIC LAND ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL - DADDON MOOR ACQUISITION - UPDATE REPORT

The Estates Manager presented the report and gave an update to Members on the acquisition of the site at Daddon Moor and advised on the purchase costs (Stamp Duty).

It was proposed by Councillor Hicks, seconded by Councillor Laws and -

Resolved:

That the acquisition costs as detailed in the report be approved.

(Vote: For – Unanimous)

The meeting commenced at 6pm and closed at 7.12pm

Chair:

Date: