

TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

INTERNAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MEETING

Caddsdow Business Support Centre, Bideford, EX39 3BE

Tuesday, 16 November 2021 - 10.00 am

PRESENT	Councillor P Watson (Chair)	
	Councillor T Inch (Vice-Chair)	
	Councillors R Boughton, J Gubb, P Hames, S Harding, S Langford and S Newton	
	Mr I Harper	
COUNCILLORS	Councillor C Hodson and N Laws	
ALSO PRESENT	S Hearse	- Chief Executive
	D Heyes	- Finance Manager (Section 151 Officer)
	J Walter	- Strategy, Performance & ICT Manager
	T Vanstone	- Senior Electoral & Democratic Services Officer
	C Dobbs	- Service Improvement Officer
	K Brown	- Democratic Services Officer

124. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Cottle-Hunkin, Mr S Dengate and the Operational Services Manager.

125. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Gubb, seconded by Councillor Hames and –

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September be agreed as a correct record.

(Vote: For 7, Against 0, Abstentions 2)

126. ACTION LIST

No actions were outstanding.

127. PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS

There were no public contributions.

128. 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.

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

No urgent matters were brought forward.

130. AGREEMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS PART I AND II

There were no Part II items.

131. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

In the absence of the Operational Services Manager, the Strategy, Performance and ICT Manager gave a verbal update on the Grounds Maintenance Contract and advised if Members had specific questions that could not be answered at the meeting, then to email the Operational Services Manager direct.

6 members of staff are to be transferred from Tivoli on 01.04.2022 – 1 Supervisor and 5 Operators. Contact can only be made 28 days before 01.04.2022 to keep in line with TUPE rules.

All equipment had been specified and additional items required would be ordered in quarter 3.

The depot would be at Victoria Park to start with and the aim was to move the depot to the new Environment Centre once able.

A software system had been identified following a demonstration received last week, however contact had been made with another supplier.

Work was ongoing with ICT and the new GIS Officer to Map TDC's estate.

Baseline budget had been created inline with current costs.

A short discussion then took place.

The Chief Executive confirmed that a full report would be presented at the Full Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December which would give details on equipment and costs.

In response to a query from Councillor Inch, the Chief Executive explained that the aim was to bring the contract back in house, get it established and then look at further development.

Following a query from Councillor Gubb, the Chief Executive explained some staffing issues recently and that the Operational Services Manager could circulate information regarding total number of staff needed for the new grounds maintenance service.

Apprentices could be a possibility in the future.

### 132. LEISURE SERVICES UPDATE

The Chief Executive gave a verbal update on the Leisure Services confirming Active Torridge had now been set up and details were given of Members involved and that the new Non-Executive Director had been appointed.

The Project Plan is very comprehensive and the Service Improvement Officer, Chris Dobbs is managing this along with other officers and SLC.

Other officers involved include:

- all of the Senior Management Team;
- Solicitor for Legal aspects;
- Community Projects Officer looking at equipment;
- Estates Manager and Contracts Officer looking at buildings;
- Civil Enforcement Officer working on the design Logo;
- Strategy, Performance & ICT Manager and team looking at ICT;
- Service Improvement Officer & Corporate Services Officer – Digital & Social Media working on Communications.

Currently recruiting for the Leisure Manager who will be key in developing the strategy of Active Torridge and TDC's aspirations.

Work is ongoing with 1610 regarding the exit strategy and an officer from 1610 had now been assigned to this. An early release on staffing information had been agreed.

Active Torridge had not yet been registered on Companies House, however this would be done shortly.

There is a lot of work required between January and March 2022 to get the service up and running by April.

### 133. QBR 2

Prior to the item being presented Councillor Hames asked whether the £153k surplus could be allocated to the training of specific tasks. The Chief Executive responded that the details were yet to be identified, however would be conducted in line with TDC's wider strategic objectives.

The Service Improvement Officer advised he would circulate the new QBR format for Members to view before the next meeting, where discussion would take place.

The purpose of the report was for Members to receive the quarterly business report for the period ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Slide presentations were received from the Service Improvement Officer and the Finance Manager & 151 Officer.

The Service Improvement Officer introduced the QBR. He presented the Performance Highlights, summarising the positives and negatives on each of the following four Themes:

- Theme 1 – Local Economy
- Theme 2 – Communities, Health & Housing
- Theme 3 – Our Environment, Our Future
- Theme 4 – Our Council

The Finance Manager (S151 Officer) concluded the presentation by providing a detailed explanation on the following:

- Income & Salaries
- Budget Monitoring
- Budget Narrative
- Capital & Reserves
- Earmarked Reserves
- Investments

TDC had more money in the capital reserves due to the new Environment Centre not being delivered this year.

If the £793k Covid grant money was not spent, then it would be returned as it is not TDC's money.

Following a query from the Chair, regarding the £430k in red on Budget Monitoring – Revenue, the Finance Manager (S151 Officer) advised he would provide in depth details of this to the Chair.

It was proposed by Councillor Newton, seconded by Councillor Inch and –

Resolved:

That Members recommend to C&R the usage of the projected 2021/22 surplus as follows:

- £100k to Apprentice Reserve
- £153k to Trainee and Graduate Succession Planning Reserve
- £600k to Transition in Government Funding Reserve

(Vote: For – unanimous)

Questions regarding the QBR are asked for in writing prior to the meeting to allow Officers time to formulate a response.

The Chair presented the Q&A supplement during which the following additional comments/questions were raised:

Mr Ian Harper queried further the response to his first question and added a further query surrounding the Car Parking at the Burrows Centre. The Chief Executive confirmed the difficulty in separating this as an income due to the multi-use of the Burrows itself and that the Centre was leased therefore no income was received.

It was confirmed that Councillor Langford could take the answer to her question, on the Discover App, back to the Bideford Town Centre Partnership and that it would be confirmed to her who would need feedback on the App.

The Chief Executive advised that Dangerous Structures are the responsibility of TDC's Building Control department, however it would also depend on who owns the building. Confirmation was given that there is a legal process to adhere to and that costs are being recovered on the property in Cooper Street.

Following a query regarding S215, the Chair confirmed he had a meeting arranged with the Planning Manger to discuss enforcement.

Mr Ian Harper queried the answer to his question relating to quality jobs and how this could be monitored? The Chief Executive advised Devon County Council's Economy Team collect, collate and analysis a lot of data surrounding this area and they may have information we could extract. TDC's Head of Communities & Place is part of the Devon Economy Recovery Group, therefore he maybe able to research this.

Confirmation was given by the Chief Executive that work was ongoing with a grant bid for a new Ice Machine at the Fishdock.

Councillor Langford enquired further to the response on her question regarding the play area at Clivedon Road, East of the Water, to which the Chair replied that clarification would be sought from Adrian Avery, the Community Project Officer.

134. SOCIAL VALUE (SET UP T&F GROUP)

It was discussed and agreed that the Social Values Task & Finish group would consist of the Chair, Councillor Inch, Councillor Hames, Councillor Newton, Councillor Langford and Mr Stephen Dengate.

The Strategy, Performance & ICT Manager advised that national legislation surrounding procurement rules is due to be released shortly. It was agreed that the new group would meet when the legislation is published.

135. CONSIDERATION OF THE FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan was discussed and updated.

Regarding Urgent Decisions, the Chief Executive confirmed he would produce a report of all retrospective decisions made during Covid-19 and that the Leader and Chair of Communities and Resources would be invited to the next meeting.

The Strategy, Performance and ICT Manager confirmed that the last two Peer Review would be circulated to the group.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and closed at 11.20 am

Chair:

Date: