



It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor S Newton and -

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

(Vote: For – 20, Against – 3, Abstentions - 6)

224. ACTION LIST

It was confirmed that there are no outstanding actions.

Councillor S Gibson joined the meeting at 6.36pm.

225. PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS

There were no Public Contributions.

226. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

227. AGREEMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS PART I AND II

Councillor H Thomas put forward a proposal to discuss item 20 in the public domain, this was seconded by Councillor D Brenton.

AN explanation was given why the Operational Services Relocation had to be discussed in Part II.

It was proposed by Councillor H Thomas, seconded by Councillor D Brenton and –

Resolved:

That Operational Services Re location be discussed in the public domain.

(Vote: For – 7, Against – 22, Abstention – 1)

Motion was lost.

It was proposed by Councillor C Leather, seconded by Councillor K James that the agenda as circulated be agreed, however as the above motion was lost this vote was not required.

228. TO CONSIDER CORRESPONDENCE OR OTHER BUSINESS ESPECIALLY BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE DIRECTION OF THE CHAIR

Nothing was brought forward.

## 229. LOCAL HEALTHCARE TRUST STRUCTURE AND STRATEGY UPDATE

Katherine Allen, Director of Strategy and Zahara Hyde, Director of Estates and Facilities and Our Future Hospital Programme Director attended the meeting to provide an update on NHS structures, local partnerships and new hospitals.

A slide presentation was delivered to Members and the same slides had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Katherine Allen commenced the presentation detailing the slides which included information on the following:

- Integrated care systems
- Place based partnerships
- Local care partnerships
- Challenges
- NHS Devon – joint forward plan
- Linked strategies and priorities with North Devon and Torridge's Local Plan
- Connection with TDC

Zahara Hyde, Director of Estates and Facilities and Our Future Hospital Programme Director then continued the presentation with a verbal update giving an insight on the status of the new program and development of the hospital. She explained the challenges that had delayed the program and that the focus for them was to prioritise local needs. It was expressed how there was a need to ensure enough housing for staff and that local services are sustained. Information was provided on the joint clinical strategy and the aims involved with growing services in the future. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic delays had occurred in the recovery of backlogs. A new offer had been negotiated for the re-development of the new hospital which included more money than previously agreed. This resource would be utilised in ensuring the progression of specific areas of need.

Councillor S Andrews joined the meeting at 6.52pm.

Members were invited to ask questions.

It was confirmed that the programme was for a major re-development of the existing hospital site not for a brand-new hospital.

In response to a query surrounding the housing development, Zahara Hyde confirmed the first phase and short-term focus would be on the site itself and accommodation for NHS staff. However, in the future working with partners in the wider community to bridge the gap in the marketplace would progress.

Confirmation was given by Katherine Allen that they are liaising with social care daily and social care is a high priority in the NHS Devon Strategy.

Following concern raised regarding Patient Initiative Follow Up, it was advised that there is a transforming, outpatient workstream in the hospital which is investigating

this matter. It was recognised that virtual consultations are not suitable for everyone therefore different channels have to operate and are in place.

Members were directed to the Rural Devon website where there is an email address for Members to get in touch if required.

In response to a query, Katherine Allen confirmed they have no specific insight or influence on the Link Centres and would respond to the consultation the same as the public and other organisations.

## 230. SOUTH WEST WATER UPDATE

Prior to the commencement of the update from South West Water (SWW) the Chair confirmed that a further presentation was being arranged by TDC's Planning Manager with South West Water. Members would be invited to attend and have the opportunity for specific issues to be addressed.

During the presentation, it was confirmed the additional meeting would be held on 1<sup>st</sup> March at Caddsdow however more details would follow.

South West Water had attended tonight's meeting in response to a Notice of Motion from Councillor P Christie concentrating on South West Waters response to TDC's planning applications.

Richard Price, Group Chief Engineering Director and Ian Lake, Head of Developer Services had attended the meeting to provide an update to Members.

Richard Price commenced the presentation advising a focus for them was to strengthen the relationship with TDC and the planning process. This is important to South West Water as they want to facilitate growth in the area, enable tourism whilst protecting the environment. Details of the recently submitted Business Plan were given along with their four main priorities.

Ian Lake then delivered a slide presentation to Members and the same slides had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The slides included information on the following:

- SWW approach to support development growth across the region
- Strategic Planning Engagement
  - Documents available of the website included – Drainage & Wastewater Management Plan, Technical Summary, Storm Overflow & Pollutions, Draft Water Resources Management Plan 2025 – 20250.
- Strategic Priorities
- SWW approach to planning applications
- SWW standard requirements
- How SWW will continue to develop their approach
- Next steps

Members were invited to ask questions.

In response to a query regarding South West Waters objections to planning applications, it was confirmed that they do not directly object to planning applications however they do raise concern on approximately 8 – 10%.

Following a statement made regarding customer dissatisfaction, Richard Price advised of money spent and improvements that have been made. Reference was made to beaches in the area that had reached bathing water standards.

Any specific areas of concern could be discussed in detail at the meeting in March.

Richard Price urged Members to look at South West Waters accounts and expressed how transparent the company is.

It was confirmed that spills had reduced from 38 to 20 and spillages would be covered in more detail at the March meeting.

Reference concern raised on water shortages in 2022, Ian Lake advised of financial investment in projects to move water around the area and that reservoir levels are higher than this time last year.

Thanks was given South West Water for their presentation and also to Councillor P Christie for his Notice of Motion and bringing South West Water to committee.

231. SHARED PROSPERITY FUND INVESTMENT PLAN 24/25

The Economic Development Manager presented the report, the purpose of which was to obtain Member approval for alterations to the Shared Prosperity Fund investment plan for 2024 – 2025.

In response to a query stating that the support for active travel enhancements in the local area did not appear in the revised boxes, the Economic Development Manager explained the reasons for this and confirmed that there is still a budget for active travel.

Clarification was given on the meaning behind support for economically inactive people.

It was proposed by Councillor K James, seconded by Councillor R Lock and –

Resolved:

That the revised Shared Prosperity Fund investment plan priorities for 2024 – 2025 intervention themes for delivery be approved.

That the appropriate alterations be made to the Capital Programme to reflect the altered capital priorities for the 2024 – 2025 investment plan be approved.

(Vote: For – unanimous)

232. COUNCIL TAX LEGISLATION CHANGES - SECOND HOMES

The Finance Manager (S151 Officer) presented the report the purpose of which was to update Members on the changes agreed at Full Council 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023 in relation to Council Tax legislation proceeding through parliament at that time for Long Term Empty Properties and Second Homes. The bill relating to these changes, The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, received Royal Assent on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor D Brenton, seconded by Councillor S Newton and –

Resolved:

That from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 - Charge 100% premium when a property has been unoccupied and unfurnished for over 1 years (currently 100% premium is charged after 2 years) be approved.

That from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 - Second Homes, properties that are furnished but no-one's main residence, charge 100% premium (currently a normal full charge is applicable) be approved.

Changes to the Local Council Tax Discount and Premium Policy be approved.

(Vote: For – unanimous)

233. CONSTITUTION UPDATE

The Head of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer) presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek Full Council's approval for updates to the Constitution.

It as proposed by Councillor K James, seconded by Councillor D Bushby and –

Resolved:

That the changes to the Constitution be adopted by Full Council.

(Vote: For – unanimous)

Councillor D Brenton had left the room temporarily and did not take part in the vote.

234. HALF YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT

The Finance Manager (S151 Officer) presented the report, the purpose of which was to report on the treasury management activity in the year to date.

In response to query surrounding Ethical Investments, the Finance Manager (S151 Officer) assured the policy had not changed and Ethical Investments are investigated whenever possible.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor K James and –

Resolved:

That the Mid-Year Treasury Management Review be approved.

(Vote: For – unanimous)

235. POLLING DISTRICT & POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2023

The Chief Executive presented the report, the purpose of which was to confirm proposals of the Returning Officer following a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places within Torridge District.

Councillor C Leather referred to Northdene still having Bideford in its title and this being incorrect. The Senior Democratic Services and Elections Officer advised he would investigate this.

It was proposed by Councillor C Leather, seconded by Councillor D Bushby and –

Resolved:

That the Returning Officer keeps the location of polling stations under review and will ask the Polling Station Inspectors, who visit each polling station on each polling day, for their comments on their continued suitability be approved.

That the polling districts and places for all wards as listed in the schedule of polling districts and polling place (Appendix B) be approved.

To note the proposed polling stations for all Wards in Torridge District with effect from 1 February 2024 (Appendix C).

(Vote: For – unanimous)

236. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE A9

One question was submitted under Procedural Rule A9.

In accordance with the Constitution a written answer to the question had been circulated to Members.

**Question from Councillor A Brenton**

Are elected Councillors involved in the provision of information and the design of the communications system at Torridge District Council? Do Councillors have any input on the way the iPad content is configured?

The answer to this question is either 'YES' or 'NO'.

If the answer is 'YES', please explain the process.

Cllr A Brenton

**Answer**

In 2016 Community & Resources Committee unanimously agreed to the provision of iPads for Members.

Councillors do not have specific input into the content configuration on an iPad as this can be limited by the Software or Applications being used. However, we are always happy to help change settings if we are able to.

Councillor A Brenton asked if a working group could be created to discuss improvements to the iPad.

The Chair asked the room if any Members have issues with the iPad system and operation. As a few Members confirmed they do indeed find it difficult to navigate the iPad, it was agreed that a meeting be arranged by Democratic Services that all Members could attend to discuss and resolve issues.

It was stressed that Members are always welcome to the Democratic Services Office and IT department for help with technology.

237. **PETITIONS**

There were no petitions.

238. **NOTICES OF MOTION**

There was one Notice of Motion.

239. **WRITTEN NOTICE OF MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR A BRENTON**

In order to protect our democratic role, good conduct and safeguard the public's trust in our local government; it is proposed that Torridge District Council adopt the Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

Prior to Councillor A Brenton presenting her Notice of Motion the Chair advised this would be an item on the agenda at the Standards meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> February and



Members are not able to adopt a policy without a report being presented to a formal committee.

Councillor P Hames left at 8.05pm.

Councillor A Brenton presented her Notice of Motion.

A short debate took place where it was highlighted that Members were being asked to adopt a policy that they had not seen.

The Head of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer) added that the Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct would come back to Full Council following a recommendation from the Standards Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor A Brenton, seconded by Councillor D Brenton and –

Resolved:

That Members adopt the Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

(Vote: For – 2, Against – 27, Abstentions – 1)

Motion was lost.

240. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor A Dart 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 – 26, Against – 4, Abstentions - 0)

241. PART II - (CLOSED SESSION)

242. OPERATIONAL SERVICES RELOCATION

The Major Projects Manager presented the report, the purpose of which was to update Members on the status of the Operational Services Centre project and to obtain approval to progress with the option to utilise the proposed site for operational needs.

A slide of the new proposed site was displayed to Members.

A lengthy discussion took place where Members concerns and questions were addressed by the Major Projects Manager.

Councillor P Pennington declared a personal interest as he is a landowner on the end of Bideford.

Members thanked the Major Projects Manager for the report and all his hard work.

It was proposed by Councillor D Brenton, seconded by Councillor H Thomas and –

Resolved:

That it be approved that the recommendations in the report be voted on individually

(Vote: For – 10, Against – 19, Abstentions – 1)

Motion was lost.

It was proposed by Councillor J Whittaker, seconded by Councillor C Leather and –

Resolved:

That it be approved that the recommendations in the report be voted on as a whole.

(Vote: For - 23, Against – 4, Abstentions – 3)

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 9.12 pm

Chair:

Date: