

Minutes of a meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Exmoor Room, Brynsworthy Environment Centre, Barnstaple on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 2.00p.m.

PRESENT: Members

Councillor Greenslade (Chair)

Councillors Ley, Mathews, Webber and White.

Also present:

Mr S. Dart

Flood Risk Engineer  
Environment Agency.

Officers:

Corporate and Community Services Officer (KS).

## **5 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bonds, Chesters and Worden.

## **6 MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meetings held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017 and 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 (circulated previously) be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

## **7 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman advised that he had just been handed an urgent decision in relation to the interim agreement with Parkwood Leisure for a 12 month contract to operate and manage the North Devon Theatres. He added that the re-opening of the theatres was a positive step.

In response to a question regarding when the theatres would be up and running, the Chairman advised that he believed them to be re-opening towards the end of April 2017.

The Committee welcomed the interim agreement to re-open the North Devon Theatres.

## **8 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest announced.

**9 RMB CHIVENOR**

The Chairman advised that the special meeting which was held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017 was very informative and added that the Committee had agreed to keep RMB Chivenor as a standing item on the agenda for future meetings.

He welcomed Mr S. Dart, Flood Risk Engineer from the Environment Agency to the meeting.

Mr S. Dart thanked the Committee for inviting him to attend the meeting following on from the special meeting the previous week for which he had provided a briefing paper.

He outlined the following key points to the Committee:

- The north east corner of the site would be the most appropriate location for housing given its low flood risk.
- Part of the site could be raised to allow for new housing development similar to works undertaken at Anchorwood Bank.
- There was a potential issue in relation to the utilisation of existing buildings, some of which were located on lower level parts of the site. He added that there was scope to adapt such buildings for commercial use.
- There were issues with the runway in terms of the burial of items beneath it and the subsequent removal if the site was developed.
- The sewage treatment works, which was currently located close to the edge of the estuary, would require relocation following any potential the redevelopment of the base.
- There were some existing buildings on the site which would need to be demolished.
- Work would commence to model the site and its existing layout.

In response to a number of questions, he advised the following:

- He explained that the map provided only displayed flood modelling for half of the site as the work was undertaken in 2009/10 and at the time they were not reviewing the Chivenor site. He acknowledged that additional flood modelling was now required for the site.
- The tidal flow affected the whole of the estuary and the loss of part of the sand dunes at Crow Point was an event that could not be reversed. He added that computer modelling was required to assess the potential risks of flooding within the estuary and surrounding land.
- As part of any redevelopment of the site the highest and lowest points of land would need to be assessed to ensure adequate protection for houses and businesses.
- The site would need to be assessed and tested via core samples for any potential toxic substances, which may be buried beneath the ground.

- A number of war time huts were located on the site, which could contain asbestos and if that were to be the case correct removal by a licensed operative would be required.
- If adequate defenses were installed to provide flood protection to the site the dispersal of water to other areas would be minimal in terms of scale.
- No further work was planned in terms of flood mapping for the site at the current time. However, the Environment Agency would assist any private partners with that work at the appropriate time.

During the discussions, the Committee raised the following:

- Concerns were raised in relation to the potential flood risk in Barnstaple.
- The potential devaluation of the land if the ground was found to contain hazardous contaminants.
- The possibility of unexploded munitions located within the site.
- The lack of space at Plymouth to house additional military personnel.
- The use of ground penetrating radar to assess the ground and assist in the location of buried any planes, boats and other vehicles in and around the site.

Mr S. Dart added that he was happy to speak to any concerned Members should they wish to discuss anything further.

The Committee thanked Mr S. Dart for his attendance at the meeting.

## **10 NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE SUCCESS REGIME**

The Chairman addressed the Committee and advised that he had no further update at the current time. He added that the Success Regime were not actively engaging with the public at the current time but that the situation would probably change following the election.

The Committee discussed the current situation and the potential impact upon GP surgeries with proposals to open on Sundays and late evenings, which would put an enormous amount of additional pressure on already stretched services.

The Committee agreed that the government should assess care and health together with the difficulties at the North Devon District Hospital (NDDH) to attract doctors to the area.

The Chairman advised that he would keep the Committee informed of any developments as and when they arose.

**11                    DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

Councillor Mathews advised that he had no update to provide to the Committee at the current time as the next meeting of the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel was not until June 2017.

**12                    WORK PROGRAMME/FORWARD PLAN**

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the work programme be noted;
- (b) that GP surgeries be added to the work programme as item for discussion at a future meeting; and
- (c) that a letter be sent to the Chairman of the Patients Participation Group to ascertain whether they would like to take part in discussions in relation to the impact of the Success Regime on GP surgeries.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 2.51 p.m.

**NOTE:** These minutes will be confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting of the Committee.