

Minutes of a meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held at the Brynsworthy Environment Centre, Barnstaple on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Members

Councillor Greenslade (Chair)  
Councillors Bonds, Chesters, Ley (present for minutes 34 to 41),  
Lucas, Mathews, Meadlarkin, Roome, White and Worden.

Also present:

Councillors Brailey and R. Cann.  
Councillors Langmead and Pennington (Torrige District  
Council)  
Keif Bines (Torrige District Council Independent representative)

Officers:

Head of Operational Services (RM) and Corporate and  
Community Services Officer and (KJ).

#### **34            APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Crabb, Patrinos and Webber.

#### **35            MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meetings held on 6th July 2017 (circulated previously) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:

(a) That Councillor Moore not Moores was in attendance at the meeting.

(b) That Councillor Mathews be added to the list of those Members present.

(c) That reference be made to the request from the Corporate and Community Services Officer to email the Members of the Committee to ascertain if they still wished to receive emails from the Rural Services Network.

(d) That a former Royal Marine, rather than a current Royal Marine, would be invited to attend the meeting in August 2017.

**36**                    **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest were announced:

Councillor Greenslade declared a personal interest as Devon County County Councillors (item 6).

Councillor Mathews declared a personal interest as Devon County County Councillors (item 6).

**37**                    **NORTH DEVON COUNCIL'S FORMAL RESPONSE TO THE  
NORTH DEVON LINK ROAD CONSULTATION.**

The Chairman addressed the Committee and welcomed Councillor Brailey to the Committee.

The Chairman confirmed that the local media was interested in the Council's response to the North Devon Link Road Consultation which was presented in the letter from Councillor Brailey to Mr D Black at Devon County Council (circulated previously). A handout showing maps and accident statistics for the wider route from the M5 to Bideford was tabled.

The Chairman expressed his condolences to those families affected by the recent accidents that had occurred on the road over the past few weeks.

The Committee discussed the consultation with particular reference to the proposal to prevent right-hand turns on the road.

Councillor Brailey emphasised that this would not prevent all right hand turns but to consider those at more dangerous locations in order to prevent the need to cross a carriageway wherever possible. It was confirmed that no roads or turnings would be closed.

The Committee expressed the need for the road to be a dual carriageway. The bridge on the stretch of road at Bolham was thought to cause traffic to back up to the Knowstone junction.

Councillor Mathews confirmed that there would be a meeting with Devon County Council on 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 to consider the report on the consultation prior to it's submission to the Devon County Council Cabinet in October.

Councillor R Cann expressed concerns over the traffic problems currently experienced on the A39 at Fremington and the possible Bickington by-pass project

It was confirmed that the A39 was not included in this consultation.

The Committee noted that the problem in relation to the 'bottle neck' at the Torridge Bridge could not be resolved as the bridge could not be widened to accommodate more lanes.

The Committee and the representatives from Torridge District Council discussed the impact of the road network and associated problems on the economy of the local area, including the effect on tourism.

RESOLVED that: North Devon Council's formal response to the North Devon Link Road be noted.

**38**                    **UPDATE IN RELATION TO THE COLLECTION OF REFUSE  
FOLLOWING THE CHANGES TO REFUSE AND  
RECYCLING SERVICES**

The Chairman welcomed the Head of Operational Services and Councillor R. Cann, Lead Member for the Environment, to the meeting.

The Chairman invited the Head of Operational Services and Lead Member for the Environment to provide an update in relation to the latest position in relation to the collection of refuse following the change to refuse and recycling services.

Councillor R. Cann confirmed that the project had met with some difficulties and did not have a good start. Quantities of food waste collected and recycling levels were higher than anticipated. Multiple reports of missed collection details were logged which added to the problem, with one such incident being logged nine separate times. Improved communications and the new direct line for Councillors to report missed collections had helped to alleviate this. He advised the Committee that the levels of garden waste being collected was still quite high although not equal to what was previously collected. Those using the service were thought to be utilising it in full.

Councillor Langmead of Torridge District Council (TDC) expressed an interest as the Lead Member for Waste and recycling at TDC.

Councillor R Cann offered the services of North Devon Council to TDC if required.

The Chair addressed the Head of Operational Services in relation to the current status of the project.

The Head of Operational Services (RM) advised that the problems incurred had included:

- problems owing to the quantity of food waste collected,
- distribution of food caddies by the suppliers,
- missed collections,
- and delays on the delivery of the new vehicles.

He advised that

- 'catch-up' crews were used in June for a fortnight
- problems with food waste had been addressed for staff: PPE equipment had been purchased and health and safety advisers had been consulted.
- The courtesy vehicles provided to cover the period before the delivery of the new vehicles had been unreliable. He advised that the two small vehicles had now been delivered and the two larger vehicles were due to be delivered in September.
- Support had been received from a Customer Services Officer. She had identified the methods of duplicated reporting and streamlined the missed collection process in relation to it's administration.
- Some reports of 'missed collections' were being made on the day of collection when in fact the collections were just slightly later in the day than previously experienced. These were not missed collections.
- The service level agreement of reaching missed collections within five working days was, in the main, being met. He hoped that a target of three days would be reached.

When asked about the effects of the scheme on staffing levels the Head of Operational Services confirmed that the Council currently had more agency staff than before the changes were introduced. Ten agency staff had been 'block-booked' for six months.

He confirmed that the number of missed collections (of approximately 100 for the previous week) were almost at the same levels as prior to the service changes.

The Chairman asked RM about the effects to the budget to which RM confirmed that although the costs had increase the income received had also exceeded the budgeted figures so had partially offset some of the costs.

The Leader of the Council praised the staff for carrying out a great job with the new service.

The Committee asked RM if the Council were made aware of road closures in advance, to which he confirmed that they were but often detours would be prohibitive due to the additional distances and weight restrictions on routes (eg on bridges).

Councillor R Cann confirmed that any roll-out of the service changes would be phased, and plans would need to be tailored to the needs of the geographical areas. He explained that within a few years Devon County Council would be processing food waste, and when the transfer station was built near to the depot then none of the Council's waste would go to landfill. He felt that when the teething problems had been resolved the Council would have a first-class service.

RESOLVED that the Head of Operational Services circulate the figures for the first month of the trial to the Committee.

### **39 NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (NHS) SUCCESS REGIME**

The Chairman addressed the Committee and confirmed that there were no further updates at this stage.

The Committee discussed their concerns over the ability of the NHS to continue to support the service both financially and to source qualified staff.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the item remain on the agenda;
- (b) a representative of the NHS attend the Committee meeting in September.

### **40 ORDER OF AGENDA**

Resolved that item 9 'RMB Chivenor' be considered at the end of the agenda as the invited speaker had been delayed.

### **41 DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting of the Devon and Cornwall Police Crime Panel on 7th July 2017(minutes circulated previously).

Councillor Mathews advised that the appointment of Mr. M. Kingscote as the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner had been refused by the Police and Crime Commissioner following the recommendations of the panel. The panel would soon be appointing a new Chief Executive and Treasurer.

The Committee expressed concerns regarding the reduction of the number of local police in rural areas. The work of 'Farm-watch' and 'neighbourhood watch' groups was supported and it was suggested the police work closer with them in future.

Councillor Pennington gave an example of how a local farmer had a tractor stolen, which was later recovered by other local farmers communicating via facebook.

Councillor Mathews confirmed that improved communication between the police and such groups would be of benefit and should be encouraged. He also confirmed that the deployment of Police officers and PCSOs was the sole responsibility of the Chief Constable.

RESOLVED that the Reduction of Police and PCSO numbers be proposed for inclusion on the agenda for the next Parish Forum.

#### **42 WORK PROGRAMME/FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Work Programme / Forward Plan (circulated previously).

The Committee considered changing the date of the meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2017 and the inclusion of the item "Education Budget from Devon County Council" to the work programme.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2017 be rescheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 10am;
- (b) "Education Budget from Devon County Council" be added to the work programme
- (c) the work programme be noted.

#### **43 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

RESOLVED that it being 3:10pm to the meeting be adjourned awaiting the arrival of Lord Burnett.

RESOLVED that following the arrival of Lord Burnett and it being 3:35pm the meeting be reconvened.

#### **44 RMB CHIVENOR**

The Chairman welcomed Lord Burnett to the Committee.

Lord Burnett apologised for his lateness. It was caused due to traffic delays following a road traffic accident.

Lord Burnett addressed the Committee and gave details of the background of his military and political career, the history of the Royal Marines, and his current role.

The Committee discussed the situation at RMB Chivenor. They expressed concerns over the impact of the closure of the base on the local environment and economy.

Lord Burnett requested that the Committee provide him with details and supporting evidence for their concerns and reservations over the closure of the base and any subsequent development of the site. He would then

endeavour to pass it on the concerns as part of a Lords Debate he is seeking on the Royal Marines.

The Committee discussed their concerns and the information which could be obtained.

The Chairman expressed his thanks for Lord Burnett's attendance.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Committee forward any relevant paperwork to the Corporate and Community Services team to be collated and forwarded to the Chairman.
- (b) the Economic Development Manager be approached by the Chairman in relation to any reports that could be forwarded to Lord Burnett.
- (b) the Chairman would provide Lord Burnett with the relevant paperwork by October 2017.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 4:25 p.m.

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