

# TEIGNBRIDGE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (TALC)

Secretary: Dudley Swain 01392 833353 email: dudley@the-swains.co.uk

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## Minutes

of the meeting held Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at Forde House

### Present:

Abbotskerswell .....	Kevin Farrelly	Kenn & Kennford .....	Andy Chislett; Bridgette Williams
Ashburton .....	John Nutley	Kingsteignton .....	Chris Meathrel
Bishopsteignton .....	Keith Lambert	Moretonhampstead ...	Jane Willis
Bovey Tracey .....	Tony Allen; Steven Leigh	Newton Abbot .....	David Howe (Chairman)
Bridford .....	Roger Dowding		Carol Bunday; Mike Hocking
Buckfastleigh .....	Fanny Jackson; Janet Jones	Ogwell .....	Richard Broome
Denbury & Torbryan ....	Tony Brownhill	Tedburn St Mary .....	Pat Moody
Dunchideock .....	Dudley Swain	Whitstone .....	Les Hickman; Tony Reed
Ideford .....	Anthony French		
Ilsington .....	Reg Winsor	TDC .....	Phil Bullivant; Kevin Lake;
Ipplepen .....	Roger Carnell		George Gribble; Gary Powell

### Apologies:

Ashburton (Alan Hitchcock); Bishopsteignton (Hazel Stuckey); Chudleigh (Michael McCormick); Ide (Rose Saunders); Ideford (Ashley Lamb); Ipplepen (Clive Tompkins); Kingsteignton (Graham Wickham)

### 1 Challenges facing Devon – Cllr John Hart, Leader DCC

Cllr Hart highlighted the past 7 years of budget cuts, amounting to some £240m and 2,000 staff reductions. A further £20m of cuts is anticipated for 2017/18. The Chancellor's Autumn Statement offered little to local government although there was some new money for "pinch point" relief and local development support. In Devon, children and adults services form the biggest demand, currently facing a £5m overspend. Our 176,000 bus passes cost about £4m annually and this is an area of significant government underfunding. If passes were chargeable at just £10 pa, it would lead to £1.76m income.

There will be increased difficulties for care in the community, where a 2% additional budget provision (£6.5m) is overtaken by the additional £7.6m cost simply of the increased minimum wage. Impending changes to business rates income and the serious impact of business RV challenges, are of great concern; 5 of our 8 DC's face a reduction in business rates income. By 2019/20 or 2020/21, then 100% of BR's will be retained locally. New Homes Bonus might accrue 50% to county by 2018 and will be used to support additional care in the community.

Library services have been transferred to a trust and this has led to significant savings because the trust, being a charity, is exempt from business rates. Youth services are still adequately supported working successfully. Our roads are safe but unfortunately, not in good condition.

The case has been presented to government that we in Devon take care of greater numbers of older people (especially those over 85) by nature of our population age profile and this imposes a disproportionate impact on our budget. However, it is noted that it often that the active retired elderly give lots back to society; so they are in some ways an asset.

Devon is increasingly a "knowledge economy" and continues to target attracting appropriate industries. However, we must not overlook the need to increase apprentice training and appropriate employment creation. Tenders are currently being evaluated for phase 2 of the broadband improvement project, to resolve the final 5-8% of locations that are badly served.

Some points about Devolution SW were mentioned, in particular the funding opportunities (and restrictions) that are linked to our eventual devolution arrangements. We want power and responsibility to up-skill and encourage employment opportunities. Several SW DC's are increasingly developing joint working practices

## **2 Forensic Collision Investigation– Sgt Nick Bloomfield, Devon & Cornwall Police**

Sgt. Bloomfield explained that collisions are usually the consequence of the road, the vehicle or the human element. If collisions occur frequently at the same location, highways engineers investigate these collision clusters to resolve inherent geometry or physical problems. The minute by minute sequence of events following a fatal collision was explained. It was evident that many processes are time consuming and may well lead to at least a 7 hour road closure. The managing, investigating and clearing up at the location can involve some 10 specialists, services and authorities including police, highways, fire, DVSA, etc.

The scene can involve many factors that need specific management, such as number of vehicles & casualties, spread & location of the scene, traffic congestion, weather, bio & chemical hazards, etc. Extensive investigations that can take place include interviews, vehicle and site examination, consideration of road alignment, road surface & texture, road signs, mobile phone usage and CCTV analysis. Such work results in evidence for possible causes with supporting data and submissions to the Coroner, Magistrates and/or Courts. This might lead to cases of careless or dangerous driving. The D&C police 10 investigators (providing 24x365 cover) are all deemed expert witnesses to investigate facts of the case.

Members raised questions about speed limits, Speedwatch, car safety and the impact/consequences of prolonged road closures. Sgt Bloomfield stressed that the priority is scene investigation rather than the consequential road closure and traffic diversions. In response to a question, he said collision with a cow, horse, ass, mule, pig, sheep, dog or goat must be reported to the police. Cats don't rate!

This topic and speaker was particularly interesting and very well received.

## **3 Minutes of the meeting 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016 – These were approved**

**4 TDC Use of IT for Planning Applications.** Tamsin Cook has now run several training sessions on how to prepare presentations from the planning data. Members expressed concern that Clerks may take considerably more time to do this preparation for a meeting. Progress towards the April 2017 deadline will be discussed at the January TALC. The Secretary is to encourage Clerks to come along to January to share experience of the changes.

**5 Secretary's Report** The bank balance is £155.52

**6 January 26<sup>th</sup> 2016 Meeting.** Lesley Tucker, Chief Financial Officer TDC, has offered to come in January to bring Members up to date on the budget situation, particularly since it will be before the deadline that parishes have to return precept requests in early February. Pamela Woods will be invited to talk about the Christow Community Land Trust (new houses & processes).

**7 Matters brought forward by Members.** Concern was expressed over attendance at TALC although numbers this evening were average (18 councils represented). The Chief Executive has encouraged councils to support TALC and the Secretary welcomes any feedback that may help improve the role of TALC.

**8 Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017** at 7.00pm at Forde House.

The Chairman wished all Members a Happy Christmas and wonderful start to 2017

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

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