

TEIGNBRIDGE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (TALC)

Secretary: Dudley Swain 01392 833353

Minutes

of the meeting held Thursday 28th September 2017 at Forde House

Present:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| Abbotskerswell | Kevin Eales | Ideford | Anthony French; Ashley Lamb |
| Ashburton | Adrian Daw | | David Fox |
| Ashton | John May | Ipplepen | Roger Carnell |
| Bishopsteignton | Kim Ford; Keith Lambert; Henry Merritt | Kenn & Kennford | Andy Chislett; Bridgette Williams |
| Bovey Tracey | Tony Allen; Steven Leigh | Moretonhampstead | Jane Willis |
| Broadhempston | Peter Stevens | Newton Abbot | David Howe (Chairman) Carol Bunday; Mike Hocking |
| Buckfastleigh | Janet Jones | Shillingford St George . | John Parrott |
| Dawlish | Howard Almond | Whitestone | Les Hickman; Tony Reed |
| Denbury & Torbryan | Tony Brownhill | TDC | Douglas Hellier-Laing; Phil Bullivant Gary Powell |
| Dunchideock | Dudley Swain | | |
| Exminster | John Goodey; Derek Madge | | |

Apologies:

Bishopsteignton (Elaine Cawthraw); Chudleigh (Michael McCormick); Doddiscombsleigh (Sara Sharpe); Haccombe-with-Combe (Anna Taylor); Ogwell (Richard Broome); Tedburn St Mary (Pat Moody);

1 Meg Booth – Devon CC Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure, Development and Waste

Statistics were illustrated showing the substantial length of Devon's roads and the valuation of its assets. Capital and revenue sources and uses of funding were explained, including how the capital "Challenge fund" supported such as the LED changes to 24,000 street lights leading to £400,000 annual savings in energy costs. This fund is also important to the pending A361 improvements. The key behind road maintenance is whether the road is fit for purpose, i.e. the reality of the road's situation and usage dictates the maintenance response. Works programmes are on-line.

It would be helpful to DCC to hear more from residents about problems with their local roads, in particular the local unclassified network. Patching, rather than structural works, may take place on this minor roads network.

Skanska is the newly appointed term maintenance contractor. They are introducing new approaches to the problems and working more with local businesses to commission works contracts. Overall savings are being realised. Some of the points from the Q&A:-

- New LED lighting works also involves checking the state of columns. It is unclear whether bat surveys are carried out in case new lighting installations might affect them – to advise.
- There are generally no plans to close down roads unless they are obviously beyond economic repair and alternate routes are available.
- Local councils should be in contact with their DCC Neighbourhood Highways Officer (NHO) when necessary. They are on the web as is the schedule for Lengthsman visits to parishes.
- Roads are inspected on a 3 year cycle
- Some pothole repair materials can be made available to parish councils; contact your NHO

2 Phil Shears, TDC Interim Head of Paid Services

Management structure changes at TDC are in progress but there are no deleterious consequences so far. Closer working with Exeter, East & Mid-Devon leads to stronger cases when bidding for government finance. Parishes are encouraged to develop neighbourhood plans (NHP's) and there is TDC officer support for this process. The increased CIL contributions for parishes with NHP's (25% rather than 15%) are significant, an example being the additional housing in Exminster. There was some discussion about the substantial additional housing being proposed near Exeter

and the government is presently consulting on planning and housing numbers – see <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/raynsford-review> Another current and important government consultation is “Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places” see <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-right-homes-in-the-right-places-consultation-proposals>

TDC’s HQ buildings are being modified to permit 25% to be let for other users whilst staff numbers have been reduced and different ways of working introduced. Concern was raised about TDC’s investments in properties. These are however subject to full due diligence by external experts, leading to an increasing income stream, so important to balancing budgets.

The recent TDC IT failure was discussed. It did not cause any break in business continuity, in fact it led to an opportune examination of Strata’s IT services, to the benefit of the system. Other points discussed:

- In response to a request for more information about the seemingly sudden departure of the Chief Executive, Mr. Shears referred to the TDC statement– see Appendix A.
- Concerns about planning decisions that conflict with local opinions were discussed. The reality is that TDC sometimes doesn’t agree with the local opinions. Major application can be “called in” (by the District Cllr.) to bring to planning committee rather than be delegated decisions. Only one representative for each side of the case can speak at committee, thus one person may need to represent the several parish councils involved, if appropriate.

3 Minutes of the meeting 29th June 2017 – These were approved

4 Litter Picking – TDC’s support for LC’s litter picking on the highways was again discussed. Post meeting, TDC clarified the situation, as follows (see also the guidance document sent out with these minutes, in particular section 12, Community):-

We are continuing to support community litter picks and provide litter picking kits upon request. However, prior to issuing equipment we need to be confident that any event we support is managed safely and that procedures are in place to maintain the safety of volunteers.

Therefore we ask that the event organiser provides a bespoke risk assessment for the event, demonstrating that the site of the litter pick has been inspected and any potential risks have been identified. For example, if litter picking is taking place on a highway we would expect to see that the event organiser has assessed any potential risks and hazards and put the necessary control measures in place to ensure volunteer safety. If a group wishes to undertake litter picking along a highway, particularly on high speed roads (over 30mph) then we recommend they consider and follow the attached Health & Safety guidance.

As volunteer litter pickers are not working for, or on behalf of TDC, they are not covered by the Council’s insurance. Therefore, we also ask for a copy of the group’s insurance policy before issuing equipment. Unfortunately TDC are not able to assist with any road closures or traffic management identified as in a risk assessment.

Once we are in receipt of these documents and are satisfied that the event organiser has adequate safety procedures in place the litter picking kits will be issued and collection details arranged. Further guidance <https://www.teignbridge.gov.uk/communitylitterpicks>

5 Secretary’s Report - The bank balance remains at £165.22

6 Topics for Meeting 30th November 2017. Members agreed to invite Cllr John Hart, Leader of DCC, who had offered to come to TALC to discuss budget matters. It was also agreed to invite Mary Ridgway, TDC Housing Enabling Officer, to talk about community led affordable housing.

7 Chairman’s Business

Once again, there was concern expressed about the quality of planning documents available on the TDC web site paper. Post meeting Note: Nick Davies says TDC displays on the web site what they received from Applicants. They will be stressing to planning agents the importance of submitting

plans/documents in a format that can be easily read on the internet. He added that they have plans to change Planning On-Line facility so they have more ability to label the documents to make it easier for the public and parishes to find the documents they need.

It seems there is no option to download a higher quality file to enable the relevant extracts to be projected with greater quality.

9 Smoke Free Policy

Gary Powell explained that as part of TDC Council Strategy, they would like to have all play parks in the district go smoke free and be able to eventually claim they have gone smoke free district wide. Some parishes have replied to us that they don't have a problem which is most encouraging. If all relevant parishes could consider displaying a poster (attached to these minutes) anyway, it would really help achieve the Councils goal.

10 Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 30th November 2017 at 7.00pm at Forde House.

2018 Meetings:- 25th January
29th March
28th June
27th September
29th November

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Appendix A

FULL COUNCIL STATEMENT – MAY 15 2017

Nicola Bulbeck will be leaving her post as the Chief Executive of Teignbridge District Council on 9 June 2017 after she has fulfilled her duties as the Acting Returning Officer for the General Election. She has served the Council in this position since 2006 and the Council wants to place on record its thanks to Nicola for her hard work and commitment during her time as Chief Executive. Her leadership and achievements during difficult and challenging times have made a significant impact local, regionally and nationally. We wish Nicola all the very best for the future.

The Council will not be appointing a new Chief Executive but will instead be distributing the duties amongst existing officers and the Deputy Chief Executive, Phil Shears who will become the Head of Paid Service. A further announcement about these new arrangements will be made in due course.

Nicola wishes to place on record her thanks and respect for her Teignbridge colleagues, partners, businesses and members of the public with whom she has worked to deliver Teignbridge's priorities and to place it in a strong position going forward.