

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL
HELD AT FOLLATON HOUSE, TOTNES ON THURSDAY 2 AUGUST 2007**

MEMBERS

* Cllr R J Carter – Chairman

* Cllr B F Cane – Vice-Chairman

* Cllr K J Baldry	* Cllr M J Howarth
∅ Cllr N A Barnes	∅ Cllr C W Jones
* Cllr H D Bastone	* Cllr L P Jones
* Cllr J H Baverstock	* Cllr R M Lawrence
* Cllr J I G Blackler	* Cllr I Longrigg
* Cllr J Brazil	* Cllr D W May
* Cllr B E Carson	* Cllr D M O'Callaghan
* Cllr P H Cook	* Cllr C M Pannell
∅ Cllr S E Cooper	∅ Cllr J T Pennington
* Cllr P Coulson	∅ Cllr S L Rankin
∅ Cllr R F Croad	∅ Cllr R Rowe
* Cllr G Date	* Cllr M F Saltern
∅ Cllr G J Fielden	* Cllr J W Squire
* Cllr R D Gilbert	* Cllr R C Steer
∅ Cllr F J Hawke	* Cllr M Stone
∅ Cllr J D Hawkins	* Cllr R J Tucker
* Cllr T J Hewitt	* Cllr R J Vint
* Cllr M J Hicks	* Cllr A Ward
* Cllr P W Hitchins	* Cllr J A Westacott

* Denotes attendance

∅ Denotes apology for absence

Officers in attendance:

For all items: Strategic Director (Community), Strategic Director (Resources),
Strategic Director (Operations), Monitoring Officer, Senior Member Support Officer;
Item 3 (Minute 38/07 below refers): Head of Planning and Building Control;
Item 4 (Minute 39/07 below refers): Salcombe Harbour Master.

36/07 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 28 June 2007 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

37/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting. These were made as follows:-

Cllrs Cane and Blackler declared prejudicial interests in Item 3: 'Local Development Framework – Sherford Area Action Plan – Inspector's Report' (minute 38/07 below refers) and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Cllrs Cook, Coulson, and Gilbert declared prejudicial interests in Item 4: 'Salcombe Harbour Strategic Plan' (minute 39/07 below refers) by virtue of either themselves or their spouse renting a mooring on the Harbour and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

38/07

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – SHERFORD AREA ACTION PLAN – INSPECTOR'S REPORT

A report was considered which advised that the Sherford Area Action Plan (AAP) Inspector's binding report had just been received. The report outlined the importance of adopting the AAP in order to enable progress with the delivery of the needed development of the new community.

The report concluded that the Sherford AAP would set out the vision and policies required to enable the sustainable development of the new community and the Council was now obliged to adopt the plan.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) It was noted that Counsel advice had been sought for clarity on matters of fact only and the Council could not challenge the Inspector's report. However, officers advised that other parties could still challenge the Inspector's report if they were so minded following the Council's decision to adopt the AAP;
- (b) A Member questioned the ambitious content of a letter received from Red Tree and could foresee difficulties should adequate funding not be in place prior to the commencement of any works. Officers clarified that the item for discussion was the Council's AAP and not a letter from an applicant. Officers stated that the tests of soundness assessed by the Inspector included reference to the deliverability and viability of the proposals and the Inspector was satisfied that a sufficient approach was in place to support the AAP. Furthermore, Council was informed that although the developer would need to fund those parts of the proposals directly related to their application, many of the improvements to the strategic transport system would require funding from a combination of developments along the Eastern Corridor, as well as public subsidy through a Major Scheme Bid for regional funding;
- (c) In reluctantly accepting that the Sherford development would be happening, some Members stated their belief that these proposals were the most suitable option available;
- (d) Members were given assurances that good quality housing and design codes would be easier to achieve with the backing of an adopted AAP;

- (e) A Member emphasised the importance of obtaining sufficient monies to cover revenue costs to ensure no additional burden fell upon local taxpayers. In response, it was noted that this would be part of significant discussions taking place about the planning agreement prior to the application being presented to the Development Control Committee for determination;
- (f) In acknowledging transport concerns expressed by Members, officers advised that, in light of the Council not being a highway authority, they would continue to raise these matters with the relevant strategic organisations;
- (g) Members wished to commend both Council officers and their Plymouth City Council counterparts in their efforts to ensure that the Inspector deemed the AAP to be 'sound';
- (h) In expressing her belief that the proposals constituted an exemplar development, a Member made specific reference to the emphasis placed upon climate change, carbon omissions and sustainability.

RESOLVED

That the Sherford Area Action Plan be adopted in line with the Inspector's binding report.

39/07

SALCOMBE HARBOUR STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

The Council considered a report which appraised it on the progress toward the development of a five-year Business Plan for the Harbour Authority and sought ratification of the Plan.

The Strategic Business Plan was to be kept under constant review, updated annually and reported on in the Harbour Annual Report and was to provide a foundation and financial strategy which should enable the Harbour Authority to move forward towards its vision (as below):

'To retain and enhance the character of Salcombe and Kingsbridge Estuary whilst updating harbour facilities to meet the requirements and expectations of resident and visiting yachtsmen for the 21st century.'

In presenting the Plan, the Chairman of the Board advised of the need to put the Harbour onto a secure financial footing and made particular reference to 2 issues. These were:

1. The desperate need for pontoon replacements which were very expensive. It was noted that when considering the Business Plan, thought was given to both borrowing all of the required funds and a 'make do and mend' policy but that neither option was deemed appropriate. As a consequence, the Plan recommended that mooring fees be increased to Harbour users in order that costs be covered in the medium term;

2. That Salcombe Harbour had gained an unfortunate reputation amongst the sailing fraternity and visitor numbers were dropping. It was noted that the Harbour was the most expensive on the south coast for visiting yachtsman, who felt that they were paying top fees for the least level of facilities. Therefore, there was provision in the Business Plan for new capital projects to bring the Harbour in line with its counterparts.

During discussion, particular reference was made to:-

- (a) the likely impact of a 16% price increase on Salcombe residents who rent a mooring. In response, the Chairman of the Board advised that due to a lack of mooring fee increases in previous years, there was a need for this level of expenditure to ensure that the Harbour continued in its current form. The Chairman also referred to the fact that these charges did differentiate slightly from car park or Council Tax charges due to it being optional and a matter of choice to rent a mooring. In stating his belief that the Plan was a step in the right direction for the future of the harbour, the Chairman also highlighted the fact that there had been very little local feedback or opposition received to the proposed charges during the consultation stage.

The Chairman accepted that such price increases would not be popular amongst some local boat owners but that the Board was striving to ensure the long-term success and viability of the Harbour. It was also confirmed that the 16% proposal was an indicative figure at this stage and when setting the actual level could vary from this figure, with the amount of capital borrowing being undertaken also having to be borne in mind by the Board. On the subject of resident charges, reference was also made to the competitive pricing for residents mooring charges when compared with other south western ports;

- (b) improving service efficiency. In light of the increased onus on efficiency savings, a Member questioned the detail of the budget forecast and in particular, whether the assumption that revenue expenditure was to increase by 4% annually until 2011 constituted value for money. In response, the Council was informed that the Harbour was subject to the requirement to make Gershon efficiency targets of 3% annually and it was also noted that the Harbour Master had changed staffing arrangements and had consequently made savings of £30,000;
- (c) the assumption that there would be no growth in business. In understanding that there may be no growth in the first few years, a Member queried why there was assumed to be no growth over the 5 year period. In response, the Chairman of the Board advised that the forecasting was prudent and growth was not assumed until any growth was apparent;
- (d) the need for regular updates. A Member stated the need for regular updates in order that the Council be kept aware of progress being made.

RESOLVED

1. That consideration has been given to the feedback from the second consultation period and, where appropriate, comments have been made with regard to amendments;
2. That the work completed to date on the Salcombe Harbour Strategic Business Plan be endorsed; and
3. That the Harbour Authority's Strategic Business Plan be adopted.

(Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 2.55 pm).

Chairman