

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Potential Helipad and Light Rail System for Torbay

1. On 23 November 2016 the Mayor took the following decision in respect of the above:
 - (i) that the Assistant Director of Corporate and Business Services be requested to consult the private sector and businesses in the aviation sector for their views on the principle of establishing a helipad facility for Torbay and that this should give the opportunity for the private sector undertaking feasibility work and to put forward proposals;
 - (ii) that an informal working group comprising the Mayor and business leaders be established to investigate the economic benefits to Torbay of having a helipad facility;
 - (iii) that further discussions be held between the Spatial Planning Department and Devon Air Ambulance in respect of their needs for adequate facilities; and
 - (iv) that due to the economic growth in Brixham in the fishing and tourism industry there is a need to improve transport links in and out of Brixham and the surrounding area to cope with this growth and the Assistant Director of Corporate and Business Services be requested to consult with the fishing industry, Brixham Town Council, rail user groups and existing rail owners to establish, in principle, if the formation of a light railway system will benefit the long term economic prospects of Brixham and the surrounding area.
2. This decision was called in and considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 14 December 2016 who resolved:

that, having listened to the advice of the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer, the Board is of the view that the Mayor's decision is contrary to the Policy Framework as it does believe that it makes best effect of the Council's reducing resources and therefore the matter is referred to the Council.
3. On 17 January 2017 the Mayor rescinded his decision taken on 23 November as there had been extensive support from the private sector on bringing proposals forward in respect of a potential helipad and light rail system for Torbay, in particular the Devon and Cornwall Business Council, and there was no longer a need for the Council to take this forward.

4. It has since become apparent that the no action should have been taken in respect of the Mayor's original decision until the Council had taken a decision on whether or not the original decision was contrary to the Council's Policy Framework.
5. In accordance with Standing Order D10.4 a report will be presented to the Council meeting on 2 February 2017 setting out the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, advice of the Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer and the Mayor's response in respect of this issue.