



Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

22 January 2020

-: Present :-

Councillor Howgate (Chairman)

Councillors Barrand, Brown, Bye, Mandy Darling, Doggett, Foster, Kennedy (Vice-Chair) and Loxton

(Also in attendance: Councillors Cowell, Douglas-Dunbar, Chris Lewis, Long and David Thomas)

26. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from the Leader of the Council and Director of Corporate Services as they were attending a Community Partnership meeting to outline the budget proposals.

27. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 11 December 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28. One Torbay Working for all Torbay Draft Corporate Plan

As part of the consultation, the Board considered the Cabinet's draft Corporate and Community Plan 'One Torbay Working for all Torbay'. The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Cowell, attended the meeting to respond to the points raised by the Board.

Resolved:

- (i) that the Cabinet be recommended:
 - (a) that an appendix be included in 'One Torbay Working for all Torbay' to cross reference other relevant strategies;
 - (b) to consider using a different photo which is less cliché than the palm trees;
 - (c) to consider setting out a more realistic approach to the problems Torbay faces in the section 'our opportunities and changes' which currently contradicts other aspects of the document; and

- (d) to ensure that where possible future consultation documents are written in plain English; and
- (ii) that the Overview and Scrutiny Board monitor the detailed Action Plan/Delivery Plans which will sit behind 'One Torbay Working for all Torbay'.

29. Draft Housing Strategy

Members considered the draft Housing Strategy 'Improving the delivery, affordability and quality of housing in Torbay' which was currently out to consultation. The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing Councillor Long attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Board.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet be recommended:

- (i) to include within the Housing Strategy document an explanation of what affordable housing, housing deprivation and non-decent home covers;
- (ii) to include more detail on how the Council will work with partners to ensure action is taken to improve the quality of homes;
- (iii) to include reference to the need for sustainable housing and links to the climate change emergency e.g. insulation and energy efficiency;
- (iv) to consider reviewing the wording around reference to lower house prices under the section 'The regional picture' as this appears to contradict statements elsewhere in the document;
- (v) to include reference to a new framework with neighbouring authorities around design, layout, sustainability and quality of housing to ensure appropriate standards are achieved to meet the climate change emergency;
- (vi) to include stronger language as to the licensing of landlords and ensure appropriate enforcement action is taken to help protect our residents; and
- (vii) to consider exploring options to set up a credit union in Torbay.

30. Budget Monitoring Quarter 3 - 2019/2020

The Board considered and noted the submitted budget monitoring report, which provided a high level budget summary of the Council's forecasted revenue and capital income and expenditure for the 2019/2020 financial year. The figures were based on the position as at the end of Quarter 3.

It was noted that the Council was forecasting an overspend on the Revenue budget of £2.87m, which was an improvement of £0.92m compared with the Quarter 2 report. The main source of financial pressure remained Children's

Services with a forecast overspend of £6.7m. However, it was noted that since this report there had been some improvements in Children's Services and this should be reflected in the Quarter 4 report.

31. Revenue Budget 2020/2021

The Board considered the draft report which had been prepared following the meetings of the Priorities and Resources Review Panel held during January 2020. The Review Panel had considered the Cabinet's budget proposals for 2020/2021 and the report set out the Panel's views, conclusions and recommendations.

Resolved:

that the report to the Cabinet on the Revenue Budget 2020/2021 be adopted including the following recommendations (with the additional wording set out in bold below):

(i) **the insertion of the following wording at the end of paragraph 4.5:**

Whilst acknowledging the proposed investment already underway at Preston Central, Members were not satisfied that sufficient provision and capacity would remain at Preston Beach with the proposed closure of Preston North and South toilets.

- (ii) that the Panel recognised the hard work and commitment of Children's Services and recommended that the Cabinet ensure that a strong focus is kept on staff recruitment and retention to reduce agency costs and ensure appropriate placements for children in care;
- (iii) that the Cabinet be recommended to consider revisiting the proposal to use Section 106 Agreement income to fund essential highways to ensure that the Council has full regard to any specific requirements on individual Section 106 Agreements;
- (iv) that Cabinet reconsiders the amount of increase for the annual parking permits in light of the successful take up of the £365 per year £1 a day permits;
- (v) that it is unrealistic to expect to receive the anticipated increase in revenue for assets above 3% proposed in light of the proposed reduction in the annual management fee and the capacity of the TDA to deliver the savings and additional income and the Cabinet be recommended to review this proposal;
- (vi) that the Cabinet be recommended to review its proposals in connection with beach huts, charging for toilets in beach locations and parking charges as this will have a significant impact on existing revenue for beaches, parking and beach huts and does not support the vision for Torbay to be the UK's premier resort;

- (vii) that the Cabinet be requested to ensure that toilet provision is maintained at Goodrington South Sands, **Preston North and South** and Corbyn Head;
- (viii) that the Cabinet be recommended to use a programme of promotion and education to increase our recycling rates in the Bay and review the effectiveness of this prior to considering implementing any changes to the fortnightly residual waste collections;
- (ix) that the Cabinet be advised that the community has a desire for greater pace to tackle climate change working with the Council and community, which has not adequately been addressed through the budget proposals and that more work should be done with the community to develop and communicate the Council's policy on climate change; and
- (x) **that the Cabinet reconsiders its proposal in respect of the timescales for establishing a Trust for the UNESCO Geopark in light of concerns over the deliverability of the savings in 2020/2021 highlighted by the Panel.**

32. Review of Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2019/2020

Members reviewed the current Overview and Scrutiny Board work programme for 2019/2020.

Resolved:

That Public Space Protection Orders be removed from the work programme in February as wider work is being undertaken in this area.

Chairman
