



Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

12 September 2012

-: Present :-

Councillor Thomas (J) (Chairman)

Councillors Addis, Bent, Darling (Vice-Chair), Doggett, Hill, Kingscote,
Pentney and Stockman

Co-opted Members

Penny Burnside, Diocese of Exeter

(Also in attendance: The Mayor and Councillors Cowell, Davies and James)

22. Committee Membership

It was reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat groups, the membership of the Board had been amended to include Councillors Addis and Doggett in place of Councillors Barnby and Pountney respectively.

23. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of the Board held on 18 July and 6 August 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24. Economic Regeneration

When seeking views from councillors and officers about the content of its Work Programme, the category with the most suggestions was Economic Regeneration. As a result, the Overview and Scrutiny Board determined that the Mayor be asked to provide a briefing note which addressed issues around his Economic Strategy (including specific questions about encouraging new businesses, job creation, sustainability and balancing the needs of the community against the needs of the tourist industry).

The briefing note was provided prior to the meeting and the Mayor attended to answer the Board's questions. The Chairman and Chief Executive of the Torbay Development Agency together with the Agency's Director of Economic Strategy and Performance also attended the meeting.

The Mayor presented his briefing note highlighting that the award of funding for the South Devon Link Road presented an opportunity of improved access, productivity and attracting new investment to the area. It was reported that the Link Road was forecast to create around 3000 new jobs. Closer working arrangements between

the Council and Teignbridge Council allowed for a focus on identifying sites that would be suitable for business development.

The Board had requested information on the **use of local labour** in the Council's capital contracts and a briefing note was considered by the Board on the use of local labour and apprenticeships in the contract for the South Devon Link Road. It was noted that a specific clause had not been included within the contract with Galliford Try. However, it had been agreed between the Council and Devon County Council that they would encourage the contractor to use local labour or supplies where possible although the cost effective delivery of the project was the key priority.

Whilst the contract was still in its infancy, it was noted that:

- Galliford Try had partnered with South Devon College to provide support to the contractor and its supply chain in education and training
- A number of adverts had been placed in the local newspaper for job opportunities on the project
- Galliford Try had appointed a local graduate to commence his training on the project
- The project was currently being run from offices in Newton Abbot with many of the key site staff already appointed living locally.

The Mayor went on to explain that he had instigated regular meetings with local banks to understand the local lending market, trends and business confidence. This had led to an initiative between Torbay Development Agency and a number of local lenders and finance sources on access to finance in Torbay which was part of the approach to encourage job growth and sustain local businesses.

Other issues which were discussed were:

- The establishment of the Torbay Manufacturing Group and the Hi-Tech Forum
- The continued successful management of the three Innovation Centres at Lymington Road, Vantage Point and Cockington
- The ongoing capital projects which were underway including the development of the former Palm Court site and the White Rock Business Park
- The need for young people and existing employees to improve their skills through a variety of means including apprenticeships

It was noted that the Mayor had requested that the current Economic Strategy be revised with consideration scheduled to be given to the new document at the meeting of the Council in December 2012.

Resolved: (i) that the encouraging direction of travel in relation to economic development be noted especially the continuing move away from a low-wage economy to a mid- to high-wage economy;

(ii) that, as part of the Youth Unemployment Review, clarification should be sought from the Interim Chief Operating Officer about Torbay Council's position (as an employer) in relation to apprenticeships;

(iii) that the Overview and Scrutiny Board be provided with the opportunity to critically engage with the consultation process on the emerging Economic Strategy;

(iv) that the emerging Economic Strategy should recognise that the South Devon Link Road will provide opportunity for inward and outward migration and that everything possible should be done to ensure that skills can be maintained and enhanced within Torbay; and

(v) that the emerging Strategy should include targets and milestones against which measure success.

(Note: Prior to consideration of the item in Minute 24, Councillor Bent declared a personal interest as a family member carried out work for the Torbay Development Agency.)

25. Work Programme Update

It was noted that the review of political governance arrangements would no longer be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Board as it would duplicate work being undertaken by the Leaders Task Group.

Chairman