

At a Meeting of the **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kilworthy Park, Drake Road, **TAVISTOCK** on **TUESDAY** the **10th** day of **SEPTEMBER 2013** at **2.00 pm**.

Present: Cllr R J Oxborough – Chairman
Cllr R F D Sampson – Vice-Chairman
Cllr M J R Benson Cllr A Clish-Green
Cllr D W Cloke Cllr A F Leech
Cllr M E Morse

Substitutes: Cllr M Ewings Cllr J Sheldon

Corporate Director (AR)
Head of Environmental Services
Leisure Contracts Manager
Affordable Housing Projects Officer
Street Scene Manager
Economic Development Officer
Committee & Ombudsman Link Officer

In attendance: Cllr J Moody

CS 11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr K Ball, Cllr D E Moyse (Substitute Cllr J Sheldon) and from Cllr N Morgan (Substitute Cllr M Ewings).

CS 12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr M Ewings – Personal – Minute No CS 18 – 2013/2014 – Member of the Tavistock BID Partnership.

***CS 13 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th June 2013, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

***CS 14 RENTPLUS – A NEW MODEL OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Dr Ian McKenzie, Director of RENTplus, attended the Meeting for this item.

The Affordable Housing Manager presented a report (page 6 to the Agenda) on RENTplus as an additional option for affordable housing in the local area. RENTplus offered an innovative model which would provide affordable rented housing with the option and assistance to purchase. RENTplus homes would be built without public subsidy and would be owned by socially responsible investors before sale to tenants. In so doing, the Council would receive the New Homes Bonus with the affordable enhancement for each new RENTplus home.

RENTplus homes would be new homes leased to a local housing association partner. In turn the housing association would lease the

homes to tenants aspiring to become home owners for a series of 5 year tenancies at an affordable rent. Tenants on the waiting list could apply for a RENTplus property through Devon Home Choice. Beginning at the end of the first 5 year tenancy, a proportion of RENTplus affordable rented homes would be released for purchase by tenants who would be supported financially to move from tenancy to home-ownership.

An appendix on RENTplus was presented with the report, however, at the request of RENTplus it was not published with the Agenda.

The Committee noted that RENTplus appeared to be aimed at those on Band E on the Devon Home Choice criteria, however, recent consultations had indicated that perhaps Band E should be removed from the criteria. It was the Committee's view that Band E should be retained to help those with aspirations to home ownership.

It was **RESOLVED** that RENTplus be adopted as an additional model for providing affordable housing in West Devon.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that Council:

- (i) adopts RENTplus as part of its Section 106 agreement within the housing allocation policy; and,
- (ii) that both Council and Devon Home Choice retain the Band E category as many applicants for the RENTplus scheme would come from this category.

***CS 15**

LEISURE CENTRE CONTRACT MONITORING

Mr J Smith, Contracts Manager for Leisure Connection, and Mr D Smith, the site manager for Meadowlands, attended the Meeting for this item.

The Natural Environment & Recreation Manager and the Leisure Contracts Manager presented a joint report (page 28 to the Agenda) on the current performance and key issues of the leisure centre management arrangements with Leisure Connection. Attendance at both Meadowlands (swimming only) and Parklands (swimming and fitness) had increased during the 10 month period of October to July year-on-year since 2010/2011 (3 years). In addition, it was noted that there had been 31 GP referrals from the Okehampton Medical Centre and Lifton Surgery and in response to a question, the Committee was advised that a suitable qualified member of staff was employed at Parklands and that it was hoped that a similarly qualified member of staff would soon be appointed to Meadowlands to enable GP referrals to take place there.

It was noted that repair and maintenance works had been carried out at both sites in accordance with the contract and that both centres would be having their 6 monthly internal Health and Safety and Pool Safety Audits carried out during September.

As had been previously reported, the relationship and partnership work with Leisure Connection/Leisure in the Community had improved during the past few years and the recent agreement to extend the contract for a

further two years has encouraged this to continue and manifested in performance improvements and positive customer feedback.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted and the increase in usage figures across both sites be welcomed.

***CS 16**

TAMAR VALLEY AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW 2014 – 2014

The Economic Development Officer presented a report (page 33 to the Agenda) on the current process and progress towards the review of the Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan. The current management plan had been approved by this Committee's predecessor the Environment & Community Committee on 16th June 2009 (Minute No EC 4 – 2009/2010) and it was now necessary to undertake a further five year review.

The AONB Partnership, which included both elected Members and officers of the Borough Council within its membership, had been reviewing its Management Plan documents during the past twelve months, including workshops, open meetings and exhibitions to generated public participation. It was proposed to publish a draft version of the Plan in October 2013, with a view to carrying out extensive consultations during the autumn and publishing a revised final version in the New Year. The adopted final Plan would then need to be in place by the end of March 2014.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the progress made in reviewing the Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan be noted the process for consultation and adoption as set out in the officer's report be also noted;
- (ii) the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee, be authorised to approve the Draft Plan for consultation purposes; and,
- (iii) the Consultation Draft be presented to the next Meeting of this Committee for Member comment.

***CS 17**

CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

The Street Scene Manager presented a report (page 39 to the Agenda) on a proposal by Devon County Council to terminate the current County-wide on-street parking enforcement agreement on 31st March 2014 and to replace it with a new County-wide agreement which could accrue savings to the County Council in the order of £408,684.

The proposal put forward by Devon County Council would not cover the Borough Council's costs in providing on-street enforcement, therefore, officers were seeking further negotiations and in partnership with other district authorities. Environmental Services and Finance officers were currently working to produce actual service costs to produce a counter-proposal to the County Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that officers continue working with partners at Devon County Council and the other district authorities to reach a satisfactory service position.

OPERATIONAL CHANGES TO THE OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES ORDER

The Street Scene Manager presented a report (page 45 to the Agenda) proposing changes to the Council's Off-Street Parking Places Order in respect of car parks at Bedford Sawmills, Gulworthy, the Bedford car park, Tavistock, the Mill Road car park, Okehampton and a reduction in the "grace" period for issuing Penalty Charge Notices.

It was proposed to introduce a separate parking fee for coaches using the Bedford Sawmills car park. Currently coaches using this car park paid the rate for a car; the proposal was to introduce an all-day rate of £10.00 with a £5.00 fee for four hours parking. The Committee suggested that the parking fees board should clearly state that parking fees for coaches included both coaches and mini-buses: a clear legal definition to be supplied.

Coaches making use of the Bedford car park in Tavistock currently benefitted from free parking and it was being proposed that coaches using the dedicated coach parking area be subject to the same parking fee regime as cars using the regular car park. In discussion the Committee was advised that both Tavistock Town Council and the Tavistock BID offered an inducement for coach operators/drivers to visit Tavistock and to propose a parking fee for coaches may prove to be counter-productive. It was the Committee's view that some interim action was required to deter local school coaches from utilising the dedicated parking space all day before introducing a parking fee.

Presented with the report at Appendix 1 was a Land Registry map showing an area at the Mill Road car park which it was proposed to include within the Off-Street Parking Places Order to enable effective enforcement to take place on vehicles which park on the land without a Council permit.

The Car Parking Strategy Group had recommended that the current 10 minute grace period currently enjoyed be reduced to 5 minutes to allow for a more effective and efficient enforcement to be carried out. It was anticipated that such a move would encourage more motorists to purchase Pay & Display tickets which may result in additional income. The Committee was advised that neither Tavistock BID nor the Chamber of Commerce supported such a proposal as it appeared contrary to initiatives currently being undertaken to increase footfall within Tavistock.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council that amendments be made to the Council's Off-Street Parking Places Order to the effect that:

- (i) a coach parking fee be added to the Bedford Sawmills car park to the Order of £10 for all day parking and £5.00 for four hours and that the fee charge display board clearly shows that the fee is for both coaches and minibuses;
- (ii) the "grace" period currently afforded to motorists be retained at 10 minutes;

- (iii) the area of land at Simmons Road, Okehampton as marked on the Land Registry map given at Appendix 1 to the report be added to the Order to enable effective enforcement to be undertaken;
- (iv) the proposal to introduce a coach parking fee at the Bedford car park, Tavistock be deferred to enable suitable action to take place to encourage school bus operators to not use the dedicated coach parking area as a convenient place to park their coaches prior to the school contract runs and that a further report on the success of this be presented to a future meeting of this Committee; and,
- (v) the Order be updated to allow for enforcement to be undertaken in respect of motorists who pay for their parking via RINGGO, the pay-by-phone facility.

***CS 19**

PROVISION OF RECYCLING CONTAINERS

The Waste Development & Contracts Manager presented a report (page 51 to the Agenda) on a proposal by the Informal Waste Project Group that charges be made for the replacement of recycling containers in specific circumstances. Whilst each domestic home across the Borough had received containers for recyclables, evidence had shown that some residents and businesses were using the containers for purposes other than household waste recycling. In addition, residents disposed of usable containers each year knowing that they could easily obtain replacement containers free of charge.

The Informal Waste Project Group was proposing that worn or damaged containers be swapped on a one-to-one basis and that other requests may attract a charge that would cover the current price plus minimum administrative costs.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations of the Informal Waste Project Group that:

- (i) the change in procedure to allow charging for recycling containers under circumstances as set down in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5 of the officer's report be adopted; and,
- (ii) that any changes considered necessary to the terms as highlighted in this report are delegated to the Head of Environmental Services, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Community Services Committee, to accept.

(The Meeting terminated at 5.05 pm.)