

LOOE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PROCEDURES COMMITTEE MEETING

held in the Committee Room, The Guildhall, East Looe on
Tuesday 20th July 2010 at 7pm

REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENT

Chairman – Councillor K Smith
Cllrs. D J Bryan, J R B Dingle, E B Galipeau
and D Welch

IN ATTENDANCE

The Clerk – Mrs A Frith

8. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs E Hannaford and M Gregory.

9. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Bryan, Dingle and Galipeau declared an interest in any matter raised concerning East Looe Town Trust.
Councillor Dingle declared an interest in any matter raised concerning West Looe Town Trust.

10. TO DISCUSS DRIVING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Councillor Galipeau explained that Councillor Mrs Hannaford had been asked to circulate information taken from the MCTi report which has not been received. Councillors Bryan and Welch stated that this Committee had been asked to look at information that Councillor Mrs Hannaford had distributed at the last meeting.

The Chairman had looked at this information and provided an amended copy for discussion (see attached Appendix 'A') and stated that this needs discussing in detail to look at the whole process and involvement of our adjoining parishes. He also suggests that the term "Driving Economic Development" is perhaps not the most appropriate and should be re-named as "The Future of Economic Development". The aim is for this document to be acceptable to all parties and partners and for the purpose of grant funding.

The Chairman asked for this document to be circulated to all members of this Committee.

11. TO DISCUSS GOVERNANCE AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES

The Chairman suggested this matter be deferred to the next meeting to enable Councillor Mrs Hannaford to present her ideas.

12. TO DISCUSSTOWN COUNCIL NOMINATED TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Galipeau stated that he did not understand why this matter was being discussed again as a Resolution at the last Full Council had

determined that a replacement Trustee on West Looe Town Trust would not be nominated until after the forthcoming election and he disagreed with the rest of the Committee regarding the interpretation of the Resolution.

The Chairman explained that this had been referred to this Committee to discuss the whole issue of Council nominated representatives on outside bodies to develop a Council Policy, which up to now, has not been needed. There ensued much discussion with Councillor Dingle raising concerns that the proposal that the nominated Trustees on East Looe Town Trust and West Looe Town Trust should be Councillors went against the Constitution of both Trusts which states that a Council nominated Trustee "may be, but need not be" a Councillor.

Councillor Smith proposed that the matter of nominating a West Looe Town Trust Trustee, taking into consideration any application received from non-Councillors, be referred back to Full Council, seconded by Councillor Bryan it was unanimously agreed.

Councillor Smith also proposed that the whole process of nominating Town Council representatives be referred to Full Council for discussion and resolution, seconded by Councillor Bryan it was unanimously agreed.

13. TO DISCUSS ACTIVE PARTNERING WITH CORNWALL COUNCIL

The Chairman reported that information on Cornwall Council's ideas for Active Partnering had been received. The proposals are wide-ranging and offer various levels of partnering from full responsibility to management of services similar to the one we already have for the public conveniences and street cleaning.

Concerns were raised that there is no mention of financial input from Cornwall Council.

Suggestions were made that Looe Town Council could perhaps implement this for the Bowling Club and civil enforcement. The Chairman suggested that, as this is the first draft of the proposal, we wait for further information. The Clerk was asked to circulate this information to all members.

14. TO DISCUSS THE USE OF COUNCIL NOTICE BOARDS

Councillor Dingle explained that there had been some controversy over what should and should not be put on the Council notice boards. This matter has now been largely resolved.

Councillor Dingle also informed the Committee that the Clerk has purchased a new notice board which can initially be used by the election candidates and following the election it will be used as a Community notice board.

15. TO DISCUSS THE COUNCIL'S INVOLVEMENT WITH STREET PASTORS

Councillor Galipeau explained that a query had been raised by former Councillor Chris Rose. There is apparently a national governing body, the Ascension Trust, that requires Street Pastors to set up an accountable body and Councillor Rose realised that Looe Town Council were being asked to be a part of this Trust and that a "virtual vote" was being requested.

Councillor Dingle stated there would be a lot of work to be done and this Council does not have the manpower available to take it on. Councillor Galipeau proposed that a recommendation be made to Full Council that a letter is sent to the Street Pastors stating that Looe Town Council do not wish to undertake formal participation, wish the Trust success and invite them to contact us again if another Steering Group is set up, seconded by Councillor Dingle it was unanimously agreed.

16. TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE NEW LEGISLATION

The Clerk had provided various reports from various sources on possible new legislation for financial laws, powers of general competence etc.

Councillor Smith stated that some of the new legislation may be working towards allowing Councils to have debit/credit cards to enable internet purchases which represent better value for money.

Councillor Galipeau requested that all this information be circulated to all members but, after discussion, it was agreed that, due to the amount of new information being received, the Chairman and the Clerk would agree what needs to be circulated. All other information will be kept in the office.

17. TO DISCUSS INDUCTION TRAINING FOR NEW COUNCILLORS

The Chairman had requested this item be discussed as the recent Standards Board investigation had highlighted the lack of training that had been provided for the Councillors involved and any criticism must be addressed. Councillor Bryan stated that he and former Councillor Ron Overd had discussed in-house training but it had never been implemented.

Councillor Galipeau stated that, as part of the Quality Status re-accreditation process, an induction training document has been done by Councillor Welch.

It was agreed that training, particularly for new Councillors, should be implemented and that all new Councillors are allocated a mentor.

18. MATTERS FOR FURTHER OR URGENT DISCUSSION

.1 Parish – Online

The Chairman had briefly looked at this and will ask St Martins Parish Clerk to investigate further and then forward his findings to the Clerk. Councillor Galipeau also agreed to investigate.

.2 Cornwall Council Staff Appraisal Policy

This information had been supplied at the request of the Clerk.

The Chairman agreed to read the information and report back to the next meeting.

.3 To report on the procedure for advertising another two council vacancies

The Clerk reported that, after discussions with Cornwall Council Electoral Services, the advertising of the vacancies to replace Michael Joy and Chris Rose be put on hold until after the current election on 12th August. We are awaiting instructions.

.4 To define the role of the Deputy Mayor

Councillor Dingle explained that the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Galipeau, had asked for this issue to be discussed.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that no decision can be made as this matter was not an Agenda item.
Councillor Galipeau would like this role to be defined and it was agreed that this matter would be put on the Agenda for the next meeting.

The Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Background

As part of the MCTI process, public consultations along with a wide variety of other activities were undertaken. As part of the end product of MCTI process a list of 'Strategies and Actions' was created.

This list of 'Strategies and Actions' provides details of areas that have been identified as having the potential for 'improvement'. The term 'improvement' is, in the context of this document the simplest term to be used when defining/describing 'Strategies and Actions' that may require further advancement/consideration/investigation.

Argument

Whilst the process was successful in achieving the required MCTI status for the Town of Looe and local environs, the use of the information gathered during the process has not been fully utilised. Some of the information was used when the Town Council was giving consideration to the employment of a 'Town Manager'. However, apart from being used as an occasional source of reference this information has enjoyed little use.

As local sources were used to gather this information, there would be an implied expectation from contributors that their concerns/ideas would at some stage, be given some form of 'consideration'. This form of 'consideration', must go beyond that of using information mainly or solely to obtain the MCTI status, it must in some way be reflected in the way the Town Council and other bodies may make 'improvements' to the local area. However, before any 'improvements' are considered by the Town Council, the 'Strategies and Actions' must be re-evaluated and updated, a process which was agreed should be undertaken at the Procedures Committee meeting on 14 June 2010.

As wide ranging as the MCTI gathered information was, it does not provide comprehensive information that could be used to drive the economic development of Looe and the local environs forward. If the Town Council and other bodies are to strive for economic development of the whole local area, then all factors that can contribute to economic development must be explored and evaluated.

Any process relating to development an economic strategy must also have contributions from anyone and everyone who can be or may affected be or will be influenced by such strategy. The economic development of the area cannot be gained from just insular information and ideas. Neither can the communities of the local area be expected to finance economic development. Whilst the area of financial development may fall outside the scope of the Town Council and other local bodies, it is an area that will always be present when considering the future of Looe and the local area.

As economic development and finance are not insular, then it will be necessary to establish a methodology on how non-insular information and

ideas can be obtained. Whatever, methodology is used, it should be sufficiently flexible as to offer the opportunity to gather short-term and long-term information. This approach should make it possible to start the information gathering process during the current summer season, failure to undertake even a partial survey in this period would be a missed opportunity.

The economic development of the local area is not and will not be solely influenced by local factors. Since the decline of fishing and agriculture, local financial income has become influenced by the tourism trade. Whether this income is derived from day-trippers, regular visitors or second home owners, etc., it is an income which has a large influence on the local area. However, it is not an influence that is totally reflected in the information gathered during the MCTI process.

The information that is required to support an effective Economic Development strategy must be:-

- Current and relevant;
- Clear and precise;
- Comprehensive;
- Unbiased; and
- Publicly acceptable.

Conclusions

For an economic development strategy to be successful, it must reflect all influences on local development, no matter where the influence comes from. If the Town Council or other bodies are to seek financial funding from other sources then it is usually a requirement of the funding application to provide details of why the funding is required and on what supporting information the application is based. To achieve this it is imperative that some form of information gathering is undertaken during the current tourist season.

For the economic development of Looe to be successful, the body that drives this development forward must be fully representative on any and all influences that can affect the way forward. To achieve this it will be necessary for this body to be non-insular and have representatives from such bodies as the Town Council, Looe Harbour Commission, East and West Looe Town Trusts, Chamber of Commerce etc., this is not an exhaustive list.

Limited economic development is already being undertaken within the area. This is represented by the developments or proposed developments at Talland Bay, St Martins Field and Millendreath. For these developments to have progressed to the stages they are at, the individual developments would already have undertaken their own form of evidence or information gathering. This may have been achieved by public consultation for the developments at St Martins Field and Millendreath, but also sales of the properties at Talland Bay. Whatever form of evidence or information gathering has been used by the developers, it is evidence that could and would effect the future economic development of Looe.

So that the experience of these developers is not lost, it would be necessary to invite the developers to join the body that may be set up to take economic

development forward. After all, the developers would not propose to undertake expensive developments, if it could not be proved that the developments were not only wanted, but were economically viable for the medium and long-term future of the area.

It must also be remembered that the evidence used to evaluate any viability or need for development has been made on carefully gathered and analysed economic and environmental information.

If a body is formed to take economic development forward then it is important that the following points are taken on-board:

- all local communities, statutory bodies etc., are represented on the body * ;
- the representation on the body can include individuals or groups who have not been elected onto another body, but have experience or skills that could be used to the benefit of the local community;
- the aims and responsibilities of the body are fully defined;
- the body has been created for the benefit of the local community.

[* this would include town and parish councils, Looe Harbour Commission, East and West Looe Town Trusts etc. This is not an exhaustive list and must not be treated as being a restricted basis for forming the body.]

It should also be considered if representation is required from Cornwall Council. It is assumed that the Cornwall Councillors for the respective local wards would in some way want to be involved with the economic development of the local area. Any representation of Cornwall Councillors on the body should not be overlooked nor should representation be considered as automatic. Such representation by Cornwall Councillors may be beneficial, but it should also be considered, whether such representation may be prejudicial to the role of as a Cornwall Councillor.

Evidence

This information must not be restricted to holiday/tourism businesses in the local area. If information gathering was restricted in this way, it would not provide information from the customer/user and amenity/service provider. To obtain quick detailed information from all parties it would be more beneficial to use a specially prepared survey letter/questionnaire. The survey letter/questionnaire must be designed in such a way as to gather the maximum amount of information/ideas, with the least amount of effort.

If a survey is undertaken it is essential that it is widely and easily available. To provide the greatest possible amount of varied information it will be necessary to undertake the evidence gathering from a large audience base and from a variety of locations. To achieve this it may be necessary to form some type of 'partnership' with bodies from outside of the local area. If this approach is taken, then that 'partner' may, as a way of agreeing to conduct a survey, gather information that is pertinent to their business. If the evidence gathered by the 'partner' is pertinent to improving their business in some way,

then that evidence would also contribute the economic development of the area.

Survey locations and audience base

If evidence viable evidence is to be gathered, then the location the evidence is gathered in, has to include as many different locations as possible. The survey location point should not be restricted to one form of establish or one area [ie holiday parks]. If different locations are to be then it may be necessary to consider list as potential survey points:

- transport providers [ie bus, coach companies, train, etc];
- tourist information centre;
- hotels and restaurants;
- holiday parks

If it is accepted that the above list offers a varied approach to evidence gathering, then those locations will also offer a greater and varied survey audience.

By using the above list, the survey audience will not only be greater but will be more varied than evidence gathered at static location points such as 'drop-in events'. Whilst the 'drop-in events' offer valuable information, it will usually be gathered from a smaller audience who have an interest in the event. By using various locations the audience will be more varied, [for example evidence gathered from a holiday park may be obtained from tourists with their own transport, whilst evidence gathered from a transport provider would offer evidence from someone who does not their own transport to rely upon.

Summary

Whatever approach is used to take economic development of Looe and the surrounding area forward, it is paramount that some or all of the following points are followed:

- the audience survey base is varied, widespread and not insular;
- the locations the survey is conducted in, is large and varied;
- a dedicated and uniform survey is undertaken;
- the evidence gathered is evaluated and categorised within an agreed timescale.