

**MINUTES OF AN INTERIM MEETING OF THE
PAIGNTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM**

6.30pm Thu 23 February 2012 @ Paignton Library

In Attendance:

Eileen Donovan (Paignton Society), Edward Harris (Resident St Michael's), PS Tamzin James (Devon & Cornwall Police), Aaron McClusky (Resident, Roselands), Liam Montgomery (Torbay Development Agency), Melvyn Newbury (Resident, Preston/Oldway), Ken Robertson (Resident Clifton/Maidenway), Catherine Wickens (Torbay Parents Participation Forum).

From Blatchcombe CP: Roger Bristow, Alan Hill, Mike Parkes (Minutes).

From Clifton with Maidenway CP: Cllr Ian Doggett, Cllr Ruth Pentney.

From Goodrington with Roseland & Hookhills CP: Cllr Jane Barnby, Cllr Ken Pritchard.

From Paignton CP: Cllr Bobbie Davies, Louise Gilson, Colin Hurst (FoVP), David Watts (Chair).

From Preston CP: Jane Brooksbank, Cllr Stephen Brooksbank, Cllr Christine Scouler, Graham Scouler,

From Torbay Council Community Partnerships: Tracey Cabache.

From Torbay Council Spatial Planning Dept: Tracy Brooke, David Pickhaver.

Apologies:

Dean Auton (Goodrington with R&H CP), Cllr Dave Butt (Preston CP), Cllr Chris Lewis (Preston CP), Lorna Gardner (Blatchcombe CP), Phill Jempson (Blatchcombe CP – resigned for family reasons), Cllr Jeanette Richards (Blatchcombe CP), David Thomas (Blatchcombe CP), Cllr John Thomas (Blatchcombe CP).

AGENDA ITEM -1. APOLOGIES RECEIVED & WELCOME

1. The Chairman, David Watts, welcomed those attending and received apologies as listed above.

AGENDA ITEM – 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

2.a. The Minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record.

2.b. The outcome of the £20k application to DCLG was still awaited. In the meantime, Tracey Cabache explained that Community Partnership funding could to be used for small expenditure items such as room hire.

2.c. The Chairman said that Gesche Buecker had agreed to continue as Treasurer on a temporary basis.

2.d. As the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (due to come into force on 1 Apr 12), might contain further guidance, it was accepted that it was preferable to continue with the current draft Constitution for the time being.

AGENDA ITEM – 3. PROJECT PLAN PROGRESS

3. The Chairman confirmed that since the last meeting, 2 of the 3 Forum subgroups had met on several occasions. The discussions had resulted in the papers that had been previously circulated

and it was agreed that it could therefore be assumed that they had been read by those attending. It was considered that 3 key questions needed addressing as listed in the Agenda papers:

- a) Are population growth assumptions currently running at less than half the projected rate?
- b) If so, will this influence the scale and pace of further development and require a 'low' and 'high' growth approach.
- c) Do Town and Seafront proposals follow community views so far expressed?

4. **Discussion points arising:**

a. Unusually within the UK, Torbay's death rate exceeds its birth rate which indicates that expansion has been as a result of inward migration over the last 20yrs. (Page 3 of 7 refers). Evidence of recent mid-year population estimates from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) do not appear to support the projected population rise to 150k by 2026 and 155k by 2031. If this is so, then the pace of development becomes important and needs to be synchronised with housing, jobs, and shopping development and captured in the emerging Core Strategy.

b. The emerging Core Strategy considered that there could be an increased future trend towards in-migration and that emerging social changes towards smaller households would support the need for about 800+ houses within Torbay each year.

c. It was felt that a lot of in-migration was as a result of people retiring to the area. They would eventually seek retirement homes/nursing homes and would free up an increasing number of houses.

d. Reference was made to the South Devon Link Road (SDLR) as a cause for optimism and would attract business in to the area; as a result there would be a need for extra housing stock.

e. A concern was expressed over the high price of properties within Torbay. Whilst people selling properties in e.g. London, this in turn pushed prices up and made it difficult for young families from Torbay to purchase appropriate housing.

f. It was asked if Neighbourhood Plans can have an influence over the pace of change and if it could have a say where large retail outlets should be located. The Chairman felt that Neighbourhood plans could have such an influence as they are expected to be spatially based.

g. Reference was made that developers could be incentivised. The new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) rates for Torbay as a whole are in prospect and Neighbourhood Plans have a role to play in showing where new development should be located and where incentives could be put in place.

h. It was noted that regionally based top down targets had now been removed. Government funding rewards were available for areas that grow e.g. new homes budget and implied cuts for those that don't. It was recognised that such growth had to be balanced with increased infrastructure such as schools and hospitals.

i. It was recognised that there were different ways of leading a Neighbourhood Plan and reference was made to the recent Teignbridge Plan which appeared to be population led but had been challenged by the local community as based on flawed population numbers.

j. It was recognised that factors of population growth, people living longer and changing family units would inevitably lead to an increased demand for houses. The Chairman referred the meeting's attention to Fig 3 on page 4 of 7 and explained that it was the pace of development that had become the key question and needed to be established.

k. A view was expressed that all developments depend on jobs and that employment was the top priority for the area. Another countered that it was limited expansion space that was the problem in Torbay. The chairman indicated that could be called a 'capacity' led approach.

l. Concern was expressed that Paignton Town Centre seemed to be dying and felt that this was largely to do with parking fees. People were increasingly shopping at The Willows where parking was free. The chairman referred to the updated retail Report for the emerging Core Strategy which indicated that shops in Paignton were also being used by residents from Brixham but this could change.

m. A concern was expressed over the number of derelict houses and empty spaces above shops that could be adapted. It was noted there may be grants available and possible scope for a Neighbourhood Development Order to simplify planning.

n. Reference was made to land in the area of Occombe Farm awaiting development.

o. It was also felt that there was a need to identify the right type of accommodation – there appeared to have been an over emphasis on flats within recent years. There was a need for appropriate housing for young families.

p. A query relating to the Baker Report was raised in that an area of land was developed before the expected time. It was explained that a consultant's report contains recommendations only and can be over ridden. It was additionally asked why Torbay Council sets an aim of 30% for affordable housing and then accepts a lesser provision, as in the recent case of the White Rock planning application. The officers explained that the figure of 30% is an aspiration and that it can be offset when the authority requests other things of a developer.

q. The meeting was reminded that developers exist to make a profit. They would often build e.g. 50 houses and then 'see how they go' before building more.

r. It was felt that Torbay could end up as a dormitory town with people being able to afford housing in a pleasant part of the county whilst travelling elsewhere to work.

s. It was proposed by Colin Hurst that there needed to be a consideration of both actual and projected numbers embedded within the core strategy and neighbourhood plan to ensure there was

a balanced provision of additional development that avoided problems which otherwise could arise. There were no objections to this and on being put to the meeting was supported unanimously.

t. Colin Hurst referred to the tabled handout regarding Paignton Town Centre. He further explained his hopes that Crossways would be improved as a retail outlet. He was also working via the Sub-Group on compiling a questionnaire.

AGENDA ITEM – 4. NEXT STEPS

5. Details of the forthcoming visit by the Princes Foundation were discussed:

3 NP Chairs & Vice Chairs – 5 March

Joint Torquay, Paignton, Brixham Forum representatives meeting – 6 March

Paignton NP representatives Meeting – 8 March.

6. All attending supported the idea of a Paignton Community event soon in accordance with Outline Project Plan.

7. Referring to the circulated Forum Diagram in the Agenda papers, the Chairman confirmed that representation of residents and local organisations was building and that the next stage would be to involve more of the business community. To this end Colin Hurst has been approaching Paignton firms and was compiling a list. Liam Montgomery offered to help add to this list.

AGENDA ITEM – 5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. Eileen Donovan offered to approach CPRE regarding their future involvement with Neighbourhood Planning.

9. The meeting was reminded that the Torbay Council website was being used to display past minutes of meetings etc.

10. Tracy Brooks said that even if the £20k bid to DCLG was successful, there would be a need to top this amount up!

AGENDA ITEM – 6. DATES OF THE NEXT MEETING

11. The next meeting will be held on Thursday 22 March at 6.30pm in the Paignton Library & Information Centre, followed by meetings on 19 April and 24 May.

12. The meeting concluded at 8.20pm.