

NORTH DEVON COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

Minutes of a meeting of the NORTH DEVON COMMUNITY ALLIANCE held at the Cedars Inn, Bickington Road, Barnstaple on Monday, 28th July 2003 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Representing:

Archdeaconry of Barnstaple: Rev'd. M. Jones
Community Health Council: Mr. J. Talbot
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary: Chief Inspector Caldwell
Devon County Council: Councillors Mrs. Gear, Knight and D. Spear
Devon Health Forum: Mr I. Tearle
Environment Agency: Ms C. Trevaskis + one other representative
Exmoor National Park: T. A. Blackmore and Ruth McArthur
Local Community Alliances: M. Taylor, Councillors Pearson, Mrs Sewell
and Mrs. Webber
Lynton & Lynmouth Town Council: Councillor Mrs. Sim
Member of Parliament: Nick Harvey
North Devon College: Mr. Trueman
North Devon District Council: Councillors Cann, Lucas, Prowse and
Mrs. Shapland
North Devon Homes: Mr. J. Davies
North Devon Primary Care Trust: Mr S. Pearce
North Devon Volunteering Development Agency: Mr P. Hamilton
Torrige Local Strategic Partnership: Councillor Mrs Ferguson
Voluntary Sector: Ms. Butler, Mrs. Bracher and Ms. Jackson

Officers:

Devon County Council

Ms. A. Boyd - Assistant County Community Strategy Officer and
I. Hobbs - County Community Strategy Officer

North Devon District Council

S. Pitcher – Executive Director (Regeneration & Development), B.
Holme - Community Development Manager, J. Manson – Strategic
Development Officer and Mrs. J. Grigg - Member Services Co-ordinator.

Also Present

Madelene Klaasen-Bos – Network Rail

1 WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

S. Pitcher welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Community Alliance and requested that everyone present introduce themselves.

2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED, that Councillor Mrs. Shapland be appointed Chairman of the North Devon Community Alliance until re-appointments are made in the next municipal year.

It was recommended that as part of the review of the Community Strategy, consideration be given towards the appointment of an independent person from the voluntary sector as Chairman of the Community Alliance.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2003 (circulated previously) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising to be discussed.

5 ORDER OF AGENDA

The Alliance agreed to consider item 10 before item 6 on the agenda.

6 DE-REGULATION OF PHARMACIES

The Alliance noted a letter from the Office of Fair Trading (circulated previously) concerning its recent report into the control of entry regulations governing UK community pharmacies.

Sue Taylor, Secretary of North and East Devon Pharmaceutical Committee, advised that the Secretary of Trade and Industry had welcomed the study by the Office of Fair Trading but that it would be subject to further consultation. She further advised that the North and East Devon Pharmaceutical Committee was dismayed at its response.

The Alliance opposed the loss of further facilities in rural communities and debated issues relating to staffing, levels of service provided to patients, access to services and social exclusion.

It was agreed that the de-regulation of pharmacies be further considered by the Alliance, once the consultation document had been published.

7 DOWNSTREAM BRIDGE: STRATEGIC IMPACT

The Alliance received a presentation by Paul Ewing, Chief Engineer (Highways and Traffic) in relation to the strategic impact of the proposed Downstream Bridge on North Devon.

He outlined existing traffic problems in the Barnstaple, stating that 67% of traffic crossing the Longbridge had no purpose in the Town Centre and that the proposed bridge would remove 12, 000 vehicles from the Town Centre daily.

The Alliance considered the potential economic impact.

Mr. Trueman requested that consideration be given to buses transporting students to and from the North Devon College.

In response to a question regarding Phase IV of the Urban Relief Road, Mr Ewings advised the Alliance that it was a protected scheme but did not feature in the North Devon Strategy. When asked for his personal view of its place in the Local Plan, he said that his view was that it may be helpful to delete it.

The Alliance supported the suggestion for a study to examine the merits and viability of closing the Strand and Longbridge (except for public/sustainable transport) to encourage Barnstaple to become a pedestrian friendly Town Centre.

I. Hobbs stated that J. Deasy, Local Service Officer, was keen to explore the Community Transport Plan through the Barnstaple Alliance as a priority for Barnstaple.

Mr. Ewing advised that the impact on the A361 and A399 would be considered as part of the North Devon Zone Package.

The Alliance agreed that the Steering Group should propose a mechanism to help to derive maximum economic impact from the bridge and to shape and deliver the strategic opportunities over the next 3-5 years.

8 A FAIRER NORTH DEVON: A SOCIAL INCLUSION AND NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL STRATEGY – REPORT ON CONSULTATION

S. Pitcher briefly outlined a joint paper (circulated previously) regarding “A Fairer North Devon – A Social Inclusion and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy”.

The Alliance noted the paper and of particular relevance, the need for the Members of the Alliance to consider how to finance the final costs of preparing the plan.

9 LINKAGE WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY ALLIANCES

I. Hobbs briefly outlined a joint report (circulated previously) regarding links between the Local Strategic Partnership and local Community Alliances.

The Alliance supported recommendations 1- 5 as detailed on page 2 of the report.

10 PUBLICISING THE WORK OF THE ALLIANCE

S. Pitcher briefly outlined a joint paper (circulated previously) regarding public access to the work of the Alliance.

The Alliance agreed that the agendas and minutes of the North Devon Community Alliance be placed on the appropriate sections of the websites of both North Devon District Council and Devon County Council and that appropriate links be made to Partners and to the public.

11 ORDER OF AGENDA

The Alliance agreed to consider item 13 before item 11 on the agenda.

12 TORRIDGE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY STRATEGY

Councillor Mrs. Ferguson outlined a paper (circulated previously) in relation to the review of the Torridge Local Strategic Partnership and tabled a leaflet entitled "A Community Strategy for Torridge".

The Alliance supported the recommendations as detailed in the report and agreed to think more overtly about working with the Torridge Alliance on issues of common concern. Each thematic working group should consider headline themes in Torridge as part of its deliberations.

13 SIGNALLING MASTS ON THE TARKA LINE

The Alliance received a presentation by Madelen Klaasen-Bos in relation to proposed signalling masts along the Tarka Line.

The presentation centred on why the system was required including the safety of railways and travellers following on from the Cullen Report on railway accidents; and why some of the alternatives particularly the leaky feeder cable system had been rejected, which included engineering and cost grounds.

The Alliance engaged in a question and answer session.

S. Pitcher advised the Alliance that the North Devon District Council at its meeting on 23rd July 2003 had agreed to employ a consultant to provide a balanced view of the technical information regarding the proposed system. He further advised that the Executive had been requested to consider appointing an all-party group with power to act to engage with other interested parties with a view to recommending a way forward for the Council.

The Alliance requested to be kept up to date on the outcome of the meeting between Madelen Klaasen-Bos and the Strategic Rail Authority regarding clarification on the leaky feeder cable system as detailed on the Seamans Website.

The Alliance also requested further updates, particularly in relation to the leaky feeder cable system, engineering and cost grounds.

14 NORTH DEVON PRIMARY CARE TRUST'S MODERNISATION AND FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN

Peter Howgrave-Graham, Director of Development and Planning, outlined a report (circulated previously) regarding the North Devon PCT, Modernisation and Recovery Plan.

Councillor Pearson advised that should the Minor Injuries Units in Ilfracombe be closed overnight, 40% of the population of Ilfracombe who did not drive, would not therefore be able to access treatments centres in other areas.

The Alliance noted the summary of timescales as detailed in the report and in particular the monthly progress reports and project group reports to the PCT Board. It was recommended that response of the Board meetings be considered at the next meeting of the Alliance in October.

15 **PLANNING SCHOOL PLACES – THE SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN**

The Alliance received a brief presentation by Vicky Rollason, Group Manager, School Organisation and Access regarding the planning of school places and the School Organisation Plan.

She agreed to bring the presentation to appropriate local alliances and engage in the community planning process.

16 **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

The Alliance noted the items for information as detailed on the agenda.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 1.20 p.m.