

**Honiton Town Council
Policy Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held at the Town Council Offices, The
Beehive, Dowell Street, Honiton on Monday 28th November 2016

Members present**St Michael's Ward**

Cllr S Edwards (Chairman)
Cllr D Perkins
Cllr J Taylor
Cllr J Zarczynski

St Paul's Ward

Cllr P Halse
Cllr C Kolek

In Attendance

Cllr R Coombs
Cllr K Hopkins

Sarah Jenkins – Deputy Town Clerk

16/59 To receive apologies for absence

Cllr Delasalle (P); Cllr Lake (P); Cllr Mountjoy (P); Cllr K Smith (P); Cllr Wadsworth (P)

16/60 To receive declarations of interest and receipt of request for new DPI dispensations on items on the agenda

Cllr Perkins – Director of Beehive Companies

16/61 Confidential / exempt items

There were no items to be dealt with in this way.

16/62 Public Question Time on items on the agenda

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that there were no public questions.

Part A matters for decisions**16/63 To receive a report on the Heart of the South West Devolution Bid, to consider the implications for the town and to agree recommendations to the Town Council**

A report on devolution had been circulated in advance. Cllr Edwards introduced her report and highlighted the need for strategies to include the Honiton electorate in any devolution debate and process. It was noted that Devon County Council and Somerset County Council are opposed to the introduction of an elected mayor as this was considered to be inappropriate for rural areas. However, the concept of the Productivity Plan would proceed.

Cllr Edwards identified the need to ensure that Honiton is represented in discussions with East Devon District Council due to its relocation to Honiton and with Devon County Council as part of the devolution process.

Cllr Coombs joined the meeting as a member of the public

In discussion members made the following points:

- The Government does not appear to be behind the devolution process as funding is not being made available
- Involvement in the devolution process should be left to East Devon District Council
- Honiton will depend on businesses to drive forward the economy
- Larger authorities will not take notice of the voices of smaller authorities
- A similar exercise in the past (Market and Coastal Towns Initiative) had resulted in only one project being realised for Honiton ie. the Beehive
- Torbay did have an elected mayor but had found this to be unviable

- The community would expect the Town Council to be involved and to make representations on behalf of Honiton therefore some engagement in the devolution process is needed
- Public engagement could be combined with the Neighbourhood Plan consultation so as to make best use of time and resources

The following recommendations were agreed unanimously.

Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Town Council's public engagement on the devolution process be combined with the Neighbourhood Plan consultations as appropriate • That Cllr Edwards, as Chairman of the Policy Committee, attends the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to advise on devolution and to discuss strategies for a combined approach to public engagement

16/64 To receive an update on the proposals for the Council Tax Referendum principles, to consider the implications for the town and to agree recommendations to the Town Council

The Chairman expressed the hope that Councillors had responded individually to the consultation. There was nothing further to report, however, should the proposals go ahead the Town Council would need to make the public aware of the implications for the town.

16/65 To receive and note the notes from the Community Engagement Forum held on 15th November 2016

The notes of the meeting had been circulated in advance and were noted. The Committee wished to thank Cllr Mountjoy for her work with the Forum.

16/66 To close the meeting

The meeting was closed at 7.40pm.