

List of subjects which were updated by David Thomas at the Public meeting on September 19th, 2024.

Pavilion

DT stated that they are in the process of having the lease returned to them by MDL. Anticipate 01/10/2024. In discussions with English Heritage to discuss how the building can be secured.

Debenhams

DT Stated that they inherited the previous planning application that was approved for 14 apartments with retail, cafes and restaurants. However, this was not financially attractive to any investor, the balance of investment versus return made the proposal unviable. A larger development would be needed. Therefore, the council are now looking to procure the other buildings up to Hoopers. The Councils Investment partners are working with Willmott Dixon to achieve the result.

New Funding Plans

Update on the Skills Agenda and a Transport Agenda
However, these funds must be split 75% Capital and 25% Revenue

Living Coasts

DT/CL advised that Stephen King is the new CEO of the Wild Planet Trust /Zoo. Charitable status and the lease remain with them. SK has alleged met with 2/3 people regarding the lease: nothing forthcoming at present.

Anti-social Behaviour/ Operation Town Centre

Council are allegedly finalising proposals.

The question was asked if a new Warrant Officer is in post to work alongside a Council officer.

- DT advised that is a £300k new budget for additional enforcement officers, support and welfare staff
- DT/CL advised he is working Alison Hernandez of the PCC
- Two Public Spaces Protection Orders have been created. These have resulted in 190 drinks being removed between June to -August plus 30 dispersals in the same period.

Disposal of Tents

DT/CL advised that this is a concern. Caravans and cars can be moved on, tents are seen as the persons place of abode so cannot evict them.

A question was asked as to why notices cannot be put up banning tents; DT to investigate.

Factory Row

The Council are on the verge of taking over responsible for Factory Row. Government has given the Council £100k to help with Court costs. DT confirmed that lease has not yet been transferred to the Council. The average stay at Factory Row is currently 557 days, the council intends to reduce this by half.

Operation BrighterBay

DT advised that £300k had been put aside from last year's budget to clean up the "final mile" into the Bay & advised that despite Swisco having quad bikes to facilitate "weed spraying" the 2 new electric quad bikes were not fit for purpose and have had to be replaced with 2 diesel quad bikes. (costs were not forthcoming)

Another machine is apparently required for "weed ripping" at a cost of £100K. No substantive information was forthcoming on this item.

Harbour View Car Park

DT advised that Contractor has been appointed to remedy the issues with the Ramp and the weight restriction. Allegedly there will be structures put in place (similar to Acro props) and should be re-opened in early October.

Devon and Torbay Devolution Deal

DT stated that confirmation had been received from the Government of approval of Torbay's devolution proposals

- Aim for the Combined County Authority (CCA) to be made up of councillors from Torbay Council and Devon County council with representatives from the district councils and business and skills sectors to be in place by early 2025
- CCA will
- Oversee adult education
- Receive £16 million for green jobs, homes and business growth
- Collaborate with Homes England on affordable housing

My Bay

DT explained a card costing £10.00 will be available from 1st Jan 2025 which can be used for Parking and discounts in shops. Business can offer discounts to users and will be available for use from January 2025.

Pitch and Putt

Attendees asked:

Why is the P&P being closed?

- DT advised that the Council are responsible for the Barn and the Abbey, and the Barn was being damaged by golf Balls. SC advised DT that the cost of the actual repair to the Spanish Barn roof in the summer was made up of approx. £12k for the scaffolding and the balance of £9k was the cost of the fencing around the scaffolding and the actual roof repair. Due to the considerable age of the roof, it was impossible to confirm the exact damage made by balls but most of the disrepair was due to age.

Why was there no public consultation prior to revoking the lease?

- DT advised there will be a consultation once the P&P is closed.

Who is going to maintain this area when the lease holder leaves?

- DT advised that Swisco will maintain the area. Stated that all the fences will be removed, and the bunkers flattened.

What the site will be used for?

- DT advised "Events" in addition a kitchen and toilet block will be built on the rear of the Barn to facilitate catering.

Can a business plan be made available or where could it be seen?

- No answer given

Had the Council factored in the loss of income from the lease from the P&P and the Bowling Green.

- DT repeatedly responded that "it would be nice if the council received the money"

Fleet Walk

This information has been supplied by Cllr Chris Lewis:

Questions from the floor Why are there so many shops empty on the top level - could the rents be reduced to attract new tenants? Why are we not using a local agent?

- *We are very conscious about the void units on the Gallery. This is a result of several factors effecting in-town retail trading conditions. These have been challenging for several years stemming back to pre-Covid. A range of concessions/inducements are available for*

potential tenants which include reduction of rents and rent-free periods. That said, we are very pleased to welcome TSB Bank PLC into the Gallery. They are looking to open in late September/early October depending on how their current fit out progresses.

- We are also discussing the potential inclusion of a local agent in the scheme that will help with the marketing going forward. This is also linked to our discussions with Milligan's and their involvement with the shopping centre integration into the wider vision for Torquay Town centre.*

The whole complex could do with a coat of paint and the lift is always out of action?

- We have recently undertaken an asset condition survey of Fleet Walk. The report and findings are currently being collated. The condition survey prioritises works assessing the condition of the plant and equipment, building fabric and the general level of decoration. Clearly the highest priority will always be to address issues of building compliance and urgent works, ensuring the shopping centre remains safe to use. However, there is a budget for external repairs and maintenance, and I have asked colleagues to investigate external redecoration. The Council has recently invested significantly in the replacement of the ANPR parking system. This will improve the parking provision for customers and enhance the experience for visitors in vehicles. The main lift (Lift 7) is scheduled to shortly receive an upgrade. To this end this work is now ongoing in the preparation of the specification and the appointment of a contractor. It is envisaged this work will commence in the current financial year and once completed will see improvement in the reliability in the lifts.*

The plant tubs have had dead flowers in them for over a year!

- I am aware the centre should look aesthetically pleasing to the eye and having dead flower planters is not ideal. To this end, I have asked for the centre manager to investigate the situation regarding the flower beds and provide some commentary on planting over the winter and for next year.*

There is a restriction that shops must be closed by 18.30hrs - not helpful for some businesses.

- It is recognised this is not helpful. However, the Gallery level closure is an operational decision which has been in place for some time. Anecdotally levels of ASB increases if the Gallery remains open into the evenings and becoming challenging for security staff. The closure at 18.30 coincides with the changeover from daytime tonight security. That said, if tenants are keen to extend the opening hours, they are more than welcome to speak to either the Centre Manager and we'll see how we can accommodate the request.*
- The meeting lasted 2.5 hours and the Chair announced the meeting closed and thanked DT/CL/DC and all attendees for their contributions to the meeting.*

DT & CL remained for further discussions with remaining attendees.

Date of AGM will be published shortly.