

CITY COUNCIL

11 OCTOBER 2010

Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee Minute 51 of 18 June 2010

GOVERNANCE REPORT

The Corporate Solicitor presented the written report setting out proposed terms of reference and a draft list of powers for the Joint Committee. She highlighted the objective to raise the profile of the Committee and strengthen its links with the Cabinet and Council.

A debate ensued, the main points of which were noted as follows:-

- i) The Joint Committee's budget was ring-fenced by law and did not impact upon the revenue expenditure of the constituent Councils. Consequently, the proposed role of Cabinet was superfluous and would serve only to create an additional and unnecessary layer of bureaucracy and potential duplication in the decision making process, and place further demands upon senior officers in that they would be required to attend Cabinet meetings in each authority.
- ii) the proposed role of Cabinet should be more tightly defined, particularly the limit at which expenditure decisions would be taken by Cabinet.
- iii) Cabinet members could attend meetings of the Joint Committee if they wished. The draft terms of reference were acceptable and greater accountability could be beneficial.

In response to concerns raised, the Corporate Solicitor stated that the Joint Committee did not operate in isolation and aspects of its work were clearly linked to Cabinet functions, particularly in relation to strategic transport issues. She suggested that the Cabinet could add support, value and accountability to the Joint Committee's work. The General Manager would be enabled to take operational decisions within the framework of the Business Plan thus reducing the number of items to be reported to the Joint Committee. The Joint Treasurer (Cornwall) clarified that it was likely that only items involving expenditure additional to the approved budget and Business Plan would need to be referred to Cabinet and Council for approval.

It was moved by Councillor Trubody, seconded by Councillor Foster, and by 6:3 votes, it was

RECOMMENDED TO CORNWALL AND PLYMOUTH COUNCILS:

That the terms of reference appended to the officer report be adopted for the operation of the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee.

(Councillors Wheeler and Wright requested that their names be recorded as voting against the above resolution.)

Note:

*The full report in connection with this minute is available on the website
www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy
or by contacting Democratic Support on 01752 304867*