

# CABINET

11 FEBRUARY 2014



## TAMAR BRIDGE AND TORPOINT FERRY JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES 25 AND 26 OF 6 DECEMBER 2013

### 25 INCOME STRATEGY

The General Manager presented the written report setting out the results of public consultation in respect of the Joint Committee's preferred income strategy option.

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

- (i) the consultation period and two day hand out of leaflets and questionnaires had been insufficient although it was appreciated that to extend this would have incurred additional costs;
- (ii) it should be noted that very few of the responses were in support of the proposed monthly tag account fee;
- (iii) a number of responses favoured differential tolling;
- (iv) the table on Page 71 of the report showed that a majority of respondents favoured a cash toll increase. In view of this, the Joint Committee should reconsider the preferred option otherwise it would be ignoring the consultation results;
- (v) Saltash Town Council was opposed to a monthly tag account fee;
- (vi) a wider range of options may well have produced a different set of responses;
- (vii) the consultation was not a referendum and had raised no new material issues sufficient to alter the preferred option;
- (viii) the consultation had enabled the Joint Committee to assure itself that it had covered all the issues;
- (ix) with regard to the table on Page 71, 80% of those respondents were tag account holders so it was not surprising that the majority had expressed a preference for a cash toll increase;
- (x) a cash toll increase would necessitate a lengthy and costly Inquiry process;

- (xi) with regard to future income strategies, it would be helpful to obtain demographic data in relation to users of the crossings and undertake a socio-economic impact of any proposals.

In answer to issues raised in debate, the General Manager commented that:-

- (i) the financial model incorporating the strategy preferred option assumed a loss of 10,000 Tamar Tag accounts, but some of those users who had closed their accounts may still cross and pay cash;
- (ii) as far as he was aware the majority of respondents were opposed to a monthly tag fee but it should be noted that of the 1737 responses which included verbatim comments, only 273 pertained specifically to the Tamar Tag;
- (iii) the consultation exercise had been valuable and the leaflet was instructive in explaining why an increase in income was needed;
- (iv) respondents had not been categorised into business and private users.

Arising from consideration of the report and debate, it was proposed by Councillor Wheeler, seconded by Councillor Wright and by 5:3 votes, it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CABINETS OF CORNWALL COUNCIL AND PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL** - That a Tamar Tag Account Fee of 80p per month be introduced for implementation in April 2014.

It was proposed by Councillor Wheeler, seconded by Councillor Dolan and unanimously.

**RESOLVED** That the report be noted and an updated report be brought to the next meeting.

## **26 2014/15 REVENUE ESTIMATES AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Joint Treasurer (Cornwall) presented the written report setting out the proposed revenue budget, capital programme and key variations from the revised 13-14 Estimates. She further stated that the Reserves were forecast to remain at just above the determined minimum level of £2m.

A short debate ensued in which attention was drawn to a textual error in the list of budget variations appended to the report and the General Manager confirmed that the budget was designed to ensure that reserves remained at or slightly above the agreed £2 million level.

Arising from consideration of the report, it was proposed by Councillor Ellison, seconded by Councillor Holley, and unanimously it was

**RESOLVE TO RECOMMEND TO THE CABINETS AND COUNCILS OF  
CORNWALL COUNCIL AND PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL** That

- (i) the proposed revenue budget for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved;
- (ii) the proposed capital programme as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved;
- (iii) the longer term revenue forecast to 2017/18 be noted.