

Notes of 'Review of Teignbridge Assets' Meeting with Teignbridge District Council

Attendees:

- Parish Council: Clerk, Chairman
- Teignbridge District Council (TDC): Neil Blaney, Tom Phillips (Head of Assets)

Purpose of Meeting:

To discuss TDC-owned assets within Moretonhampstead Parish, following TDC's Strategic Asset Plan adopted in June 2024, which set out a three-year strategy including a review of the Council's estate.

Background from TDC

- The Strategic Asset Plan review is complete, and TDC is meeting with parishes to share initial findings and explore next steps.
- Meetings are intended as informal conversations to provide context on potential asset transfers.
- Tom Phillips' remit: review budgets, structures, overheads, and the rationale for TDC's asset ownership. He is assessing statutory vs. non-statutory assets:
 - Toilets are *non-statutory* and could potentially be run more efficiently by local councils.
- Wider context includes devolution and the creation of unitary authorities, which are likely to take a more dispassionate view of assets. TDC believes it is better to start conversations early.

Local Context (Parish Council)

- Public services divesting assets locally:
 - NHS: disposing of the Hospital.
 - Devon County Council: disposed of Library to the Library Trust (significant repair costs outstanding).
 - Parish Hall: major kitchen refurbishment underway.
 - Sports Centre: requires a new roof.
 - SWAST: seeking volunteers to replace the co-responder service.
- There is concern that services/assets are increasingly being passed to communities, leading to greater inequality and financial pressure on parish residents.

- Any TDC decision on asset transfer will therefore have a major impact on the parish.

TDC-Owned Assets in Moretonhampstead

Tom Phillips confirmed TDC owns:

1. Court Street car park
 2. Station Road car park
 3. Court Street toilet block
 4. Former toilets at Station Road
 5. Land at Kinsman's Dale
- Revenue-generating assets are less likely to be disposed of.
 - In 2024/25:
 - Court Street car park generated £46,036
 - Station Road car park generated £43,064

Parish Council Position

- Policy of not owning buildings.
- Court Street car park and toilets are seen as linked: car park income should offset toilet running costs.
- Concern: removal of toilets could affect bus service viability (end-of-line stop). Toilets are also used by North Bovey residents.
- Residents believe TDC has not managed car parks effectively – perception that Moreton is overlooked compared to other tourist destinations such as Widecombe, which has more favourable charging.

Points Discussed

- Alternative income generation: Neil suggested considering concessions (e.g. cycle hire, café) on surrounding land.
- Public consultation: Parish Council intends to ask the community for views on toilets and potential charging.
- Maintenance assessment: Tom advised the Parish Council to assess running costs, as TDC's costs are higher due to its wider responsibilities. Bovey Tracey TC was suggested as a useful case study (they have lowered their toilet running costs).

- Potential services: TDC asked if PC would consider taking on road sweeping. PC explained it trialled the lengthsman scheme, but it was not cost-effective. Waste collection is not feasible, though PC already pays TDC to empty the bin in the Sentry.
- Toilet building condition: Structurally sound, though TDC confirmed surveys will be carried out. No major TDC maintenance planned.
- Funding opportunities: Parish Council asked if grants might be available to support a transfer. Neil noted that UKSPF funding is TDC's major source but will be managed by the combined authority from next year.
- Commercial sensitivity: Some details cannot yet be made public.

Next Steps

- Tom Phillips is the Parish Council's main contact for future discussions.
- Parish Council to:
 - Consider a maintenance assessment of the toilets.
 - Plan for a public consultation.
 - Factor possible transfers into budget/precept planning.