



## Town & Parish Council Training Workshop 9<sup>th</sup> May 2014 Kilworthy Park, Tavistock, WDBC

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The workshop session focussed on discussing the main challenges that Our Plan needs to address over the coming 15-20 years.

The three workshop groups were given some suggested challenges already identified by officers, loosely grouped under the headings 'People' and 'Place'. It was acknowledged that some of the challenges were relevant to both headings. The suggestions below were raised by the workshop participants as other challenges that need to be addressed.

### **Place – additional challenges**

- Making the most of new technologies, including improvements to/consistent phone signals, Wi-Fi availability and broadband connections, thus avoiding unintended inequality for businesses across the Borough
- Making sure that this technology is planned for in advance and not retrofitted at the expense of householders
- Making our Borough a 'destination' location and promoting tourism across the area
- Protecting the tranquillity of our environment so that we can preserve the area as a special place to live and visit
- Encouraging businesses to work in partnership with other business to support different sectors of the economy
- Recognising the importance of flexible employment sites to meet emerging/changing needs
- Making the most of assets within each community
- Making the most of co-locating services in rural areas – understand how villages contribute to networks and what facilities are available within the network.
- Being clear about what we want to encourage and what we do not want to encourage
- 'Addressing' fuel poverty
- We should be seen to be actively encouraging all types of renewable energy in appropriate locations, not just solar and wind. However, one workshop group noted that there needs to be consideration to the amount of energy that can be generated rather than just providing renewable energy for the sake of it when it is often the case that the technology provides a limited amount of energy for local residents and businesses.
- Aim for an integrated transport plan with our partners which looks at transport links and our green footprint
- Rail links in particular were highlighted as well as the importance of lobbying for an alternative route to the Dawlish line

- Consider what we can do to enable/bring forward derelict/brownfield land more quickly (the Toll House and Focus site in Tavistock were used as examples)

## **People**

- Keeping our smaller villages and settlements sustainable, living communities
- Attracting a range of jobs so that we can retain young people and improve opportunities for people to afford homes in the area as well as showing that we are open for business and can meet changing demand
- Finding innovative and flexible housing solutions, particularly for our older population, through bungalow villages, sheltered housing and independent living complexes. These should be available across the Borough, not just in the larger towns.
- Understanding how our population is changing so we can plan properly.
- Improving the quality of life and income levels
- Improving the quality as well as quantity of jobs
- Providing appropriate facilities and infrastructure for elderly people
- Proactively bringing in jobs and business to West Devon
- Creating a better balance of affordable and market housing
- Encouraging more opportunities for people to live in the area who have local connections
- Continuing to support our voluntary sector who are valuable in our communities
- Stress the importance of Neighbourhood Plans and the benefits of having one
- Recognise the importance of recreation, particularly in terms of access, availability and location

## **General**

In addition, there was also some discussion about the merits in preparing a “wishlist” for what we would like to see in the Borough in an ideal world. This could be an expansion to the Vision. The Council could identify any constraints to delivery, but there could be a positive, enabling policy which allowed the items to come forward if the applicant could demonstrate that the scheme was viable, in a suitable location etc. Having an enabling policy may help to address concerns that items previously categorised as “desirable” in our Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) never come forward. Some participants stressed the need for more universally positive language.