

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Notes of the meeting of the Port Royal Scoping Study Reference Group held at Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Woolcombe Lane, Sidmouth, on Wednesday 15 February 2017

Present: Cllr. Jeff Turner (Chairman)
Cllr. Ian Barlow, STC
Cllr. David Barratt, EDDC
Dave Bramley, Sidmouth Vision Group
Alan Darrant, Sid Vale Association
Mel Gater, Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce
Deidre Hounsom, Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan
Cllr. Stuart Hughes, DCC Highways
Cllr. Paul Wright, STC

Also Present: Jonathan Andrews, Groupwest
Christopher Holland, Town Clerk, STC
Richard Cohen, Deputy Chief Executive, EDDC
Alison Hayward, Regeneration & Economic Development, EDDC
Ed Heynes, Jillings-Heynes Planning Ltd.
Karen Jenkins, Organisational Development and Transformation, EDDC
Alison Stoneham, Communications & Public Affairs, EDDC

Apologies: Cllr. John Dyson, EDDC

The meeting started at 7.30 am and finished at 8.50 pm.

1 **Welcome and Introductions**

The Chairman of the Group, Councillor Jeff Turner, welcomed everyone to the meeting including Ed Heynes of Jillings-Heynes who had been appointed as consultants for the Scoping Study and who was accompanied by Jonathan Andrews of Groupwest who would assist with the study.

Group Members introduced themselves and expressed their desire to help facilitate the study and to encourage community involvement and engagement.

2 **Notes of the last meeting**

The notes of the meeting of the Reference Group held on 20 October 2016 were acknowledged.

3 **Scoping Study Project Update**

The Chairman reminded Members that since the last meeting of the Reference Group, Jillings-Heynes had been chosen as the independent consultants to carry out the Scoping Study. It was noted that from a field of five companies, three had expressed an interest and tendered for the work with Jillings Heynes being chosen by the two Councils. This had been reported to the group, the current tenants and the press.

4 Introduction to Project Consultants

The Chairman of the Group introduced Ed Heynes of Jillings-Heynes who had been appointed as the consultants for the study together with Jonathan Andrews of Groupwest who would be providing assistance with particular regard to commercial viability. Ed Heynes commented that he was pleased to be appointed to such a high profile project and that he recognised the interest and work already done in connection with the site. He briefly outlined a number of similar public schemes for other areas including Bideford and Torbay and reassured the group that he had experienced similar levels of interest and challenges with sites before.

It was stressed that the consultants were acting independently to produce a report that both Councils would consider at the end of the process. The group noted that any recommendations in the final report would have to balance community aspirations and wishes with economic viability. Any proposals which might move forward from the study would have to be realistic and deliverable with a viable mix of uses.

The possibility to combine the forthcoming Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan second householder survey and questions which could be used by the study was agreed as being a sensible use of resources which would hopefully avoid 'consultation fatigue' and duplication of work.

5 Communications Update

Group Members discussed the forthcoming study and reemphasised the need to continue to provide good communication between the Councils and community via the gathering of as much relevant information as possible including previous studies and the views of stakeholders and public.

6 Next steps

The group noted that Jillings-Heynes would be carrying out their initial work to gather information and existing studies which would be followed by meeting with stakeholders. It was suggested that stakeholder meetings should be convened early in the study timetable after which the Reference Group could meet to discuss issues raised.

7 Next Meeting of the Reference Group

The next meeting of the Reference Group would be held once initial Stakeholder meetings had taken place.