

**Minutes of a Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council's  
Tourism and Economy Committee  
on Monday 8 March 2021 at 6.30 pm**

(Due to the current COVID-19 situation, the Tourism and Economy Committee met virtually as authorised by the Regulations set out in Clause 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020.)

Councillors present: Ian Barlow

Denise Bickley

Louise Cole

Charissa Evans

Deirdre Hounsom

Stuart Hughes

Invited Reps: Chamber of Commerce –Sally Mynard

Ignyte Ltd – Tina Veater

TIC Manager – Jeff Bailey

Tourism Advisory Cttee – Jo Watson

Sidmouth International Jazz & Blues Festival – Ian Bowden

JR Event Services – John Radford

Apologies: Alistair Handyside, Chris Lockyear, Marianne Rixson, Louise Thompson

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.40pm

**PART 'A'**

**66 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Tourism & Economy Committee meeting held on Monday 14 December 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record.

**67 Declarations of Interest**

Name	Item Number	Type	Action Taken	Details
Cllr Louise Cole	69 Jazz and Blues Festival 2022	Personal	Remained at the meeting during discussion but did not vote	Trustee of Sidmouth Coastal Community Hub

**68 Matters of Urgency & Report**

- The Chair reported that a meeting had been held recently with Sidmouth hoteliers, and MP Simon Jupp. Plans had been discussed to support the 2021 summer season and the hotelier's preparations for reopening. It was expected to be a very busy season and EDDC needed to be encouraged to expand its enhanced cleaning regime and reopen the public conveniences at Port Royal which were situated in an important visitor area of the town.
- The Chair and County Councillor Hughes gave an update with regard to the temporary traffic scheme and also the closure of The Esplanade from the lifeboat station to the turning circle at The Ham; it was hoped that this could become a permanent closure as part of a future traffic order which DCC were working on.

**69 Sidmouth International Jazz & Blues Festival 2022**

Following Members discussion and support for a Jazz & Blues Festival in Sidmouth at their meeting on 14 December, Director Ian Bowden, gave a presentation of the latest proposed plans for the Sidmouth International Jazz & Blues Festival due to be held 2 to 5 June 2022. Members continued to be very supportive of the plans to use venues around the town including The Ham and Blackmore and Connaught Gardens and felt that it would benefit not only residents and visitors with entertainment but also the economy of the town and wider area.

**RESOLVED:** That the Tourism & Economy Committee and Council continues support to enable the introduction of an International Jazz & Blues Festival in June 2022.

**70 Tourism Advisory Group Update**

Councillor Cole, Chair of the Tourism Advisory Group gave an update of the work being carried out by the group.

Councillor Evans reported that the Live Sidmouth website and Facebook page were developing well and commended the exceptional work being carried out by staff members Adele Salter and Liz Palmer.

Jeff Bailey reported that the TIC was expected to reopen on Monday 17 May after a number of refurbishment/redecorating works had been carried out. This would include the use of Visit Sidmouth branding, enabling of accommodation sales and the introduction of a variety of Visit Sidmouth products.

**RESOLVED:** That the Tourism Advisory Group reports be noted.

**71 Information Centre Manager's Update**

Jeff Bailey, Information Centre Manager, reported that the TIC closed on 4 January 2021 in line with the national government lockdown and although the budget had saved on staff costs there had been no income since that date and very little during the 2020 season.

**RESOLVED:** That the Sidmouth Information Centre Reports be noted.

**72 Tourism & Promotion Contract Update**

Tina Veater of Ignyte, presented the report of the promotional activity work carried out with and on behalf of the Town Council. The Town Map had been printed and would be distributed to Sidmouth businesses on Monday 19 and Thursday 22 April. The online Guide had been produced and issued via online and social media newsletters and website traffic continued to increase ahead of what was expected to be a very busy season.

**RESOLVED:** That the Tourism & Promotion contract update report be noted.

**73 Tourism & Promotion Budget Spend and committee 2020/2021**

The Chair presented the latest Tourism & Promotion Budget report.

**RESOLVED:** That the Tourism & Promotion Budget report be noted.

**74 Resources Working Group Project Update**

Members were asked to consider an update from the Council's Resources Working Group on current and future projects.

**RESOLVED:** That the Tourism & Economy Committee would continue to work with other committees and organisations to help progress the many projects outlined on the Resources Working Group report.

**75 Matters Raised by Invited Representatives**

The Chair reported that Alistair Handyside, South West Tourism Alliance, had recently reported to the Sidmouth hoteliers meeting and was working hard to lobby for additional support from the government for accommodation providers to recover from the Covid pandemic.

John Radford of JR Event Services gave a presentation regarding a proposed 'Connaught at Christmas' event, including craft & food markets and an illuminated walk through the gardens, to run from 7 to 12 December 2021. John was well known to the Council having helped organise the logistics for Sidmouth Folk Festival and assist the Council in running the Sidmouth Airshow. Members were very supportive of the event which they felt offered new opportunities for visitors and a chance for businesses to promote the town at an otherwise difficult time of year. They encouraged cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce which Mr Radford welcomed as he felt it offered opportunities to all businesses.

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CHAIR OF THE TOURISM & ECONOMY COMMITTEE