

**Minutes of a Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council's
Tourism and Economy Working Group
on Monday 13 December 2021 at 6.30 pm**

(Due to the COVID-19 situation, the Tourism and Economy Working Group met virtually)

Councillors present: Ian Barlow
Louise Cole
Kelvin Dent
Deirdre Hounsom
Steven Kendall-Torry
Hilary Nelson
Richard Thurlow

Invited Reps: Chamber of Commerce – Sally Mynard
Ignyte Ltd – Tina Veater
Acting TIC Manager – Tim Shardlow
EDDC Licensing Manager – Steve Saunders

Apologies: Jack Brokenshire, Charissa Evans, Chris Lockyear

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.55pm

PART 'A'

18 Minutes

The Minutes of the Tourism & Economy Working Group meeting held on Monday 13 September 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record.

19 Declarations of Interest

Name	Item Number	Type	Action Taken	Details
Cllr Kelvin Dent	25 Knowle Amphitheatre	Personal	Remained in the meeting during discussion and voting	Knowle Residents Member
Cllr Louise Cole	26 Street Trading	Personal	Remained in the meeting during discussion and voting	SCCH Director

20 Tourism Advisory Group Update

Councillor Cole, Chair of the Tourism Advisory Group, gave an update of the work that had been carried out by the Tourism Advisory Group since the last meeting and reported that she and Cllr Nelson were completing an Innovation Resilience Fund application to be sent to East Devon District Council and were continuing discussions with other nearby local towns to coordinate a tourism strategy, maximising the enhanced Visit Sidmouth tourism offer.

It was noted that a new Independent Shops film had now been launched on social media.

EDDC had launched an #EastDevonly brand, promoting the support of local businesses. Cllrs Barlow and Cole were meeting with EDDC representatives as no consultation/collaboration had been carried out with Visit Sidmouth prior to the release.

The TIC manager, Jeff Bailey had now retired and Tim Shardlow was working as acting TIC Manager in addition to supporting the TAG. A small retirement gathering had been held at the TIC where Jeff was presented with a gift from the Council.

RESOLVED: That the Tourism Advisory Group report be noted.

21 Information Centre Manager's Update

Tim Shardlow, acting Information Centre Manager, reported that the TIC was currently being staffed by himself, Di Dann and Mel Cole on winter hours until closing for the Christmas and New Year period.

Tickets for the 2022 Folk Week had commenced and it was anticipated that there would be high numbers of sales. The new TIC flag had attracted a number of both visitors and residents and there had been good feedback on the refurbishment and that the Town Council had continued to support the TIC to remain open.

The new Visit Sidmouth merchandise was now being sold via the TIC and Visit Sidmouth website; additional sales had been achieved by attending the Classic Car Show in September and it was anticipated that merchandise would also be made available for sale from The Arches café during 2022.

There was a need to maximise the Visit Sidmouth branding prior to and throughout Folk Week to recognise that Sidmouth Town Council provided the largest sponsorship to the event; Tim Shardlow and TAG would create a sponsorship agreement to be agreed with the Folk Week committee.

Cllr Hounsom reported that she would arrange another meeting with the festival/event organisers group, particularly with a view to integrating their ticket sales via the Visit Sidmouth website.

RESOLVED: That the Sidmouth Information Centre report be noted.

22 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; highlighting the fact that there had been 1.5 million page views on the Visit Sidmouth website. Since the website went live the number of users had increased by 39.9% from Aug 2020 to Dec 2021. The 2021 Town Map had included 57 businesses and there were currently 80 businesses signed up for 2022 with others still in discussion.

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

23 Tourism & Promotion Budget Spend and Committed 2020/2021

The Chair presented the Tourism & Promotion Budget report as at the end of October 2021.

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

24 Sidmouth Air Show 2021

The Town Clerk presented his report on the 2021 Sidmouth Air Show and a discussion on how the future of the event could be developed. It was agreed that a survey of traders, residents and visitors should be used to help evaluate the value of the event and that a report on this, together with an appraisal of benefits and disbenefits be brought before the full Council in the summer.

Councillor Richard Thurlow reported that he had held a meeting with interested parties to discuss whether additional activities could be included over the Bank Holiday weekend. There had been a very positive response and it was hoped that following further discussions individual clubs would work together, with support from the Town Council, to create a series of events.

RESOLVED: That:

1. the Sidmouth Air Show report be noted.
2. A group be created to consider the evaluation process and report back to T&E Working Group in March 2022; Members to be Cllrs Barlow, Dent, Nelson, Thurlow.

RECOMMENDED: That:

1. that the 2022 Air Show should take place in August 2022.
2. that a survey of traders, residents and visitors should be undertaken to help evaluate the value of the event and that a report on this, together with an appraisal of benefits and disbenefits be brought before the full Council in the summer.

25 Knowle Amphitheatre

The Town Clerk reported that following an initial assessment by an event organiser of the Knowle Amphitheatre area a number of serious health & safety issues had been found which would need to be highlighted with the County Council prior to sign off from EDDC and then transfer to STC.

The independent opinion was that only 150-180 people would be able to safely use the site at one time and a full safety report should be written by an open space consultant.

Members had been asked to consider the drafting of an appropriate booking and management procedure for future use of the Knowle Amphitheatre, to include charges and letting conditions, but this would need to be deferred until a later date when more information regarding remedial work was available.

RESOLVED: That the Knowle Amphitheatre report be noted.

26 Street Trading

In September 2019 Members had considered the report of the EDDC Licensing Manager, in respect of Street Trading in Sidmouth when it was resolved to discuss this further in the Tourism and Promotion TaFF.

At the March 2020 Tourism & Economy Committee meeting it was resolved that the Council would continue discussions with East Devon District Council and to gather evidence in order to review Street Trading in Sidmouth in the future.

The original report was circulated for Member's information and Steve Saunders advised that identifying safe locations would be key to considering allowing any future street trading in Sidmouth. It would also be possible to allocate specific date periods for a restricted number of streets/areas to enable further control by the Town Council, whilst enabling street trading at specific events such as Late Night Shopping. The overall process to change the Street Trading policy in Sidmouth, including public consultation, would take between 6 to 12 months.

RESOLVED: That:

1. The Licensing Manager to be asked to forward a summary of the additional information on licensing more specific areas to the Town Clerk who would liaise with other towns who had permitted trading streets to find out about any issues they may have experienced.
2. the Chamber of Commerce be asked to draw up a list of possible street trading places suitable in the town.
3. Street Trading be discussed again at the next Tourism & Economy Working Group meeting.

27 Matters Raised by Invited Representatives

Sally Mynard, Chamber of Commerce, reported that:

- The Chamber of Commerce wished to thank the Town Clerk, Town Council and volunteers for all the hard work to organise the Air Show which had been so successful for the town.
- Late night shopping had been disrupted by bad weather but had been enjoyable for those who had attended.

- The committee was currently working on preparations for the Jubilee celebrations in June 2022 including a Street Party.

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CHAIR OF THE TOURISM & ECONOMY WORKING GROUP