

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Assembly meeting of Sidmouth Town Council
held at Sidmouth Methodist Church Hall
on Monday 4 April 2022 at 6.30 pm

Ward	Councillors Present:
Sidmouth North	Charissa Evans
	Stuart Hughes
Sidmouth South	Kelvin Dent
	Chris Lockyear (Vice Chair)
	Hilary Nelson
	Rachel Perram
Sidmouth West	Louise Cole
Primley	Deirdre Hounsom
	Jeff Turner
Sidford	Jack Brokenshire
	Marianne Rixson
Sidbury	John Loudoun
Salcombe Regis	Ian Barlow (Chair)
Apologies:	Denise Bickley, Steven Kendall-Torry, Dawn Manley, Emma Murdoch, Richard Thurlow, Jenny Ware

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 7.40pm.

PART 'A'

1 Welcome from the Chair of the Council

The Chair, Councillor Ian Barlow, welcomed the attendees; all electors of Sidmouth Town Council wards had been invited to attend the meeting, and he thanked all Councillors and staff for all their work throughout the year.

2 Minutes of the Town Assembly held on Monday 19 April 2021

The Minutes of the Town Assembly meeting held on Monday 19 April 2021, which had been circulated with the agenda, were received and signed as a true and accurate record.

3 Reports

Members of the public were encouraged to make comments and ask questions at the end of each of the following reports.

3.1 Sidmouth Police

Police Officers Adam Speers and Kelly Edgar attended the meeting and reported that there were now 2 police officers in each of the main East Devon towns and they could be contacted via their email addresses or via the Town Clerk.

3.2 Member with Special Responsibility for Finance

Councillor Chris Lockyear, Member with Special Responsibility for Finance, presented the Finance Report showing a breakdown of the 2022-2023 budget compared with 2021/2022, with an explanation of any increases and decreases.

3.3 Chair of Tourism & Economy

Councillor Louise Cole gave a report regarding the work carried out by the Town Council's Tourism & Economy Working Group showing how the Tourism Strategy had been put into action with the new digital guide, printed Town Map, Visit Sidmouth website, TIC refurbishment and introduction of Visit Sidmouth merchandise.

The Tourism Strategy recognised that coastal towns and rural areas relied on having a resilient tourism economy to sustain themselves now and into the future and Cllr Cole outlined the Response, Recovery, Growth priorities for 2022.

Members were also reminded of the ongoing work to improve play facilities at The Ham and Long Park which would both have a positive impact on Tourism; draft designs were awaited which would then enter a consultation process to choose the final design for installation later in the year.

3.4 Chair of Planning

Councillor Kelvin Dent gave a report explaining that the primary role is to consider planning applications and give observations to East Devon District Council who are the planning authority and make the final decision. There have been 22 meetings with 228 applications considered during the last year and in approx. 90% of cases the Local Planning Authority followed the Town Council's recommendations.

70 applications to carry out work on trees in conservation areas and those covered by Tree Preservation Orders had also been considered and most had been given permission apart from those where a tree was healthy and made a significant contribution to the amenity of the area.

The Working Group had also been following the progress of the draft Local Plan; a number of sites had been proposed for new housing and the Working Group had responded that due to the area of the AONB the sites would all be contrary to existing planning policy.

The meetings would continue to be held via zoom to ensure the safety and convenience of Members and officers. Councillor Dent thanked Members and the Planning Clerk for their work throughout the year.

3.5 Chair of Environment

Vice Chair, Councillor Chris Lockyear, gave a report regarding the work carried out by the Town Council's Environment Working Group which worked closely with other local environmental groups and organisations such as the Biodiversity Group, Sidmouth Arboretum, Sid Vale Association and Sidmouth in Bloom.

The environmental projects carried out during the year included working with the Youth Centre to enhance its surroundings; 'Life on the Verge' which enabled rewilding of some areas encouraging increase biodiversity; thermal imaging of properties to inform householders of where they could reduce their carbon footprint; River Sid Fish pass group; development of a Tree Strategy and extensive discussions with South West Water and the Environmental Agency regarding sewage outfall on the seafront.

4 General Issues and questions

Members of the public were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions to Members of the Council concerning any issues within the Sid Valley area.

No comments were made, or questions asked of Members.

5 Grant Presentations

Ashlynn Lee from Sidmouth Hospice at Home (SHaH) gave a presentation regarding the work they do and how they intended to use the grant allocation made from this year's Town Council budget.

SHaH cared for people with life limiting illnesses in the Sid Valley and for their families and carers.

9 palliative care nurses were fully paid for by SHaH and they worked alongside 80 volunteers caring for those who were in the last year of life and supporting them in choosing their preferred place of death.

SHaH headquarters would be moving to the old Sidford Surgery building and this would also house a drop in centre; there was an Information Centre in town that was open Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm supplying information, advice and support.

The service costed approx. £700,000 per year and was funded solely by legacies and fundraising activities. Sidmouth Hospice at Home was the only hospice care service working in the Sid Valley and members were asked to help raise public awareness.

The Chair thanked those present for attending Sidmouth Town Council's Town Assembly giving special thanks to those who had given presentations.

.....
CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL