

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council
held at Sidmouth Methodist Church Hall
on Monday 5 September 2022 at 6.30pm

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

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 7.58 pm.

A minutes silence was held as a mark of respect and in memory of former long-time Councillor, Simon Pollentine, who was Chair of the Council from 1996 to 1998 and also for Gary Palmer, husband of member of staff, Liz Palmer, who had recently passed away.

PART 'A'

56 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 8 August 2022 were signed as a true and accurate record.

57 Declarations of Interest

Name	Item Number	Type	Action Taken	Details
Cllr Chris Lockyear	58(i)	Personal	Remained in the meeting during discussion	Governor of Sidmouth College
Cllr Louise Cole	58(v) & 59	Personal	Remained in the meeting during discussion	Director of Sidmouth Coastal Community Hub CIC

58 Matters of Urgency or Report from the Chair

- I. The Chair of Council reported that the recent set of A Level and GCSE results from Sidmouth College were excellent and amongst the best in the South West in terms of value add for GCSE. Disadvantaged students had a positive value add for the first time in a number of years.

RESOLVED: Members agreed that a letter of congratulations be sent to Sidmouth College.

- II. The Chair of Council confirmed that the Council is investigating providing its own separate Council emails for Members to allow Council and private emails to be better differentiated
- III. The Chair of Council confirmed the recent costly spate of vandalism at the Arches Toilets which had been reported in the press. Members agreed that all possible deterrents including charging for use should be investigated ahead of the final budget setting in the new year.
- IV. The Chair of Council confirmed that as President of the Twinning Circle, he would be inviting a delegation from Sidmouth's Twin Town of Le Locle to the Town for a Twinning Visit on 19 June 2023 for around a week. The Chair of Council would be attending a number of events and possibly be holding a small reception in Woolcombe House.
- V. The Chair confirmed that a draft document setting out some broad guidelines would be drawn up to help the Council respond to event consultations from the Principal Councils. It was hoped that if agreed by Members, the document may help in the future response to any event in the Council area.
- VI. The Chair of Council reported that the bus operator Stagecoach had been called to a public inquiry by the Traffic Commissioner. Devon County Council had been asked by the Traffic Commissioner to collate evidence and information and were asking for any representations to be sent to them. The Chair of Council also reported that he was contacting the other Chairs and Mayors to see if a coordinated letter and response could be sent to Stagecoach and the inquiry.
- VII. Members agreed with the Chair of Council, that a letter of thanks be sent to the Sidmouth Lifeguard Team, operated by Sidmouth Lifeboat, to thank them for their services during the summer.

RESOLVED: that a letter of thanks be sent to the Sidmouth Lifeguard Team.

59 Public Open Question Time

A Member of the Public attending asked the Chair of Council if he agreed that the Council should continue to support events in the town and that the Council should not be dissuaded or pressurised into adopting restrictions on such events at the request of individuals who may not speak for the majority of residents. The Chair of Council answered that the forthcoming broad guidelines on responding to events, would hopefully help in making sure that events continue within an agreed framework for the enjoyment of all.

60 Police Advocate Report

Councillor Dent gave a report on the latest crime figures and incidents as advised by Devon and Cornwall Police. In addition, it was noted that a new Chief Constable, Will Kerr OBE, had been appointed.

RESOLVED: that a letter congratulating Will Kerr OBE be sent and an invitation to visit Sidmouth made.

61 Working Group Reports

61.1 Planning Working Group Reports

a) Councillor Dent, Chair of the Planning Working Group, presented the reports of the Planning Working Group meetings held on Wednesdays 10 and 24 August 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Planning Working Group reports be noted.

b) Councillor Dent, Chair of the Planning Working Group, presented the report of an Informal Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council's Planning Working Group meeting held on Wednesday 17 August 2022.

RESOLVED: 1) That the informal meeting of the Planning Working Group meeting report be noted.

2) That because of the effect on the landscape and the strain on local services, the Council would continue to resist the allocation of housing on the sites proposed.

3) That the Chair of Planning would explore convening a meeting of representatives of the main towns together with Devon County Council, East Devon District Council and local MPs to discuss the strain on local services and infrastructure which the proposed housing allocation would only exacerbate.

61.2 Tourism & Economy Working Group

Councillor Cole, Chair of the Tourism & Economy Working Group, advised that the Working Group would be meeting on 12 September and asked Members to note the date change of the following meeting of the Tourism & Economy Working Group meeting from 12 December to 21 November 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Tourism & Economy Working Group Report be noted.

61.3 Environment Working Group

Councillor Barlow, Chair of the Environment Working Group reported that the Working Group were meeting at the end of October but were currently collating a number of project costings to include at the Pre Budget meeting on 17 October 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Environment Working Group Report be noted.

61.4 Council Resources Working Group

Councillor Lockyear, Chair of the Council Resources Working Group advised that there was due to be a meeting of the group on 8 September 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Council Resources Working Group Report be noted.

61.5 Youth Provision Working Group

Councillor Cole, Chair of the Youth Provision Working Group, advised that there was a meeting of the group on 6 September. Members were also reminded of the 'Skate Jam' which had been rescheduled for Saturday 10 September from midday.

Councillor Lockyear, Chair of Council added that the recent fire damage to the Youth Centre had been dealt with quickly by both the Fire Service, Police and Young Devon.

RESOLVED: That the Youth Provision Working Group Report be noted.

62 Reports from Members with Special Responsibilities

62.1 Finance Report

a) Councillor Thurlow presented the Finance Report for July 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Finance Report for July 2022 be noted.

b) Members were asked to note the receipt of completion of review of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) from the Town Council's auditor; PKF Littlejohn. The statutory Conclusion of Audit Notice for 2021/2022 had been advertised on the Town Council's website.

RESOLVED: That the completion of review of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return be noted.

62.2 Other Reports from Members with Special Responsibilities

a) Councillor Lockyear updated Members on recent communications he had made on behalf of the Council with the Environment Agency and South West Water. Both had replied to enquiries by the Council but had also not answered a number of questions leaving many issues unresolved regarding the use of sewage overflows. Members were also concerned over the recent press releases by the EA which were accepted by the public as official warnings when in fact in many cases they were forecasts only. This had a huge impact on towns and communities in terms of wellbeing and their economies.

63 Council Meetings

The Chair of Council asked Members their views on returning to the Council Chamber at Woolcombe House for full Council meetings. There was general consensus amongst Members that whilst the Methodist Hall was an excellent space, the different situation with regard to health guidance, the difficult acoustics and cost factors meant that they would support returning to Woolcombe House for full Council meetings. The Chair of Council advised that he would be canvassing those members who had given apologies but that it would be possible that meetings from October might return to the Council's Council Chamber at Woolcombe House.

.....
CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL