



SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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7 September 2023

To: All Members of the Tourism & Economy Working Group
(Cllrs: Ian Barlow, Lorraine Brown, Stuart Hughes, Chris Lockyear, John Loudoun, Hilary Nelson, Rachel Perram, Kevin Walker)

Invited Representatives:

Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce Representatives (x2)

South West Tourism Alliance

Sidmouth Information Manager

For Information:

Other Members of the Council

Town Clerk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Meeting of the Tourism & Economy Committee Wednesday 13 September 2023 at 6.30pm

You are called upon to attend the above meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Woolcombe Lane, Sidmouth. It is proposed that the matters set out on the agenda below will be considered and resolution or resolutions passed as the Town Council considers appropriate.

The Chair of the Committee has the right and discretion to control questions to avoid disruption, repetition and to make best use of the meeting time. Individual contributions will be limited to a maximum period of three minutes.

Yours faithfully,

Christopher E Holland
Town Clerk

A G E N D A

Page/s

1 Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Tourism & Economy Committee meeting held on Monday 7 June 2023.

4 – 7

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| 3 | <p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>To receive any Members’ declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda. Note: You must also declare the nature of any personal or prejudicial interests in an item whenever it becomes apparent that you have an interest in the business being considered.</p> | |
| 4 | <p>Matters of Urgency and Report</p> <p>To consider any items that in the opinion of the Chair should be dealt with as matters of urgency because of special circumstances. (Note: such circumstances need to be recorded in the minutes)</p> | |
| 5 | <p>Exclusion of the Public</p> <p>To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There are no items which the Clerk recommends should be dealt with in this way.</p> | |
| 6 | <p>Tourism & Promotion Advisory Group Update</p> <p>To receive an update from the Chair of the Tourism & Promotion Advisory Group, Councillor Hilary Nelson on their recent work.</p> | |
| 7 | <p>Information Centre Updates</p> <p>To note the Sidmouth Information Centre Finance Report and TIC Visit Sidmouth sales for the period ending July 2023.</p> | 8 – 9 |
| 8 | <p>Tourism & Promotion Contract Report</p> <p>A written update of recent promotional activity and Ignyte’s work with Sidmouth Town Council has been provided by Tina Veater.</p> | 10 |
| 9 | <p>Tourism & Promotion Finance Report</p> <p>To receive the Tourism & Promotion Finance Report for the period ending July 2023</p> | 11 |
| 10 | <p>IRF Project Update</p> <p>To receive an update from the Chair of the Tourism & Economy Committee and note the IRF Finance Report for the period ending July 2023.</p> | 12 |
| 11 | <p>Sidmouth Regatta and Air Show</p> <p>To receive a report relating to the 2023 Regatta and Air Show. To review the Sidmouth Regatta 2023 and to consider plans for 2024 and beyond, including how the event could be enhanced by additional or alternative activities or by adopting new practices.</p> | |
| 12 | <p>Visit Sidmouth – Trails</p> <p>To consider the proposal to add the Trails map functionality to the Visit Sidmouth website in order to promote walking, cycling and other tours in conjunction with other organisations. Details of the proposal are attached.</p> | 13 |
| 13 | <p>Request to sell ice-creams and snacks at The Ham</p> <p>At the June Trustee meeting it was resolved that:
The benefits and disbenefits of a formal concession to permit the sale of Ice Creams and snacks by an operator at the Ham for 2024, be investigated by the Tourism and Economy Committee.</p> | |

14 **Fishermen's Sheds – Sidmouth Trawlers – Fish & Chip Trailer**

At the August Trustee meeting it was resolved that:

The benefits and disbenefits of a formal concession to permit the sale of fish and chips from the Fisherman's Sheds area for 2024, be investigated by the Tourism and Economy Committee.

15 **Matters Raised by Invited Representatives**

To consider any other items or matters to be raised by the representatives of

a) South West Tourism Alliance.

b) Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce.

**Minutes of a Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council's
Tourism and Economy Working Group
held in the Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Sidmouth
on Wednesday 7 June 2023 at 6.30 pm**

Councillors present: Ian Barlow

Stuart Hughes

Chris Lockyear

Hilary Nelson

Rachel Perram

Kevin Walker

Invited Reps: TIC Manager – Tim Shardlow

Apologies: Cllr John Loudoun

Chamber of Commerce – Sally Mynard

Ignyte Ltd – Tina Veater

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.10pm

PART 'A'

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the Tourism & Economy Committee meeting held on Monday 13 March 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest received for items on this agenda.

3 Tourism Advisory Group Update

Councillor Nelson gave an update of the work that had been carried out by the Tourism Advisory Group since the last meeting and reported that:

- The TAG had met twice, 17 April and 5 June, and had been working on new promotions, updating the Visit Sidmouth website and a new video promoting festivals held throughout the year.
- There would be two additional videos produced during the year; one to promote Family Friendly and Affordable holidays in Sidmouth and another highlighting Independent Retail and would be issued in late summer to cover the shoulder season.
- Discussions were being held to create a town Christmas Light Trail as the Christmas at Connaught event would not be held this year. The Light Trail might include static lit statues and a food event on The Ham selling mince pies and mulled wine etc.
- There would be a new virtual tour on the website which would include audio/video commentary.
- Sidmouth's Blue Flag Beach status had been retained and the TAG in conjunction with the Chair of the Council were producing a fact sheet for residents, visitors and businesses to alleviate any concerns over river outflow issues.
- The TAG had received feedback from businesses who had reported that they were really struggling with lack of customers, there were fewer visitors who were very late bookings, shorter stays and spending less.

RESOLVED: That the Tourism Advisory Group report be noted.

4 Information Centre Updates

Councillor Nelson presented the Sidmouth Information Centre Finance Report and TIC Visit Sidmouth sales for the financial year ending March 2023.

Tim Shardlow, Tourist Information Centre Manager, gave an update of TIC activities and reported that:

- The TIC was now operating on 'summer season' hours of 10am to 5pm Monday to Saturday and 10am to 4pm Sunday, with two members of staff. Footfall was averaging at over 100 per day and were split approximately 40% local residents and 60% visitors.
- The new Giant Deckchair had arrived and would be positioned on the Esplanade shortly and it was hoped to be a popular photo opportunity.
- 20,000 Town Maps had initially been printed, received and were being distributed; these were again proving to be very popular this year.
- The Manor Pavilion Summer Play season would be starting at the end of June and running until September.
- 2023 year was the Bicentenary year for Sidmouth Cricket Club who had many events planned during the summer.
- The TIC had sold tickets for the 2023 Jazz & Blues Festival headline acts and had developed a very good relationship with the organising team.
- Folk Festival sales were currently more than double those of 2022. All tickets sales were sold at a 10% commission rate to support the TIC administration costs.
- The TIC was holding the register for booking the Walking Festival trips running from 16 to 22 September. Other shoulder season events include the Science Festival and many Christmas events.
- Unfortunately, there would be no coach day trips available from Sidmouth this year; Greenslade Tours had ceased trading and a new company Wayfarer Tours had managed to run one coach trips before their coach provider had withdrawn their services.
- Concerns were raised about the difficulties of obtaining car season tickets which was effectively excluding some vulnerable visitors and residents from accessing this reduced cost service. District Councillor Ian Barlow reported that he would raise this issue with the appropriate officer at the District Council.

RESOLVED: That the Sidmouth Information Centre reports be noted.

5 Tourism & Promotion Contract Update

In the absence of Tina Veater, Ignyte, Cllr Nelson presented the report of the promotional activity work carried out with and on behalf of the Town Council and described the functionality of the new, improved Visit Sidmouth website.

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

6 Tourism & Promotion Finance Report

The Chair presented the Tourism & Promotion Finance report for the financial year ending March 2023.

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

7 IRF Project Update

The Chair presented the IRF (Coast Meets Country project) Finance report for the financial year ending March 2023 and gave an update on the progress of the IRF Project:

- The IRF project deadline had been extended to December 2023 to enable final parts of the project to be completed.

- Councillors Nelson, Barlow and Ignyte's Tina Veater would be visiting the partner towns representatives to encourage further involvement in the project which would be beneficial to the whole district.
- The IRF project focus had moved towards the sustainable tourism part of the program, partnering with businesses who were already working with a green agenda and would become Change Maker Champions and acting as exemplars in order to create a Sustainable Tourism Roadmap and Carbon Action Plan and this would promote a culture of collaboration with the business community in the area.
- Free online training videos were being made available for businesses which would support them in their transition to a more sustainable approach.

RESOLVED: That the IRF Project report be noted.

8 Sidmouth Regatta

Cllr Perram, Chair of the Sidmouth Regatta Working Group gave an update and reported that:

- Meetings had been held with representatives of the various groups running events over the regatta weekend. The next meeting would be held at the end of June.
- One of the main concerns raised was the issue of obtaining insurance to run the Three-Legged and Raft races which was proving difficult to obtain.
- It had been suggested that a Fancy Dress paddleboard race could be held which should be covered by the insurance held by Sidmouth Jurassic Paddleboards trading on the beach during the summer months.
- Due to restrictive trading laws on the seafront, it had been suggested that food outlets be invited to trade on The Ham during the afternoon and evening of the Regatta Air Show. In addition to this it was hoped that Red Arrows merchandise would also be available for sale.
- More volunteer collectors were needed this year, with as many collection buckets as possible throughout the town, these could have QR codes and information regarding giving donations via text.
- Jurassic Fibre would be approached to discuss the feasibility of creating wifi hotspots around the town to ease issues with mobile phone usage during the event.
- Groups had been asked to submit requests for funding for prizes they may wish to present at the end of their events. These requests would then be considered at a future Council meeting.
- The Town Clerk confirmed that the seafront PA system would be left in position for both the Saturday and Sunday events during the regatta weekend.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) The Sidmouth Regatta Working Group report be noted and Members be thanked for their work in planning for this year's events.
- 2) Discussions would be held between Cllrs Nelson, Perram, the Town Clerk and J R Event Services to finalise plans for street collections, receiving donations via other methods, trading on The Ham and creating wifi hotspots to ease issues with mobile phone usage during the event.
- 3) An urgent item be added to the next Trustee meeting agenda to consider permission for trading on The Ham for food outlets and Red Arrows merchandise during the afternoon and evening of the 2023 Air Show.

9 Matters Raised by Invited Representatives

Councillor Ian Barlow made a suggestion of behalf of the Chamber of Commerce:

- A suggested figure of £10,000 be considered for the 2023/24 budget to support the purchase of individual cameras of a suitable quality which would enable one month's recording and police access to data. These could be distributed to interested businesses who would be responsible for the installation and ongoing running costs.

RESOLVED: That a sum of £10,000 for CCTV cameras be considered for inclusion in the Pre-Budget schedule.

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CHAIR OF THE TOURISM & ECONOMY WORKING GROUP

Sidmouth Tourist Information Centre - Income and Expenditure Report **Month 4 - July 2023**

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Budget	Budget Balance
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Salaries	12,475	34,000	21,525
Cleaning & Office Mtce	2	500	498
Business Rates	1,336	2,700	1,364
Photocopier	35	200	165
Stationery	53	100	47
Telephone	645	1,700	1,055
Postage & Packing	118	100	-18
Sundries, Provisions, Equipment	41	100	59
Bank/Credit Card/Shopify Charges	1,002	1,400	398
Purchase of Stamps	0	1,000	1,000
Purchase of Publications	510	2,000	1,490
Purchase of Goods/Souvenirs	0	200	200
	£16,217	£44,000	£27,783

<u>Income</u>			
Sale of Stamps	207	1,000	793
Sale of Publications	1,485	4,000	2,515
Sale of Souvenirs	305	1,000	695
Sale of Adult Merchandise	239	1,000	761
Sale of Children's Merchandise	15	100	85
Commission - Sidmouth Folk Festival	2,879	4,000	1,121
Commission - Coaches	0	100	100
Commission - Jazz & Blues Festival	164	0	-164
Sundry Income	65	100	35
STC Funding	10,000	32,700	22,700
	£15,359	£44,000	£28,641

Total Expenditure	£16,217	£44,000	£27,783
Total Income	£15,359	£44,000	£28,641
Net Expenditure over Income	£858	£0	-£858

Current/Deposit Bank Accounts £27,268

Visit Sidmouth Merchandise - Sales 2023-24

Product - Sales	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	2023-24 Sales to date	2023-24 Sales Income	Total 2021-22 Sales	Total 2022-23 Sales
Coffee Cup	1	1											2	£14.16	12	12
Vacuum Flask													0	£0.00	18	11
Plastic drinks bottle		1	1	1									3	£20.61	14	9
Jute bags	1	4	3	3									11	£59.62	31	40
Umbrella	1			1									2	£25.00	6	2
Adults cap		2	4	2									8	£80.00	18	14
Polo Shirts			2										2	£40.00		8
Children's cap													0	£0.00	3	6
Children's T-Shirts			1										1	£15.00		
	3	8	11	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	£254.39	102	102

Visit Sidmouth – summary

Tourism Landscape

The summer has been tough for many Sidmouth businesses, accommodation providers have had vacancies for the first time for 4 years and have had to promote offers to fill the bed spaces. Many restaurants and food and drink businesses have struggled with staff and therefore not opened 7 days a week over the summer, reducing their income and profits. Due to the cost of living crisis many visitors chose to spend time on day trips with picnics from home rather than the weeklong family break that they might have taken previously. Visitors that were staying overnight stayed for shorter periods of time and this puts additional strain on accommodation providers who need to do more turn arounds of laundry, cleaning etc due to shorter stays. It has been a much harder summer than we have seen over the post Covid years.

Devon announced that visitors were 20% down on last year for July and August and Cornwall also stated a drop of 15%.

Visitor spend has also seen a reduction on previous years due to families bringing picnics with them etc as they simply do not have the accessible income that they have in previous years.

Website

The new website is performing well and the hope of retaining users for longer has been successfully achieved with an average of 2.83 pages being viewed by users and a dwell time of over 2.3mins. Sidmouth Air Show drove a huge number of people to the website and the webcams this year with 2461 users in 2022 and a huge 4825 in 2023. At one stage there were over 100 people on each webcam in the queue waiting to take control of the cameras. We believe that the increase in webcam traffic this year was due to the weather as many social media comments stated that they didn't attend for fear of getting wet!

Users viewing the website on mobile devices is continuing to grow and this increased to 57% of the total users across July and August.

Organic search remains high with 70% of the users being served the website in response to their search. This shows the SEO work that is ongoing is working well.

Google Analytics 4 went live for Visit Sidmouth on 11th August which means that the new metrics for reporting data can no longer be compared to previous years as the reporting of data is no longer the same.

Town Map 2024

The sales effort for the 2024 Town Map is underway with a view to generating the Town Map so it is in destination for February 2024.

There is limited stock for the 2023 map available, but copies can still be collected from the TIC for any businesses that need replenishment.

Visit Sidmouth Guide 2023

The Visit Sidmouth guide has been read by 6,753 users digitally with 572 downloading a copy onto their hard drives for future reference. The guide has had 13,912 impressions since its digital launch in March 2023.

Social Media

Our social media channels continue to grow with 10,860 followers across Facebook and Instagram and 615,683 impressions and 33,781 engagements over the summer period from June to August.

We have also launched a TikTok channels and post some amazing video creations to drive engagement. We have 229 followers and 272 likes on the channel so far.

We also launched a page on Threads on the day of its launch and continue to post regularly on this channel to with 327 followers.

Tourism Promotion Budget & Spend 2023/2024

Item	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Spend to date	2023-24 Budget	% Spent
Ignyte Service Agreement													£0	£23,977	0%
Ignyte Sales Income			-1,089	-1,624									-£2,713	-£26,000	10%
Visit Sidmouth Website Development costs/updates													£0	£3,850	0%
Social Media Advertising													£0	£2,000	0%
Video Production													£0	£4,000	0%
Visit Sidmouth products													£0	£1,000	0%
Town Map	940	25	104										£1,069	£7,000	15%
Promotional Material: e.g. Ad Spend, Signs, Editorial			774										£774	£3,500	22%
Training & Events													£0	£3,500	0%
Visitor Survey/Evidence Base Research													£0	£1,173	0%
Net Council Budget	940	25	-211	-1,624	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-£870	£24,000	-4%
Budget remaining														-£24,870	

Earmarked Reserve brought forward

Jazz & Blues Festival grant	3,000													£19,381	
Budgetted items from EMR:														£3,000	
Virtual Tour for Sidmouth Festival & Events additional grants													5,800	£5,800	
EMR remaining													3,000	£3,000	
														£7,581	

Tourism Information Centre 2023/2024

Item	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Spend to date	2023-24 Budget	% Spent
TIC Salaries	2,433	2,076	4,290	3,676									£12,475	£34,000	37%
Other Expenditure	376	2,095	265	496									£3,232	£6,800	48%
Purchase of stock			240	270									£510	£3,200	16%
Sales Visit Sidmouth merch	-25	-56	-118	-55									-£254	-£1,100	23%
Sales stamps, publications, etc	-281	-438	-787	-556									-£2,062	-£6,100	34%
Commission on ticket sales	-85	-1,360	-894	-704									-£3,043	-£4,100	74%
STC Funding			-5,000	-5,000									-£10,000	-£32,700	31%
Total	2,418	2,317	-2,004	-1,873	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	£858	£0	

Innovation & Resilience Fund Budget & Spend 2023/2024

Item	Spend 2022/23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Spend to date	Budget	% Spent
Branding Support	19,000													£19,000	£19,000	100%
Bespoke Video Content	18,496													£18,496	£18,000	103%
Webpage Development	41,011			258	8,885									£50,154	£55,471	90%
Creation of Linked Content	10,570													£10,570	£10,570	100%
Website Accessibility	1,830													£1,830	£1,830	100%
Sustainable Tourism Area Webpage Development	5,655				5,994									£11,649	£22,260	52%
Sustainability Video Content	0													£0	£2,000	0%
Sustainability Training & Support	5,000		4,000	343										£9,343	£15,000	62%
Project Manager Consultancy Fee	9,644			1,811										£11,455	£22,000	52%
Additional Linked Content - Honiton and OSM	5,750													£5,750	£8,000	72%
Equipment for Sustainability Training	1,822													£1,822	£2,078	88%
Net Council Budget	118,778	0	4,000	2,412	14,879	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	£140,069	£176,209	79%
Budget remaining															-£36,140	

Innovation & Resilience Fund Income 2023/2024

Item	2022/23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Income to date	Budget	% Spent
EDDC I&R Fund	146209													£146,209	£146,209	100%
Sidmouth TC	22000													£22,000	£22,000	100%
Ottery TC	5000													£5,000	£5,000	100%
Honiton TC	3000													£3,000	£3,000	100%
Seaton TC														£0	£0	
Budleigh TC														£0	£0	
Total	176,209	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	£176,209	£176,209	100%

Objective

Simpleview will create a new Trails collection widget. It will allow you to build a map with paths using KML files imported from 3rd party providers or built using [Google's Map tool](#).

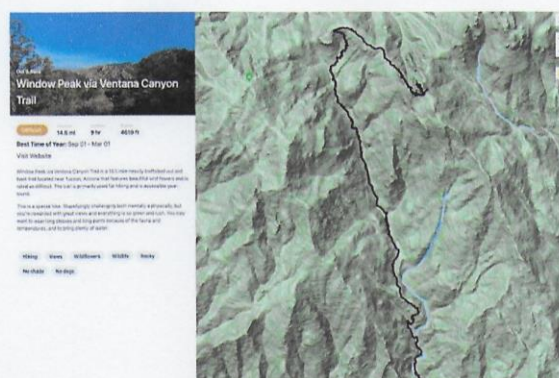
Specifications

An example "Trail" item is shown to the right. CMS Users will be able to create as many trail items as they might like.

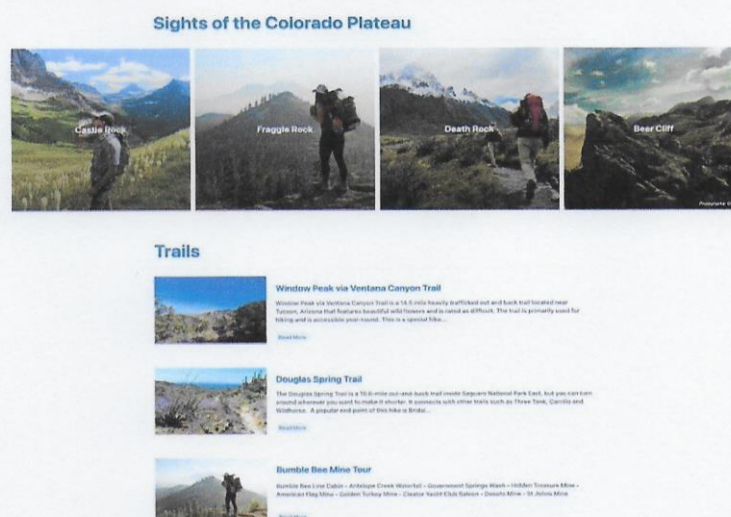
The Trails collection features include:

- Ability to plot paths between points
- Mobile Friendly
- Photos
- Difficulty Level
- Distance
- Duration
- Ascent /Descent
- Best time of year to go
- Website
- Description

A live client example can be seen here.



All Trails that are created can be displayed via a Collection widget for easy viewing and exploration. Example shown below:



Please note: There is no need for design as the widget will adopt the theme styles from your site. We are also not doing any customizations to the fields available for this data type.

Cost Summary

This estimate is based on the above stated work. If the scope of the job changes then additional costs may be incurred. Quoted prices are subject to running costs at time of production and VAT at current rates. Quotes are valid for 90 days and prices may change outside this period.

Item	Set-Up	Annual Fee
Trails Collection Widget	£1,488	£465