

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council
held at the Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Sidmouth,
on Monday 3 March 2025 at 6.30pm

Ward	Councillors Present:
Sidmouth North	Stephen Blakeway Bernie Davis Stuart Hughes
Sidmouth South	Kelvin Dent Paul Dodds Chris Lockyear (Chair) John Nicholson
Sidmouth East	Lorraine Brown
Primley	Hilary Nelson (Vice Chair) Kevin Walker
Sidford	Mike Goodman
Salcombe Regis	Ian Barlow Edward Willis Fleming

Apologies: John Loudoun, Rachel Perram

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.00pm.

PART 'A'

113 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 3 February 2025 were signed as a true and accurate record.

114 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received at this meeting.

115 Matters of Urgency or Report from the Chair

- The Chair reported that there would be an informal meeting of members on 28 April ahead of the Annual Council meeting
- The Chair reported the retirement of the Council's Finance Officer. Members noted that a recruitment process had already begun.

116 Public Open Question Time

- Cllr Willis Fleming asked County Councillor Hughes if the County Council's Tree Officer could attend a future meeting to discuss planting trees alongside/on some of the wider footways.
Cllr Hughes answered that if the desired sites were sent to him, he would discuss this with the Tree Officer and start the process of working together on such a project.
- Cllr Brown asked County Councillor Hughes when the ford in Mill Street would reopen.
Cllr Hughes answered that maintenance work by the Environment Agency (EA) to the gates was still ongoing and that the EA were awaiting some parts for the gates in order to reopen them.

117 Police Advocate Report

Cllr Nelson reported that the Police had noted the town had been relatively quiet with regard to crime recently with a new policing strategy for Manstone. However there had been continuing vandalism at the Port Royal construction site and at Manstone Football Club.

RESOLVED: That the Police Advocate report be noted.

118 Committee/Working Group Reports

118.1 Planning Committee Report

Councillor Dent presented the reports of the Planning Committee meetings held on Wednesdays 29 January and 19 February 2025.

RESOLVED: 1) That the Planning Committee report be noted and agreed.
2) That the author of the Town Council's Housing Needs Survey be invited to a future meeting of the Council to make a presentation on his report and answer questions.

118.2 Tourism and Economy Committee Report

Cllr Nelson reported that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 19 March.

118.3 Environment Committee Report

Councillor Barlow reported that the next meeting of the Environment Committee would be held on Monday 14 April.

RESOLVED that:

118.4 Council Resources Working Group

The Chair reported that the Resources Working Group had met twice recently. The Group had been looking at options for Longpark and Arches Toilet refurbishment, Knowle Car Park extension, the former Youth Centre site and Local Government Reorganisation.

Members expressed continued concern at the apparent lack of progress to provide sufficient toilets at Port Royal.

118.5 Youth Provision Committee

Cllr Nelson reported that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 26 March. It was noted that the recent Working Together conference hosted by the Council at Kennaway House had been very successful and thanks were expressed to the Councils staff and Cllrs Davis Dodds and Hughes for their involvement.

It was noted that the forthcoming directory of activities for young people was progressing well and the response from clubs and societies had been excellent. A Freshers Fair would be held at Sidmouth College on 28 March supporting the project which included a grant process for those young people on the Early Help scheme. A procedure for administering the grant was being worked up.

119 Reports from Members with Special Responsibilities

119.1 Finance Report

Councillor Lockyear presented the Finance Report for January 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Finance Report for January 2025 be noted.

119.2 P3 – Parish Paths Partnership

Councillor Walker updated members on the project to improve the state of Footpath 59 from the Millenium Green to Sidbury Mill. It was noted that the P3 Team would be including the work in the in programme for the current year. The exact timing was yet to be agreed on and a procedure for notifying residents had been agreed with the Town Clerk. More volunteers were still very much required to assist the work teams and another Councillor would be helpful to join the P3 team.

Cllr Walker also praised the DCC Public Rights of way team and STC staff for their helpful support.

RESOLVED: That the P3 Report be noted.

119.3 Climate Awareness Partnership Sidmouth (CAPS)

Councillor Davis reported that the recent screening of a film entitled “6 Inches of Soil” shown at the Radway Cinema which showed how farmers could transform the way they produce food attracted 176 ticket sales.

120 Sidmouth Fair Trade Town

Sidmouth first achieved Fairtrade Town status in 2016 and Sidmouth Town Council passed a motion of support as part of the original, successful bid.

Sidmouth Fairtrade committee reported that Sidmouth became a Fairtrade Community on 23 July 2024 and would have to renew on 23 July 2027.

Town Council’s ongoing commitment to supporting the principle of Fairtrade was vital in the committee’s endeavours to retain the Fairtrade status.

RESOLVED: That Sidmouth Town Council re-endorses its status as a Fairtrade town and organisation.

121 Baker Close Play Area – park upgrade

Melissa Wall, EDDC Section 106 Officer, had written to request the Town Council’s support for a proposed upgrade to the Baker Close play area which was owned by East Devon District Council.

The upgrade of the park was currently out for tender and would be awarded in March 2025 with work due to commence in summer/autumn 2025. There was £43,025 of S106 funding that the District Council would like to use to ensure an enhanced scheme could be provided above and beyond like for like replacement. This S106 receipt, earmarked for play came from 12/2452/MFUL, Land west of Combe Hayes which was near this play park.

As part of the S106 process, the Town Council’s formal approval was required to support this S106 spend.

RESOLVED: That Sidmouth Town Council supports the use of S106 funding towards the refurbishment of the play area at Bakers Close, Sidmouth.

122 East Devon Local Plan 2020 – 2042 Consultation

Cllr Dent presented the Planning Committee’s report and recommendations regarding the East Devon Local Plan 2020 – 2042 Consultation.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the Council supports the new East Devon Local Plan 2020 – 2042.
- 2) the particular housing needs identified in STC’s Housing Needs Survey be stressed to the Local Planning Authority, Sidmouth District Councillors and Member of Parliament.
- 3) EDDC Planners and Strategic Planning Committee be congratulated on their work in preparing the Plan.

123 General Risk Register

Members were asked to consider the adoption of the revised General Risk Register document.

RESOLVED: That the General Risk Register circulated be approved and adopted by the Council.

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CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL