



SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY

Monday 7 April 2025 at 6.30 pm
Sidmouth Guide HQ, Lawn Vista, Sidmouth

Sidmouth Town Council offers a very warm welcome to all residents in the Sid Valley area to attend this Annual Town Assembly meeting where reports of the Town Council's work will be received, with the opportunity for residents to raise any general concerns/issues and ask questions regarding the work of the Town Council.

- 1. To receive apologies for absence**
- 2. Welcoming address from the Chair of the Council—Councillor Chris Lockyear**
- 3. To receive Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on Monday 4 March 2024**
- 4. To receive annual reports from:**
 - **Sidmouth Police**
 - **Member with Special Responsibility for Finance—Cllr Chris Lockyear**
 - **Chair of Tourism and Economy—Councillor Hilary Nelson**
 - **Chair of Planning—Councillor Kelvin Dent**
 - **Chair of Environment—Councillor Ian Barlow**
- 5. General issues and questions relating to the work of the Town Council (Questions notified prior to the meeting will be given priority)**
- 6. Vision Group for Sidmouth – 20th year update from Jeremy Woodward**
- 7. Presentations from:**
 - Sidmouth Jazz & Blues Festival – Director Ian Bowden**
 - Sidmouth Folk Festival – Production Director John Radford**

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly of Sidmouth Town Council
held at St Francis Hall, Woolbrook, Sidmouth
on Monday 4 March 2024 at 6.30 pm

Ward	Councillors Present:
Sidmouth North	Stephen Blakeway Bernie Davis Stuart Hughes
Sidmouth South	Kelvin Dent Paul Dodds Chris Lockyear (Chair) John Nicholson Rachel Perram
Primley	Francetta Bridle Hilary Nelson (Vice Chair) Kevin Walker
Sidford	Mike Goodman
Salcombe Regis	Ian Barlow Edward Willis Fleming
Apologies:	Lorraine Brown, Louise Laybury, John Loudoun, Phil Weaver

25 Electors from the Town Council's area were present.

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.10pm

PART 'A'

1 Welcome from the Chair of the Council

The Chair, Councillor Chris Lockyear, welcomed those present.

All electors of Sidmouth Town Council wards had been invited to attend the meeting.

2 Minutes of the Town Assembly held on Monday 3 April 2023

The Minutes of the Town Assembly meeting held on Monday 3 April 2023, 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

PCSO Sarah Reece presented the statistical report of crimes reported during the period April 2023 to February 2024 and answered questions from Councillors and members of the public.

The full report would be forwarded to the Town Clerk for inclusion on the Town Council's website.

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 2024-2025 budget compared with 2023-2024, giving a detailed description of major items and an explanation of increases and decreases. He also presented a list of the 2024-2025 grant allocations; two recipients had been invited to attend the meeting to describe how the grant funding would be used to support their work.

3.3 Chair of Tourism & Economy

Councillor Hilary Nelson gave a report regarding the work carried out by the Town Council's Tourism & Economy Committee, explaining how it supported local businesses, tourism promotion and the economy of the Sid Valley, including the following:

- Visit Sidmouth website and social media
- Forthcoming launch of a Virtual Tour giving 360° panoramic views
- Annual promotion of Shop Local and Workcations
- Tourist Information Centre for both visitors and residents
- Coast Meets Country project working with Honiton, Ottery St Mary, Budleigh Salterton and Seaton
- Festivals Forum
- Sustainable Tourism Roadmap
- Changemakers Champions

3.4 Chair of Planning

Councillor Kelvin Dent gave a report explaining that the primary role was to consider planning applications and give observations to East Devon District Council who were the planning authority and made the final decision. There had been 22 planning meetings with 147 applications considered and in the majority of cases there were no objections, although 34 proposals had not been supported. The Local Planning Authority had followed the Town Council's recommendations apart from in 19 cases where they came to a different conclusion. The Working Group also had delegated power to decide on applications relating to trees in Conservation Areas and trees subject to TPOs and had dealt with 36 such applications. There had been three applications of note: the Rockfish proposal at Port Royal, McCarthy Stone's proposals at the Knowle and an application from EDDC to build a toilet block in front of the entrance to the swimming pool and TIC.

The Working Group had also been monitoring the progress of the emerging East Devon Local Plan which proposed 168 houses for Sidmouth and 38 for Sidbury; all sites were within the AONB and the Town Council had objected to this proposal.

Councillor Dent thanked the Working Group Members for their work throughout the year and for making the meetings both effective and enjoyable.

3.5 Chair of Environment

Councillor Ian Barlow gave a report regarding the work carried out by the Town Council's Environment Committee which worked closely with other local environmental groups and organisations such as the Biodiversity Group, Sidmouth Arboretum, Sid Vale Association, Carbon Action Plan and Sidmouth in Bloom.

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.

One question had been received prior to the meeting; “Will STC consider introducing a ‘plant-based’ resolution committing it, as part of its climate action plan, to improving accessibility to and promoting the consumption of plant-based foods in Sidmouth?”

The Chair reported that this would be discussed by the Environment Committee who would make a recommendation to a future Council meeting.

5 Presentations

Gateway Sidmouth

Susan Marshall gave a presentation describing the work carried out by the Gateway Sidmouth team of volunteers, who worked with both rough sleepers and those who lived in the Sid Valley area and were in risk of becoming homeless. Gateway worked closely with local Police officers, East Devon District Council, social workers etc and offered practical help, Food Bank referrals and hot food and drink in emergency situations. The Mustard Seed supported a drop-in centre for four mornings per week and used the Dissenter Church vestry as a quiet area to discuss confidential issues. When Gateway was set up 8 years ago, they dealt with 8 clients, in 2022 that had gone up to 44 clients and in 2023 the number was over 100. Ages range from teenagers to those 80-90 years old.

Sidmouth Jazz & Blues Festival

Ian Bowden gave a presentation describing the forthcoming Sidmouth International Jazz & Blues Festival 2024, which would be held from Thursday 23 to Monday 27 May.

There would be five world class evening headline concerts at Blackmore Gardens and three days of music on the dedicated outdoor performance stage, free music at local venues, free educational workshops, masterclasses and performances.

Sidmouth Jazz & Blues Festival were pleased to be one of the Visit Sidmouth Changemaker Champions and were working to reduce the environmental impact of the festival.

The Chair thanked those present for attending Sidmouth Town Council’s Town Assembly.

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CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL