



SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY

**Monday 13 April 2026 at 6.30 pm
Sidbury Village Hall, Fore Street**

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 Hilary Nelson**
- 3. To receive Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on Monday 7 April 2025**
- 4. To receive a summary of annual reports from the Chair of the Council - Councillor Hilary Nelson**
- 5. To receive a report from Sidmouth Police**
- 6. General issues and questions relating to the work of the Town Council (This section of the meeting will be limited to 15 minutes in total. Questions notified prior to the meeting will be given priority)**

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly of Sidmouth Town Council held in the Sidmouth Guide HQ, Lawn Vista, Sidmouth on Monday 7 April 2025

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

Approximately 20 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 and also welcomed Cllr Jo Dodds to her first meeting since being elected.

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

2 Minutes of the Town Assembly held on Monday 4 March 2024

The Minutes of the Town Assembly meeting held on Monday 4 March 2024, 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

PC Ross Buckler presented the statistical report of crimes reported during the period March 2024 to February 2025 and answered questions from Councillors and members of the public.

The full report was fully accessible to the public on the Sidmouh/Police.uk website.

PCSO Sarah Meeds would be leaving Sidmouth on 17 April 2025 and would be replaced by PCSO Jane Starkey who had previously worked in the Metropolitan Police as a PC.

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 2025-2026 budget compared with 2024-2025, giving a detailed description of major items and an explanation of increases and decreases.

He also presented a list of the 2025-2026 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. Councillor Nelson thanked the TAG volunteers, Chamber of Commerce and Members of the T&E Committee for their hard work and support throughout the year.

3.4 Chair of Planning

Councillor Rachel Perram gave a report explaining that the committee's 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. In addition to this the committee was required to consider the emerging Local Plan and review the Neighbourhood Plan; to assist with this work the Town Council had commissioned a Housing Needs Survey for the Sid Valley.

Councillor Perram thanked the Planning Committee Members for their work throughout the year, in addition to the Town Clerk and Planning Officer.

3.5 Chair of Environment

Councillor Ian Barlow gave a report regarding the work carried out by the Town Council's Environment Committee and reported that during the year the Town Council's Environment Policy had been updated and adopted. Cllr Barlow thanked all the local environmental groups and organisations who were working closely with the Town Council; these included the Biodiversity Group, Sidmouth Arboretum, Sid Vale Association, Carbon Action Plan and Sidmouth in Bloom.

3.6 Chair of Youth Provision

Councillor Hilary Nelson gave a report regarding the work carried out by the Town Council's Youth Provision Committee. Due to the dilapidated and dangerous condition of the Manstone Youth Centre building, it had been closed and demolished, however Sidmouth Town Council continued to support Youth Services in the Sid Valley, providing youth services from alternative locations.

Working with other groups, who also supported the youth of Sidmouth, a guide had been produced giving information of the many and various organisations that were available for young people to join. This was distributed at an Activities Fair held on Friday 28 March which over 500 young people attended; a 'Get Involved' grant scheme had also been established designed to support those unable to access memberships due to lack of funding.

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.

Two questions had been received prior to the meeting:

- "What steps, if any, has the Council taken over the past year, as part of its climate action plan, to support and encourage the adoption of plant-based diets?"

The Chair and Cllr Barlow replied that this had been discussed by the Environment Committee and incorporated into the revised Environment Policy.

- "Will the Council reconsider its policy on air shows in light of the urgency of the climate crisis in general and its own environmental objectives in particular?"

The Chair and Cllr Barlow replied that this topic had been discussed by Council on a number of occasions and had resolved that taking into consideration the value of Sidmouth Regatta to the town and its popularity among residents, the annual Air Show would continue to be the central event of the Sidmouth Regatta Weekend for the next 5 years, with a commitment to continued ongoing sustainability and improvement.

5 Vision Group for Sidmouth – 20th year update from Jeremy Woodward

Jeremy Woodward gave an update and presentation regarding the work carried out by the Vision Group for Sidmouth which had been set up 20 years ago.

The Vision Group for Sidmouth has the mission statement of 'Inspiring Projects, Generating Ideas for the Future' and worked on their three objectives:

1. Planning applications in the Sid Valley
2. Sustainability and Resilience
3. Informed Debate

6 Presentations

Sidmouth Jazz & Blues Festival

Ian Bowden, Festival Director, gave a presentation describing the forthcoming Sidmouth International Jazz & Blues Festival 2025, which would run from Friday 23 to Monday 26 May 2025. This would be the 4th year of the event which was steadily building from its initial small event; Blackmore Gardens had now become the home of the Jazz & Blues Festival and this extended into the Peacock Lawn where there would be a food court and additional free music and events. Mr Bowden thanked the Town Council for its generous grant support which would be used to enable the education aspect of the festival in addition to the free music and events around the town.

Sidmouth Folk Festival

John Radford, Production Director, gave a presentation describing the 2025 Folk Festival which had a full program of events and performances over 8 days both on The Ham and throughout the whole town. Tickets were being sold via the Tourist Information Centre and local discounts had been introduced for EX10 residents. It was estimated that around 22,000 visitors came to Sidmouth every day during the festival period.

Mr Radford thanked the Town Council for its generous donation which would be used to support the Children’s Festival where the events were all free.

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

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CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL