



SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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10 June 2019

To: All Members of the Tourism & Economy Committee
(Cllrs: Ian Barlow, David Barratt, Denise Bickley, Jack Brokenshire, Louise Cole, Charissa Evans, Deirdre Hounsom, Stuart Hughes, Chris Lockyear, Dawn Manley, John Rayson, Marianne Rixson, Louise Thompson, Paul Wright)

Invited Representatives:

Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce Representatives (x2)

Sidmouth Information Manager
Town Clerk

For Information:

Other Members of the Council
EDDC Member Champion for Tourism

Dear Sir/Madam,

Meeting of the Tourism & Economy Committee Monday 17 June 2019 at 6.30pm

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

Yours faithfully,

Christopher E Holland
Town Clerk

A G E N D A

Page/s

- 1 **Election of the Chairman of the Tourism & Economy Committee**
To receive nominations for the position of Chairman of the Tourism & Economy Committee for the forthcoming year.
- 2 **Appointment of the Vice-Chairman of the Tourism & Economy Committee**
To receive nominations for the position of Vice Chairman of the Tourism & Economy Committee for the forthcoming year.
- 3 **Apologies**
To receive any apologies for absence.

4	Minutes	4 – 5
	To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Tourism & Economy Committee meeting held on Monday 11 March 2019.	
5	Declarations of Interest	
	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.	
4	Matters of Urgency and Report	
	To consider any items that in the opinion of the Chairman should be dealt with as matters of urgency because of special circumstances. (Note: such circumstances need to be recorded in the minutes)	
5	Exclusion of the Public	
	To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There is one item which the Clerk recommends should be dealt with in this way.	
6	Information Centre Manager’s Report & Financial Report	
	a) To receive the attached report from the Information Centre Manager.	6
	b) To receive the Finance Report for the Financial Year End to March 2019 in respect of the Sidmouth Information Centre.	7
7	Town Guide Finance and Distribution Figures	
	a) To note the Income and Expenditure Report for the Financial Year End to March 2019.	8
	b) To note the Guide Distribution figures for the period to May 2019.	9
8	Tourism and Promotion Strategy	
	To consider the attached report. 10 – 11	
9	Matters Raised by Invited Representatives	
	To consider any other items or matters to be raised by the representatives of the Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce.	
10	Exclusion of the Public and Press	
	The Vice-Chairman of the Council to move the following: “that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of its contents.”	
	 <u>PART ‘B’</u>	
11	Advertising Rates	
	Advertising promotion sales commence in August. Members are asked to approve the advertising base rates for the 2020 Guide and Directory; see attached confidential report. 12	
	<i>(Members agreed at the Tourism & Economy Committee meeting held on 16 June 2014 that advertising rates should be increased by cpih each year.)</i>	

Forthcoming Council and Committee meetings:

26 June 2019 – Planning Committee

1 July 2019 - Council

10 July 2019 – Planning Committee

24 July 2019 – Planning Committee

5 August 2019 – Council

14 August 2019 – Planning Committee

28 August 2019 – Planning Committee

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council's
Tourism and Economy Committee
held at the Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Sidmouth,
on Monday 11 March 2019 at 6.30 pm

Councillors present: - Simon Pollentine (Chairman)
 Frances Newth (Vice Chairman)
 Ian Barlow
 David Barratt
 Jack Brokenshire
 John Dyson
 Marc Kilsbie
 Ian McKenzie-Edwards
 John Rayson
 Paul Wright

Apologies: John Hollick, Stuart Hughes, Sheila Kerridge

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.10pm

PART 'A'

19 Minutes

The Minutes of the Tourism & Economy Committee meeting held on Monday 10 December 2018 were signed as a true and accurate record.

20 Declarations of Interest

Name	Item Number	Type	Action Taken	Details
Cllr John Dyson	21 b) Information Centre Financial Report	Personal	Remained in the Chamber during discussion and voting	Folk Festival Trustee

21 Information Centre Manager's Report & Financial Report

a) In the absence of the Information Centre Manager, the Chairman presented the Information Centre's report.

RESOLVED: That the Information Centre Manager's report be noted and the Town Clerk would review whether it would be financially viable to have a cash point machine situated in the Information Centre.

b) The Chairman presented the Finance Report for the period to January 2019 in respect of the Sidmouth Information Centre.

RESOLVED: That the Sidmouth Information Centre's Finance Report be noted and agreed.

22 Town Guide Finance and Distribution Figures

The Chairman presented the Income and Expenditure Report for the period to January 2019 and the latest Guide distribution figures for the period to February 2019.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the Town Guide Income and Expenditure Report for the period to January 2019 be noted and agreed.
- 2) the February 2019 Guide distribution figures be noted.

23 Future High Streets Fund

Richard Eley, President Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce, gave a report regarding the latest position on the Future High Streets Fund and how it had not been appropriate for Sidmouth to apply.

RESOLVED: That Mr Eley be thanked for his detailed and informative report.

24 2019 Tourism Promotion

Members were asked to note the new 2019 Sidmouth Town Guide, Directory and Town Map. The Town Clerk presented a new Promotional Video and Virtual Reality Tour which would be placed on the Visit Sidmouth website and Face Book pages.

RESOLVED: That the 2019 Sidmouth Town Guide, Directory, Town Map, Promotional Video and Virtual Reality Tour be noted. Links for the Promotional Video and Virtual Reality Tour would be communicated to prospective visitors via the various Council media channels including email and Social Media.

25 Matters Raised by Invited Representatives

- the annual Daffodil Day would be held on Saturday 16 March 2019.
- it was understood that East Devon District Council would no longer manage and maintain their noticeboards, which were very well used; especially those in the Market Place and Connaught Gardens. The Town Clerk had been in talks with the District Council about this, but no suitable solution had been agreed on.
- The Chamber had supported the Council's suggestion from the previous meeting, that additional notice boards be placed at the entrances to Sidmouth displaying forthcoming festivals and events.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the Town Clerk would continue discussions with the District and County Councils regarding notice boards in Sidmouth.
- 2) the Town Clerk continue discussions with the District Council regarding their notice boards in the town.

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CHAIRMAN OF THE TOURISM & ECONOMY COMMITTEE



**Sidmouth Information Centre
Manager's Report to the meeting of the
Tourism & Economy Committee on 11th June 2019**

SIDMOUTH FOLK FESTIVAL

After a slower start earlier in the year the sales of telephone bookings made at the Information Centre have picked up and advance bookings for the festival are now very healthy indeed. The trend to move to on-line booking appears to have peaked and this has been noticed by Sidmouth Folk Festival too. This year our sales to date are up on last year (to mid-May: - 2018 : £42,000; 2019 : £44,000). NB. These are sales made through our office only and does not include on-line bookings. It has been agreed with the Folk Festival that from next year our commission-on-sales rate will increase to take into account the amount of extra work we do for the festival (we are the only point of contact for any customer for most of the year) which appears to be increasing whilst the commission we receive had fallen behind with no increases for some time.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation providers initially reported a slow start to the year but happily this has improved recently. As discussed by the Tourism and Economy Committee recently, we understand from registered accommodation providers that AirBnB is having a significant effect on their bookings. Similarly, we are getting fewer enquiries from "private" residents wanting to offer accommodation during folk week through us. A look at the AirBnB website shows just how much accommodation is available through this medium which however it is viewed, is still bringing visitors to the town.

OPENING HOURS / STAFFING

The "Summer" opening hours are 10.00 – 17.00 Monday to Saturday inclusive and 10.00 – 16.00 Sundays and Bank Holidays. We have three "permanent" members of staff (including the Manager) who work all year round and now three "seasonal" members who join us for the summer season from 1st May to 30th September.

FOOTFALL COUNTER

The footfall counter that we have had for many years was unfortunately accidentally damaged by a visitor to the office. Whilst it has been re-assembled, we have lost confidence in the daily readings. The reason for the need for a counter goes back to the time when East Devon District Council grant aided the centres across the district. The size of the grant to each centre was proportional to the footfall through the office. As this particular need for these figures has now ceased, Members need to make a decision on whether to purchase another counter or not. A suitably robust infra- red beam counter would be approximately £200. Whilst doing so, Members may also wish to consider such a counter for the Jurassic Interpretation Centre which is being refurbished in conjunction with the East Devon and Dorset Jurassic Coast Trust.

RECOMMENDED

- 1) That Council considers purchasing a visitor counter for the Information Centre
- 2) That the Committee note the report of the Manager of the Information Centre

**Sidmouth Tourist Information Centre - Income and Expenditure Report
Month 12 - March 2019**

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Budget	Budget Variance
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Salaries	34,465	33,500	-965
Cleaning & Office Mtce	323	300	-23
TIC Refurbishment	5,145	5,000	-145
Office Postage	4	400	396
Stationery	274	400	126
Telephone	1,239	900	-339
Photocopier	159	150	-9
Computer & Internet	100	100	0
Sundries, Provisions, Equipment	108	250	142
Credit Card & Bank Charges	844	1,400	556
Purchase of Stamps	2,953	1,500	-1,453
Purchase of Publications	3,788	4,300	512
Purchase of Goods	170	1,500	1,330
	£49,572	£49,700	£128
<u>Income</u>			
Sale of Stamps	2,433	2,400	-33
Sale of Publications	7,050	7,400	350
Sale of Goods	1,834	2,300	466
Accomodation Commission	954	1,200	246
Commission - Sidmouth Folk Week	4,721	5,700	979
Commission - Coaches/Taxi/Ferry	230	200	-30
Commission - Car/Coach Park	670	700	30
Comm & Discount Vouchers	496	600	104
Sundry Income	175	200	25
STC Funding	26,600	26,600	0
	£45,163	£47,300	£2,137
Total Expenditure	£49,572	£49,700	£128
Total Income	£45,163	£47,300	£2,137
Net Expenditure over Income	£4,409	£2,400	-£2,009

Current/Deposit Bank Accounts £11,782

**Sidmouth Town Guide - Income and Expenditure Report
Month 12 - March 2019**

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Budget	Budget Variance
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Guide & Directory Printing	15,264	15,700	436
Promotion	5,250	6,400	1,150
Postage	13,669	13,000	-669
Envelopes	0	0	0
Guide & Directory Administration	10,000	10,000	0
Website Hosting & Updates	0	200	200
Bank Charges	84	100	16
	£44,267	£45,400	£1,133
<u>Income</u>			
Guide Advertising Revenue	34,000	38,000	4,000
Directory Advertising Revenue	6,300	7,600	1,300
Interest Received	39	0	-39
	£40,339	£45,600	£5,261
Total Expenditure	£44,267	£45,400	£1,133
Total Income	£40,339	£45,600	£5,261
Net Expenditure over Income	£3,928	-£200	-£4,128

Current/Deposit Bank Accounts £9,887

Sidmouth Town Guide Distribution Figures - to the end of May

	2017	2018	2019
UKHOL	7,941	5,323	4,968
Bitesize	3,012	2,661	3,970
Holiday Directory		1,809	
Holiday Brochure	97	71	105
Holiday Guide Finder	212	157	59
Heart of Devon & Autumn Break			
TOTAL from advertisements/leaflets	11,262	10,021	9,102
Been before/Update previous guide	124	89	
All advertisers (Guide & Town Directory)	92	94	74
Visitsidmouth website	348	367	329
TIC's Nationwide	2,405	2,127	3,313
Sidmouth Information Centre	218	253	255
Email/Phone to Town Council office	28	38	27
TOTAL from other sources	3,215	2,968	3,998
TOTAL GUIDES SENT	14,477	12,989	13,100
TOTAL WEBSITE HITS	71,947	79,570	75,809



Report to: Tourism and Economy Committee

Date of Meeting: 17 June 2019

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Agenda Item 8

Subject: **Tourism and Promotion Strategy**

Purpose of report: The purpose of this report is to consider developing a Tourism Strategy to best promote the town and enhance the Council's tourism advertising and promotion offer.

Recommendation:

- 1. That a Tourism and Promotion Strategy Task and Finish Forum be set up to produce a Tourism and Promotion Strategy for Sidmouth.**
- 2. That a Tourism Survey be carried out to research the tourism market in Sidmouth and provide detailed and reliable visitor data to inform the future Tourism Strategy.**
- 3. That the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Tourism and Economy Committee continue promotion for 2019/20 within financial controls already approved.**

Reason for recommendation: To develop a Tourism and Promotion Strategy for the town based on reliable evidence and research.

Officer: Town Clerk

Financial implications: Costs of a Tourism Survey depending on scope and size of survey.

Risk: Low Risk

Background information: Minutes of Sidmouth Town Council Tourism and Economy Committee Meetings
Report in full

1. Members may be aware that for some time, the Council's Tourism and Economy Committee have been discussing the idea of a Tourism Strategy to help inform and give focus to how the Council promotes the Sidmouth area.
2. For some time, East Devon District Council has taken a more limited approach to promoting tourism, focussing on its own managed attractions and leaving the various Town Councils together with some parishes to promote their own areas independently. In Sidmouth this was not such a difficulty as it had long been supporting an existing popular Town Guide and Tourist Information Centre together more lately with an improved Visit Sidmouth website, interactive webcams, videos, social media and most recently, an interactive tour.

3. It has however become apparent that the Council's ability to promote the area in a focussed and relevant manner, is often restricted by a lack of a clear aim which itself is based only on anecdotal evidence, personal opinion and individual's preferences rather than on clear research and fact.
4. The recent survey carried out during the consultation for the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan has been useful to gauge the opinion of residents, but up until now, no detailed research has ever been carried out giving data on visitors. East Devon District Council also confirms that no relevant data for visitors exists. A strategy and meaningful research could answer questions such as:

What is the Council trying to achieve for Tourism? How involved does it wish to become? What is the tourism market for the area? How long do people stay? What age group are they? How much do they spend? What sort of accommodation do they want? What sort of advertising works? How much should be spent to advertise?

5. In order for a meaningful and useful Tourism Strategy to be developed, it is therefore recommended that reliable and relevant visitor information be obtained to inform such a document. This could be carried out locally with accommodation providers and advertising specialists or if Members wished, by an appointed company in the form of a full research survey of visitors and providers. It would provide relevant research into those visiting and spending in the town together with input from advertising professionals and accommodation providers. It would be to find out what visitors actually want and not what 'we' think they want.
6. To progress the production of a Tourism Strategy based on clear and relevant evidence, it is recommended that a small Task and Finish Forum be created (ideally three but a maximum of five Members) to co-ordinate, draft and recommend such a document to the Tourism and Economy Committee. Such a TaFF could call on advertising specialists, accommodation providers, businesses and other organisations as needed.
7. Whilst the research and composition of a strategy is being undertaken and in order to continue to promote and provide advertising continuity for businesses and accommodation providers, it is also recommended that the Council continues to promote and advertise as permitted by current budgetary controls.

Town Clerk
17 June 2019