

Minutes of the Town Team Meeting

Tuesday 9th August 2016

Present: Helen Nathanson; Councillors Ben Piper and Robert Vint (Totnes Town Council); Maggie Cornhill (Redhouse Events); Ray Reynolds (Good Food Market); Lindsay Garner, Andy Garner (Chamber of Commerce); Paul Chapman (Totnes Market Traders Association); Peter Rees, Mike Craddock, Bob Tildesley, Richard O'Connell, David Martin (residents); Frances Northrop (Totnes Community Development Society); Neil Greenhalgh, Sam Deeley and Cathy Aubertin (SHDC)

1. Street Cleaning

Neil Greenhalgh (SHDC Operations Manager) attended the meeting to answer questions about street cleaning and waste in the town.

Waste Collections

Neil explained that a waste rounds review is underway and the results expected in October. The Town Clerk had previously been assured by SHDC Executive Director Sophie Hosking that Totnes Town Council would be on the consultation list for this because waste collection is a recognised issue in the town. Neil was unsure that we could be included in the consultation at this late stage, having not been informed of our wish to be involved. He will investigate.

Andy Garner, Chamber of Commerce, explained some of the main issues around rubbish collection from a business perspective:

1. The collection of rubbish on a Friday. On the busiest day of the week, the town regularly looks messy, with rubbish bags and contents strewn around and the lorries add to an already busy High St.
2. The lack of seagull sacks used by residents and the impact this has on the businesses operating beneath. He asked if businesses could be supplied with sacks so that they have the option to clear up any mess whilst waiting for collection. Seagull sacks are provided to residents for free but businesses would have to pay so this is not an option.

Street cleaning

Neil explained that SHDC reviewed street cleaning last year to save £100k. 4 mechanical sweepers have been brought for the district and Totnes shares one with the surrounding villages. These sweepers wet clean rather than just dry and are more efficient. The town is zoned according to priority for cleaning and we should report any problems to SHDC so that the cleaning "Hit Squad" can respond in accordance with the priority of the area. For example, Fore St and High St are in Zone 1 for high priority and a response is required within 4 hours.

2. Town Centre Management

We looked at examples of job descriptions from other towns to guide our discussions. The following points were made:

- What is the need for this role and how would it work alongside other roles within the town such as the Destination Manager and the Locality Officer?
- Is it simply adding another layer: if we have a problem with car parking or waste can't we just phone SHDC direct to sort it out? In theory, yes, but in practice it is not always easy to get hold of the right person and situations would benefit from a central figure to build contacts and relationships.
- How will the role be managed?
- How do we ensure the role will add value?
- Is this a part time role?

It was agreed that there are many aspects of this to finesse before a proper proposal can be drawn up for discussion. A small Working Group will therefore look into this in more detail and come back to the October Town Team meeting with a proposal. The members of the WG will be: Councillor Ben Piper, Lindsay Garner, Frances Northrop, Mike Craddock, David Martin and Helen Nathanson.

3. Market Square

Discussion was had about the content of the Market Strategy and the following comments were made:

- Parts of this could be used as a response to the Joint Local Plan
- Representatives from SHDC were not happy with the comments about the management of the market. No personal criticism was intended here...
- We need to get on with the actions and make sure we use the report constructively
- We need to focus on the different elements of the report individually because this is potentially a very large project
- If we are to make the market sustainable and build on its success then we need to work in partnership with all those concerned including SHDC, market traders, local businesses etc.

It was decided to start by inviting John Baulch to the next meeting of the Town Team so that we can talk with him about finalising the design work and ensuring that any new design incorporates the recommendations in the Strategy. It was felt that a focus on the physical aspects of the Square was a positive first step and a pressing issue, because there are many aspects of street furniture in the Square which are obstructing both the present market set-up and any future plans.

5. The next meeting will be on Tuesday 13th September at 5.30pm in the Guildhall.