

STC minutes 5th Feb 2018 (Extracts)

Public questions before the meeting.

Public Open Question Time

- District Cllr Cathy Gardner commented that the District Council should consider how best to choose a developer for the Drill Hall site for example the uses of the new building, the involvement of local business, Sidmouth being a Fair-Trade town and aspirations to become plastic free.
- Michael Temple asked, as the District Council had ignored its own Local Plan for the number of dwellings planned for at The Knowle, whether the number of dwellings at Port Royal would be increased correspondingly from 30 to 70.
- Jeremy Woodward reported that the Vision Group for Sidmouth would be holding a Plastic Free Day meeting on Thursday 22 February 2018.
- Oliver Salter, representing the Sailing Club, commented that the users of the Port Royal Club needed some security to know what the District Council intended to do with their building, especially as the current lease only had approx. 10 years to run.

Port Royal Scoping Study Reference Group

Councillor Turner, Chairman of the former Port Royal Scoping Study Reference Group, presented the report and recommendations from the Town Clerk and the consultant's report from Heynes Planning Ltd and Groupwest. The purpose of the report was to provide an update to members on the outcome of the Scoping Exercise that was undertaken in 2017 in relation to the Port Royal Site. It described the activities that were taken as part of the Scoping Exercise including the research of relevant issues undertaken by the external advisors; the public consultation exercise; the findings of their work and their recommendations for the next steps. The report made recommendations to Members and noted the position of the District Council.

During the discussion, Members made the following comments/observations:

- It was in the Town Council's interest for the Port Royal Club to flourish, therefore the Town Council, District Council and Port Royal Club should work together to improve the facilities and agree an extension to the lease period to ensure security for the future.
- The District Council should be encouraged to undertake refurbishment/maintenance of the public conveniences, Port Royal Club building and Lifeboat Station to help enhance the whole area.
- Any potential developer should be encouraged to take into consideration Sidmouth's historical links to the sea, its position on the Jurassic Coast and its maritime heritage when considering plans for the Drill Hall area.
- The marketing brief for the Drill Hall should be wide and flexible enough to enable a mixed-use development which would be preferable, the design should be aspirational in order to support future economic viability within Sidmouth whilst encouraging possible heritage, community and cultural benefits.

- There should be a financial contribution from the site development towards the beach management programme.
- It was welcomed that the Town Council would continue to work closely with the District Council through the core group of councillors who had been part of the Scoping Study Reference Group.

RESOLVED:

1. That Members noted the detailed research undertaken in the Scoping Exercise that had provided a comprehensive and thorough analysis, including financial viability assessment, of the complex issues related to future development within the Study Area.
2. That Members noted the analysis in the report and in particular the following elements:
 - a. The existing covenant impacting upon parts of the potential development site
 - b. The risk of flood especially related to land outside of the area allocated within the Local Plan
 - c. The lack of financial viability of development if on-site or off-sited affordable homes were included
3. That members noted the report and recommendations of the 7 February 2018 Cabinet of East Devon District Council which if adopted, would result in not seeking a mixed development for the overall site and would seek the marketing of the Drill Hall only.
4. That the Town Council focuses on improvements to and a general raising of standards to the Fishermen's shed and Fish Shop area.
5. That the District Council be encouraged to undertake refurbishment of the public conveniences, Port Royal Club building and Lifeboat Station to enhance the whole area.
6. That the Marketing of the Drill Hall should not commence until 1 March 2018 to enable the draft of the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan to be issued.