

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Confidential Report of a Meeting of the Seaton Regeneration Programme Board held at Seaton Town Hall, Seaton, on Thursday 23 June 2011

Present:

Councillors: Graham Godbeer (Chairman)
Jim Knight
Ian Thomas
Stephanie Jones
Peter Burrows

Seaton Town Council: Councillor Heather Sandham

Axmouth Parish Council: Councillor Carol Rapley

Other Members: Marcus Hartnell – Seaton Chamber of Commerce
Edward Willis Fleming – Axe Riverside Co.
Jenny Nunn – Seaton Tramway
Amanda Newsome – Natural England
Carolyn Dunn – Town Development Manager, Seaton

EDDC Officers: Nigel Harrison – Economic Development Manager
Richard Cohen – Deputy Chief Executive
Chris Lane – Democratic Services Officer
Charlie Plowden – Countryside Manager
Donna Best – Principal Estates Surveyor
Kate Little – Head of Economy

Apologies: Councillor Andrew Moulding - EDDC
Councillor John Meakin – Seaton Town Council
Philip Higginson – Seaton Town Clerk
Nick Stephen - Communications Officer

The meeting started at 9.25am and finished at 12.00noon.

1 Report of the meeting of the Programme Board held on 12 May 2010

The notes were confirmed as a true record, subject to changes to the first line of the second paragraph of minute 90 to change the word 'would' to 'may' and 'Blackstock' to Blackhole'.

2 Matters Arising

Summary on latest developments at LSE2 (Harepath Road) (Minute 87 refers)

NH reported that the owner of options on this land was keen to enter into discussions with EDDC. The Planning Service was in the process of trying to set up an Members Pre-application Advisory Panel to meet with Ward Members and Portfolio Holders to advise on the suitability of the developers proposal.

Elizabeth Road playing fields (Minute *89 refers)

JK reported that the Pink Hippo Nursery had now moved into a new building at Elizabeth Road Playing Fields with the capability for housing 40 toddlers. They had received an inspection from OFSTED, who had graded them as outstanding.

3 **Introduction to Town Development Manager – Carolyn Dunn**

CD, the recently appointed Town Development Manager introduced herself to the Board and gave details of her background and previous experience. Members noted that she was on a 2 year fixed term contract and worked 3 days a week. Members noted that she was most recently Chief Executive of the City Management Company in York. CD had started her career in advertising and marketing and then moved into town centre management. Posts in Huddersfield and then Norwich followed and she also became Director of the Association of Town Centre Management.

4 **Introduction to Deputy Chief Executive – Richard Cohen**

RC Deputy Chief Executive Development, Regeneration and Partnership introduced himself to the Board and gave details of his background. Members noted that his recent background was working for the London Development Agency in London. He had also worked in the West Country in Plymouth and Bristol. His role at EDDC was to progress the development, regeneration and partnership agenda in East Devon.

5 **Role of the Board**

GG confirmed that the Regeneration Board was not a Committee of the Council. It was made up of stakeholders; and the confidential nature of discussions meant that the public and press had been precluded from meetings. IT asked whether meetings could be opened to the public to keep the people better informed over what developments were likely in the regeneration site.

RC wanted to but agreed that communication was important including the need to be as transparent as possible.. Private sector members of the Board were of the view that maintaining the confidentiality of discussions at the Board was important to ensure open and frank debate, but agreed that there was a need for a better flow of information to the public from meetings of the Board.

RESOLVED 1. that a meeting be held with the Communications Officer to discuss ways for the Board to communicate;

2. that the possibility of holding meeting at venues away from Seaton Town Hall be explored.

6 **Update on the Seaton Regeneration Agenda**

D B Principal Estates Surveyor, gave an update on progress that had been made with the Seaton Regeneration agenda. Work on the superstore had started, there was also progress on the provision of housing on the site and a planning application had been submitted for the Seaton part of the cycle path. She reported that work had started on preparation of a plan for land at the Underfleet and, that good progress was being made on the Visitors Centre project.

C P advised that the Axe Wetlands was a continued success including a grant from Natural England which had unlocked the infrastructure developments for the Axe Wetlands and the capital build programme. The Axe Wetlands were a destination for families and other users; this would increase when the Marsh Lane car park was completed. There were 25,000 new visitors already this year and the facility was already well on the way to achieving the 60,000 visitors predicted this year. J N reported that visitor numbers in April were up 30% against last year.

Members noted that Devon County Council hoped to start work on the cycle way later this year, subject to the grant of planning permission. There was money available from the sale

6 Update on the Seaton Regeneration Agenda (Cont)

of Exeter Airport to undertake this work and it was hoped that it could be finished in 2012/13.

DB explained that the matter of the proposed demolition of the Underfleet toilets would be discussed by the EDDC Cabinet at its meeting on 13 July. The Cabinet would consider the options for the temporary provision for toilets, following the demolition of the existing provision. In the longer term provision for public toilets would be made in the Tesco superstore and the Visitors Centre. The Tramway also had proposals for a new station in Seaton, which would be likely to include toilets.

7 Seafront Enhancement – discussion by Edward Wills Fleming

EWf presented a seafront enhancement scheme as a way of encouraging further investment into the town and ensuring people stayed in Seaton and sent their money in the town.

NH advised that the enhancement document for the seafront should be shown to the Town Management Partnership.

RESOLVED the Regeneration Board is supportive of the seafront enhancement scheme and would consider a progress report back to the next meeting as appropriate.

8 Visitor Centre progress

DB updated Members on progress made with the Visitor Centre. The planning application for the Centre had been made in September. A contractor was currently working on aspects of the building design. A consultant advisor had been appointed to help deliver the Centre and also a Client Advisory Group established to help with this process. A vision for the Visitor Centre had been suggested which was based around the theme of 'Natural Seaton'.

It was hoped to start construction through 2011 and 2012 with a 'soft' opening in 2012 prior to being full open to the public in spring 2012. HS reported that the Town Council had set up a TIC Advisory Committee to discuss the TIC function within the Visitor Centre. The budget for the Centre was £2.3m and Donna Best confirmed that some of this budget may be lost if money was not spent within a certain timescale

9 Section 106 and Participatory Budgeting in Seaton

Under the existing policy for smaller developments a contribution was sought towards sport and play to provide facilities off-site. These contributions accrue over time and work had been undertaken with Seaton Town Council and Ward Members to ensure that the facilities provided were what the community wanted. This was done via a process called 'Participatory Budgeting'.

A "Participatory Budgeting" exercise on sport provision in Seaton was carried out during autumn 2010. Seaton community groups were asked to submit their proposals for their sporting priorities and seven valid proposals were received. The town held a public voting exercise for £75,000 capital sports funding available. Two projects received the most votes were;

A cover for the outdoor swimming pool at Seaton Primary School (£50,000) and £15,000 on traditional outdoor gym equipment at Seaford Gardens and £10,000 on delivering ground level trampoline and climbing wall as a part of improving facilities at Elizabeth Road.

10 **Dates of future meetings**

Meetings of the Seaton Regeneration Programme Board –

Wednesday 21 September 2011 at 9.15am) Venue to be confirmed.

Wednesday 14 December 2011 at 9.15am) Venue to be confirmed.