

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Confidential Report of a Meeting of the Seaton Regeneration Programme Board held at Seaton Town Hall, Seaton, on Wednesday 17 February 2010

Present:

Councillors:

Ray Franklin (Chairman)
Stephanie Jones
Jim Knight (EDDC and DCC)
Andrew Moulding (EDDC and DCC)
Margaret Rogers

Seaton Town Council:

Councillor John Meakin
Councillor Sandra Semple
David Mears – Town Clerk

Edward Willis Fleming – Axe Riverside Co.
Jenny Nunn – Seaton Tramway

EDDC Officers:

Donna Best – Principal Estates Surveyor
Nigel Harrison – Economic Development Manager
Karime Hassan – Corporate Director
Nick Stephen – Communications Officer
Rachel Perram – Democratic Services Officer

DCC Officer:

Tony Matthews

Councillors Also Present:

Cllr Peter Halse Portfolio Holder - Economy

Apologies:

Councillors:

Councillor Dennis Hall – Axmouth PC

Tesco:

Tim Robinson
Juliette Bishop

The meeting started at 2.10pm and finished at 3.45pm.

62 Report of the meeting of the Programme Board held on 16 December 2009

The notes were confirmed as a true record.

Margaret Rogers' membership on the Seaton Regeneration Programme Board was confirmed. Mrs Rogers raised concerns that she had not been in receipt of papers for the meeting since June 2009. The Corporate Director's secretary and Democratic Services Officers would be notified and would ensure that Mrs Rogers was included in all distribution lists.

***63 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor/ Officer	Agenda Item	Type of interest	Nature of interest
Jenney Nunn, Seaton Tram Company	Minute #65 of Board Meeting on 16/12/2009.	Land Interest	Seaton Tram Company had a land interest in the transfer of Sheep's Marsh, which ran along the north side of the Company's land.

64 Town Centre Manager

Nigel Harrison congratulated the Clerk, David Mears and the Town Council for the work that had been carried out to drive this initiative forward. The job description and person specification had both been approved by them. Gratitude was also expressed to Tony Collins, Town Centre Manager, Exmouth and John Wokersein, Clerk to Exmouth Town Council for their valued input into this proposed role. It was important to maximize the vibrancy of Seaton.

Members heard that the proposal for a Town Manager would be discussed on 25 February at the next meeting of the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee at EDDC. This Committee would compare the Seaton model for a Town Manager with that of the similar role in Exmouth. This would be a useful way for Members to gain a wider understanding of the objectives of such a position. A report to the Economy Portfolio Holder would be produced as a result of discussions at that meeting.

Members heard that EDDC's contribution to the three year funded post was dependent upon the successful conclusion of the land deal with Tesco. Funding would be three way between Seaton Town Council/EDDC and Tesco. Funding from the latter two partners would start upon commencement of building, which was estimated for September 2010.

Members noted that the Chamber of Commerce for Seaton was still in its infancy and had only been in operation for one year. Accordingly, the post would be managed initially through the Seaton Regeneration Programme Board, with the Chamber of Commerce being included in the Governance Statement. Seaton Town Council would be the employer of the Town Manager.

Members were receptive to a proposal made by one of the Board, that outlined the possibility of inviting a volunteer to take on the post of Town Manager in the interim period before funding commenced.

65 Visitor Centre

Dona Best advised Members that Tracey Guiry (Project Manager for Seaton and Exmouth Visitor Centres) had now left, but had agreed to sit on the Exmouth and Seaton Interpretation Board.

Members heard that it was now time to draw down funds from Devon County Council that would pay for work to be carried out for the visitor by catering consultants. Money was also needed for the visitor centre Project Manager, as well as for the consultants Ward Williams, who had been asked to work with the Councils on the delivery of the centre. It was clear that a viable business plan was needed quickly, both for the delivery and management of the centre, once constructed.

66 Tesco progress report

Karime Hassan updated Members in the absence of representation from Tesco.

Members were advised that Tesco were examining the technical issues for the sea pipe that would deliver the fill from the sea barges to the land behind the sea wall.

Tesco were keen to progress as quickly as possible with the construction project. A planning application was due from them by the end of February.

67 Section 106 funding for provision of open space

Members were reminded that at the last meeting of the Board, Seaton Town Council had raised concerns that EDDC might lose out on Section 106 funding for the town. Members were reminded that there was an allowance tied with the planning permission for the Tesco store and associated land for housing, which could be used to fund the Elizabeth Road site and the Underfleet area. EDDC's Section 106 Officer, Sulina Tallack was looking at this issue and Kate Tobin, Axe Wetlands Project Co-ordinator, had been working with the Town Clerk on the Underfleet area.

Further to a request from Cllr Jim Knight for playing field land for football, local Members were asked to identify potential pieces of land so that this could be considered by EDDC and the associated funding sought in the town's regeneration process.

68 Future of current Tourist Information Centre (TIC) building

Members heard that final work was being undertaken that would permit the centre to move to the Seaton Tramway building by March 2010.

Interest had been shown in the building from several businesses. However the building would have to be demolished in the forthcoming months to permit the development of the site - the grant of a short term lease was considered inappropriate.

69 Elizabeth Road Site

David Mears, Town Clerk, acknowledged that as a result of the resolution at the EDDC Executive Board on 2 December, the Town Council were now landowners of the Elizabeth Road site. Discussions were underway with Devon County Council regarding the possible relocation of the nursery to the site. The martial arts club and the scouts were also being consulted about the buildings on site.

70 Communication Messages

RESOLVED that a press release be prepared to cover the instruction for EDDC and DCC to prepare a design for the new visitor centre.

71 Any other business**Axe Riverside Company – proposed development**

Edward Willis-Fleming updated the Board regarding a planning application that had been submitted 3 ½ years ago by the Axe Riverside Company. This proposed two flats, a restaurant, conference facilities and a marine club for the Axe riverside area. This application had received an objection from Devon Highways, who were concerned about the possibility of high trip rates that this development might cause. Limits had also been proposed over the size and frequency of vehicle delivery movements on site. Members heard that Mr Fleming's company would ideally like to deliver this project simultaneously to the Tesco/Visitor centre re-development. This would give strong visitor impact to this part for Seaton.

Members expressed surprise over the comments from the Highways department as the area surrounding the site had previously housed a number of business units, a garage and Racal, a large company, had employed some 400 people in that part of town.

Mr Willis Fleming was advised that the application was on going and details would be forwarded to the Town Council for their comments at the beginning of March.

On Street Parking Charges

Members heard of a proposal from Devon County Council to levy parking charges for on-street parking in Seaton town centre and along the sea front. Seaton, along with Topsham and Tiverton were the first towns to be affected by proposals from the County council to impose such charges across the county in all market and sea side towns.

Members were alarmed to hear this news, as Seaton, along with Exmouth had been identified as areas for regeneration, due to the relatively poor infrastructure and economy of these towns. Members were advised that proposed hourly charges were 85 pence and agreed that these charges were unreasonable, given the poor economy that existed within the town. Free short stay parking was essential for the future viability of small businesses in the town.

- RESOLVED**
1. that the Economic Development Manager, EDDC, write to Devon County Council to express concern over proposed on-street parking charges for Seaton town centre and sea front areas.
 2. that the Board await feedback from analysis work being undertaken on Seaton by Rob Heatherington.

71 **Dates of next meeting**

TBA