

MEETING OF TOWN TEAM COMMITTEE
28th September 2012

At the Town Hall, Ivybridge at 5.40pm

Present: Gary Streeter (in the Chair)
County Cllr Roger Croad, District Cllrs Barber and Saltern, Town Cllr Mrs Silsbury; Richard Peachey, Jack Sutcliffe, Steve Hitch, Simon Blacker, Caroline Hodgson, Joanne Parr and Margaret Punchard

Deputy Mayor, Cllr Chris Childs (Co opted as a non voting member for the meeting in place of the Mayor)

In attendance – Richard Sheard (Chief Executive, SHDC); Lesley Hughes (Town Clerk, Ivybridge Town Council)

1. Apologies – Cllr Parsons (Mayor of Ivybridge) and Chris Passmore
2. The procedure for granting of dispensations was considered by discussing the proposal from the Chairman (previously circulated by email):

In accordance with new guidance in openness and transparency on personal interests issued by DCLG in August 2012, I propose that because a significant proportion of this committee would be prohibited in participating in town centre discussions in such a way as would impede our business a general dispensation to those members be granted for discussion purposes provided that disclosure of personal and pecuniary interests is made at the beginning of each meeting in the usual way.

The ITT accepted the above proposal.

3. Declaration of interests and permitted dispensations

Chairman, Caroline Hodgson, Cllr Silsbury, Cllr Barber, Cllr Croad, Cllr Childs – none

Richard Peachey – landowner in Fore Street

Joanne Parr – operator of a retail outlet in Fore Street

Jack Sutcliffe – representative of owner of Glanvilles Mill, Levanter Properties

Cllr Mike Saltern – Chairman of TOR Homes

Simon Blacker – if signage scheme went to phase 3 then there would be a pecuniary interest

Steve Hitch – Trustee of Tone Leisure

4. Gary Streeter welcomed Richard Sheard and asked him to update the committee on discussions in respect of the proposed study of retail, leisure and assets in Ivybridge.

To make progress on a plan for the town the evidence base has to be sufficient particularly in terms of the retail and leisure offer (including public sector assets). It was recognised that the process would not be quick as the work would commence in January and it would then take a further 4/5 months before a report was produced. It needed to lead to a planning document to support growth.

Reference was made to reports of Okehampton and Tavistock which were very comprehensive, but those were entirely different towns to Ivybridge. As a commuter dormitory town it was important to think about reaching the right audience, rather than just asking questions of people currently using the town centre.

In response to the question about having any voice and whether the group would just be a talking shop, Richard Sheard indicated that it was important that the Town Team had a strong voice as if there was a will to have a statutory Neighbourhood Plan then the Town Team would be instrumental in that process. The Chairman advised that the Government was wanting such groups to have more authority and that he anticipated that a Town Plan would be delivered and there would be a product in 2013.

The difficulty of engaging with the wider community was raised as well as the need to ensure that there was realism and deliverability.

In relation to cost of the study and any other funding available for the town, Richard Sheard advised that there was funding for the study and £1 million was still in the pot for the Leisure Centre. He emphasised that if realistic, achievable plans were created then the private sector would be more interested – there was a need to create the conditions to invest in Ivybridge.

Various people referred to having done this before and there was other work going on around the County which could be of help – Ilfracombe was one such place. As a dormitory town, Ivybridge needed a selling point. Concerns about a wishlist and developers deciding on their own criteria if to invest. If plan was too rigid or inflexible (up to 20 years hence) then how realistic could that be as the world moved on quickly?

It was recognised that the Princes Foundation masterplan had done good work, but this new study would enable the group to retrace steps and provide more underpinning evidence for the plan, even though the outcomes could be the same.

Richard Sheard concluded by explaining that the report would gather evidence about the current situation and this would lead to a planning document for developers covering the social, environmental and economic aspects. However alongside this quick wins were important. He welcomed further comments and the District would look at the draft brief and send on another version which took the views expressed into account.

The Chairman welcomed the consideration of an augmented document at the next meeting and in due course the appointed consultant would be able to attend the Town Team Committee meeting.

5. Simon Blackler explained that all his recommendations and actions were well documented and he offered it to the floor for any comments. Everyone recognised that the signage was urgently needed and whilst there might be minor changes which some were wanting to see included they acknowledged that the project should not be delayed.

The funding of the scheme would be taken from the TESCO 106 money and once that was spent there would be £25,000 remaining and a little over a year to spend it.

The Chairman thanked Simon for all his work and the Committee gave its support to the scheme.

5a. Although there was no “any other business” Richard Sheard asked if he might update the meeting on the Leisure Centre. He recognised it was frustrating that the sort of scheme hoped for could not be delivered but there was a need to think about immediate enhancements and then looking at the longer term solutions. This was an area where the study work was needed. It was likely that £250,000 would be used to improve and upgrade the centre but the opportunity had been taken to submit an expression of interest for the Sport England money to see whether a bid might be possible.

The Chairman indicated in the light of that update that the Leisure Centre would be included on the next agenda.

6. Date of next Committee meeting – Friday 2nd November at 5pm

A wider group meeting before Christmas would ensure that feedback was given to all interested members of the public and this could be held in The Watermark. The Chairman agreed to circulate a date to all as soon as this could be sorted out.

(NB – Date for wider group meeting agreed for Friday 7th December at 6pm)

The meeting closed at 6.45pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....