

TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL –EXTERNAL COMMITTEE

TOURISM AND BUSINESS & HIGH STREET REGENERATION SUB-COMMITTEE

NOTES OF A MEETING ON 12TH MARCH 2019

Present: TTC Cllrs. M. Carter, Mrs. J. Curteis, Mrs. S. Ferguson, K. Mulholland and J. Nelson. ABC Cllrs. M. Bennett and G. Galpin. Shawn Dewey (K&ESR), Rod Hardingham, Glenn Thompson and Seren Welch. Claire Gilbert (Deputy Town Clerk) took notes.

1. Apologies for Absence. Cllrs. J. Crawford, Mrs. P. Smith and Mrs. K. Walder (TTC), Sarah Barber (ABC), Mike Bartlett (TDCC), Simon Robinson (TDCC).

2. Minutes. The last meeting held on 22nd January 2019 were **AGREED**.

2.1 Minute 4.13 – parking data from Ashford Borough Council. Claire Gilbert reported that she had not yet contacted ABC for the data, however, it was agreed that this should be followed up and a letter would be sent from the Town Clerk to Parking Services.

Action: CG/PB to email Parking Services at ABC.

3. Update on ABC & TTC Meeting & Future High Street Fund Presentation.

3.1 Cllr. Graham Galpin had conducted a presentation on 31st January 2019 on the Future of High Streets and Town Centres. It became clear from a meeting that took place after this presentation that Tenterden did not qualify. Cllr. Galpin reported that this was the first round of funding and it all depends on the receptivity of the DCLG in London. ABC will only be submitting one bid for the funding; Ashford Town Centre are further ahead with their documentation and this will be submitted. Cllr. Galpin reported that all is not lost; if the Town Council can amalgamate Seren Welch's work on the Destination Management Plan and produce an Action Plan for Tenterden, an application could be advanced. Cllr. Galpin reported that there might a Phase 2 of the funding if there is an under-spend. However, following further discussion around a phase 2 bid, it was felt unlikely that funds would still be available.

3.2 Seren reported that once we have a clear plan, funds could possibly be unlocked. It would be surprising if there was an under-spend on the High Street Fund, however, there is the opportunity to ask for advice and seek funding via different means.

3.3 Cllr. Mike Carter reported that the hard and soft landscaping in the High Street required improvement, for example widening the footpaths, and funding could be obtained via Section 106 monies. Seren reported that this is classed as 'public realm' and would be surprised if monies could be

allocated to this. Cllr. Carter raised the issues of pollution in some of the High Street shops from buses in particular

- 3.4 'Tenterden Improved Phase 2' was discussed and Seren asked if a copy of the full document (Tenterden Improved Phase 1) could be obtained from Colin Kinloch which includes the data. Cllr. Sue Ferguson has a copy of the data and will forward this information to Claire Gilbert for circulation.

Action: SF to forward full Tenterden Improved report including data.

- 3.5 Cllr. Carter highlighted the traffic issues on the High Street and reported that the Councillors had been coming up with ideas to solve the issues; Cllr. Matthew Freeman had produced some graphics with the ideas. Seren reported that the Town Council could adopt a 'Clean Air Policy' for the Town and funding could be unlocked for this, however this would require gathering air pollution data

- 3.6 Cllr. Jean Curteis reported that buses used to go straight through to Hastings from Ashford, etc. but since that stopped, buses have been turning around near the Vine. It was agreed that with any changes to the High Street configuration, the public need to be consulted. Cllr. Ken Mulholland reported that Cllr. Galpin had been asked previously about investigating the measuring of vehicle fumes in key areas; Cllr. Galpin suggested making a formal request to Environmental Services and copying him in.

Action: CG/PB to write to Environmental Services re pollution.

- 3.7 It was agreed that a proposal needs to go to the Town Council for Tenterden Improved Phase 2. It was noted that this could be a 10-year project. Seren suggested looking at the County's priorities and align to those. Cllr. Brad Bradford, Environmental Services and Sheila Davison (Highways Department) might be open to discussion.

- 3.8 Cllr. Carter reported that one of the priorities from the Residents Survey was congestion in the High Street and this needs addressing.

4. Action Map.

- 4.1 Seren reported that the Heritage Trail Leaflet that the Town Council had proposed to update and reprint was very detailed, however, no feedback had been received from visitors. The leaflet is very dated and it has taken approximately eight years to distribute 10,000 copies. This very much indicated that the leaflet was not as popular as others.

- 4.2 Seren reported that we need to look at Airbnb's and Tourist Information Centres in a radius of 15 miles to target visitors with a more up to date leaflet. Day and overnight stay visitors needed to increase. The Heritage Trail leaflet does not showcase a working retail High Street. Seren has been working on a new leaflet which provides a map of the High Street and also points visitors to local tourist attractions. QR codes could be linked to the

leaflet and there could be a link via Ashford Borough Council's Visit Ashford & Tenterden for a Pdf download. The map/leaflet could showcase the 25 coffee shops/restaurants plus five pubs in the Town. Dwell time is currently two hours by group visitors and this increases to five hours if the railway is included. We need visitors to 'eat, drink, stay, explore'.

- 4.3 The new leaflet/map is not designed to replace the Ashford & Tenterden leaflet, but to complement it. The leaflet will show events for the whole year, not just seasonal. There is an option to create a shop list from the 'base map' which would be useful for Town Events. Cllr. Mrs. Ferguson reported that she had a blank Town map which could be used as well.

Action: SF to email blank Town map to CG.

- 4.4 It was agreed that a Town map was needed in the Chamber's notice board on the side of Waitrose. Seren had spoken to ABC and there is the opportunity to put A4 notices by the parking machines for what is coming up (seasonal posters) and perhaps the QR code.

- 4.5 Seren would be meeting with Sarah Barber & Tracey McKeen at ABC to look at the new leaflet and it would be circulated to local attractions for their support. Seren reported that she had also been going through the Visit Ashford & Tenterden website with Sarah and Tracey.

- 4.6 It was agreed that a working group would need to be set up to sign off the Tenterden map. There needs to be a co-ordinated launch for Visit Tenterden and it was agreed that Richard Harvey should be involved.

Action: Working Group to be set up and CG to ask Richard Harvey to assist with the launch.

- 4.7 Seren reported that Claire Gilbert had set up a Visit Tenterden Instagram account and Seren was assisting in building the profile. The objective of this Instagram channel is to reach out to potential visitors, influencers, travel trade and Destination Marketing Organisations. Also, working in partnership with the High street and key attractions within 30 min radius of the town. The Committee thanked Seren for all her work on the projects underway.

5. **Chamber notice board update, social media training update and parking info displays.**

- 5.1 It was agreed that the notice board, located on the side of Waitrose by the car park, should contain the Town map when complete or a list of main Town Events.

6. **English Tourism Week Opportunities.** Seren reported that English Tourism week is coming up and there needs to be a media push; this will be taking place on social media, however time scales were tight and this could be a focus for next year,

- 7. Evaluation & Monitoring.** Seren reported that Tenterden needs a footfall counter, however, the Town Council cannot afford to purchase one. Seren asked Cllr. Galpin whether ABC might be able to help. Cllr. Galpin suggested writing to him direct to make the request; ABC currently use Springboard.

Action: *CG/PB to write to GG with a request to supply Tenterden with a footfall counter.*

8. Tenterden's High Street Market.

- 8.1 Cllr. Ferguson reported that the Friday Market Sub-committee had been set up for the handing over of the High Street Market from ABC to the Town Council. Now that the handover had taken place and had been running for nearly a year, it was requested that the Friday Market Sub-committee be closed and the Friday Market amalgamated into the Tourism & Business Sub-committee.

- 8.2 Cllr. Ferguson reported that there were a couple of active market traders who were keen to improve the market, and in particular attract more traders. Currently there was no official market manager and it had been suggested that this maybe something that a Town Co-ordinator to take on. Cllr. Mike Bennett commented that it should not be the Town Co-ordinator's responsibility as they would have enough to do; Cllr. Galpin endorsed this statement.

- 8.3 The Committee discussed various ideas of how the market could be improved and it was agreed that the vans had to go as currently from the opposite side of the road it looked like a boot fair. Uniform gazebos were mentioned, however, they require a commitment from the Town Council's maintenance team to put up and take down each time and there would also be storage issues.

- 8.4 The Committee briefly discussed other locations within the Town for the market as its current position does affect High Street businesses and the stretch running from the Town Hall to the old Lloyds Bank contain high end shops.

- 8.5 It was agreed by the Committee that Tourism & Business was not the place for the market to be covered and at this stage it still required a dedicated meeting

Action: *CG to report back to PB.*

9. Any Other Business

- 9.1 Cllr. Ferguson circulated images of the empty shops in the High Street. It was agreed that this should be on the agenda for the next meeting to look at the issues.

Action: *CG to add as an agenda item for next meeting.*

- 9.2 Cllr. Justin Nelson reported that a landlord database for Tenterden was needed; Cllr. Galpin commented that a taskforce were putting it together and it should be ready in the next six months.
- 9.3 Glenn Thompson suggested that pop up shops should be allowed to trade in the empty shops around the Town. Although this would a great idea, it would be down to the landlords to action/give permission.
- 9.4 Town Co-ordinator Job Description – Seren reported that we had received an example job description from Tracey McKeen, however, a copy of the ABC Town Centre Manager’s job description would also be helpful. Cllr. Galpin agreed to liaise with Andrew Osborne in Economic Development.
- Action:** *GG to liaise with Andrew Osborne re JD for Town Centre Manager.*
- 9.5 Cllr. Galpin reported that there will be a Revitalisation of the High Street Forum in London on 25th April and encouraged a representative to go. Cllr. Nelson would liaise with the Town Clerk’s office for a representative from the Town Council.

10. Date of Next Meeting: to be confirmed.