

TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL –EXTERNAL COMMITTEE

TOURISM AND BUSINESS & HIGH STREET REGENERATION SUB-COMMITTEE

NOTES OF A MEETING ON 22ND JANUARY 2019

Present: TTC Cllrs. Carter, Mrs. Ferguson, Mulholland, Nelson & Mrs. Walder. ABC Sarah Barber & Cllr. Bennett. Mike Bartlett (TDCC), Shawn Dewey (K&ESR), Rod Hardingham, Simon Robinson (TDCC), Glenn Thompson and Seren Welch. Claire Gilbert (Deputy Town Clerk) took notes.

- 1. Apologies for Absence.** Cllrs. Crawford & Mrs. Smith (TTC), Cllr. Bill Barrett & Graham Galpin (ABC).

Cllr. Bill Barrett would no longer be a member of this Committee as Cllr. Graham Galpin is now able to attend; Bill will still be kept informed of progress via agendas and minutes.

- 2. Minutes.** The last meeting held on 11th December 2018 were **AGREED**.

- 3. Update on ABC & TTC meeting held on 14th January 2019.** Claire Gilbert briefly updated the Committee on the useful and productive meeting held at Ashford Borough Council. Attendees were Cllr. Pam Smith, Cllr. Mike Bennett, Sarah Barber, Tracey McKeen, Christina Fuller and Claire Gilbert. The meeting was mainly to update ABC on how TTC would like to improve Tourism advertising, particularly via digital content and the role of the Co-ordinator was discussed from a tourism perspective. Tracey McKeen had agreed to send over an example of a job description which will help in producing one for the Town Co-ordinator. Seren Welch reported that Hannah Clayton-Peck is now Town Centre Manager for Ashford and it would be useful to have a meeting with Hannah in the future as it would be a great opportunity to share information.

- 4. Action Map for Committee and Task Group.** Seren had produced a Tenterden Destination and Town Centre overview plan– Destination Work Programme – Phase 1 Activation 2019. Seren had been looking at digital delivery on the core Ashford website and drew up the one-page action plan from the discussions at the January meeting. ABC are keen to look at key areas and in particular extend visitor stays. ABC buys into research with Visit Kent and can look at data on average spends and how the Borough is performing in Kent as a whole. The Committee went through the programme and the following additional notes were made.

Action: *Produce a Borough Tourism Dashboard – this is an overview document to be prepared for the next meeting indicating areas for development and growth – SW to draft for sign off by ABC Tourism.*

- 4.1** Seren has started work on the current destination content review. The content on Ashford Tourism and Visit Kent needs to be kept up to date and the information refreshed. Sarah Barber reported that this information could be updated as regularly as required, for example, on a daily basis if necessary. As part of this content review, there will also need to be a blog/digital media timetable.

Action: *SW to work with ABC Tourism and Kent Tourism to draft outline – report back on progress at next meeting.*

4.2 Service Level Agreement – there is currently an SLA between ABC & Invicta Chamber and this works very well. It was agreed that there should be an SLA between ABC and TTC for ongoing partnership development.

Action: *TTC and ABC to draft an outline SLA – Cllr Walder to support.*

4.3 Tenterden Tourist Information Centre function – this is currently placed in the Town Hall and is a self-help service. With the Town Hall re-ordering a possibility, a temporary or new permanent home for this service needs to be sought. At the meeting with ABC on the 14th January, a few ideas came up, one of which was the Museum. Seren suggested St. Mildred's as another possible option – it is open daylight hours, seven days a week and this would draw visitors into the Church.

Action: *SW and DTC to consult with St. Mildred's as possible TIC info point. ABC Tourism to advise on TIC requirements given their knowledge of previous Tenterden TIC function and expertise on current TIC demands.*

4.4 Currently ABC provide TIC support by phone, online and through visitors to the Gateway in Ashford; this includes Tenterden enquiries.

Action: *ABC to advise on any current data available on Tenterden Specific enquiries also any available website data associated with Tenterden pages/ links.*

4.5 There was an interesting statement that not everyone knows that there is a Steam Railway in Tenterden, and this includes some locals! Although there are the brown tourist signs, it was suggested that maybe a topiary train could be installed at the top of Station Road or on the opposite side of the road near Montalbano.

Action: *TTC & SW to explore options for a temporary/ permanent train orientated installation on the High Street to report back at next meeting – Cllr Walder to support.*

4.6 Economic Development – Claire was currently trying to arrange a meeting with Andrew Osborne at ABC to look at economic development and Town management for the Co-ordinator role.

Action: *TTC to arrange a meeting with ABC Economic Development before the next Tourism and business subcommittee meeting – DTC, Cllr Smith and SW to attend.*
4.7 *Travel trade enquiries – the Tenterden coach parks require more advertising and this could be done by linking them to itineraries. It was agreed that it would be good to know who is using the coach park.*

Action: *TTC to request coach parking usage figures from ABC for 2018 highlighting month by month usage figures
SW to attend Excursions 2019 on 26th Jan to review trade product development opportunities for the town with key operators.*

4.7 There needs to be a review of the event delivery for the Town to ensure there are no event clashes and provide support for local businesses.

Action: *Development of a Key events clash diary to be held by TTC office/ shared with ABC Tourism – SW to draft outline.*

Quite a few of the local attractions have signed up to the Kent Big Weekend, but this year the Railway has not. Shawn Dewey reported that K&ESR are looking at their vision, i.e. who they are, where are they going, and also

looking into how the railway can become a year-round attraction. Seren also suggested approaching the History Society to conduct 'experience' walking tours over the weekend.

Action: SW to scope possible walking tour with the advice from local heritage groups and possibly local history graduate for product launch over the Kent Big Weekend/ English Tourism week.

4.9 English Tourism Week takes place 30th March to 7th April 2019 and it is important for Tenterden to link into this.

Action: outline proposal for English Tourism week activity – SW to draft outline for report back at the next meeting.

4.10 Seren reported that the first six months should focus on programme delivery and then look at taking on a Town Co-ordinator. It was agreed that Graham Galpin's help would be required to unlock potential funding.

4.11 Seren highlighted that the Destination Work Programme is an outline of what needs to go into a Business Plan. The end aim is a recognised enhanced destination offer, strengthened via partnership working.

Action: TTC and ABC to work on an outline business plan for April 2019 – March 2020 – this would establish the role for the TCM to be introduced by Sept 2019.

4.12 Mike Bartlett asked how we get people to know where Tenterden is? People seem to know where Rye is; Sue Ferguson reported that Rye tends to draw in people from London for the weekend via the train links. Seren reported that there are some quick wins such as enhancing and adding geographical locators to the Tenterden based businesses on www.visitashfordandtenterden.co.uk

Action: SW to review this as part of the overall web content review.

4.13 It was highlighted that there are some issues with parking in Tenterden, although Bridewell Car Park is heavily underused. This could be improved via 'top tips on parking' and then highlighting that it is free on Sundays and Bank Holidays. Mike Carter stated that ideally there needed to be at least another 100 parking spaces.

Action: TTC to request full parking data and any information that indicates which car parks are running at capacity.

Note: Shawn Dewey reported that the Railway were looking at improving their car parking facilities, with provision for at least seven coaches and disabled parking spaces. They were also considering weekday parking arrangements for workers. A planning application will be submitted to ABC and funding will be required for the project. Mike Carter encouraged Shawn to write to the Town Council for possible funding.

5. Chamber of Commerce Noticeboard by Waitrose. Justin Nelson reported that the Town Council now has Pear Mapping software and it would be useful to put an up to date Town Map in the noticeboard. Seren suggested advertising a plan of key events.

Action: Mike Bartlett TDCC to discuss suggested usage of the notice board space at the next chamber meeting and report back.

6. Any Other Business.

- 6.1 Sue Ferguson requested that the parking times for when Station Road Car Park changes to coaches only needs to be specified more clearly and consistently.

Action: *Sarah Barber ABC agreed to look investigate.*

7. Date of Next Meeting. Tuesday, 12th March 2019 at 5.30 pm.

Graham Galpin will be conducting a presentation on the Future of High Streets and Town Centres on Thursday, 31st January 2019 at 7.00 pm in the Town Hall.