

MPAPP Meeting Minutes – 21st November 2023

In attendance: Fiona Toms (FT), Zara Aitken (ZA), Ray Tew (RT), Cllr Marcus Kravis (MK), Nicki Maclean (NM), Cllr Craig Palmer (CP), Cllr Andy Hadley (AH),

Apologies: Paul Matcham (PM), Maureen Smith (MS)

1. Minutes of last meeting/matters arising/action log review

Minutes from last meeting approved. A review of action points from previous meeting undertaken and action log updated.

Action log updates:

Action 19 - FT to look at initial actions of setting up 'educational' sub-group to take educational actions on Minehead Plan forward

Update: There are currently limited resources available to take this forward. Report on these issues shared by Devon & Somerset Chamber of Commerce - meeting being scheduled for December to discuss how we can work within this influential group to help move this forward.

Action 20 - FT to take Walkers are Welcome project forward

Update: RT has provided a contact at one of the walking groups. FT to take forward in December. We need to find a group to own this one.

Action 21 - MCDT to speak to MTC re funding for Project Coordinator role

Update: Conversations ongoing between MTC & MCDT. RT has met with Ben Parker, Operations Manager of Minehead Town Council.

Action 23 - ZA to rearrange meeting with Teenagers in Minehead and give update at next meeting.

Update: Meeting rearranged for 27th November. ZA will update at Dec MPAPP meeting.

Action 25 - ZA to arrange meeting with MTC re Minehead Place / Master Plan

Update: Outstanding.

Action 27 – FT will pull together immediate Blue Flag Award ‘quick win’ actions that will enable a fast start next year.

Update: Report created and shared with Jim Whittaker and RT. Waiting for Jim to provide his update and contact names for actions to take forwards.

2. Devon County Council Benchmarking Plans – Presentation from Keir Duffin

Keir Duffin (KD), Economy Team Manager at Devon County Council (DCC) presented plans for benchmarking exercise regarding regeneration of 9 Devon market and coastal towns. Some of this work involves setting up regeneration boards in towns and taking forward projects, such as a Maritime Training Academy in Ilfracombe.

KD explained many Devon coastal towns are experiencing issues regarding lack of affordable housing, lack of labour force, lack of opportunities for young people among other issues. Towns included in the benchmarking exercise are Ilfracombe, Bideford, Seaton, Axminster, Tiverton, Teignmouth, Dawlish, Okehampton and Great Torrington.

Benchmarks include 'Projects completed', 'Funds bid for', 'Funds secured', 'Business case development undertaken', 'Community consultation undertaken', 'No of delivery partner involved', as well as more economically focused benchmarks such as 'No. of businesses supported', 'No. of new jobs created', 'No of people supported into employment'. The full list of benchmarks can be found in the document attached to the minutes.

RT queried how the towns were chosen. KD explained data from Heart of the South West LEP (HotSW LEP) was utilised to identify smaller towns with population over 10,000 that would struggle in the aftermath of Covid-19. 8 towns were originally selected but Great Torrington approached DCC and asked to be included if they provided funding themselves.

MK queried if this work had come out of the Coastal Productivity Group and whether some district councils had been more eager to be involved than others. KD explained it had come out of DCC realisation that many towns in Devon would suffer following Covid-19 which resulted in the Future of Towns Report. KD advised some districts had been more enthusiastic than others and there seemed to be a general theme that where district councils were engaged, this also seemed to result in a more engaged community.

FT queried what the results of this data collection would be, and recommended KD attend next meeting to further discussions around this.

Action: ZA to invite KD to next meeting.

Action: ZA to share dashboards and benchmark targets with MPAPP group.

3. Individual Updates

i. Somerset Council – Cllr Andy Hadley

AH shared that Somerset Council are experiencing financial difficulty and as such, devolution work to town councils will begin shortly.

Flooding drop-in session held recently. AH is looking into drainage on seafront. AH advised Environment Agency (EA) not forthcoming with information. Groyne in town is blocked but EA have given 0-6 month timeframe for resolving it.

Continuing work on LCNs.

ii. Somerset Council – Cllr Marcus Kravis

MK advised that Somerset Council are looking for support from Town Councils in light of Somerset Council financial difficulties and hope the town can see this as an opportunity. MK feels Minehead needs to look to other towns such as Watchet and Porlock for partnership working.

FT queried where regeneration funding would usually come from. AH advised County Council usually, as Town Councils do not exist for this function.

iii. Minehead Town Council (MTC)

CP gave update on Minehead Victorian Christmas event that the new business group is planning for Friday 24th November as well as Christmas trees that MTC have provided. All in group felt it important that new business group engage with local authorities to ensure support can be provided. ZA meeting with Ben Jewell today (21st Nov) and will discuss this with him.

Note: new group called Minehead Business & Community Association

iv. Minehead and Coast Development Trust (MCDT)

RT advised he had met with MTC Operations Manager, Ben Parker, to discuss how MTC and MCDT can work together but has not heard back from Ben following this meeting.

v. Somerset Council – Nicki Maclean

NM advised she is not working on anything Minehead specific currently but is keen to hear progress of the new business group in Minehead.

4. Minehead Cultural Festival

FT gave update around ideas presented in PowerPoint presentation for a Minehead Cultural Festival in 2025. Discussion held around the best time of year for such an event with general consensus being September for better weather and to avoid Butlins' Adult Weekends. Other discussions regarding involving Butlins and West Somerset Railway ensued. RT suggested it may be best to start small, perhaps planning for weekends only in September 2025, rather than a whole month. RT also suggested a steering group would need to be formed to take this forward with support from Minehead's cultural organisations. CP suggested tying in with Somerset Arts Week (SAW) which is usually in September.

Action: FT to take forward by looking at events calendar for September 2025.

Action: RT to provide contact name for SAW

5. Minehead Beach Fish Sculpture

FT gave update around ideas presented in PowerPoint presentation for the Minehead Beach Fish. Discussion around potential location and possible issues, such as planning permission and funding with the general consensus being that it's a good idea that should be investigated further.

FT explained the fish sculpture could be loaned from another seaside town for an off season trial of two months. Cost for this in the region of £1000.

AH feels the next logical step would be to decide on a potential location and speak with the organisation who created the fish to see if they can advise on whether the selected location would work. NM suggested FT speak with Idverde re waste

disposal. FT raised that MS had suggested contacting Somerset Waste Partnership also.

FT feels there is potential to launch this on World Plastic Free Day on 8th May 2024.

Action: All to have a think about potential location.

Action: FT to share location requirements document with group. (Send with minutes)

6. MCDT Project Coordinator Role Funding

ZA and RT met with National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) two weeks ago to discuss bid. NLCF Funding Officer, Sarah Drummer-Wade is preparing to take MCDT's bid to first stage committee. MCDT should find out outcome of first stage within next 2 weeks. RT advised it has been a useful exercise to hone down MCDT's purpose and mission.

Other bids submitted to Swire Charitable Trust and HPC Small Grants Programme, and also looking at corporate sponsorship opportunities. ZA has prepared a corporate sponsorship proposal. AH requested sight of the corporate sponsorship proposal when finished.

MCDT queried how a partnership with MTC might work. CP advised that the deadline for financial budgeting is January.

Action: ZA share corporate sponsorship package with AH.

7. MPAPP Facebook Page and Logo

FT raised the issue of MPAPP visibility and discussed opportunities for ensuring MPAPP is more visible in the community including creation of a Facebook page and a logo. Group agreed this was a good idea. FT and ZA working on logos.

Action: ZA to share logos with group.

8. AOB

i. Poetry Competition

ZA gave update about poetry competition. Wording to go in all shelters on seafront has been approved by Assets Team at Somerset Council.

Currently awaiting creation of website by Shonie Milward-Usher who ran the competition so QR codes can be printed and added to the signage that will contain the poems.

Action: ZA to share the poems with MPAPP.

Note: In MS' absence her agenda point re education will be carried over to the next meeting in December