

Destination Okehampton - Council Working Group

Notes of the meeting held on 20th December 2017

Time: 19.00 – 20.35 Venue: Okehampton Conservative Club

Present: Mike Davies, Brian Finch, Jan Goffey [Town Mayor] Michael Ireland [Chair] Mike Moore [Connect Bude] Maureen McDonald, Paul Vachon and Paul Voaden

Apologies: Kevin Ball, Tom and Sue Baxter, Chris Bligh, Clare Gladstone, Anne Johnson, Jon Kelsey, Tony Leech & Christine Marsh and Peter Moores.

Notes of the last meeting. The notes were accepted as true record of the meeting held on 1st August 2017. Proposed, Mike, Seconded Paul Vachon.

Matters arising not already on the agenda

The walks leaflet and Town guide produced by Paul Vachon and a task and finish group was discussed. The meeting was told that the Okehampton Town Guide was now ready for printing and the format would be a 24 page booklet. The aim was to produce the guide ready for the start of the tourist season – April 2018.

Action point – to find the £1000 needed to print 5000 copies of the guide.

Sunday market – I was confirmed by the Chair and Mike Davies that a letter of thanks had been sent to the organisers of the Sunday market.

Visit to Bude - at the previous meeting it had been agreed to visit Bude to see what could be learned from the Bude Area Tourist Board and Council about how they present their Town's heritage. It was also noted that to Bude Heritage Day would be the 28th July 2018.

Action point The Mayor of Bude to be contacted by Mike Moore with a view to arranging a meeting with Cllr Jan Goffey [Mayor of Okehampton].

Heart of South West Partnership Report

A discussion took place about the HSW partnership report which had omitted Okehampton, Tavistock and other major towns in West Devon and Torridge from the maps. Jan Goffey thanked MI and the Town Clerk for producing a response to this consultation.

Mike Davies said we need to know what funding is available from the LEP's. At a meeting in London [18th March 2017] Paul Maynard MP had noted the importance of the LEP's on the development of the railway.

Paul Vachon had read and comment on the HoSW consultation document and was critical that no actual method of deliver was mentioned for the proposed productivity strategy. He pointed to an earlier report HofSW Social Enterprise Report (2016) which is worth reading.

OkeRail Report

Mike Davies [Chair of OkeRail Forum] provided an update on the work of OkeRail. MD gave a synopsis of the forthcoming Jacob's report on the Okehampton – Exeter railway. Patrick Carney had told MD that they [Jacob's] needed to hear from GWR, Dartmoor Railway, OkeRail and Aggregate Industries on the future development of the line.

In summary, Devon County Council want the cheapest option, GWR want the Parkway Station, Town Terminus and double track, while Dartmoor Railway want to give no access beyond the proposed Parkway Station. Aggregate Industries and Network Rail want access to Exeter and beyond into the national network.

An infrastructure programme is needed to deliver the Parkway Station; to include a bus turning and parking area, disabled parking and real-time information signs. A track survey had identified three sections, each of ½ miles length that need to be replaced. One bridge identified as structure 588A has vertical crack needed work; all Level Crossing points need to be reassessed, 60% of line fencing needs replacement and GMS-R communication masts [3] will have to be installed.

Special Trains for 2018 – The Chair confirmed that he was in negotiations with GWR with view to running 3 special trains, to Oxford, Tenby and London Paddington.

Great Western Franchise – public consultation – The Chair asked that responses be made by the 21st February 2018.

Edwardian Bandstand – The Chair asked local member of the working group to consider the idea, first proposed by the OTC Park keeper, of reinstating the Edwardian Bandstand as visitor attraction in the park. After a short discussion, Cllr Paul Vachon suggested that it could form the centre piece of an arts and heritage attraction.

Action point – The Council promote a competition for the public to suggest how the Bandstand project could be development.

OkeRail CIC Coffee morning – The Chair reported that he had booked the Hatherleigh Old School Room on market day Tuesday 30th January. The aim would be to promote the OkeRail project in Hatherleigh with a stand and information from Mr Bob Rush and provide focus for discussion on the benefit of the rail service to Hatherleigh. It was noted that Hatherleigh like Bude have always been strong supporters of the re instatement of the railway.

Action – Member were asked to attend and bring cakes that can be sold, it is also usual to have a draw – so donations of prizes are requested.

AOB

Mike Moore [Connect Bude] report that they had found it difficult to recruit members from Holsworthy to support *Connect Bude*.

A date for the diaries is Monday 8th January at the Parkhouse Centre, Bude, when Cllr. Geoff Brown (Cornwall County Council & Chair of the PRTF) will be speaking at the Bude local area network for transport.

He noted the change of timetable for the 6 & 6A Stagecoach buses to Bude from Exeter via Launceston. The City bus 12 A will compensate for the reduction in services by Stagecoach.

Close; 20.35 hours.