

8<sup>th</sup> August 2012

At a meeting of the Tourism Committee of Sandwich Town Council held this day  
present: -

The Mayor (in the Chair)

Councillor Carter

“ Mrs Laslett

“ Moorhouse

“ Scollard

“ Scott

Mr Steve Laslett

Mr Colin Carr, Harbour Master

1. Apologies were received from Councillor Graeme, Councillor Mrs Liote, Mrs Leatherby and Mr Collins.
2. The Harbour Master, Colin Carr, was invited to attend the meeting to discuss the issues affecting the River Stour and future promotion of the river. Mr Carr explained about the silting problem on the river, the lack of facilities for mariners (i.e. a dry dock) and the proposal for the Environment Agency to open up the Stonar Cut, which could see the river at Sandwich dry up within 10 years. It was acknowledged that the waterways around Sandwich are of such historical importance that work should be done to promote the maintenance and development of the river as an economic asset as well as a natural asset. It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that a letter be sent from Sandwich Town Council to MP Laura Sandys asking for guidance on how to construct a long-term plan for the preservation and future development of the river. A government department for inward investment could possibly be identified or a government/European grant sought for assistance in the future.
3. The Mayor of Broadstairs & St. Peters, Councillor David Saunders, attended a pre-meeting of the council on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012 to discuss tourism. It was good to see that the new tourism guide and SCEA website are of a comparable standard to the promotional literature in Broadstairs & St. Peters. However, Broadstairs & St. Peter's view events and tourism in a very different way to Sandwich, they have developed a strategic vision for tourism and allocated 27.5% of their precept to events and tourism. For the 2012/13 financial year Sandwich Town Council did not allocate any of the budget for this purpose.  
Broadstairs & St. Peters have developed a very good working relationship with the local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce (CoC) over the last few years. It is desirable for Sandwich Town Council to develop the same team mentality, with the council working on negotiations, the CoC addressing tactical issues and the traders dealing with operational issues.  
At the last CoC meeting it was proposed that the Sandwich Town Council be asked to take the lead on the formation of a town team. However, this matter was not raised at the last meeting. It was AGREED that Councillor Watts will put an item on the agenda for the Town Council meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> August to discuss having a 'Town Team'.

It was also RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that Sandwich Town Council and Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund be asked to consider funding for tourism in the 2013/14 year. This will be put on the relevant agendas prior to the budgets being set.

4. A letter from Sandwich Local History Society was considered in relation to the development of the Waterfront Town Trail. It was agreed that Cllr Mrs Laslett and Cllr Scollard walk the route and respond to Sandwich Local History Society.
5. The proposal for new signage boards on the Quay and Cattle Market conveniences were considered. It was agreed that there is already a lot of town signage in these areas and introducing new signs would make the areas look cluttered. Instead of introducing additional signage. It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that DDC be contacted to find out when the contract ends for the marketing company who currently populate the two large A0 signs and if the town council can take over the management of these signs in the future.
6. A DDC Safety Advisory Group meeting will take place on 27<sup>th</sup> September at which the summer 2013 road closures will be discussed. The Mayor, Town Clerk and Mr. Laslett will be attending this meeting and will feedback on the progress of this discussion to the Tourism Committee in October.
7. Cllr Mrs Laslett has made further enquiries with Mr R. Linnings regarding a survey of visitors. Canterbury Christ Church University are keen to have 'live briefs' for their students as long the criteria works with the course syllabus and timetables of the academic year. The council would probably be asked to cover some expenses, such as travel for the students. We would need to provide the University with clear aims and objectives i.e. to measure what visitors like to do, what is the business case for providing the services that attract visitors and what are the barriers that stop people visiting? Cllr Mrs Laslett, in consultation with Cllr Carter and Mr Laslett, will progress with this enquiry and feedback at the next meeting.
8. The White Cliffs Country Tourism Newsletter for the Summer 2012 contains information about the filming by a Brazilian film company in Sandwich, it was estimated that the public relations value of this footage is £690K. The production by the Brazilian film crew was one of several PR activities that have been arranged this year in conjunction with the events diary, promotion of events brings people into the town and will build overall trade. Sandwich Town Council should be aware of the figure of £690k for understanding and supporting promotion in the future.
9. Cllr Mrs Laslett provided an update on the proposed Dover District Council Heritage Strategy. It will be essential for the town council and the local community to look at the list of assets that DDC proposes and request that any other assets that are important to the local community be added, especially those that are under threat.  
There are currently thirteen proposed 'themes' for assets and it will hopefully be possible to think laterally on what is included, for example by adding Sandwich Quay and waterways.  
The comprehensive list of proposed assets will be emailed to the Tourism Committee members as soon as possible and then included on the agenda for the town council meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> August. It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the council reviews the list of assets and makes suggestions for assets that should be included, the Town Clerk will then feedback this information to DDC.\*

\* After the meeting it was established that DDC are only taking comments on the proposed Draft Heritage Strategy and the opportunity for feedback into what assets should be listed will come later in the year.