

SEAFORD REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of Steering Group Meeting 4 held at St James' Club (Seaford Volunteers) 7th February 2001

Present:

Cllr David Schueler
Sue Moffatt
Christine Hart
Mary Crutch
Owen Clifford
Joan Pearce
Paul Rideout

Liz Riley
Cllr John Freeman
Peter Sinclair
Joan Pearce
Maggie Simmons
Jacqueline Biddles

Cllr Laurie Holland
Mary Crutch
Cllr Duncan White
Roy Bellingham
Colin Brown
Inspector Ron Preddy

0. Introductions and Apologies

Apologies for absence received from Ted Cowdrey, Pauline Gower

Cllr Duncan White was introduced as the new representative from Lewes District Council.

Jacqueline Biddles had been invited as a representative from Sussex Rural Community Council with a special interest in young people from the ages of 11 to 23.

Colin Brown introduced Mr Paul Rideout from South Downs Council for Voluntary Service.

1. Minutes of Meeting 3 - 9th January 2001

Subject to correction of two spelling errors, these were approved.

2. Correspondence

Reference was made to a letter received from the chairman of the Coastal Renaissance Partnership which advised that SEEDA have reported their funding is overspent this year and the next phase after SRB6 has therefore been postponed for six months until the spring of 2002. The CRP Chairman has stated very firmly that he wishes the present SRB6 strategic plan to be completed by Spring 2001 as already agreed and he looks to all Partnership members to work to this end.

He suggested that all participants might like to write to SEEDA to protest at their decision and point out that a tremendous amount of work has been and is being put into the process of encouraging much needed economic and social regeneration along the East Sussex Coast. Most of this work is being carried out by voluntary effort and it is disappointing, to say the least, to be unable to proceed with this if there is going to be a postponement of funding. It was agreed that such a letter should be prepared and sent.

3. Reports from Thematic Task Groups

3.1 Seafront Improvement (Liz Riley) - see attached notes of meeting 7th February 2001

A meeting of this group had been held on the morning of 7th February which had been attended by Jackie Ellis (LDC Department of Tourism and Culture) and Leader of the CRP Thematic Group on Tourism and Culture.

As explained in the attached notes Jackie suggested that the best approach for Seaford was to focus on the town's particular attributes, notably its historical connections and also its potential specialised sports facilities.

A number of suggestions were made for development of a tourism/culture strategy and Seaford should become associated with the in-depth survey into sports provision currently being carried out by the CRP Thematic Group in Hastings, Eastbourne and Bexhill.

One notable idea was the possibility of establishing a "Spa" Health Resort in Seaford as there is no other along the East Sussex coast.

Representatives of Sea Anglers, Seaford Lifeguards, the Sailing Club and the Sub-Aqua Club will be invited to future meetings of the Task Group.

It was suggested that for the Heritage Trail Street Maps would be advantageous showing the relationship between 'interpretation 'points and to advertise hotels in the town as an inducement to tourists to stay for two or more days. Contact should be made with the Cross Channel Link to establish how they could direct visitors to Seaford.

3.2 Local Transport (Ted Cowdrey) - see attached notes of meetings 18th January and 1st February

In Ted Cowdrey's absence it was reported that a meeting of the Task Group had been held on 18th January where a number of issues concerning cycle routes had been discussed (see notes).

A special meeting was also held on 1st February at which representatives of cycling organisations were present together with members of the Seaford Town Council and the Principal of Seaford Head Community College. The purpose of the this meeting was to clarify various issues concerning cycle routes and to ensure as far as possible that Seaford Town Council and the Seaford Regeneration Partnership (together with other interested bodies) had an understanding of the possible ways forward for the town in this very important area.

Various other issues discussed included:

- Bicycles are not allowed on buses or trains. Sustainable transport requires this correcting.
- The Local Transport Plan contains 16 strategies which need studying
- The questionnaire published in local papers regarding residents' opinions about public transport has only attracted a trickle of replies and is therefore being reissued.
It was agreed that any questionnaires issued from the SRP should be carefully worded so as not to prejudice the issue on which opinions are sought.
- It was advised that the Hopper bus at Cooksbridge takes wheelchairs and this bus collects and delivers passengers to the station.
- The availability of Government Town Challenge funding was discussed. It was agreed that the Transport Task Group should meet with the ESCC Transport people about LTP.

3.3 Community Centre and First Stop Shop (Mary Crutch) - see attached notes of meeting 10th Jan.

Contact had been made with potential users including the Library Services, Careers Advice Service, Health and Further Education and the suggested services required are listed in the attached notes

Conceptual sketches for floor plans in a three-story building were tabled at the meeting. It was noted that a café/creche/healthy living centre would be necessary to ensure a relaxed atmosphere.

It was considered essential that the Youth Service and Students councils need to be involved and Jane Spencer would be able to help in this and access existing surveys of youth needs. It was noted that Brighton University have the facility to produce suitable questionnaires to obtain young people's

views on desirable features for their section of a community centre as well as on other facilities required for them in the town.

The importance of appropriate staffing was stressed and this would include both paid staff for library, health and careers services together with volunteers, with specific experience (and training if necessary) , for other aspects .

Various long term options for a permanent site include consultation with LDC to find suitable land, advice from knowledgeable members of Probus on the possibility of car park sites, acquiring the site of a burnt-out garage in Richmond Road. In addition there is the possibility of incorporating a community centre complex within the redevelopment of the Station site. If car park sites are available the use of an environmentally sensitive portable building could be considered (costing circa £500,000) could be possible, subject to planning controls.

It was agreed desirable that to achieve some progress on this project short term accommodation in a rent-free shop should be investigated.

Neil Brown (LDC) had agreed to approach Railtrack to obtain their views on the proposals for redeveloping the Station site.

It is necessary to establish quickly with Railtrack whether:

- a) They would allow a development as envisaged
- b) If so would they wish to carry out the development themselves (probably unlikely)
- c) Would they be prepared to sell or lease the site for a private/commercial development.

The other important issue is whether any organisation prepared to develop the site would be prepared to incorporate the proposed community services centre (without charge).

It was noted that incorporation of the Day Hospital Refurbishment plans in the station site would be desirable if the NHS were in agreement. The SRP would need to write to the NHS trust regarding this as there is funding already ear-marked for the refurbishment work on the existing day hospital site which could possibly be diverted.

3.4 Cradle Hill Business Park (Peter Sinclair) see attached notes of meeting 16th January.

Peter Sinclair reported that the last meeting was held at LDC - see the attached notes - which concentrated on ways of improving the present site and its approaches.

A meeting is being arranged (probably 15th March) with Cradle Hill occupiers and traders to discuss their ideas and needs and allow them to be part of the consultation exercise. It is proposed that the Federation of Small Businesses and Sussex Enterprise should be asked to send representatives to the Task Group meetings. The Chamber of Commerce will also write to the occupiers of Cradle Hill to ask for a representative to join the Task Group.

With regard to the possibility of a new business park on the site, Sue Moffatt considered that SEEDA would suggest this should be funded privately - not from SRB sources. However SEEDA might consider improvements to the existing site.

3.5 Town Centre Regeneration (Mary Crutch)

There had been no further investigation of suitable buildings and shop premises for redevelopment because many of those previously considered are already being occupied by businesses or turned into

residential accomodation. However the possibilities of a farmers market is still being actively considered and a meeting with SRCC is being arranged in April to obtain advice on setting these up.

4. Priorities, Timescales, Costing and Funding Sources

A schedule had been circulated before the meeting with details of the proposals produced by each of the task groups and with columns in which priorities, timescales, estimated costs and possible funding sources could be entered for each element.

It was agreed that the five task group leaders, together with David Schueler, should meet to establish these criteria and report back to the main steering group.

In the meantime the schedule could be sent to the CRP and possibly to other towns. Colin Brown also advised that he proposed to set up a meeting of the four new town partnerships to foster discussion and exchange of ideas.

5. Public Relations

David Schueler confirmed that a press report on the activities of the SRP had appeared in the Seaford Gazette and press releases will be issued to other local papers.

David Schueler also reported that Ted Cowdrey and he had attended the Town Centre Management Symposium held on Monday 22nd January at Eastbourne Town Hall. This was extremely interesting, particularly the workshops and report back sessions which had thrown up some very good ideas. These are being collated and copies will be available in due course. As a follow up there will be a conducted tour of Brighton and Hove City Centre, together with talks by various officials concerned with regeneration in the city.

6. Partnership Constitution

Colin Brown stated that he would be setting up a meeting shortly to provide advice on setting up a formal constitution for the partnership.

It was also agreed that following the presentation given by Owen Clifford at the last meeting the partnership should be renamed the Seaford Regeneration and Community Partnership.

7. Any Other Business

Forms were provided to record the time spent by at the various meetings being held as this information is needed by the CRP as evidence of "in kind" match-funding.

David Schueler mentioned the Celebrating Safe Seaford initiative which had been launched by the Rev. David Gillard and it was agreed that the SRP should write to express their support.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 7th March 2001 at 5.00 pm at Seaford Volunteer's HQ - St James' Hall, Blatchington Road.

It was agreed that all future meetings should be held on the first Wednesday of each month.

DS/5/3/2001

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