

**MINUTES OF LOOE TOWN COUNCIL TOWN TOURISM COMMITTEE
MEETING**

held in the Tourist Information Centre, The Guildhall, Fore Street, East Looe
on Tuesday 4th September 2012 at 7.00pm

REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENT

Chairman - Cllr Mrs E Hannaford
Councillors E B Galipeau, W Martin,
P Crossley and Mrs M Powell
Tourist Information Centre Manager – Mr M Camp
SECTA – Mrs E Coles
Polperro Promotion Group – Mrs M Gill
TASTE – Mrs M Sadler

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk – Mrs Anne Frith
Councillor A Toms

16. APOLOGIES

There were none given.

17. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman stated that she had sought advice from Cornwall Council Legal and Member Services regarding the Declaration of Pecuniary Interest, as the advice was not conclusive she proposed that no interests should be declared and the matter be referred to the Procedures Committee, seconded by Councillor Galipeau it was unanimously agreed.

18. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

19. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 4th JULY 2012

There were no matters raised.

20. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE MANAGER

Mr Camp gave his report as per attached Appendix 'A'.

Councillor Galipeau stated that Mr Camp's report was good news and that a press release should be done, this may also tempt accommodation providers to advertise with the Tourist Information Centre.

It was agreed that Mr Camp and the Chairman produce a press release.

21. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM SECTA

Mrs Coles gave her report as per attached Appendix 'B'.

Councillor Crossley and Mr Camp both stated that business had been very slow during the Olympics but picked up again afterwards.

22. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS

Councillor Toms informed the Committee that he is willing to take responsibility for the firework display but only if he can get enough volunteers. The Lions Club have agreed to help with the collecting and Councillor Toms will put out a press release and the firework display will be at midnight.

Councillor Martin stated that he and Councillor Crossley would be happy to help with fund-raising.

At this point Councillor Toms left the meeting.

23. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CORNWALL COUNCIL TOURISM PANEL

There had been no meeting.

24. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE POLPERRO PROMOTION GROUP

Mrs Gill gave her report as per attached Appendix 'C'.

Mr Camp had asked why Falmouth Tourist Information Centre will only promote Falmouth but no response as yet. The Committee agreed that this is very short-sighted. Councillor Martin suggested that all businesses in Looe have their deliveries before 11am to reduce the chaos in Fore Street, it was suggested that this is for the businesses to sort out and perhaps discussed at the next business meeting in October and then referred to Environment and Public Protection Committee for discussion.

25. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE REVIEW

The Chairman reported that Mr Camp has ordered new products and created a new advertising rate card which shows the minimum charges up to maximum charges with options in between.

Mr Camp stated that he and Anne Libby (Tourist Information Staff) will market the advertising.

The map pad is underway and the advertising is open to Polperro as well as Looe.

The new products have sold steadily and the home-made fridge magnets are selling well.

The spinner has been labelled and new racking has been put up.

26. TO DISCUSS A DRAFT WEDDING GUIDE

The Chairman had produced a draft document (see attached Appendix 'D') explaining the purpose of the guide and its intention to compliment the accommodation guide produced by Mr Camp.

The Committee agreed that producing this guide is a very good idea as weddings are big business.

It was suggested that a working party be set up to progress this after the Chairman has presented it to the Polperro Promotion Group at their next meeting.

Mrs Sadler and Mrs Crossley would probably help with this and other volunteers will be sought.

27. **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON LOOE WALKING ROUTES**

The Chairman reported that all the signs are up and looking very nice, the leaflet is not quite ready, it is just waiting for an access statement from Cornwall Council and the podcasts are still being worked on and the formal launch will probably take place in October.

28. **MATTERS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION**

.1 Vending Machine

Councillor Martin asked if a letter could again be sent to East Looe Town Trust, following their refusal of our previous request, to site a small vending machine outside the Tourist Information Centre during opening hours explaining that there would be no litter issues as the packaging forms part of the toy that would be dispensed.

The Clerk was asked to write to East Looe Town Trust again.

The Meeting closed at 8.35pm.

TIC Managers Report Sept 4th 2012

The season so far: I thought it would be hard to start this report on a positive note. The weather, the recession and even the Olympics all seem to have combined to give us what at first looks to be one of the quietest seasons I have known since I started work in the TIC. But having just done the August figures I am getting a different picture. Figures for August show that we have done around 90% more accommodation bookings than we did last August! (44 compared with 25) and across the year we are virtually on a level par with last year. (148 compared with 146 in 2011). This equates to nearly £16,000 worth of business sent to local accommodation providers.

Sales are up by over £12,000 on last year, mainly due to over £14,000 of Eden Tickets and £6000 of Music Festival tickets. Numbers through the door are slightly down, about 52000 so far, but last years figures were a little hit and miss..

At the same time, the website has had over 24,000 visitors, an increase of 106% on last year. Mobile use has gone up by 636%! We have nearly run out of the Looe Guides...and the 'What can we do if it Rains' leaflet!

Advertising for 2013: We hope to start contacting business soon, informal approaches have already yielded a handful of businesses interested in the map pad. I am a little concerned that due to the bad summer we may struggle to achieve the revenue of last year but at the end of the day if a businesses wants trade next year then they need to still advertise.

Summer Opening: We tried the longer opening hours during August, initially 10 am till 6 pm. We soon decided that this was not productive and so changed it to 9.30 till 5.30. Financially this extra hour has not been cost effective, with the weather most people leave it late to come out and have tended to disappear earlier than perhaps they would have done if they had been on the beach all day. Who knows what might have happened if we had had six weeks of sunshine?

Complaints: Considering the weather, most visitors have kept a brave face and carried on regardless. We have had problems with the public toilets resulting in myself and Simon unblocking the drain in the gents and Anne having to lock the ladies due to the unsafe condition. Thankfully the only complaints about accommodation have been in regard to properties not on our books and outside the town.

At the same time we have had some very positive feedback left in the comments book, about both the TIC and the town in general.

Fundraising: Following on from the £60 we have given to Looe in Bloom we have also given over £50 to Looe Lions through donations made during carnival week. The hiring out of wheelchairs has also brought in quite a bit of money for Liskeard Lions.

Mark Camp Sept 4th 2012

Town Tourism Committee
4th September 2012

SECTA Report

SECTA, TAVATA and BOBM had a meeting with Malcolm Bell on 17th July. Once again we asked that this area be promoted more.

I believe this has been taken on board and a further meeting, which will include, and be held at St Mellion Golf Club, is being arranged for later this month.

Concern has been voiced by some members over planning for wind turbines in the Looe Valley. Also members disappointed at cancellation of New Year fireworks.

Looe in Bloom Ladies have done the judging for us for the Caradon in Bloom awards. Once again Looe itself has excelled in displays, despite the bad weather. At least the volunteers have not had to do as much watering! The presentation will be held at the Eliot House Hotel, Liskeard at midday on 27th September.

Not a lot to report this month. As you will appreciate this is a busy time for accommodation providers and other businesses.

PPG Report of Maz Gill – 4th September 2012

1. PPG have had a summers break and have our next meeting on Tuesday 11th at 7pm at the Village Hall. Any members of Tourism Committee are welcome to attend.
2. More Polperro promotion leaflets have been printed and will be handed out for local distribution at next weeks meeting, and sent by post to TIC throughout the Duchy.
3. Polperro in Bloom has been judged and winners will be announced at the next meeting. For the information of this panel only, Harry and Karen from The Kitchen won first prize for the business section. The judges, Many from Cornwall in Bloom, Tony White, Robert Chisman and Sam the Polperro Mayor, thought both the Warren and Fishna Bridge were beautiful and testament to the amount of work put in, and are to be given a special certificate “ An area of outstanding Blooming Loveliness”. The details of the other winners will be announced at next weeks meeting.
4. The “Cornwall in Bloom” annual winners will be announced at the end of September.
5. On the 30th July ten serving soldiers from the Royal Logistic Regiment, Tank Transportation Division, left Polperro to walk 5 marathons in 5 days along the Cornish Coastal Path finishing at Lands End. They were raising funds for the Army Benevolent Fund and the severely disabled son of one of the soldiers. Radio, TV and all local newspapers were notified twice, but sadly no coverage was given. They have raised a substantial amount with money still coming in, so no end figure is yet available.
6. Tanya Aspinall a local journalist has been very busy promoting Polperro in journals and magazines in a very positive way which has been appreciated by all.

7. The car park problem still causes much displeasure amongst locals and visitors alike. How ridiculous it is to have to pay £4.00 in parking fees to visit the local Doctors Surgery.

8. Date of next PPG meeting – Tuesday 11th September at 7pm.

Appendix 'D'

The opportunity

Historic and picturesque churches

Looe as a beautiful historic and picturesque port has the potential to attract couples to make Looe the location for their special day.

Looe has 3 impressive Church locations, St Nicholas Church (fishermans church), Riverside Methodist Church and St Martin Church.

A Polperro section could be considered for Polperro Methodist Church, Talland and Lansallos Churches and Sclerder Abbey plus Polperro venues. Polperro Promotional Group will be asked to they wish to participate.

Civil marriage/partnership locations

There is a growing number of locations that have licence for civil marriages or partnership ceremonies.

These include The Guildhall a 19th century grade 2 listed building managed by East Looe Town Trust, Barclay House Hotel, Looe Island, Hannafore Point Hotel, Jubilee Inn and Tremadart Country House.

There is scope to offer the Putting Green location as a marquee venue.

Wedding Breakfast locations

Looe has a plethora of high quality restaurants and hotels catering for different tastes and size of party

Picture sque wedding photographs

Looe offers many spectacular photographic back drops from Hannafore looking over to Looe Island, the Pier, Wooldown, harbour side, beach, Downs and river.

Economic benefits for Looe

The knock on benefits for Looe are considerable.

This is not only for businesses directly associated with weddings; venues, dance teachers, wedding gifts, florist, photographers, videographers, wedding cake and favours producers, there is the opportunity for accommodation providers, shops, pubs, leisure boating, hairdressers, beauticians, taxis etc from the knock on spend of visitors, especially if wedding party are from outside Looe.

Although many venues undertake their own marketing through brochures and websites, there is potentially scope to promote Looe overall as an attractive location for a wedding.

Promotion

The town supported by literature and website could be promoted at Wedding Fairs directly, but a web based campaign may be the most cost effective method of promotion with a specific page on the Visit South East Cornwall web site supported by facebook and twitter.

Westpoint Area <https://www.eventelephant.com/weddinglink>

Princess Pavilions <http://www.cornwallweddingfairs.co.uk/Fairs/005U/Princess-Pavilion-Wedding-Fair>

Kingsley Village

There is also scope for Looe Town Council to organise its own wedding faire in partnership with key venues in the town.

Format, content and costings

The literature would be solely financed by advertising venue. A rate card would be produced with a mock up of format and a data base of potential advertisers collated.

The size would be A5 full colour throughout. The cost per advert would be similar to the Looe Accommodation Guide.

The content would include generic views of Looe, its history, town facilities, leisure activities and transport links. Looe Town Tourism Panel to co ordinate the project with Polperro Promotional Group co-ordinating the Polperro advertisers. The split of adverts to editorial to be 50:50.

There is scope for Looe Town Council to achieve up to £1500.00 in direct revenue whilst promoting Looe as a quality destination.