

REPORT FOR MARCH COUNCIL MEETING

What I have started doing is forwarding to Town Councillors and The Town Clerk any information from Teignbridge that I think would be useful for Town Councillors, to make sure you as are kept in the **loop**.

The biggest thing this month has been the Teignbridge Budget, which can now be seen on the Teignbridge Website.

The Youth Network had a meeting this month at Red Rock, Dr Cowen from Barton Road Surgery now attends to talk about the mental health needs of the young people, they are now looking at how this can be made better and more available.

Coastal Contribution Scheme

Cllr Mary Lowther and I received a presentation on this from a Teignbridge Officer at the Dawlish Warren Tourism Board. It is essentially a tourism tax for hotels and campsites within around the coast. It is a voluntary donation scheme modelled on the tourism tax used throughout Europe.

The types of tourism tax that are applied internationally are:

- Flat rate per person, per night
- Flat rate per room, per night
- Percentage of the total room rate
- Stepped percentage of room rate by star rating
- Flat rate per person, per night based by accommodation type/star rating.

I have since been to the Coastal Contribution workshop which was held at the Langstone Cliff Hotel on 26th February hosted by Cllr Nina Jeffries – Portfolio Holder for Business, Economy and Tourism. It was a really positive afternoon and was a very productive exercise. I have attached the slides and the slides and the feedback from the afternoon.

Local Plan

I have been attending local plan meetings, we have one more meeting left and then the first draft of the first part of the plan will be going to Overview and Scrutiny and then Full Council for approval.

Lawn Working Group

The Lawn Working Group will be bringing an update and a recommendation to Town Council in March meeting.

Cllr Linda Petherick
28th February 2020

Discussion point 1

Do we need a voluntary donation scheme or a BID? What's not being funded that we want or need?

- Very keen to keep money raised in the local area – particularly Dawlish Warren
- Flexible spending if voluntary contribution. If BID it is fixed up front
- Spend: marketing, events
- Spend: cycle parking, seating, signage, aesthetics, play park at Dawlish Warren
- Hybrid of both? Cost of running BID. Opt out voluntary scheme
- Dawlish Warren Visitors Centre
- Voluntary donation: tourism officer, beach showers, toilets, environmental officer

Discussion point 2

Is the Coastal Contribution idea practical? How could accommodation providers collect it? Are guests likely to pay it?

- Cost to the company, % charge on credit cards will add up Opt in? People may not see it. Opt out? May pay when they don't mean to, then refund costs too!
- I am sure some would pay it and £1 okay with a cap, wouldn't want a percentage. Depends on what customers think it will be spent on as to whether they are willing to contribute
- Able to collect money online easy enough, would be hard to find time to explain and push this face to face or over the phone
- Bookings through agencies charge 25% commission. This would affect any money donated to coastal contribution
- No getting businesses to pay/sign up
- Booking agents not practical – commissions 15%-25% - exclude?
- Could booking agents add it to their website?
- How: at time of booking, opt-out, online, all customers pay in advance, businesses avoiding cash (security reasons and costs of processing)
- Concerns over interest to sit on board
- Voluntary opt-in, based on number of businesses. Hybrid of 2 options
- Yes, practical

Discussion point 3

Is the BID idea desirable? Is there enough enthusiasm in the business community to start one?

- BID not desirable to us
- No BID, not desirable, not flexible enough and another cost to business
- Guests likely to pay, or by mistake
- Concerns regarding cost of setting up BID
- Smaller businesses won't buy in
- Concerns over the number of accommodation providers in Teignbridge
- BID no, no enthusiasm

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It has been a 450-year journey to its current role which is now primarily a leisure facility for boat owners and pleasure trips together with cyclists and walkers using the former towpaths. The area occupied by the canal is also an important wildlife area.

Earl said that in Roman times, the canal served ships going to Exeter (called Isca Damnoniorum) at which time it was the most important port on the south coast. We were shown a drawing of boats in 1587 coming up as far as the Westgate to drop off goods at the city wall. Prior to this period, politics played a



Speaker Earl Connolly (right) is thanked by Bishopsteignton Probus Club member David Colwill.

major role in preventing the formation of a canal with significant resistance from the Earl of

Devon who was part of the powerful Courtenay family who owned much of Topsham. At

ships came up the River Exe, into the canal up to Topsham where they unloaded and loaded their goods.

The Bishopsteignton Probus Club is for retired men and those nearing retirement. It is a small, friendly and welcoming club.

Chairman Baz Carpenter (on 01626 774056) or secretary Tony Corlett (on 01626 774772) would be pleased to give more information, including encouraging potential members to attend initial meetings free of charge to let you see if you like the club's warm atmosphere, fellowship and varied activities.

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Have your say on new tourism tax proposals

A 'TOURISM tax' to help protect Teignbridge's coastal areas and make sure facilities keep pace with high visitor numbers could be introduced in time for this summer.

Teignbridge District Council is consulting on an idea to ask all guests staying in accommodation within a mile of the Teignbridge coast to pay an extra £1 per night, per room.

The voluntary donation, which would help fund conservation and tourism related projects, would apply to hotels, holiday parks, B&Bs and Airbnbs within one mile of the coastline.

Money raised through the scheme would then be spent on improving and protecting the coastal areas and on facilities for tourists, such as beach showers and lockers, cycle parking look-out points, or lifeguard coverage.

Teignbridge, which has beaches at Shaldon, Teignmouth, Dawlish and Dawlish Warren, attracts thousands of visitors each year.

The 'tourist tax' would apply to all hotel guests regardless of whether they were local or overseas visitors.

Edinburgh City Council recently became the first in the UK to pass the laws, even though they cannot come into effect until the Scottish Parliament has passed enabling legislation.

A consultation has now begun in Teignbridge and runs until March 27, 2020, after which feedback will be considered before the council decides whether the idea of a voluntary visitor giving scheme in Teignbridge is worth pursuing.

At the same time, accommodation providers will also have the chance to indicate if there is support for introducing a tourism business improvement district (T-BID) similar to that in Torbay, where a levy is applied on businesses in the tourism sector through local rates.

Cllr Nina Jeffries, portfolio holder for business, economy & tourism, has urged people in

the tourism industry to give the council their views, and said: 'The coastal contribution idea would, if implemented, be a tangible way for people who visit and love the area, to gift in a focused way. This initiative could provide additional support for much needed amenities around our coastline, helping to keep improving the visitor experience and supporting environmental projects essential to maintaining the attractiveness of the coastline.'

Explaining how the 'coastal contribution' idea would work, details on the Teignbridge District Council website state that it is a proposed visitor donation scheme which would work by asking paying guests at participating accommodation providers, within one mile of the Teignbridge coast, to voluntarily pay £1 per room per night, capped at £3. The funds raised will be used to pay for conservation and tourism related projects.



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