

MEETING REPORT

Meeting: Council, 11th December 2023
Agenda item:
Report subject: Updates & Information
Report author: K Elliott-Turner, Town Clerk

Councillor updates, conference and event attendance

Councillor Spencer

Ivybridge Food Hub launch day – 28th November 2023 (verbal report to be presented)
Youth meeting – 4th December 2023

Councillor A Rea

Ivybridge Food Hub launch day – 28th November 2023

Councillor Weeks

Ivybridge Food Hub launch day – 28th November 2023
Youth meeting – 4th December 2023

Councillor Dredge

Community Safety Partnership (CSP) remote meeting – 26th October 2023
DALC Board meeting – induction of new members – Cheriton Bishop – 13th November 2023
Employers Pensions meeting Exeter racecourse – 15th November 2023
DALC Larger Councils remote meeting – 16th November 2023
DALC Board Meeting remote meeting 21st November 2023
GWR Managing Director update remote meeting – 28th November 2023 (see report below)
S.Hams Cllr Advocate remote meeting – 30th November 2023
John Hart DCC Budget remote meeting – 30th November 2023

External meeting/event/conference reports

Cllr Dredge - Webinar Stakeholder Meeting with Mark Hopwood Managing Director GWR 28th November 2023

- The Department for Transport (DfT) now hold all costs and revenue risk. GWR has no ability to take commercial risks or make investments unless they are underwritten by the DfT. The company has to agree an annual plan with the Department. GWR is facing a substantial financial challenge with a smaller fleet and, as a consequence, reduced services.
- There is a draft Rail Reform Bill which is unlikely to receive primary legislation until after the election. It is designed to put most of the power and responsibility for running the nation's railways into the hands of Great British Railways including taking away from the Transport Secretary the power to grant rail franchises.
- It has been announced that the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) will be conducting an investigation into the performance of Wales and West Railways (which includes the services between Paddington and Penzance) as it is currently the worst performing of the five distinct national railway areas. I understand that Network Rail are responsible for c. 70% of delay minutes affecting GWR.

MEETING REPORT

- Rail passenger numbers for GWR have recovered to 95% of pre-pandemic levels but with a larger proportion of the numbers travelling for leisure journeys which means shorter, cheaper journeys and reduced overall revenue.
- On a brighter note, new stations at Reading Parkway, Marsh Barton and Portway park and Ride have been opened in the current year.

Town Clerk's updates

Christmas festival

Big thanks to the Town Hall staff and Parks Officers for their incredible hard work in organising and co-ordinating a successful and enjoyable Ivybridge Christmas Festival. Thanks also go to the team of volunteers, without whom the Christmas Festival couldn't take place or be the successful community event that it is. Thanks to Miss Ivy Events, we were able to provide a large number of good quality food and artisan stalls spread out across the event area, enhanced with some fantastic entertainment and children's rides.

Following an event de-brief meeting, we are looking to put on a similar event next year, with the date being set as 22nd November 2024.

Ivybridge youth meeting

Previous meetings regarding youth provision and the wellbeing of our younger residents resulted in discussions around projects and ideas which could help support that section of our community. It became clear that in order for our young people to feel valued, listened to, and to receive the support that they need, rather than what the council and other community stakeholders feel they need, a Youth Strategy needs to be formed. This will involve mapping of existing provision – clubs, support networks/organisations, etc, and identifying gaps. It will also involve strong engagement with our young people to ascertain, direct from them, what it is they need and/or want and what they feel is missing. The results of engagement will identify focus areas, which will in turn identify suitable projects, or areas of need requiring further work. Elements of the engagement exercise overlap with work currently being undertaken by the Community Economic Plan Steering Group, and so the 'Youth Strategy' group are looking to collaborate on this. The Youth Strategy group is looking at their set up, and how they can best achieve their aims. Their next meeting will be in January.