

English Riviera Destination Management Group Minutes of Meeting

Date	Thursday 18th June 2020
Venue	Online - Zoom
Attendees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rebecca Davies, TDA 2. Carolyn Custerson, English Riviera BID Company Ltd (meeting Chair) 3. Kevin Mowat, Torbay Council (including Harbour Authority) 4. Cllr Swithin Long, Torbay Council 5. Alan Denby, TDA 6. Martin Thomas, Torbay Culture 7. Nicky Harding, Conference English Riviera 8. Lynn Stephens, South Devon College 9. Jim Parker, Torbay Together 10. Nick Powe, English Riviera Global Geopark Organisation 11. Alan Tyerman, Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust 12. Steve Reynolds, Torbay Business Forum 13. Adam Luscombe, Torbay Council
Apologies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pippa Craddock, English Riviera BID Company Ltd (Chair) 2. Gary Calland, National Trust

MINUTES

1.	Welcome and introductions	Action
1.1	RD thanked all Partners for coming. The focus of the meeting will be to hear from all partners about the impacts of Coronavirus, the current situation and priorities.	
1.2	The last DMG was on 12 th March, when Coronavirus had just arrived and lockdown happened soon after. Now is the time to restart conversations, to join up as a destination and to work in partnership for recovery.	
1.3	Apologies from PC, GT. Carolyn has kindly agreed to Chair today's meeting in PC's absence.	

2.	Partner Updates	Action
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<p>2.1</p> <p>2.2</p> <p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p> <p>2.5</p> <p>2.6</p> <p>2.7</p> <p>2.8</p> <p>2.9</p> <p>2.10</p> <p>2.11</p> <p>2.12</p> <p>2.13</p> <p>2.14</p> <p>2.15</p>	<p><u>RD gave a summary update of work completed since March:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing emergency business response, supporting businesses with accessing Gov information, guidance and grant/loan funding. Gathering local business intelligence, feeding into local, regional and national reports. • Identifying key issues and evidence to measure the impact of C-19. • Working closely with ERBIDCo, developing businesses and consumer communications, supporting new focus groups, task force and linking with TC Food Safety and Licencing Teams for reopening guidance. • Very challenging 3 months - digesting a lot of information in a short space of time, providing business support. <p><u>Now the focus is on recovery and growth:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the delivery of the HotSWLEP Tourism and Visitor Economy Recovery Plan and established new Working Group with Destination Management Organisations Visit Devon, ERBIDCo, Visit Somerset, Visitor Exmoor and South West Tourism Alliance. • New partnership collaboration working on common themes to repair and growth the economy and build ambitions to be a Tourism Zone. • Torbay Economic Plan – includes tourism theme and is under review with the Council and TDA. Key areas are opening up the sector responsibly, building resilience and year round sector, accelerate training and support. RD to share after the meeting for feedback as part of the consultation. <p>Carolyn Custerson, ERBIDCo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CC referred to slide (bullets extracted below). The past 3 months have been unprecedented, not text book on how to deal with it. Increased partnership working has been essential and a real positive to come out of the crisis. Reopening on 4th July is the main focus. • Role Since Lockdown: lobbying, B2B/Key Partner Communications, Impact Research & Consumer Insights • 4th July (lift on Gov. ban on overnight stays and non-essential travel) Resort Re-Opening Date • Final Government Guidelines awaited (1m Social Distancing) - 25th June announcement expected if not sooner • New 'Good to Go' National Accreditation being introduced by VisitEngland/Gov to help consumer confidence • 'Responsible Riviera' Campaign. • Destination Marketing Activity (ERBID Reactive Budget): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Residents 'Locals Summer Savers' Campaign, Digital + Breeze + Local Media ○ Day, VFR and Staying Visitors Campaign – Welcome Back – Targeted Digital across key target areas ○ New video footage by Helicopter commissioned ready to support Naturally Inspiring marketing campaigns • Recovery Planning – Short Term Priorities, Medium & Long Term (LEP/TBC Recovery Plans) – the post COVID visitor landscape is expected to look different, 	<p>RD</p>
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	adaptations and re-positioning will be required.	
	Kevin Mowat, Torbay Council	
2.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KM commented on how the 'easy bit' of shutdown is done, reopening is harder – lack of Gov guidance, no restrictions on travel. The Council set up its emergency response team early on and has now reopened toilets at main sites (beaches/harbours). Focussing on reopening in a managed, responsible way, working in partnership with ERBID and TDA. Last week saw town centres reopen, using Gov guidelines and adapting for Torbay, no negative feedback so far. 	
2.17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial pressures of the Council, -£10m of what we need, monitoring weekly. 	
2.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torbay Council stepped in to support the RICC, venue wasn't eligible for Gov. grant funding, new Board and control from Parkwood. 	
2.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torbay Economic Plan – reshaping/ repurposing place as appropriate for Torbay, not referring to as 'recovery' as we don't always want to return to what we used to do and need to look at differently. – A new discussion point for the group 	KM
	Councillor Swithin Long, Torbay Council	
2.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on the post-Covid plan, 'recovery' not used as we're not wanting to return to all the past issues. Thanks to all who have engaged so far. The Plan went to Cabinet on Tuesday and is now under consultation with partners. 	
2.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on reopening the high streets, a responsible approach to support implementation of set up/PPE, visually looking good. 	
2.22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid into Gov for Edginswell train station, Town Centre Deal and Future High Streets. 	
2.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joined up with English Riviera Visitor Attractions group last week 	
2.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steve Darling and Darren Cowell appealing to the Gov for bespoke support for those businesses missing out. 	
	Alan Denby, TDA	
2.25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on the post-Covid plan as RD summarised, please feedback comments. This isn't a TDA plan and is for all Torbay place partners to contribute and deliver across all sectors. 	
2.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big priority are the 2 bids for Gov support mentioned, Future High Streets and Town Centre Deal. 	
	Lynn Stephens, South Devon College	
2.27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New level 4 Higher Apprenticeship in Hospitality Manager underpinned by a new Cert HE using South Devon University Centre awarding powers (in response to employers) 	
2.28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accor and Hilton have been very supportive and have taken part in a promotional webinar to attract people to retrain for industry and to present the opportunities which the new hotels will bring. This will take the place of the planned open event with MR from last DMG minutes. A very exciting step forward to promote aspirational career paths in Torbay. 	
2.29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 5 FdSc is now set to run for the first time in 4 years. This gives us the focus to develop the level 6 for September 2020 	
2.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional note for the minutes: Contacted Blue Badge to see what they could do for us but this came in at about £6k. Tour guiding is a none starter from us and suggest it comes off the agenda for the foreseeable future. 	
2.31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to develop new apprenticeship opportunities despite 90% being on BIL. TUFC are continuing to work in partnership with the college, using facilities and supporting students. 2 college students were recently signed by TUFC which supports local aspiration and promotes the youth interest in our local club. 	
	Jim Parker, Torbay Together	
2.32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with the new Economic Plan, several groups now working together, 	

	working with health and community wealth building – new collaborations.	
	Nick Powe, English Riviera UNESCO Geopark	
2.33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 partners have come together to shape a new Transformational Plan, 3 strands including reopening plans and community engagement. NP will circulate the plan to DMG partners. Details include more communications on why Torbay has the accreditation and what it means to people and place. There is a schools and champions project and ambassador artists. ERBID has given financial support. 	NP
2.34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kent's Caves – tomorrow is the 140th birthday of being open to the public, unfortunately not open due to Covid. Caves will be reopening on 11th July, tickets available online from 4th. Capacity I massively reduced, 4 tours an hour with 10 on a tour (used to be 50). The experience however will be better and they can spread visitors over the day/week. All visitors must prebook – changing culture, messages we need to share. 	
	Martin Thomas, Torbay Culture	
2.35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through adversity positive things can happen – Information, advice and guidance has been the focus. Information and guidance from Gov is patchy. Challenges across the sector and we don't know for example when/of theatres can reopen. 	
2.36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts Council emergency funding received, a new funding programme for the sector is on TC's website. 	
2.37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lot of advocacy for organisations 	
2.38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fragile and exposed sector, the impact will be long and many organisations won't be here in a year's time. MT has submitted eviende to DCMS. 	
2.39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in joining (KM) future conversations on place making, which could be focus of next meeting. 	
2.40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MT reference a successful legal case for heritage museum 	
2.41	CC added and agreed, we need to diversify and supported involvement in future place making conversations.	
	Alan Tyerman, Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust	
2.42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TCCT has an update in English Riviera Magazine this month 	
2.44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of estate team are back working and off Furlough. Volunteers are not back yet, extra support is needed and management at the Visitor Information Centres at BerryHead and Cockington, this will be reviewed ongoing in line with visitor demand. 	
2.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Occombe Farm development is continuing, part finance is secured. Opening Summer 2021. The café refurbishment is taking place now (not opening until July), the expansion will be better for social distancing requirements. 	
2.46	CC offered ERBID support for the VIC's with businesses at BerryHead and Cockington. AT to take forward.	AT
	Nicky Harding, Conference English Riviera	
2.47	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most staff at RICC are furloughed, 5 are still working 	
2.48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NH is seeing positive light now, past months have been hard, retaining bookings, some successes as well as losses. NH is working hard to develop businesses opportunities, remote networking, webinars and keeping in touch. 	
2.49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yesterday and last night working to midnight on the first VisitBritain 'MeetGB', 1-2-1 appointments. 	
2.50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed bookings to note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Hip Society, March 2021, 500 delegates, 3 days, £500k to the Bay; West of England Brass Band, March 2021, 100 delegates, 2 days £132k; NHS Foot and ankle surgeons, March 2021, 3 days, 500 delegates, 	

	<p>£500k;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rotary Club, 3 days, 500 delegates, £360k; ○ Open University moved from Oct to Feb/March tbc £130k; Evangelical Church Nov and more, new 2 year contract Nov 21 and 22, £1.4m. ○ Irish Dancing, 3 years from 2021 £1.3m. 	
2.51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We need to new hotels. 	
2.52	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disappointing and confusing to read the press release which referred to loss making conferencing business. 	
	<p>Steve Reynolds – Torbay Business Forum</p>	
2.53	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From a banking perspective, processed 6 years' worth of lending in 6 weeks, all deb of course needs to be paid back. 	
2.54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Capacity is key for reopening, tough for hospitality. 	
2.55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TBF events now online, Tues 30th June features CC. 	
2.56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Momentum is building for business growth, we need to reposition the workforce and redeploy. 	
2.57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New collaborations and community partnerships – TBF and SDC working together to deliver events. 	
2.58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Economic Plan, we need to deliver now, don't consult for too long. We need to push forward and 'keep in local'. 	
	<p>Adam Luscombe, Torbay Council</p>	
2.59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Asking for feedback particularly rail services and the London line (what and when); bus networks are up and running; active travel and investment; walking and cycling – widening footways at 'pinch points' (Abbey Sands and Redcliffe hotel) 	
2.60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CC – on the trains, summer we will see increase in day visitors, from the weekly consumer reports we know the car is preferred mode of transport. Higher volume of business train travel Feb/March, NH can share information to support; Bus travel we have seen increase of enquiries through the Visitor Information Centre; Good to see walking and cycling is being looked at, during lockdown more people are out and taken up activities. 	
2.61	<p>Bullets below for partners with AL's email – partners to send any further feedback to AL:</p> <p><u>Bus</u></p> <p>The key message for the buses is that they are safe but they have a lack of capacity. They have increased frequency to almost 'normal' operating levels across most of the network but capacity is significantly down. Anyone who needs to travel by bus can do so confidently but everyone needs to consider if they must make that journey and if so wear a mask and preferably avoid peak times. Clearly services will need to respond to any increases in demand and visitor numbers will be key to that so I'd like to understand the thoughts around the virtual table on what those numbers might be and when they might be if possible – completely understand that it is at best a best guess.</p>	ALL
2.62	<p><u>Rail</u></p> <p>Again they are providing a reduced service but given the service pattern it primarily meant we lost our long distance services and reduced the regular local service to hourly. They are expected to increase back to a half hourly local service but I'm not clear at the moment about long distance.</p> <p>Question for the group from me would be what our messaging for this summer is planned to be, do we want backing from the operators to push hard with our services and encourage the visitors back with additional marketing? Clearly with my transport</p>	

	<p>hat on I'd rather if we do, that we don't encourage them all by car.</p> <p>We also have resubmitted a bid for Edginswell Station and are still looking to bring forward proposals to improve the concourse facilities at Torre, Torquay and Paignton – the latter as part of the future high streets public realm scheme.</p>	
2.63	<p><u>Active Travel</u></p> <p>You may have seen from the news that there was a promise of £2bn for walking and cycling – which was quickly clarified to be £250m for this year. They then reduced that to £225m to account for the cost of a maintenance voucher scheme that will be launched nationally. After weeks of waiting to see how the funding was to be distributed, we had it confirmed that it was in two tranches, the first being up to £55k for us, and the second, up to £221k later in the year.</p>	
2.64	<p>We have submitted proposals to widen the footway under the bridge on Torbay Road at Abbey Sands, and along Esplanade Road between Preston and Paignton (outside the Redcliffe). We are also looking at where we have space to allow shared use of paths again at Torbay Road, but also on Dartmouth Road. Lastly a trial version of the Paignton scheme has been proposed. Going forward with the second tranche we do have longer term proposals that we may look to accelerate but we don't yet know the terms of the funding agreement so we can't be precise. If anyone has any concerns, particularly about where it is difficult to socially distance or where movement could be improved then they can email highways@torbay.gov.uk or schemes for the future to future.planning@torbay.gov.uk.</p>	
2.65	<p><u>Planning</u></p> <p>We have new Development Management Service Manager (Wendy Ormsby) and a new Assistant Director (David Edmondson) who have recently joined the team. The Development Management team continue process planning applications remotely during Covid-19. Clearly as a department we are keen to work with owners of vacant sites which in particular leads us to consider the Bay Hotels and Living Coasts sites.</p> <p>Gary Calland, National Trust Update by email for the minutes: Key summary:</p>	
2.66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coleton Fishacre opened its garden on Monday 8th June, with limited pre-booked online tickets. First week went well so we have upped our booking capacity for this week 	
2.67	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenway garden will open on Monday 22nd June, again pre-booked online tickets only and limited capacity 	
2.68	<p>At both places, we are taking a phased approach with the aim to increase visitor numbers steadily. Both houses remain closed. As and when we can, we will look to introduce a limited F&B offer and possibly retail too.</p>	

3.	Terms of Reference	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RD asked partners to review the ToR, specifically how they would like to manage meetings moving forward and how often to have them (during Covid). • LS, happy to continue online and to have them more frequently, suggesting monthly. • CC agreed, monthly for 1-1.5 hours • KM, Agreed, conversations support shaping place and include Local Plan review. <p><u>Action: Decision made:</u> Partners all agreed for monthly online meetings.</p>	All

4.	Election of Chairperson	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RD asked partners for Chair nominations, noting that PC has offered to continue as independent Chair. • LS put her nomination forward. • Partners discussed, all agreed for LS as the next Chairperson. CC suggested the Group has a Vice-Chair and suggested MT, education and culture leading the DMG forward. All agreed. <p><u>Action: Decision made:</u> Partners voted in LS as Chairperson, MT as Vice-Chair.</p> <p>Action. RD to update the Terms of Reference.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>RD</p>
6.	A.O.B - none	
7.	Next Meeting	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC – RD to set up with the new Chair and circulate dates. 	RD/LS

Minutes recorded by: Rebecca Davies, TDA