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## Minutes of STP Board Meeting

<b>Date</b>	Thursday 21 October 2021
<b>Venue</b>	Microsoft Teams
<b>Time</b>	4:00 – 6:00pm

<b>Present-</b> Jacqui Dallimore (JD) (Chair) Scott Dolling (SD) Alison Dewey (AD) Cllr Carole Mulroney (CCM) Joan Tiney (JT) Denise Rossiter (DR) Helen Symmons (HS) Ellen McPhillips (EM) Alice Pickering (AP)	Roslin Beach Hotel, Managing Director SBC Director of Culture and Tourism SBC Head of Culture & Tourism Strategy SBC, Cabinet Member for Business, Culture & Tourism Borough Hotel/SSIBA Essex Chambers Leigh-on-Sea Town Council - Town Clerk Southend Theatres SBC (minute taking)
<b>Apologies</b> Marc Miller (MM)	Stockvale

Discussion Points		Action
1.	<b><u>Welcome and apologies.</u></b>  MM sent apologies.	
2.	<b><u>Minutes from previous meeting</u></b>  Board agreed and were happy with previous meeting minutes.	
3	<b><u>Illuminations</u></b>  SD and CCM shared proposed illumination plans with the Board. The project consists of three phases which will take place over 3 years. Each phase will run from April – September. Funding for this project has not yet been secured but will be proposed to full Council in February, there may also be scope to bid for resource to deliver this project through the Government’s levelling up fund.  Phase one 2022 - will focus on lighting for the Cliff Lift, Pier hill Gardens and Pier Hill areas. Costing a total of £350,000.	

Phase two 2023 - will concentrate on the pier hill lift, including an opportunity to install solar panels. It will also see the install of a LED display screen on the pier bridge. Total costing £450,000.

Phase three 2024 - is set to enhance existing structures along City beach, including the seating areas to be highlighted with LED strips. £250,000.

Board questioned whether work could start earlier to minimise disruption to the summer trade. Depending on funding available, there is potential to shift the program timeline.

Board all support the project and agreed to write a letter to all councillors in support of the scheme.

ALL

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### Updates from each sector

#### Hospitality

Summer to October has been a fantastic time for the hospitality sector but is now starting to see a decline in visitors. This could be due to higher Covid-19 infection rates, inflation, and increased energy bills. It's hoped the Christmas season will increase business.

#### Leigh

Leigh played host to some highly successful events over the summer including The Garden Gatherings in Leigh Library Gardens.

Currently running Totally Locally Fiver Fest which hasn't been as popular as previous years.

Upcoming events include, Leigh Poppy trail, Christmas craft and farmers markets, Light trail in Leigh Library Gardens 1-19 December and lantern making sessions.

It was noted the planning applications for BT hubs have been objected to because they will look out of place around the Leigh area. **(Amendment from Helen Symmons 02/11/21)**

Also, the hoarding around the disused foreshore office has still not been addressed despite being highlighted in previous STP meetings. **CCM has now reported this to the asset management team - 22/10/21**

CCM

#### Central Seafront

Drainage issues along the seafront causing more flooding and sewage issues.

The police presence during the summer was good but it is now noted the smell of marijuana has return now this presence has dwindled. Also, drug dealing has been taking place outside establishments along the front.

There have also been issues with travellers, including unpaid bar tabs and spa retail having to close due to problems caused.

CCM has advised Martin Terry the community safety lead of recent events. 22/10/21

New concrete blocks have been put in place along the seafront. The positioning was questioned, but it was explained the Counter Terrorism Police advised SBC where to place. The blocks are currently being painted in bright welcoming colours, including the new place brand, feedback from the public has been very positive, and the bright coloured blocks have been welcomed by visually impaired groups.

There are no plans for more blocks, and they are a temporary measure until major landscaping scheme takes place. Once they are no longer needed, they are to be relocated and repurposed.

### **Attractions**

Free parking for certain days in December was discussed to entice visitors to the town over the Christmas period. SD to confirm

*SD provided an update 25/10/21 from the highways team who quoted the below from the council's fees and charges document.*

***“To provide free parking in Council car parks after 16:00 on Thursdays and all day on Sundays in December and Christmas Day (except those with barriers)”***

Seafront fireworks – Southend BID has confirmed adding one additional to the end of the program extending the firework season up to the 11 December.

### **Business Sector**

There is concern many businesses will shut down due to Government grants being misused. Energy prices going up is having an effect for all sectors. The rising Covid-19 rates and restrictions potentially being put back in place will cause an impact on already struggling businesses.

### **Culture/Theatres**

The Cliffs Pavilion reopened in July and Palace theatre in September. Attendance for both is back to normal. A few shows have been cancelled due to Covid-19. All staff are required to wear masks/face shields, but masks are generally not being worn by customers, impossible to police with such a capacity.

### **SBC**

The Council have been busy with reopening and events delivery including Southend Arts Festival.

During September, Visit Southend social channels reached just under 1 million people and had an engagement rate of over 60k.

AD presented a light festival proposal for February half term. Board agreed the under spend from the Welcome Back fund to be used for this event. It is to be an all-weather event and was decided interactive displays would be used instead of static. Street theatre light costumes were suggested. EM to send contact details of artists over to AD.

**SD**

**EM**

<p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p>	<p>New pier trains are set be running in the next couple of weeks. There have also been record-breaking visitor numbers to the Pier.</p> <p>Southend has now been awarded City status. SBC have not had official information but will be shared with the Board once received.</p> <p>There are also talks of a commemorative concert for Sir David Amess in the upcoming months.</p> <p><b><u>CIC Discussion</u></b></p> <p>Board decided this would be discussed at another meeting when all can attend. DR to circulate more information regarding this proposal.</p> <p><b><u>STP Board vacant post</u></b></p> <p>Two names were discussed as potential STP Board members.</p> <p>John Harland who was pivotal on the Purple flag working group, has been very involved with recent events including the Southend Jazz Festival and Women’s Tour. Would represent the night-time economy sector.</p> <p>Comedian Ross McGrane who now has a permanent venue in Shoebury, could represent the Shoebury vacancy. Ross is also very well connected with the local cultural seen and was actively involved in the Southend Arts Festival.</p> <p>Board agreed both names should be approached but as per Terms of Reference upon agreement from absent Board members.</p> <p><b><u>2022 Council Budget</u></b></p> <p>Discussion took place around the partnership being allocated funding from SBC. It was agreed the best course of action would be for the Board to identify proposals and costings for particular projects that meet objectives outlined in Destination Southend rather than asking for a set amount of money with no proposal on how that would be spent.</p> <p>Board members were asked to think of projects and ideas to present to the Council. It was suggested Board should attend the Council budget meeting in February to show a united front.</p> <p>The issue of parking charges in the winter was raised, it was proposed Southend should have cheaper charges in the winter to encourage visitors. STP/ Essex Chambers to write a letter outlining this.</p> <p>AD to send DR last STP parking letter.</p> <p>Changes to parking signage discussed. SD spoke with the highways team and evidence shows most visitors are staying longer than three hours.</p>	<p><b><u>DR</u></b></p> <p><b><u>MM</u></b></p> <p><b><u>ALL</u></b></p> <p><b><u>AD</u></b></p>
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**Culture and events update**

Successful events include the Southend Arts Festival, Women’s Tour and Hares About Town.

AD to share Hares About Town evaluation report which brought 175K visitors to town.

There is 40K in the Welcome Back fund to be spend on retail spaces. AD suggested half be used on a 4D lightshow in the high street in partnership with the BID over the festival season.

10K to be spent in Southchurch over the festive period, including simple Christmas lighting, street art and the craft/winter event, Frostbite.

The other 10K would be spent on a Chinese New Year festival in January that would take place in the town centre.

Board agreed these would be a good use of funds under the STP banner.

AD presented a showreel for the Southend Arts festival which included impact figures, such as social stats, AVE and attendance.

This showreel will be uploaded to the STP Website and socials.

**AD**

**AOB**

MM raised the desire for a yearly event diary. The Culture and Tourism team have been sending through a monthly what’s on PDF, highlighting the events for the current month and what is coming up. Due to funding and last-minute events it’s hard to create a yearly event diary as it is ever changing.

Winter Wonderland was discussed as a potential event for the STP to link up with but more research into the company will need to be conducted.

**Date of next meeting: 27 January 2022**