

Notes of TET campaign group meeting on 14 March 2024, 7pm, Bishopsteignton Community Centre (amended)

Present: Henry Merritt (Chair), Bill Bailey, Kate Benham, Roger North, Judith Sharples (note-taker)

Apologies: Rona Boyne, David Carpenter-Clawson, Sarah Free, Ben Northcott, Claire Quelvennec

Discussion on developments

The meeting was an opportunity to catch up on all the developments since our last meeting on 11 July 2023 and to identify the risks and challenges we now face. The outcome of the work on the business case is expected in July / August and, if this does not show that £2 of benefits will be achieved for every £1 spent on the TET, TDC's £1m funding commitment will be withdrawn.

The approach TDC is taking to the development of the business case was discussed together with the role of the two sets of consultants (Urban Foresight working on tourism impacts and Jacobs doing the overall cost benefit analysis). Concern was expressed that the focus of the tourism work seems too be too narrowly focused. Only businesses along the route of the Trail have been invited to the workshop and it is not clear whether there will be separate contact with other businesses set to benefit from the Trail, particularly those based in Newton Abbot. It was also noted that it is important to learn from the experience of businesses located on or near existing trails. Judith confirmed she has made these points to Estelle.

Engagement with politicians is also very important given that there will be a general election this year and county council elections in 2025.

The proposed devolution deal for Devon and Torbay provides a potential funding opportunity if this goes ahead. DCC and Torbay Council are currently consulting on the proposals with a deadline of 24 March for comments.

It was noted that Estelle Skinner is doing an excellent job of keeping us informed and involving us in the work on the business case. It appears that negotiations with landowners are on hold until the outcome of the work on the business case is known. Henry has been informed that Joshua Manning is now our lead DCC officer contact. Judith sent him an email on 22 February requesting a copy of the working draft of the business case for the Teignmouth to Dawlish section of the Trail which was promised last November but she has not received a reply.

It was noted that the follow up meeting to the meeting which took place on 29 November was due to take place on 20 February but has now been postponed until 14 June 2024 (to be confirmed).

Judith reported that she has sent two emails to Anne Marie Morris (in December 2023 and February 2024) asking for her help but has yet to receive a reply.

Kate asked whether it would be a good idea to do another petition – it was agreed this should be considered if it looked like the business case wasn't going to give us the result we need.

Agreed actions

1. Kate to contact Donna Manson (DCC CEO) again to request the document promised last November and express concern again at apparent lack of DCC officer capacity to take forward the plans
2. Henry to ask Kim to put the paper Judith wrote on BPC website
3. Judith to ask Ben to post a link to the paper on Campaign Group Facebook page and ask people to provide any additional evidence that might be relevant to the business case
4. Judith to also ask Ben to use Facebook to encourage people to respond to the devolution deal consultation
5. Judith to ask Estelle what input we will have on the business case draft report before it is finalised
6. Henry to contact Martin Wrigley to express concern that landowner negotiations appear to be on hold until work on business case is complete and concerns re apparent narrow focus of tourism report on impact between Teignmouth and Kingsteignton only
7. Henry to speak to John Penaligon to clarify the position on land negotiations
8. Judith, Bill and Kate to attend the workshop for local businesses taking place on 20 March at 5.30pm at Bitton House. Henry is not available to attend.