

**DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL**  
**CHAMBER OF DARTMOUTH GUILDHALL ON TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2019**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: R Cooke (Chairman); A Fyson; T de Galleani;  
R. Lyon (The Mayor); F Pritchard-Tagg (Deputy Mayor)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Cllr D Gent; B Harriss; Town Clerk: C Pritchard-Williams;  
Properties Administrator; Hannah Williams;  
Town Groundsman: Rob Harkness; two representatives from  
Dartmouth Green Partnerships (DGP): Stevie Rogers & Kathy  
Stansfield; a representative from Friends of the Orchard: Peter  
Shaw; and one member of the public.

**A G E N D A**

**PART I - Open to the Public**

**36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllrs: P Allen; M Baillie; R Springett; S Thomson.

**37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none at this point.

**38. UPDATE FROM GROUNDSMAN**

- **Groundsman's regular report**

The Chairman summarised the report that was submitted by the  
Groundsman, Appendix A

*The Groundsman arrived at 6.10pm*

There was a general discussion about aerating / spiking in Coronation Park,  
and this cost has been agreed by the Clerk as it's under £1,000. The Chairman  
asked about putting sand down as well, and the Groundsman said that this  
would increase the cost vastly, so it wasn't included.

Stevie Rogers spoke about the five Washington Thorn trees (Mayflower 400)  
which will be planted into St Saviours churchyard, these were donated to  
Dartmouth Town Council.

Cllr Fyson spoke about the item further down the agenda for verges and  
street spraying and asked if walls would be included, the Groundsman said it  
wouldn't be good practice to spray at a height as it increases the risk of drift.  
The Groundsman said that areas that were particularly bad in places but not  
owned by SHDC or DCC then we could look at spraying them.

- **Town Council's tree policy**

The Groundsman said it was common for local Councils with land to have a  
tree policy, it sets out how we would manage the trees in the town, owned  
by ourselves. This will form part of the Green Space strategy that affects  
open spaces across the town.

Cllr de Galleani mentioned when they were working on the Neighbourhood Plan in relation to green spaces, and whether TPO's could be identified on trees in the town (not just our own).

Peter Shaw asked if the policy would include the replacement of trees, Rob said it does cover the replacement and ensures that a suitable tree is used to replace.

Stevie Rogers was in favour of a tree policy but also mentioned the tree warden.

**Properties Administrator** to circulate this tree policy to all Cllrs and for it to be agreed at Full Council.

### **39. EVENTS**

#### **RNLI event – discussion regarding any conditions.**

The Chairman said that this has been previously discussed at a Corporate Property committee meeting but that it should be passed to Open Spaces for any considerations.

The email was read out and the Groundsman said he wasn't concerned about this.

The Clerk was asked to ensure that it states in the agreement that they tidy up after themselves and confirmed that they had been informed of this.

### **40. STREET FURNITURE (Benches / Memorial Trees / Bins)**

- Memorial Benches & Plaques policy

The Clerk explained that Cllr Pritchard-Tagg had helped in writing this policy, the policy was read out

**Proposed:** Cllr Lyon

**Seconded:** Cllr de Galleani

**Resolution:** To approve this Memorial Benches & Plaques policy but to amend the section on Memorial Trees to say that Dartmouth Town Council no longer offers memorial trees in the Town Centre but can offer some space in the Orchard on discussion with the 'Friends of the Orchard' group.

- The Clerk reported that we would need to buy replacement benches and that we had a quote from Tor Quarry for 10 that they would store for us until we needed them, the Chairman said that we would need three quotes and this could be passed to the Finance Committee to agree or back to Parks and Open Spaces.

### **41. SIGNAGE (across all open spaces)**

The Properties Administrator reported that all signed had now been updated with Dartmouth Town Council stickers on them.

Cllr Harriss said that people had commented on a lack of signage in the park, and this is relevant to dogs not on leads. The Groundsman said that SHDC had recently updated all their signs to comply with the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), which refers to dogs being on leads etc...

### **42. ROYAL AVENUE GARDEN**

Charging for toilets over Regatta

The Regatta had asked if the toilets would be free of charge over the Regatta period. The Councillors discussed this and it was generally thought that the pay on entry would remain in place for the Regatta period, though this should be discussed at a Corporate Property committee meeting.

There was also a discussion as to whether the time the toilets are closed could be extended past 6pm and the Council thought that this should be investigated, to find out the additional cost and brought back to a Corporate Property committee meeting.

The Regatta have also asked if the additional areas down by the greenhouse along the embankment (as indicated by the map) could be used by the Regatta as well, and the Clerk was asked to check last year's license.

#### **43. CORONATION PARK**

- **Dartmouth Town Council - kayak rack**

- **Dartmouth Yacht Club - Kayak rack**

There was a conversation about both these kayak racks and Cllrs generally thought that this may make the park look very scruffy and were worried as it's the first thing you see when you drive off the higher ferry.

Cllrs asked for clearer designs before deciding as it was important that the park still looked attractive.

The Chairman said that this needed to be looked at when more information was available.

The Mayor said that we should look at re-shuffling the boats around to group certain vessels together.

- **RNLI request for permanent premises**

Cllr Pritchard-Tagg said that this was circulated previously and had been discussed at the last Corporate Property committee meeting, but that basically the RNLI had asked about the possibilities of having a permanent base on Coronation Park.

Cllr Lyon said they were still in discussions as to moving the lifeboat station.

The Chairman said that more information was needed on this item.

#### **44. CASTLE ESTATE / WARFLEET**

##### **Paddle board business**

Cllr Gent said there had been complaints about somebody running a business from Warfleet without permission and reports that their clients are parking their cars on the roads and causing a disruption.

Cllr Gent said that he would discuss this with the Clerk and write to them to ask them what their plans were for this year.

*Cllr Gent left the meeting at 6.55pm*

#### **45. DEPOT**

##### **Confirmation of compost area**

This has been agreed previously at the Corporate Property Committee meeting, but it had come to this committee for confirmation with the Groundsman.

The Groundsman said that this was underway.

**46. ST SAVIOUR'S CHURCH GRAVEYARD**

Nothing to report.

**47. THE ORCHARD**

Friends of the orchard report Appendix B

The orchard report had been circulated previously.

Peter Shaw confirmed that they charged £100 for a tree, which covered sourcing the tree and the plaque, Cllrs responded that they thought this was too cheap considering memorial plaques were £250.

Peter Shaw said that the policy previously agreed at the Corporate Property committee is technically a Dartmouth Town Council policy so this can be reviewed. Cllrs agreed that this policy should be reviewed and brought back to the Parks and Open Spaces Committee, with a view to bringing it in line with the memorial plaques. Cllrs thought that any profit could be earmarked and put back into the Orchard for maintenance.

Peter Shaw mentioned some fencing that needs maintenance and asked if the Groundsman could look at getting this fixed. The groundsman said that we would need to get a contractor in to do this as the grounds-team were too busy at the moment.

**48. LONGCROSS CEMETERY**

**Update on chain-link fencing**

This is on the Grounds-team's list as they need to cut back the shrubbery around the fencing before the maintenance team can get to it.

**49. PROJECTS**

The Clerk said that Cllr Smith had asked when the Townstal Community Hall notice board would be back. This had been taken away to be renovated.

The Mayor thought that the posts were rotten and needed replacing but thought that the main board was ok.

The Properties manager was asked to find out if it was repairable and if not then we would purchase one in our corporate colours.

**50. VERGES / STREET SPRAYING**

The Mayor spoke about the history in the town of the weed spraying, he said that we should discuss with DCC about getting them to pay us to do it.

Groundsman spoke about an urban grass cutting program, where DCC will cut 1200 square meters of grass 4 times a year, and he thinks they will give us this money for doing it. Cllr J Hawkins gives us £1,000 a year for weed spraying.

Peter Shaw said there is a stretch from Ridge Hill entrance down to the bottom, where the wall has some penetration of velarium, perhaps spraying this would be a better solution. The Groundsman was asked to advise what would be the best option.

Cllr de Galleani spoke about some houses building sheds illegally on the footpath/bridle way along College Way,

The Mayor said this was a discussion to have with DCC about it.

## **51. BUDGET**

The Chairman explained that he had met with the Finance Officer to discuss the budget for the Parks and Open Spaces and was confident that the allocated money was being used for Parks and Open Spaces.

Green Partnerships reported that they had ordered another 20 hanging baskets (140 baskets in total) They have also ordered more troughs for the South Embankment opposite the yacht club and an octagonal trough in Bayards Cove. It was suggested that a Green Partnerships report be added to future committee meetings.

## **PART 2 – Confidential**

No items

*Meeting finished at 7.29pm*

## **EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Note: If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence it will be proposed by the Chairman that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended, excluding the press and public.

## **Appendix A**

### Groundsman's report

#### **Royal Avenue Gardens**

##### Work Completed

- Spring bedding planted
- Hedges reduced
- Prairie bed weeded, pruned and mulched
- Red clover treated with selective weedkiller
- Acknowledge work done by volunteers Green Partnership and Derek Eels
- Winter prune of roses

##### Work to do

- Replant bed by kiosk with Agapanthus and Allium - Feb
- Replant summer bedding May 2019
- Plant bed in memory of Vini - April
- Weed and mulch cottage garden bed - March
- Replant 6 dead standard roses - March
- Prune, mulch and feed roses - March
- First grass cut - Mid March
- Rodent Treatment ongoing
- Newcomen piazza beds tidied - April
- Lift trees by boat float and pottage - Feb
- Move Royal Naval Association memorial

#### **Coronation Park**

##### Work completed

- Hedges reduced
- Ivy treated
- Grass behind tennis courts brought back to good condition
- Play area inspected on a weekly basis

##### Work to do

- Employ contractor to verti drain and re-seed park surface
- Survey of two Pittosporums above tennis courts as both contain rot in the base. May need to remove.

#### **Castle Estate**

- Vegetation removed from both lime kilns
- Hazel wood coppiced
- Ash saplings removed and stumps treated from lime kilns
- Grass cut at Warfleet
- Planted areas in front of Gunfield hotel cut and cleared
- Gunfield hotel clear and cut back footpaths
- Clear round top of Lime Kiln

## **Orchard**

- Acknowledge work done by Dartmouth Community Orchard
- Renew fencing
- Area to be cut above site store
- Treatment of Hemlock Water Dropwort in March/April targeted application as we have reduced amount present
- Cut flower meadow twice per year Late June and September
- Cut footpaths monthly

## **Longcross**

- Push test of memorials to be arranged
- See draft management plan
- Natural burial area brought back to standard
- Grass standard improved across new section

## **St Saviour's Church**

### Work completed

- Grass cut
- Ivy removed from memorials
- Footpaths cleaned

### Work to be completed

- Plant replacement trees

## **Play Areas**

- First cut early March (weather depending)

## **Highway verges**

- Commence first cut in mid March ( Weather depending)
- Commence first street spray April (weather depending)
- Cut back BRNC side of College Way - Feb

## **Appendix B**



## **Friends of Dartmouth Community Orchard**

**Short Report to Dartmouth Town Council: *Mid  
September 2018 – Mid February 2019***

1. I apologise for such a long break in our reporting. However, I can summarise by saying the Orchard is in good health and is ready for the arrival of spring.

2. Last year's apple crop was quite good and we were able to supplement it with apples from local private orchards. We had a successful series of Apple Pressings: 18<sup>th</sup> September – early croppers: members of the Friends - donations  
18<sup>th</sup> October – demonstration & juice tasting: Food Festival Youth Day  
21<sup>st</sup> October – demonstration & juice tasting: Food Festival stall in the Market Place  
28<sup>th</sup> October – main public event: juice for donations – some retained for cider  
13<sup>th</sup> December – remaining apples: BRNC Cadets – juice to Food Bank  
We used both the basket press and the main press that we acquired last year. They have proved invaluable.
3. Rob Harkness (Town Groundsman) and his team strimmed the whole Orchard in November. This is the first time for a number of years that the Orchard has had a back-end cut at roughly the right time. BRNC cadets did a great job raking up the strimmings with a little help from Friends at the Working Parties. This work will help bring the sward back into condition as a wildflower meadow instead of the scrubby grassland overgrown with invasive, 'thug' plants that it has become.
4. The Friends have continued their working parties through the autumn and winter. They planted two new memorial trees (making a total of four), repositioned an interpretation panel to the College Way entrance, pruned some trees, and cleared out the hedge bottom along the Ambulance Station boundary. They have also placed 20 new name tags on trees where the variety is known. We are currently awaiting the results from 10 samples sent to the Royal Horticultural Society for identification. Once known, the trees will be correctly tagged.
5. In December, a small team of BRNC Officer Cadets raked strimmings in the Western Paddock and on the mound, cleared an old gate post of ivy, took back overhanging trees from College Way, topped out the hedge and cleared invasive buddleia, and raked out the hedge bottom. The voluntary labour by Friends and Officer Cadets combined totals approximately 90 hours in this period.
6. Two pieces of infrastructure improvement need to be tackled in the coming year: the path round the Eastern paddock should be given a similar all-weather surface to the one connecting the two entrances, (we have been unsuccessful in getting grant aid for this); and the fence separating the Woodland Zone from the Western Paddock needs replacing – it has rotted at the base and is leaning dangerously. We ask the Committee to consider fund these works.
7. Our liaison with the Devon Wildlife Trust continues strongly. Once again they provided a stall at our Apple Pressing. Recently, their Project Officer for the Greater Horseshoe Bat Project met with Rob Harkness and Peter Shaw to consider ways of enhancing the orchard habitat for bats. There will be a short report about this later.

8. Finally, we extend a warm invitation to all members of the Committee to attend our  
**AGM TUESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019, 6.00 - 7.30 pm at DARTMOUTH YACHT CLUB.**

*Peter Shaw*

*Chairman, Friends of Dartmouth Community Orchard*

*8<sup>th</sup> February 2019*