

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING, CONVENED IN ACCORDANCE WITH
THE PROVISIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SCHEDULE 12, PART II, AND
HELD IN THE CLIFTON ROOM AT THE GUILDHALL, DARTMOUTH
AT 6.00 PM, ON MONDAY, 18TH MARCH 2019.**

PRESENT: Cllrs: R Lyon (Mayor); F Pritchard-Tagg (Deputy Mayor);
Cllrs: D Gent; R Springett; R Cooke; T Fyson; T de Galleani; S Smith; M
Baillie.
Administrator: Ruth Searle; Town Clerk: Charlie Pritchard-Williams;
Dartmouth Chronicle representative: Charley Adams
6 members of the public.

1. INTRODUCTION & WELCOME

The Mayor, Cllr R Lyon welcomed those present and said it was nice to see so many people here, he also explained that this was the 'Annual Parish Meeting' and not a Council meeting

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS YEAR'S MEETING

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 16th April 2018 were circulated to Cllrs and members of the public.

Proposed: Cllr Springett

Seconded: Cllr Gent

There were no comments

**3. MAYOR'S REPORT ON COUNCIL BUSINESS TRANSACTED
DURING THE PAST YEAR**

This last year has been a particularly busy year for Dartmouth Town Council.

GREEN SPACES

After many months of negotiation with South Hams District Council, DTC took over the ownership of various green spaces within the town. These being;

- Coronation Park
- Royal Avenue Gardens
- (This included the toilets and showers within those spaces.)
- The Visitor Centre
- The area of the proposed greenhouse.
- The Castle Estate, which is the land between the lower and higher highways to the Castle along with an area along Warfleet Creek, including the car park at the Castle, the toilets and boat parking at Warfleet Creek and Sugary Green.
- Also parcels of woodland between the sea and the roadway to Coastguard Cottages.
- Some green verges and hedges at the top of the town.

We are very grateful to the Dartmouth Green Partnership and the Friends of the Community Orchard, whose volunteers are helping with various projects. We are

also very grateful to Dartmouth Green Partnership for all their hard work in providing baskets and tubs throughout the town, which last summer really added to the beauty of our town.

All the comments we have had in the office and by email from the townspeople have been extremely positive and we have received many congratulations to the team of groundsmen, led by Rob Harkness, for the improvement to the green spaces.

MAINTENANCE AND BUILDINGS

Thanks go to our maintenance team, who maintain our buildings throughout the town. These include:

- The Guildhall
- The Butterwalk
- The Market Square
- Ivy Lane Centre
- The Longcross Cemetery

Added to these they now have the additional properties added to their portfolio:

- The Visitor Centre
- The various toilets
- The Amenity Hut
- The Bandstand

The planned refurbishment of the Guildhall is nearing completion and I am sure the town will be pleased to know it has been achieved within the budget, which was set over two years ago. This is now a vibrant part of the town's amenity space.

We have, at present, plans to refurbish the Ivy Lane Centre and continue with our ongoing maintenance of the Market Square and Butterwalk and other buildings

I would particularly like to thank our staff, who have risen to the additional work that this has obviously caused. They are doing an amazing job.

NEW STAFF

We have recently added Katie Brown, who, as our Receptionist and liaison officer between Dartmouth Town Council, South Hams District Council and Devon County Council regarding issues within the town that are not the responsibility of DTC has ensured that matters are hopefully resolved as quickly as they arise.

Hannah Williams, who has taken over the role of the Properties Administrator looking after the many and varied buildings that form part of the town's heritage, is responsible for the smooth-running of ownership, lettings and maintenance.

The great sadness of Vini Taylor, who was going to take over Dave's role, was unfortunately involved in a fatal traffic accident just before Christmas.

So today, Alan Duffy, has joined our building maintenance team along with Tim and we are confident that he will help us in our mission to keep all the council's property in good condition for future generations.

I would like to extend a sincere welcome to the new personnel.

David Walker, who was our maintenance team lead, has taken retirement and we are grateful for his work with the Council and wish him well.

TOWN PROJECTS

We are very concerned about the increase in criminal damage to, not only our buildings but others in the town and to this end, we have negotiated with Devon and Cornwall Constabulary to enable us to fund the installation of CCTV systems that covers the main areas of the town. This information will be relayed to the Police Office when it returns to the centre of town and directly to the Police HQ in Exeter. The Police Crime Commissioner is funding one-third of the cost of this work.

We are also planning some PIR lighting, which works automatically and is activated by people as they move near a building. We are putting these on our toilets and other areas that have suffered damage in the past to prevent, hopefully, future occurrences of vandalism.

BUSINESSES

I am concerned for the businesses of the town following the demise of the Business Improvement District (BID) and the Dartmouth Chamber of Trade. As you are aware, the Town Council, receives no funding from the business rates and it would appear the only two organisations that are working on the behalf of the business community are the Visitor Centre and the Dartmouth Business Breakfast Club.

Dartmouth is very fortunate in having a number of Festivals throughout the year and it is good to see them going from strength to strength. We have the Dart Music Festival, Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta, Shakespeare Week, the Food Festival and Candlelit. During the remainder of this year and next year, the Dartmouth Mayflower 400 team are working towards the commemoration of the sailing of the Mayflower in 1620. They are working with all the Festivals to engage the community to be part of this national commemoration. All these festivals and events are helping to bring people to our town to keep the town vibrant and to ensure the businesses benefit from these visitors.

GRANTS

During the year, Dartmouth Town Council awarded Grants to:

- The Dartmouth Visitor Centre
- Dartmouth Green Partnership
- Dartmouth Swimming Pool Company Ltd
- Dartmouth and Area Healthcare Action Group
- Dartmouth Community Chest
- Dartmouth Mayflower 400

- Youth Geneses
- Friends of Dartmouth Community Orchard
- The Classic Anglo/Breton Regatta
- The Town Crier
- Dartmouth Parish Church

We are pleased to report that the Town Council's operating expenses are within the limits we have set. This is due to the diligence and care taken by the Town Clerk, Charlie Pritchard-Williams and Ali McGrigor the Finance Officer. This has enabled us to keep a good reserve for future commitments and unforeseen financial requirements.

FUTURE PLANS

The perennial problem in Dartmouth, of course, is parking. And the Town Council are discussing various options with South Hams District Council and Devon County Council.

The health issues within the town have been very worrying, particularly the loss of the Dartmouth and Kingswear Hospital with its beds, minor injuries unit, x-ray and physio departments. The Action Group are having on-going discussions with the National Health Trust.

The Council feel that the demise of the Little Cotton Camping & Caravan site has had a large impact on the businesses of the town, and we will try to replace this facility at Jawbones adjacent to the old water tower site. This is in the early stages of process and we will be considering fully the views on this project from interested parties in ensuring that the environmental issues regarding use and appearance are taken into account.

A team has been established within the town working with the Dartmouth Town Council, South Hams District Council, Devon County Council, Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority, and the RNLI to establish a new slipway adjacent to the Higher Ferry, and my understanding is that they are going ahead with planning permission.

In November 2018, the Town Council voted to discontinue the Neighbourhood Plan (due to lack of interest). Since this decision, a community group have come forward who want to lead on the Neighbourhood Plan for Dartmouth. Although the current Council cannot be involved in this for 6 months (due to the vote), the Councillors attending the February and March meeting all thought that it was a good idea for the group to start working on it without Town Council involvement until after May 2019 (which coincides with a new Council).

THANKS

Di and I have attended many events organised by the Town and have been honoured to support the hard work and dedication of the volunteers. We send our congratulations to these amazing people who ensure that this community thrives.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the staff of DTC, especially Ruth Searle who is my guiding light on all things administrative, Ron Lambden, the Town Sergeant, Les Ellis, The Town Crier and Liz his consort, my Deputy Mayor, Fred Pritchard-Tagg, and, of course, my fellow Councillors and their partners for their year(s) of service and hard work.

And thank you to the Town Clerk who has just passed her Certificate in Local Councils Administration.

4. TOWN CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS

Cllr Springett said that the local training corps were currently meeting in Totnes but would be very happy to have cadets from the town attend.

A representative from the Dartmouth and Kingswear Group spoke about all the items that the group are currently working on:

- The Neighbourhood Plan
- Health situation and are working in tangent with other organisations
- Seymour Drive
- Campaigning to save the building which used to be a bathing hut out at the Castle.
- Bathing area at Castle Cove

he added that they have an AGM on the 26th March at the Flavel.

Cllr Lyon said that he and the Clerk were meeting with a member of the public about the Neighbourhood Plan this week and understood there was a community led group who were willing to work on this.

Cllr Lyon also added that he was aware of the problem with supports and bridges at the Castle Cove.

A member of the public wanted to add something to Cllr Springett's announcement, the scouts currently have vacancies at the moment, but the cubs and beavers are currently full.

Cllr Cooke mentioned that on the 6th June this year there will be quite a lot of 75th celebrations / remembrance events but wanted to mention that he's been invited to go to Courseulles Sur Mer and if anyone else wants to go along then get in touch with the Twinning Association.

Cllr Gent spoke about the youth club and how the young adults who attend continue to get the blame for vandalism and anti-social behaviour in the town, he spoke passionately about some of the issues that face the youth in Dartmouth and all the work that Youth Genesis do in supporting them.

5. OPEN FORUM

The same representative from the Dartmouth & Kingswear Society spoke about a recent meeting with highways and was worried about the Norton Narrows housing

at Crocket Farm, he was amazed to hear that DCC thought it was a good idea for a 106 agreement.

Cllr Gent said that this was incorrect and that there was never an offer for 106 money for Norton Narrows, it was always for affordable housing.

Baker Homes have now taken over the project and on the 30th March there will be an exhibition at Townstal Community Hall of their work elsewhere.

The same representative from the Dartmouth & Kingswear Society asked if the Council could fight for a 106 agreement to put in place following on from planning applications and Cllr Gent said that 106 agreements would be available from both the big planning applications for Dartmouth.

The same representative from the Dartmouth & Kingswear Society added that that coaches may not come into Dartmouth if there are road delays coming into Dartmouth because of the road works.

Cllr Smith, asked Cllr Gent did we ever adopt the St Ives policy (anti second home owners), Cllr Gent said we did not and that this could be a part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Fyson said that St Ives has had it inserted into their NP, but it of course needs to be endorsed in the proper way. It also only applies to new builds and doesn't apply to established houses.

A member of the public said he was concerned about DCC taking away the restrictions on parking along the embankment in the winter and asked what the Town Council feels about it.

Cllr Lyon said the Town Council were concerned about it and that he'd been speaking to highways about this, if we want to change the system from what it is now we will end up with pay and display throughout Dartmouth, and he didn't think that was the best option but the new Council could look into this.

Cllr Fyson said that one exercise completed for the NP was the survey forms that were distributed and filled out in 2016 and from this parking was identified as the most important issue with the public.

Cllr Springett said that he conducted a survey in 2015 along the embankment and over 30% of the cars parked did not belong to Dartmouth residents.

A member of the public asked about cleaning the back of the Butterwalk, and Cllr Lyon said that this would be looked at by the new Council.

Meeting closed at 18.37