

DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting

7th September 2015

At the Guildhall, Dartmouth

Present

*The Town Mayor (Councillor R M Lyon) - Chairman

#The Deputy Mayor (Councillor R W I Cooke) - Vice-Chairman

#Cllr P F Allen

*Cllr M Baillie

*Cllr L M Barnes

#Cllr R E Chilcott

*Cllr G B F Coles

*Cllr A J C Fyson

*Cllr T de Galleani

*Cllr D M Gent

*Cllr F J Hawke

*Cllr I A Pritchard

*Cllr R F Rendle

#Cllr S Smith

*Cllr R Springett

*Cllr S Thomson

*County Cllr J Hawkins

*District Cllr H Bastone

#District Cllr R Rowe

*Denotes attendance

#Denotes apology for absence

Also in attendance 4 members of the public, Kim Gray from SCG Associates and 1 member of the press.

The Mayor opened the meeting and thanked the Regatta Committee for their hard work over the last year which had led to an excellent Regatta.

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllrs Pritchard, Coles and de Galleani declared a personal interest in minute 88(c) approval of the Corporate Property minutes.

Cllr de Galleani declared a personal interest in agenda item 18 – vacant Market Unit.

Cllr Coles declared a personal interest in agenda item 16 – Mayflower 400.

82. REPORTS.

Police and District and County Councillors' Reports.

Inspector Tomlinson gave his report on the crime figures for Dartmouth for August 2015 and included an additional report on the Regatta, which he felt from a policing perspective had gone very well. Cllr Hawke asked if the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary had moved away from Neighbourhood Policing. Inspector Tomlinson explained that although they were under significant budgetary constraints and there were no firm decisions for the future, the police in Devon were committed to Neighbourhood Policing.

Cllr Hawke also raised concerns over the parking of large articulated vehicles in Nelson Road during Regatta. Inspector Tomlinson confirmed that the police would deal with obstructions such as this but had not been aware of any problems.

Cllr Hawkins thanked Dartmouth Town Council for their support during Regatta, which had been a great success this year. He added that the favourable police report on Regatta had been due in no small part to Gina Coles, and he thanked Mrs Coles for all her hard work on behalf of the Regatta Committee.

Cllr Hawkins congratulated the Trustees of the Indoor Swimming Pool project on the cutting of the first turf at the new pool site and thanked them for their dedication.

Cllr Hawkins reported the sad news that Nick Hindmarsh would be leaving as Head of Dartmouth Academy and would be sorely missed.

Cllr Hawkins also reported that First Buses had now finished as the contractor for bus transport in the South Hams.

Following a question from the Mayor, Cllr Hawkins confirmed that he had raised the problems with the pavements and potholes in the Town with the Highways Officer and that the gully cleaner had been booked through Devon Highways to attend the Town. Cllr Hawkins would also follow up on the outstanding work to the North Embankment paving.

Cllr Gent informed Cllr Hawkins that several members of the public had fallen on paving slabs in Duke Street recently and there were also problems with paving outside the Spar shop, the Conservative Club and the Seale Arms in Victoria Road. He asked Cllr Hawkins to arrange an urgent meeting with Devon Highways to inspect the problem areas and to arrange future inspections on a regular basis. Cllr Hawkins stressed the need for any falls to be reported to Devon County Council. A member of the public present at the meeting reported that she had fallen near Townstal Farmhouse in April and again recently in Duke Street; Cllr Hawkins would contact her to obtain details.

Cllr Fyson congratulated Cllr Hawkins on a successful Regatta and asked Cllr Hawkins for assurances that future air displays in Dartmouth would not be affected by the problems experienced at Shoreham Air Show. Cllr Hawkins shared Cllr Fyson's concerns but added that this would be reviewed by the Civil Aviation Authority.

Cllr Barnes raised concerns over the new reserved spaces car park in Mayors Avenue, which was frequently empty and questioned whether the District Council would receive a better income from letting this for 2 hour parking. Cllr Bastone replied that these spaces were let on an annual basis but he would take Cllr Barnes query back to the car parks team.

Cllr Springett echoed Cllr Barnes comments and asked that the District Council provide more motorcycle parking for the Town which was in short supply.

Cllr Bastone reported that at its meeting on 23rd July 2015, the Executive had agreed the award criteria for the joint Leisure Service procurement project with West Devon Borough Council.

Residents in coastal communities were reminded that reusable seagull proof sacks were available from the District Council free of charge. Further information was available via waste@southhams.gov.uk or 01803 861199.

Cllr Bastone informed the meeting that officers at South Hams District Council had developed a simple Town and Parish Council precept calculator tool which would be circulated to Clerks in December and which would show Town and Parish Councils the effect of changing their precepts up or down.

Cllr Bastone reminded the Town Councillors of the need to update their Register of Interest forms as and when their personal circumstances changed.

The District Council was inviting residents and businesses to have their say on a new Alcohol and Entertainments Licensing Policy. The consultation exercise would expire on 6th November 2015 and the renewed policy would determine how the council made decisions on alcohol and entertainment licensing issues over the next five years.

At a Special Council meeting on 10th September 2015, members of the District Council would consider a report which sought to revert back to the 2 to 10 Affordable Housing threshold policy in light of the recent High Court decision to quash national policy in respect of planning obligations for affordable housing.

The District Council's Development Management Committee considered a report at its meeting on 2nd September 2015 which recommended that the pilot whereby Town and Parish Council representatives can speak at Development Management Committee

meetings had been a success and should now be formally adopted and included in the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Households who wished to be considered for a vacancy in affordable rented housing were required to register with Devon Home Choice (www.devonhomechoice.com). In addition, residents who were looking for assistance with buying their first home were required to register with Help to Buy South West (www.helptobuysw.org.uk).

An amended TAP Fund process had been agreed for 2015/16 and the deadline for applications was 12 noon on Friday, 18 December 2015. To enable Town and Parish councils to set their precepts accordingly, applications would be determined by local Devon County Council and South Hams District Council members on Thursday, 14th January 2016.

Cllr Bastone reported details of the TAP Fund Process 2015/16 to the meeting. The following key amendments had been agreed to the TAP Fund determination process for 2015/16:-

- Whilst it would still be looked upon more favourably to work together, Town and Parish Councils would now be able to submit applications without the support of another council.
- Repeat bids would not be considered.
- Applications would be determined by local County and District Councillors only. Whilst Town and Parish Council representatives would be entitled to give a brief outline of their application(s) to the Panel of local Members, they would no longer have a 'vote' at the table.

The deadline for TAP Fund applications for 2015/16 was 12 noon on Friday, 18th December 2015 and the applications would be determined by local Member Panels from 2.00pm on Thursday, 14th January 2016.

The Rural Housing Alliance had published a useful guide for Town and Parish councils, Affordable Rural Housing – A Practical Guide for Parish Councils.

The guide described the key stages in delivering affordable housing in rural areas:-

- Partnership working;
- Housing need;
- Delivery methods;
- Community consultation;
- Funding; and
- Planning application to planning permission.

Cllr Lyon asked Cllr Bastone if the number of litter bins in the Town had diminished; Cllr Bastone replied that some had been removed following abuse of their use by holiday lets.

The Mayor would write to both the Harbour office and the holiday let companies in Dartmouth to ask them to remind their customers to dispose of their rubbish in the correct way.

On behalf of Cllr Smith, Cllr Hawke asked the District Councillors if the £30,000 put aside for landscaping at the new Indoor Swimming Pool was still available; Cllr Hawkins and Bastone would investigate.

Cllr Pritchard told the meeting that she was delighted that the Castle toilets had been refurbished but asked the District Councillors why the public toilets at Totnes had not been included in the pilot charging scheme. Cllr Bastone replied that that the 12 month trial was being piloted in Kingsbridge and Dartmouth and it was important for everyone to send in their views on the scheme. Cllr Hawkins added that he hoped the standard of the toilets would be raised and that all communities would be charged in the future.

83. PRESENTATION BY BY KIM GRAY FROM SCG ASSOCIATES REGARDING THE REFURBISHMENT OF CORONATION PARK DINGHY PARK.

Miss Gray explained that SCG Associates had been commissioned by South Hams District Council to carry out phase 2 of the works to Coronation Park and produce plans for the refurbishment of the Dinghy Park from the £85,000 ring-fenced in their capital budget. They had recently held a drop in session at the RNLI hut on

Coronation Park in order to gauge public opinion on the proposals and would be acting on comments received to produce a sustainable and manageable plan for discussion with District Council officers on 10th September 2015.

Cllr Barnes voiced concerns that all but one of the proposed plans showed a large encroachment onto the playing area surface, Miss Gray explained that the District Council would be taking into account the views of all the users of the park.

Cllr Bastone agreed with Cllr Barnes concerning the need to prevent further encroachment on to the park but added that the RNLI still had planning permission for 5 parking spaces in the boat park area.

Miss Gray clarified that the consultation included whether or not there was a need for cars to enter the site. Cllr Coles explained that it would not be possible for cars to enter the site as detailed in the proposals and to maneuver amongst the boats; Miss Gray confirmed that the RNLI parking spaces were not included in the plans.

Cllr Springett questioned whether the Devon County Council chevron parking scheme for the eastern side of the park should have been included in the plans. Cllr Bastone explained that the next phase of the District Council's plans for Coronation Park would include the hedged area on the eastern edge but added that Devon County Council had no monies available for the chevron parking scheme. Cllr Springett asked that a letter be sent to Devon County Council asking them to reconsider the additional parking.

Cllr Rendle asked how the new dinghy park would be policed and suggested a key entry system to ensure the rules were not flouted.

Mr Bridges asked Cllr Bastone how many boats were currently in the dinghy park. Cllr Bastone explained there were currently 60 boats in the park with room for 90 so there would be no need for encroachment further into the park.

84. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR.

Mr Anderson asked the Mayor if following dissention concerning the BID in Dartmouth, what had been gleaned from the meeting with the Chief Executive of South Hams District Council.

The Mayor replied that the meeting had not taken place.

Mr Anderson continued and added that all the dissenters to the BID believed that there was no check mechanism on the BID and he asked the Mayor to confirm with South Hams District Council that the BID was acting legally. Mr Anderson was concerned that there was an operating agreement between South Hams District Council and the BID but that the District Council had no ability to check for embezzlement or malfunction.

85. URGENT BUSINESS.

There was none.

86. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent

Seconded: Cllr R Springett

Resolved: That the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 6th July 2015 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

87. CORRESPONDENCE.

- a) A letter had been received from the Dartmouth Business Improvement District detailing the position on a petition requesting an Extraordinary General meeting of the BID. Having taken legal advice the BID Directors did not believe that an EGM was necessary.
- b) A copy of Dartmouth Caring's Annual report for 2014/2015 had received and was available to view in the Council offices.

- c) A letter had been received from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission informing the Town Council that the Commission was minded to cease their payment (currently £90 per annum) towards the upkeep of Longcross Cemetery. The Clerk would write to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to query this policy decision.
- d) Details of the Town and Parish Fund for 2015/2016 had been received by email from South Hams District Council. £8,789 was available for the Dartmouth Area Cluster with a deadline for applications of 18th December 2015. Applications would now be decided by County and District Councillors only, with no vote for Parish Councillors.
- e) An email had been received from the Dartmouth Area Locality officer giving details of dates and places he would be visiting in Dartmouth. He had declined an invitation to attend a Town Council meeting at present as his work covered 16 Councils across the South Hams but hoped to be able to attend in the future.
- f) Details had been received from South Hams District Council on the Licensing Act 2003 Consultation on Draft Licensing Policy – responses were required by 6th November 2015. This would be considered by the next meeting of the Planning Committee and by a special meeting of the General Purposes Committee.
- g) Details had been received from South Hams District Council on the Gambling Act 2005 Consultation on Draft Gambling Statement of Principles – responses were required by 23rd October 2015. This would also be considered by the next meeting of the Planning Committee and by a special meeting of the General Purposes Committee.
- h) A request had been received from the Dartmouth Unit of St John Ambulance to set up a first aid display in the Market on Saturday 19th September 2015 as part of the Save a Life Campaign. The Clerk would write to grant permission for this.
- i) Details of the Devon Minerals Plan to the period to 2033 had been received from Devon County Council; representations were required by 16th November 2015. This would be considered by the next meeting of the Planning Committee and by a special meeting of the General Purposes Committee.
- j) An email had been received from the Dartmouth and District Indoor Swimming Pool Trustees detailing costs and sources of funding now that a final contract had been signed with Kier construction; this had been circulated to members for information.

- k) Details of the new staffing structure for the Devon County Council Neighbourhood Highway Group had been received. The Highways Officer for Dartmouth would be Lisa Edmonds.

88. REPORTS

a) Finance Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on 9th July 2015 were reviewed.

Proposed: Cllr S E Thomson

Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 9th July 2015, be received, approved and adopted.

b) Planning Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22nd July 2015 were reviewed.

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent

Seconded: Cllr R Springett

Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22nd July 2015, be received, approved and adopted.

c) Corporate Property Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Corporate Property Committee held on 10th August 2015 were reviewed.

It was noted that :-

Item 7 page 4 – Cllr Rendle was not prepared to review the conditions for hiring of the Royal Avenue Gardens.

Item 13 page 8 - the report on parking in the Market would be brought to a future Full Council meeting.

Proposed: Cllr R Springett
Seconded: Cllr F J Hawke

Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Corporate Property Committee held on 10th August 2015, as amended, be received, approved and adopted.

d) Planning Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on 19th August 2015 were reviewed.

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent
Seconded: Cllr A J C Fyson

Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 19th August 2015, be received, approved and adopted.

e) General Purposes Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 3rd September 2015 were reviewed.

Amendments:- It was noted that Cllr Hawke did not have a prejudicial interest in item 7 Park and Ride tenders.

Item 2 page 2 - The nominal fee of £5 was per large item of Household rubbish. Cllr Springett requested that the cutting of grass verges in Dartmouth be considered as an additional budget item.

Proposed: Cllr T de Galleani
Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 3rd September 2015, as amended, be received, approved and adopted.

89. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

The Clerk presented a report on payments made under Standing Order No. 56 (b). Cllr Hawke requested that a report giving total project costs for the Guildhall refurbishment be presented to Council.

Proposed: Cllr R Springett
Seconded: Cllr F J Hawke

Resolved: That the Clerk's actions in paying accounts totaling £43,534.01 for the month of July 2015 and £30,882.77 for the month of August 2015 under Standing Order No. 56 (b) be endorsed.

90. DEEDS OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL.

Proposed: Cllr R Springett
Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That Deeds of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial be issued in respect of Grave No. J19 at Longcross Cemetery, Dartmouth and the Town Mayor (Councillor R M Lyon) and Deputy Mayor (Councillor R W I Cooke) be authorized to sign the Documents in accordance with terms contained in Minute No. 225 (3) 1975/6.

91. REPORTS.

Representatives on Public Bodies and Associations.

Cllr Gent reported that the Youth Club was running well. Nick Hindmarsh had resigned from the Chairmanship of the Friends of Ivy Lane and the group would be meeting shortly to elect a new Chairman.

92. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR.

There were none.

93. PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL CHRISTMAS TREES IN DARTMOUTH.

Members discussed a project proposed by Cllr Chilcott, to supply additional Christmas Trees around the Town for business to decorate and form a Christmas Tree trail. It had been suggested that the cost of this be met by the unused monies in the Town Council's Christmas lights budget.

Proposed: Cllr R F Rendle
Secoded: Cllr I A Pritchard

Resolved: That any unused funds from the Christmas Lights budget be given towards the lights provided by the Snow Ball team and this donation by the Town Council be publicised.

94. MAYFLOWER 400.

Details of the plans for the Mayflower 400 project so far had been circulated to members.

The Mayor had attended a meeting in Plymouth in 2014 and had spoken to the cultural attaché from the American Embassy who was very supportive of the project.

The Mayor stressed the need to make Dartmouth the most important part of the Mayflower trail and added that additional links with Dartmouth Massachusetts would aid funding applications.

Cllr Springett suggested that the Town Council work with the BID to draw up an action plan to provide excursions and accommodation for the 20 - 40 American visitors to Dartmouth in 2016. Town twinning was not thought appropriate, instead sister city status would be investigated.

Proposed: Cllr F J Hawke
Secoded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That Cllr Coles lead on arranging the visit to Dartmouth by visitors from Dartmouth Massachusetts in 2016.

Proposed: Cllr F J Hawke
Seconded: Cllr T de Galleani

Resolved: That in view of the confidential nature of business about to be transacted, it was in the public interest that the press and public be excluded and that they be instructed to withdraw.

95. CREATION OF THE POST OF MAINTENANCE ASSISTANT.

Members discussed the creation of the post of Maintenance Assistant. A confidential paper on the proposed salary and hours was laid round the table.

The creation of a post to Market the Guildhall would be discussed at the next meeting of the Personnel Committee.

Proposed: Cllr R Springett
Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That the post of Maintenance Assistant be created and advertised as soon as possible.

96. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN VACANT MARKET UNIT.

Details of 5 expressions of interest in the vacant unit in Dartmouth Market were laid round the table.

Proposed: Cllr F J Hawke
Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That the vacant unit in the centre building (formerly Andersen's Upholstery) be offered to the Children's Shoe Fitting Shop.