

# **DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the Town Council Meeting**

**2<sup>nd</sup> November 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 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 2 members of the public, and 1 member of the press.

### **133. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

Cllr Pritchard declared a personal interest in item 3 of the Corporate Property minutes of 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015 – Orchard maintenance contract.

Cllr Smith declared a personal interest in County Councillors' reports – Dartmouth Academy.

Cllr Cole declared a personal interest in minute no 141 – reports Mayflower 400.

### **134. REPORTS.**

#### Police and District and County Councillors' Reports.

In his absence Inspector Tomlinson's report on the crime figures for Dartmouth for October 2015 was laid round the table.

Cllr Hawkins reported that he had attended a very constructive meeting with Steve Jorden the Chief Executive of South Hams District Council, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, District Councillor Bastone and the Clerk earlier that day. Steve Jorden had made a commitment that South Hams District Council would provide facts and figures to facilitate Dartmouth taking back assets from the District Council.

Cllr Hawkins had met with Peter Brunt and Lisa Edmonds from Devon County Council Highways together with the Mayor, Cllr Gent and the Clerk and had walked round Dartmouth highlighting the areas of concern on the pavements and roads in the Town. He informed the meeting that Devon Highways would be installing new paving in Duke Street in the New Year.

Cllr Hawkins had received numerous queries from the public concerning whether adjustments could be made to the traffic regulations to make parking along the north embankment 2 hours only all year round and he suggested that the Town might wish to consider this for the future.

He reported that a new Dartmouth and District Public Transport group would be set up in the next 2 months and would hold meetings with the bus companies in December.

Cllr Hawkins would be meeting with the new acting Head of Dartmouth Academy in the next week to raise concerns about the future of the school.

Devon County Council had informed Cllr Hawkins that no monies were available for the provision of echelon parking on the north embankment side of Coronation Park and Cllr Hawkins suggested that South Hams District Council could take this forward as owners of Coronation Park.

Cllr de Galleani raised concerns about trees being cut down on College Way – these were later identified as being on Devon County Council land and were notified to their Highways Officer.

Cllr Barnes brought up the disgraceful state of the grass in Coronation Park which had not been cut since Regatta and was causing problems for residents wishing to use the park. Cllr Hawkins explained that the District Council were seeking quotes for the repairs to the surface caused by the Regatta marquee but that a quote for £17,000 for the work had been rejected. The Mayor suggested that local farmers be approached.

Cllr Hawke asked if there was a programme of pavement repairs to follow the repairs to Duke Street; damage was being caused by vans parking on the pavement. Cllr Gent reminded Cllr Hawkins that there were many gullies that also needed clearing by the County Council.

Cllr Coles queried whether the surface of future pavement replacements would be brought back to the Town Council; Cllr Hawkins confirmed that this would be the case.

Cllr Rowe thanked Cllr Barnes for his recent email and added that she had noted Cllr Pritchard's comments about the Castle Estate toilets and was pleased to have been involved in ensuring that they had been redecorated by the District Council.

Cllr Rowe recommended the Neighbourhood Plan process to Dartmouth Town Council, as pavements, housing and employment land could all be influenced through the plan.

On the subject of devolution Cllr Rowe told the meeting that South Hams District Council had considered working through the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for Devon and Somerset. Cllr Rowe added that she hoped that the government review of the holiday absence from schools policy would benefit the tourist industry in the South West.

There would be a Community Resilience day at Fingle Glen near Exeter on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015 and a Tough Choices meeting at Ivybridge on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015 organised by John Hart the leader of Devon County Council.

Cllr Rowe also reported that 24 Devon and Cornwall Police stations were to be closed although the Police would be applying for an increase to their annual budget raised through the Council Tax system.

Cllr Smith asked the District Councillors for the current update on the West Dart development, he was aware that the Planning Inspectorate was to consider the appeal in February 2016 but the development and the affordable housing it would provide were essential for the community and also for the Indoor Swimming Pool and the Academy. Cllr Hawkins told the meeting that nothing could be done until the appeal was heard and stressed that it was important to include additional land for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan for Dartmouth.

In his absence Cllr Bastone's report was laid round the table. Cllr Bastone had reported at the last meeting on the recent Council decision to revoke the higher Affordable Housing Thresholds following changes in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

The PPG changes followed the High Court decision in the case of West Berkshire and Reading Councils v the Secretary of State for Department for Communities and Local Government which effectively outlawed the higher thresholds.

The Secretary of State has been granted leave to appeal the High Court decision and West Berks colleagues had informed South Hams that there was a provisional date for a Hearing on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

**135. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR.**

Mr Distin asked the Mayor if he was aware that there was a body of opinion that the Parochial Church Council should be paying more of the cost towards the redevelopment of Southford Road school rooms, and he went onto ask if the Councillors were aware of how much the Church had done to help the pre-school. The Church was aware of the need to keep the rent affordable for the pre-school and those connected with the pre-school and the church had raised £100,000 so far; Mr Distin asked that the Town Council bear this in mind when setting their budget.

The Mayor replied that the pre-school had been asked to make a presentation to a future Council meeting and this would be considered as part of the budget process.

Mr Harris asked the Mayor if the proposal to provide a parking facility for mobile homes was still being considered.

The Mayor replied that this was still being looked at and a suitable site had yet to be identified.

Mr Harris asked the Mayor if he was aware that a member of the public had fallen over an A-board outside the Market and asked if the Town Council could do something about these signs.

The Mayor replied that Cllr Hawkins would contact the Highways Officer about this and the subject would be discussed at the next meeting of the Corporate Property Committee.

Mr Harris asked the Mayor if there were any plans for a Nativity scene in Dartmouth.

Through the Mayor Cllr Gent replied that he would raise the matter at the next meeting of the Parochial Church Council.

**136. URGENT BUSINESS.**

There was none.

**137. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES**

**Proposed: Cllr D M Gent**  
**Seconded: Cllr R Springett**

**Resolved: That the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015 be confirmed and signed as a true record.**

**138. CORRESPONDENCE.**

- a) Email notification had been received from Dai Antill, South Hams District Council Locality Officer that he would be attending the Full Council meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to answer members' questions.
- b) A request had been received from the RNLI to use the Boatfloat on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016 from 11.30 to 13.30 (which coincided with high water) for their annual "Sink our Ship" event.

**Proposed: Cllr S Smith**  
**Seconded: Cllr R Springett**

**Resolved: That the RNLI be granted use of the Boatfloat for a fundraising event on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016.**

- c) A request had been received from the Dartmouth community boat store group for a contribution (£1,000 to £1,500) towards the surveys required to submit a planning application for the boat store.

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

**Resolved:** That the request for funding from the community boat store be raised at the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

### 139. REPORTS

a) Planning Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 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 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015, be received, approved and adopted.

b) General Purposes Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015 were reviewed.

**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 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015, be received, approved and adopted.

c) Planning Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2015 were reviewed.

**Proposed: Cllr D M Gent**  
**Seconded: Cllr G B F Coles**

**Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2015, be received, approved and adopted.**

d) Corporate Property Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Corporate Property Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015 were reviewed. Following a question from Cllr de Galleani, Cllr Springett clarified that the £6,000 to be suggested to the Finance Committee for the budget for the Orchard paths would only be used if the Friends of the Community Orchard did not obtain grant funding.

Amendment :- That the words “The contractor to phone the Council offices the same day as the work is carried out” be added to each of the maintenance contracts at item 3.

**Proposed: Cllr R Springett**  
**Seconded: Cllr A J C Fyson**

**Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015, as amended, be received, approved and adopted.**

e) Personnel Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015 were reviewed.

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

**Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015, be received, approved and adopted.**

**140. FINANCIAL MATTERS.**

The Clerk presented a report on payments made under Standing Order No. 56 (b).

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

**Resolved: That the Clerk's actions in paying accounts totaling £44,931.31 for the month of October 2015 under Standing Order No. 56 (b) be endorsed.**

**141. REPORTS.**

Representatives on Public Bodies and Associations.

Cllr Gent informed the meeting that the Dartmouth and District Youth Partnership (previously FOIL) would be meeting in the next week.

Cllr Smith informed the meeting that the Townstal Hall Association meetings were held at the end of each month and he hoped as many Councillors as possible would attend.

Cllr Cole gave a report on the Mayflower 400 project. The American visitors hoped to sign a Sister City Compact with Dartmouth on 18<sup>th</sup>

May 2016 as part of a launch event for the Mayflower 400 project. The Sister City scheme would be a community led venture.

#### **142. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR.**

Cllr Springett asked the Mayor if he was aware that the banners for the Dartmouth Galleries week were still in place around the Town although the event had been over for some time.

The Mayor replied that he would write a letter to ask that these be taken down.

Cllr Springett asked the Mayor if he was aware that Dartmouth ATC would not be putting out a flight at the Remembrance Parade on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2015, this being the first Remembrance Parade that they would have missed. He asked if it would be appropriate for the Mayor to write to the Chair of the civilian council in Totnes to protest.

The Mayor replied that he would write; Cllr Springett would provide the contact details.

#### **143. ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.**

Following the death of Cllr Chilcott members discussed the appointment of a new Chairman of the Finance Committee. Cllr Barnes proposed Cllr Rendle and this was seconded by Cllr Pritchard. This was a second proposal following the one below. There were 5 votes for each candidate and Cllrs Hawke, Lyon, Rendle and Thomson abstained. Cllr Rendle stood down as a candidate and Cllr Thomson was elected. During a heated discussion Cllr Barnes said “I resign” and left the Council chamber at 8.20 pm, Cllr Baillie said “and I am resigning too” and left the Council chamber at the same time.

**Proposed: Cllr S Smith**

**Seconded: Cllr R Springett**

**Resolved: That Cllr S E Thomson be elected as Chairman of the Finance Committee for the remaining part of the Council year.**

**144. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS.**

Following discussions with the organisers of the Snow Ball lights members were asked to consider a contribution by the Town Council towards the taking down of the Town's Christmas lights.

Cllr Rendle reminded members that this had been discussed at Full Council on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and resolved that any monies left in the Town Council's Christmas lights budget could be used for this purpose.

**Proposed: Cllr F J Hawke**

**Seconded: Cllr D M Gent**

**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.**

**145. TO CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT OF THE MAINTENANCE ASSISTANT.**

The Clerk explained that following interviews on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015 by the interview panel of Cllrs Barnes, Lyon, Thomson and the Clerk, it was proposed to appoint Mr Denis Schofield to the post of Maintenance Assistant to Dartmouth Town Council.

**Proposed: Cllr R Springett**

**Seconded: Cllr D M Gent**

**Resolved: That the Town Council appoint Mr Denis Schofield to the post of Maintenance Assistant at SCP15.**