

DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting

4th January 2016

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 B T Harriss
*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 11 members of the public, and 1 member of the press.

175. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr S Smith declared a personal interest in agenda item 3 – presentation by the Principal of Dartmouth Academy.

176. PRESENTATION BY TINA GRAHAM PRINCIPAL DARTMOUTH ACADEMY.

Tina Graham began by explaining that although she had been acting as Principal since September 2015, she had been appointed to the permanent post on 7th December 2015. There had been many changes during the last term and a new stronger focus on raising academic standards.

Following a question from the Deputy Mayor Mrs Graham clarified the scope of the OFSTED report which had put the Academy into special measures; this had been based on the performance from October 2013 to September 2015.

District Cllr Rowe arrived at 7.13 pm

Cllr Springett asked what help the Town Council could provide and Mrs Graham explained the importance of showing the young people that they were valued and engaging with them through the community; Mrs Graham had joined the Townstal Community Partnership to support this.

Cllr Fyson questioned how data on developing social and community contact would be measured. Mrs Graham explained that despite the continual rise in exam pass rates expected by the media, the year groups varied and so current measurements were taken on progress made. There was a need to balance both academic achievement and life skills/community contact.

Following a question from Cllr Smith, Mrs Graham gave details of the multi-academy trust consisting of the Academy, Kingsbridge Community College, Blackawton Primary School, East Allington Primary School, Kingswear Primary School and Stoke Fleming Primary School, who were all working together to assist Dartmouth Academy in increasing their pupil numbers and achievements. Mrs Graham went on to add that she would not have taken the position at the Academy if she did not believe 100% that the children of

Dartmouth needed an outstanding all through Academy provision. She believed that parents made choices through exam results and went on to add that there had been an increase of 26 pupils at the Academy since September 2015.

Cllr Allen asked for the makeup of the Board of Governors; this role was currently filled by an interim advisory committee of 4 people, 2 retired educational professionals and 2 parents.

Cllr Hawke raised the question of how the Academy was financed; Mrs Graham explained pupil admissions were administered by Devon County Council and the Academy benefitted from being part of the umbrella group which also provided support to the teaching staff from all 5 schools.

Cllr Hawkins asked if Mrs Graham had a plan to change the feeder Primary School's attitude to sending their pupils onto Dartmouth Academy. Mrs Graham explained that collaboration with the Primary Schools had increased since September 2015 and they all shared a common goal of parents having the best choice; there was now a relentless focus on helping the young people at Dartmouth Academy to achieve the same exam results as other children nationally.

Cllr Gent invited Mrs Graham to visit the Ivy Lane Youth Centre.

177. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH DAI ANTILL, LOCALITY OFFICER SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr Antill began by explaining that the new locality teams had been introduced by South Hams District Council in the summer of 2015; South Hams was split into 3 zones and covered by 6 locality officers, the officer for the Dartmouth Area was Alan White. These officers would check on the District Council's assets, report fly-tipping, put up planning notices and would be receiving enforcement training in the next week.

Mr Antill regularly held public engagement sessions in Dartmouth at Sainsburys, The Flavel, Lidl's and the Children's Centre.

Cllr Barnes asked if Mr Antill would raise the matter of the outstanding repairs to the grass in Coronation Park.

Cllr Coles asked what the main issues were that were raised by the public in Dartmouth; these were refuse, waste recycling, planning and affordable housing.

Cllr Smith suggested that Mr Antill ask the Dartmouth Chronicle to publicise who he was and the work of the Locality Officers. Mr Antill informed the meeting that dog fouling was also a problem in Dartmouth and he added that he had arranged for the dog warden to visit a Townstal Community Partnership meeting.

Cllr Smith left the meeting at 7.47 pm

Cllr Fyson asked that the Locality Officers be proactive as well as reactive when considering planning matters, particularly on enforcement issues. Mr Antill repeated that the locality officers would be receiving training shortly so they could assist the enforcement team and Cllr Gent asked that two Dartmouth enforcement issues – on Yorke Road and Victoria Road be considered; the Clerk would send details to Mr Antill.

178. REPORTS.

Police and District and County Councillors' Reports.

Inspector Tomlinson gave a report on the crime figures for Dartmouth for the month of December 2015.

Cllr Hawkins reported that the work to Coronation Park could not take place until the ground was drier.

Devon County Council was putting together a Traffic Regulation Order for the whole of the South Hams. Cllr Hawkins had met with members of the Town Council to discuss ideas and the new order would come forward from the Highways and Traffic Order Committee in March 2016.

Cllr Hawkins would be going to the Public Inquiry for the West Dart Development in February.

Cllr Hawkins had spoken to County and District Officers concerning the interactive traffic signs in Dartmouth, following reports of problems; he asked the meeting if perhaps the signs should be taken away. He also explained that the signs belonged to South Hams

District Council but were operated by Devon County Council as a contractor for the District Council.

Cllr Springett stated that the signs had caused problems during Regatta and the signs should be amended to tell drivers that they could use the Park and Ride car park with the service bus, when the Park and Ride buses were not running. Cllr Springett also asked the District Councillors to take action concerning vehicles parked on verges that were marked “for sale”.

Cllr Barnes asked Cllr Hawkins to seek the repair of the broken manhole cover opposite the Longcross Cemetery lodges on Townstal Road.

Cllr Allen asked Cllr Hawkins for an update on the pavement works on the North Embankment; Cllr Hawkins had met with officers from Devon County Highways together with the Mayor and the Clerk, at the site and a plan of action had been agreed for when the weather improved in the New Year.

Cllr Rowe agreed that the interactive signs should be corrected before Easter and went on to inform the meeting that the District Council had changed the name of “Our Plan” to “Our Plan South Hams”; this would be an overarching strategic plan for the whole district to 2031. The District Council’s new Planning and IT systems had now gone live on their website.

Cllr Rowe reported that the deadline for receipt of TAP Fund applications had now expired and these would be determined (by Cluster area) during the afternoon of Thursday, 14th January 2016. At its meeting on 10th December 2015, the District Council had approved the principle of an overriding Joint Local Plan with the Dartmoor National Park Authority, Plymouth City Council and West Devon Borough Council.

The District Council had also approved a motion expecting all statutory consultees – for both planning and licensing applications – to comment in writing with reasons for their view.

The District Council Executive had formally opened up the consultation period on their draft budget setting proposals for 2016/17; this would be approved by the meeting in February.

Cllr Rowe informed the meeting that there had been a spate of thefts from farms in the area and she reminded everyone to lock farm buildings, garages and sheds.

Cllr Bastone had nothing to add.

179. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR.

Mrs Morris asked the Mayor if the users of the Guildhall had been consulted concerning the refurbishment of the kitchen, as it was important to keep the hot cupboard facility.

The Mayor replied that users had been consulted.

Mr Reach asked the Mayor if it would be possible to ensure that the interactive traffic signs were accurate and to change the words to read “parking only” for the Park and Ride, as visitors did take notice of the signs.

The Mayor replied that the District Councillors were taking this matter forward.

Mr Boughton asked the Mayor if the Town Council was aware that the mechanism for changing GP’s in Dartmouth had been abolished, with no surgeries taking patients from Dartmouth Medical Practice, and he asked that the Town Council ensured that its representatives attended the Patient Participation Group meetings and minutes of this were circulated to all Councillors.

The Mayor replied that the Council’s representatives, Cllrs Gent and Springett would ensure that the Town Council was kept informed.

180. URGENT BUSINESS.

There was none.

181. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES.

Members reviewed the minutes of 7th December 2015.

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent

Seconded: Cllr R Springett

Resolved: That the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 7th December 2015, be confirmed and signed as a true record.

182. CORRESPONDENCE.

- a) An email had been received from Devon County Council asking for comments through their website on finding alternative funding for School Crossing Patrols to ensure that all necessary support functions were in place for a safe and compliant service. Comments were requested from schools and parents by 8th January 2016.
- b) A letter had been received from South Hams District Council asking for comments by Monday 18th January 2016, regarding the next meeting of the Parish Remuneration Panel, which would be meeting to consider the Parish basic allowance and travel and subsistence levels.
- c) A letter had been received from South West Highways giving contact details for the Footway Improvement works to Duke Street and Victoria Road scheduled for 4th January 2016 to 31st March 2016.
- d) An email had been received from the Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat Project run by the Devon Wildlife Trust requesting that sites be nominated for the temporary siting of bat detectors in 2016. The Clerk had passed this information onto the Friends of the Community Orchard and would also put forward Longcross Cemetery as a potential site.
- e) An email had been received from the Devon Air Ambulance Trust asking Parish and Town Councils to consider suitable sites for Community Helipads to enhance their night flying operations. Cllr Springett suggested Coronation Park.
- f) An email had been received from the Locality Officer and circulated to all Councillors giving options for new signage to the Lower Ferry.

No objections were raised to the preferred option of siting the sign adjacent to the Boatfloat railings.

183. REPORTS.

a) Planning Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9th December 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 9th December 2015, be received, approved and adopted.

b) Corporate Property Committee.

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Corporate Property Committee held on 15th December 2015 were reviewed. Item 6 Longcross Cemetery – the resolution be amended to “**That no planting of shrubs or trees be allowed in Longcross Cemetery or St Saviour’s Churchyard without permission**”.

Proposed: Cllr R Springett
Seconded: Cllr RWI Cooke

Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Corporate Property Committee held on 15th December 2015, as amended, be received, approved and adopted.

184. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

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

Proposed: Cllr P F Allen

Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That the Clerk's actions in paying accounts totaling £51,955.59 for the month of December 2015 under Standing Order No. 56 (b) be endorsed.

185. DEEDS OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL.

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent

Seconded: Cllr R Springett

Resolved: That Deeds of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial be issued in respect of Grave Nos. J20 and J21 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.

186. REPORTS.

Representatives on Public Bodies and Associations.

There were none.

187. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR.

Cllr Hawke asked the Mayor if he could confirm that the Town Council was still one member short for Dartmouth United Charities. The Mayor replied that this was so.

Proposed: Cllr F J Hawke

Seconded: Cllr L M Barnes

Resolved: That Cllr R F Rendle be nominated as a Town Council's nominative trustee for Dartmouth United Charities.

188. GRANT TO DARTMOUTH TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE.

The Mayor informed members that he had been advised by the Directors of the TIC that the situation at present concerning the Dartmouth Tourist Information Centre was that they had suffered 2 years of losses and now faced a £20,000 loss this year.

The Town Council had given a grant of £3,000 so far this year and the TIC had entered into a commercial arrangement with Burt and Buoy to sell Dartmouth merchandise. The TIC Directors felt that they needed a second grant of £3,000 this year and a further £3,000 in 2016/2017 plus £3,500 towards the Newcomen Engine costs otherwise they would not be able to continue.

The Mayor had met with Peter Connisbee the Chairman of the BID and the directors of the TIC on 2nd January 2016 and had proposed that the TIC, Town Council, Business Forum and BID should work together.

Members felt that they could not give a grant should this money be used towards merchandising particularly against other businesses in the Town; the Clerk advised members that the Town Council had powers to support tourism but could not give a grant to a retail business. It was generally agreed that changes needed to be made and Cllr Rendle stressed the need for the Town Council to have equal representation on the group with the BID, the TIC and Business Forum; this group would need a constitution and the need to work together must be made paramount.

Motion A

Proposed: Cllr F J Hawke

Seconded: Cllr R Springett

Resolved: That the Town Council fully supports a Tourism service for Dartmouth but acknowledges that it cannot continue to operate at a loss.

Motion B

Proposed: Cllr F J Hawke

Seconded: Cllr A J C Fyson

Resolved: That the Town Council encourages the formation of a working party to investigate what is required for the provision of a Tourism service in Dartmouth consisting of equal numbers of members from the Town Council, B.I.D., Business Forum and T.I.C. Directors, all to fully participate in this.

Motion C

Proposed: Cllr F J Hawke

Seconded: Cllr R W I Cooke

Resolved: That the Town Council makes available £3,000 in 2016/2017 to support the provision of a Tourism Service only, this dependent entirely on motion B above taking place and subject to the findings of the working party.

189. FINANCIAL STATE OF DARTMOUTH.

Cllr de Galleani informed members that she had asked for this to be included on the agenda as she was worried about the sad state of the Town with rising rents and more and more changes in shops.

Cllr Allen agreed that footfall was down but felt that it was important to stress the positives including the quality of life.

Cllr Springett felt that the wants and needs of visitors to the Town were unknown and should be the subject of investigation by a short term contract intern employed by the Town Council or the BID. Cllr Barnes agreed that the BID had a professional team to look at this.

Cllr Pritchard informed the meeting that both local residents and many visitors could not afford to shop in Dartmouth.

Cllr Rendle agreed that Dartmouth had changed having been a vibrant Market town visited by many tourists. He believed that the Dartmouth Trust had caused part of the problem through changing to charging

best rents. The Town's appearance also needed improving; parking on the embankment should not be allowed and banners, posters and A-boards should be cut back. Town Council representatives needed to be influential on outside authorities and ensure that groups did not just fight their own corners but put the Town first.

Proposed: Cllr F J Hawke

Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That Standing Orders be suspended in order to allow the meeting to continue after 9.30 pm.

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent

Seconded: Cllr F J Hawke

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.

190. QUOTATIONS FOR THE GUILDHALL KITCHEN ELECTRICS.

Details of 3 quotations for the Guildhall kitchen electrics were laid round the table.

Proposed: Cllr R Springett

Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That the Town Council accept quotation 2 for £1,650.00 (no vat).

191. QUOTATIONS FOR ALTRO FLOORING AND WHITE WALLING OF THE GUILDHALL KITCHEN.

Details of 2 quotations for altro flooring and white walling in the Guildhall kitchen were laid round the table.

Proposed: Cllr R Springett
Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That the Town Council accept quotation 2 for £4,178.00 plus vat.

192. QUOTATIONS FOR PLUMBING WORK AT THE GUILDHALL.

The Clerk explained that despite seeking quotations for the plumbing work at the Guildhall, only one quotation had been received; details of this were laid round the table. Members felt that the detailed quotation represented good value for money.

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

Resolved: That the Town Council accept the plumbing quotation of £9,737.00 plus vat.