

DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting

3rd October 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 8 members of the public, and 1 member of the press.

80. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr Harris declared a personal interest in agenda item 20 - Quotations for damp proofing in the Council Chamber.

81. PRESENTATION BY STEVIE ROGERS, CHAIRMAN OF DARTMOUTH GREEN PARTNERSHIPS.

Stevie Rogers told the meeting that this was a very good time for her report to the Town Council as Dartmouth Green Partnerships would shortly be replacing the summer displays with the winter ones in the Town and would be hearing from RHS South West in Bloom concerning the awards that had been achieved this year ; this would be on Thursday 6th October in Taunton.

She explained that the Green Partnerships was facing three challenges in the next year.

- 1) Small shops and businesses that placed displays in the Town were being replaced by national chains that did not provide floral displays. Those small shops that remained could not afford to spend money on floral displays.
- 2) The number of volunteers available to help Dartmouth Green Partnerships was limited by the Town's population and the large number of other groups that required volunteers.
- 3) The reduction in Local Authority funding, particularly the reduction in manpower by the District Council, meant that Dartmouth Green Partnerships had more work to do to bring the green spaces in the Town up to standard. The lack of a lease from the District Council for the new greenhouse site had also put a hold on their fundraising for this project.

This year Dartmouth Green Partnerships had spent an extra 1500 hours on work which had been caused by the District Council cut-backs. The RHS had assessed volunteer gardening work at £13 per hour giving this work a value of nearly £20,000.

Stevie Rogers detailed the other costs incurred by Dartmouth Green Partnerships this year and urged the Town Council to be brave when

considering the asset transfers of Dartmouth's green spaces from South Hams District Council.

Their projects for the next year included:-

- Extending the number of small groups they worked with and which were to be entered into the "It's Your Neighbourhood Awards".
- All the baskets, pedestals and supports needed to be renovated and re-painted.
- Pursuing a lease for the new greenhouse site.
- The purchase of a new shed and additional tools.
- To ensure that the renovation of Coronation Park was completed and that Royal Avenue Gardens continued to be well maintained.
- To continue to lobby for the preservation of all green spaces in Dartmouth; once lost these would never be replaced.
- To buy and erect a small greenhouse as an interim measure.
- To continue involvement with the Townstal Community Partnership, Mayflower 400 and Neighbourhood Plan groups.
- To have a programme of information, sponsorship and signage boards throughout the Town.

Cllr Coles arrived at 7.25 pm

Stevie Rogers informed the meeting that with the current number of volunteers and the amount of work needed to be carried out, it would be too much to ask that Dartmouth be entered in the South West Regional awards in the National Competition in 2017.

Cllr Smith asked if Dartmouth Green Partnerships received any additional help in addition to that given from Cllr Hawkins' Locality Fund and the grant from the Town Council. Stevie Rogers confirmed that there had been no additional funds given and Cllr Smith suggested that South Hams District Council may wish to waive the bill for watering in light of all the work carried out by the volunteers. Cllr Rowe agreed to raise this with the relevant officers.

Cllr Harriss asked about the lease for the new greenhouse site and asked the District Councillors why there was a delay. The Clerk would contact the assets team at the District Council to chase this.

Cllr Springett suggested that if the volunteers were overstretched then Dartmouth Green Partnerships should prioritise their wish list and consider cutting back on their programme of work. Stevie Rogers commented that the group's plans were governed by the wishes of the Town.

The Mayor thanked Stevie Rogers for her presentation.

82. PRESENTATION BY DAVID JOBBINS MRTPI, ON A PROPOSED MIXED USE URBAN EXTENSION, ON LAND NORTH OF THE TOWNSTAL ROAD.

Mr Jobbins explained to members that he was a Chartered Town Planner and was attending the meeting to give the Town Council information on the proposals for a possible development on land north of the Townstal Road. South Hams District Council was currently reviewing the local plan and was asking landowners to put forward sites. Mr Jobbins was acting for the landowners of New Barn Farm and he showed the meeting the indicative layouts of the development which might include 120 houses, health care facilities and public open space. He also showed the meeting some possible street scene elevations based on existing buildings in Dartmouth. No planning application had been lodged with the District Council as yet and Mr Jobbins would be happy to attend future meetings as required.

Cllr Barnes raised concerns that Dartmouth needed more jobs and was worried that the proposed development would be taken up as second homes. Mr Jobbins explained that South Hams District Council had a duty to provide homes and to look at the housing allocation for their area.

Cllr Smith told the meeting that affordable homes should be a priority in developing the site and Cllr Gent agreed but raised the question of the definition of affordable. He suggested that social housing should also be considered. Mr Jobbins replied that he was sure that South

Hams District Council would push for as much social/affordable housing as possible.

Cllr Fyson commented that more development could help small businesses in the Town but second homes would not. He asked Mr Jobbins how this development would be integrated with the West Dart development on the other side of the Townstal Road, as this would be opposite the employment land. Mr Jobbins told the meeting that this would provide an opportunity to enhance the entrance to the Town and agreed that integration with the West Dart development was essential.

Cllr Springett stated that the road adjacent to both developments was dangerous and asked Mr Jobbins to pursue the inclusion of a footpath and cycle way from Norton to Sainsbury's and suggested that a footbridge would also be a good idea.

Cllr Rendle agreed with Cllr Barnes and told the meeting that all the statistics on the profile of Dartmouth showed that jobs were needed above all else.

Cllr de Galleani commented that it was refreshing to see so many trees included in a scheme and differing heights of buildings.

Cllr Pritchard stated that there was a desperate need for local people to get housing; wages did not match housing prices; Dartmouth did need more social housing.

The Mayor thanked Mr Jobbins for attending the meeting and his informative presentation.

83. REPORTS.

Police and District and County Councillors' Reports.

In the absence of Inspector Chris Tapley, a report on the crime figures for Dartmouth for the month of September 2016 was laid round the table.

Cllr Rowe's report had been laid round the table. Cllr Rowe told the meeting that she fully supported the work of Dartmouth Green Partnerships but suggested that there may be other ways that could be considered of providing the floral displays in the Town.

Cllr Bastone reported that the District Council Executive had met in September to discuss the Annual Treasury Management Report, their Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 – 2021/22, Write Off Reports, and the Consultation Response on Self Sufficient Local Government – 100% Business Rates Retention.

The task group set up to deal with outstanding enforcement cases was working extremely effectively and the number of outstanding cases had reduced dramatically.

The District Council had considered the following motion received in accordance with District Council Procedure Rule 10.1:

(a) By Cllrs Hopwood and Foss – from Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI).

“There are 49 female members of staff at South Hams District Council born between 1950 and 1969 which will be adversely affected by the government changes made to the Pensions Act. With this in mind and the wider South Hams female population the Council calls upon the Government to make fair transitional state pension arrangements for all women born on or after 6th April 1951, who have unfairly borne the burden of the increase to the State Pension Age (SPA) with lack of appropriate notification. Hundreds of thousands of women had significant pension changes imposed on them by the Pensions Acts of 1995 and 2011 with little/no/personal notification of the changes. Some women had only two years notice of a six-year increase to their state pension age.

Many women born in the 1950's are living in hardship. Retirement plans have been shattered with devastating consequences. Many of these women are already out of the labour market, caring for elderly relatives, providing childcare for grandchildren, or suffer discrimination in the workplace and so struggle to find employment. Women born in this decade are suffering financially. These women have worked hard, raised families and paid their tax and national insurance with the expectation that they would be financially secure when reaching 60. It is not the pension age itself that is in dispute - it

is widely accepted that women and men should retire at the same time. The issue is that the rise in the women's state pension age has been too rapid and has happened without sufficient notice being given to the women affected, leaving women with no time to make alternative arrangements.

The Council calls upon the Government to reconsider transitional arrangements for women born on or after 6th April 1951, so that women do not live in hardship due to pension changes they were not told about until it was too late to make alternative arrangements.”

Cllr Bastone told the meeting that a South Hams Town and Parish Update Briefing for Parish Clerks had taken place that morning and would also be held on 6th October 2016.

Neil Parish MP, Chair of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Select Committee in Parliament was coming to speak at a panel discussion on the priorities for the farming industry during the Brexit negotiations and beyond, on Thursday 27th October 2016 at 7.30 pm at Dartington Hall; everyone was welcome to attend.

Cllr Bastone commended the Classic Channel Regatta event to the Town Council as he believed that this was very important to the port of Dartmouth; he hoped that members would support this taking place in Dartmouth Market in July 2017.

Cllr Fyson asked the District Councillors if they were content with the way a recent planning case on Crowthers Hill had been handled, as he felt the proper procedures had not been applied. This had been the third attempt to get planning permission at this site.

Cllr Bastone replied that the parking had been removed from the most recent application and there were now no planning reasons on which to refuse permission.

Cllr Barnes raised concerns over the area surrounding the café on Coronation Park where extra benches had now been added on the grass.

Cllr Bastone replied that the land had been allocated to the café.

Cllr Barnes also questioned the current business uses taking place in the boat park on Coronation Park, as kayaks were being hired from

this point and those carrying the kayaks across the road on the blind bend could cause an accident.

Cllr Bastone confirmed that the users had a licence to operate a kayak hire business from the boat park.

Cllr Gent told the District Councillors that the Town Council had not received any replies to letters sent to the planning department particularly concerning enforcement issues.

Cllr Bastone offered to broker a meeting between the Head of Planning and Cllrs Gent, Fyson and the Clerk; a list of the unanswered questions would be compiled for this meeting.

Cllr de Galleani asked if the gate on the children's play area in Coronation Park could be turned round so that it had to be pushed to enter the play area, not push to go out as at present; to prevent children escaping.

Cllr Bastone replied that he would raise this with the appropriate officers.

84. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR.

Mr Mitchell asked the Mayor if the main road into Dartmouth would be widened to allow for the extra traffic caused by the new developments on the main road; would the developers pay to straighten the road.

The Mayor replied that he would be meeting with County Councillor Hawkins the next day and would bring this to his attention.

Mr Mitchell asked the Mayor for details of the budget for the modifications to the Guildhall and for sight of the business plan. The Mayor replied that £350,000 had been budgeted for the refurbishment works. It was planned that the refurbished building would be used more therefore reducing the costs to the Town Council.

Mr French asked the Mayor if anything could be done about vehicles that had been abandoned in the Town.

Through the Mayor the Clerk replied that vehicles could be checked to see if they had current vehicle tax and insurance and if not then

could be reported to the District Council who would take steps to remove abandoned vehicles.

85. URGENT BUSINESS.

There was one item of urgent business which would be taken at the end of the meeting.

86. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES.

Members reviewed the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 5th September 2016.

Amendment – Minute 70, page 70

Resolved: That the Town Council unanimously supports the devolution of assets from South Hams District Council in principle.

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent

Seconded: Cllr R Springett

Resolved: That the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 5th September 2016, as amended, be confirmed and signed as a true record.

87. CORRESPONDENCE.

- a) Email notification of the variation of the license for the Seahorse Restaurant had been received from South Hams District Council and circulated to members. This would be considered by the next meeting of the Planning Committee.
- b) The stakeholder briefings from the South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group were being received and circulated to members.
- c) Details of the new Dog Control Orders had been received from South Hams District Council. Comments were required by 20th October 2016 and could be made through the offices or through the District Council website.

88. REPORTS.

a) Personnel Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 7th September 2016 were reviewed.

Proposed: Cllr L M Barnes
Seconded: Cllr T de Galleani

Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 7th September 2016, be received, approved and adopted.

b) Corporate Property Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Corporate Property Committee held on 14th September 2016 were reviewed.

Proposed: Cllr R Springett
Seconded: Cllr G B F Coles

Resolved: That the Report and Recommendations of the meeting of the Corporate Property Committee held on 14th September 2016, be received, approved and adopted.

c) General Purposes Committee

The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 15th September 2016 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 15th September 2016, be received, approved and adopted.

- d) Planning Committee
The Report and Recommendations of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on 21st September 2016 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 21st September 2016, be received, approved and adopted.

89. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

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

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent
Seconded: Cllr P F Allen

Resolved: That the Clerk's actions in paying accounts totaling £39,230.58 for the month of September 2016 under Standing Order No. 56 (b) be endorsed.

90. REPORTS.

Representatives on Public Bodies and Associations.

Cllr Barnes reported that he and Cllr Coles had met with representatives of the Market Traders and Tenants on 27th September 2016. Many concerns had been raised and Cllr Barnes had asked the Chairman of Corporate Property to call an additional meeting just to look at issues in the Market; this was set for Monday 17th October 2016.

The main concerns had been with the Classic Channel Regatta Supper in the Market in July 2017; the organisers had given assurances that all the issues raised would be addressed and the Town Council was pleased to support this event taking place.

91. URGENT ITEM – DIRECTORSHIPS OF THE T.I.C.

The Mayor told members that the Town Council should appoint Directors of the T.I.C. as soon as possible to ensure continuity for the staff and subscribers. Cllr Gent offered to be a Director and told the meeting that Cllr Hawke, though absent, was believed to be interested in becoming a Director.

92. DEVOLUTION OF SERVICES FROM SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL.

The Mayor told members that a meeting had been arranged with the Leader of South Hams District Council on Friday 7th October 2016 at Follaton House to discuss the possible transfer of assets. Councillors would meet prior to this meeting to discuss the agreement with the District Council with the view of working to get the best service for Council tax payers.

93. INSTITUTION OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS' ENGINEERING HERITAGE AWARD TO THE NEWCOMEN ENGINE, 21ST OCTOBER 2016.

A small reception was planned to celebrate the award of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers' Engineering Heritage award to the Newcomen Engine on Friday 21st October 2016. This would be held at the T.I.C. building at 3.00 pm.

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent
Seconded: Cllr R Springett

Resolved: That a small reception be held to celebrate the Mechanical Engineers' Engineering Heritage award to the Newcomen Engine.

94. SKIP DAY MONDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2016.

The Clerk told the meeting that a second skip day for members of the public to dispose of large items of household rubbish was planned for Monday 10th October 2016 from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm. Skips would be placed at the Townstal Community Hall and at Dartmouth Market. Volunteers from the Community Hall and Townstal Community Partnership would man the skip at Townstal and Cllrs Allen, de Galleani and Gent would man the skip at Dartmouth Market.

95. PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP.

The Clerk told the meeting that there was still a vacancy on the Planning Committee. Cllr Rendle volunteered to join the Planning Committee.

Proposed: Cllr R Springett

Seconded: Cllr D M Gent

Resolved: That Cllr R F Rendle join the Planning Committee.

96. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR.

Cllr Springett asked the Mayor if all Councillors could attend the official opening and blessing of the Southford Road Schoolrooms on 10th October 2016. The Mayor replied that while he was unable to attend due to other commitments all Councillors could attend.

Cllr Smith asked the Mayor if members would consider putting an item on the agenda for the November Full Council meeting to discuss the proposed closure of Dartmouth Hospital as he felt the Town Council should take the lead on this subject. Members felt that this was too important a subject to be included with other items and a separate Full Council meeting just for this matter would be called with the representative from the Torbay and South Devon CCG invited to attend.

Proposed: Cllr D M Gent
Seconded: Cllr I A Pritchard

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.

97. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN A VACANT MARKET UNIT.

The Clerk explained that the proposed tenant chosen at Full Council on 5th September 2016 for unit 5 (formerly Home Fabrics) had decided not to now take up the offer of a unit. Members felt that it was important that any new business complement the existing shops in the Market.

Proposed: Cllr G B F Coles
Seconded: Cllr L M Barnes

Resolved: That the Town Council re-advertise the vacant unit in Dartmouth Market.

98. QUOTATIONS FOR DAMP PROOFING IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Details of 3 quotations for damp proofing in the Council Chamber were laid round the table.

Proposed: Cllr R F Rendle
Seconded: Cllr R Springett

Resolved: That quotation 3 for £4,330.00 including vat for damp proofing in the Council Chamber be accepted.