

DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL HELD VIRTUALLY ON
MONDAY 1st JUNE 2020

PRESENT: There were 13 Councillors present at the meeting.
Cllr: G Webb (Mayor); S Hibbert (Deputy Mayor)
Cllrs: P Allen; M Baillie; N Bodinnar; C Campos; D Case; A Edsall; G Evans; R Lyon; D Wells; L Williams; G Yardy.

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: C Pritchard-Williams; Properties Administrator: K Brown; Administrator: R Searle; Responsible Financial Officer: A McGrigor; County Cllr J Hawkins; District Cllrs H Baston; R Rowe; Dartmouth Chronicle: G Ware; and 6 members of the public.

PART I - Open to the Public

19. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reminded both Councillors and the public that this meeting was being audibly recorded.

Members of the public participating in the meeting (e.g. asking questions) should be aware that they were being recorded or reported on and by entering the virtual meeting room, they were consenting to being recorded.

The Mayor then explained that there will be two Full Council meetings a month, so that business that would go through a Committee could be discussed, that any business arising that needs more urgent attention can be discussed without waiting a full month and so that the agendas for the meeting are shorter meaning matters can be discussed more thoroughly.

District and County Cllrs may attend the second meeting as members of the public unless their presence is specifically required as representatives of SHDC or DCC.

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs T de Galleani, M Webber and D Shepherd.

Resolved: that the Council approve these apologies.

Majority vote carried

Prayers were read out by Father Will Hazelwood and the Mayor thanked him.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr G Webb declared an interest in item 29

Cllr S Hibbert declared an interest in items 31 & 32

22. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were none.

23. TO NOTE THE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM:

- a. County & District Councillor - Cllr Hawkins (Appendix A)
- b. District Councillor - Cllr Rowe (Appendix B)
- c. District Councillor - Cllr Bastone (Appendix C)

Cllr J Hawkins left the meeting at 19:17

24. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 4TH MAY 2020

Page 3 - Cllr D Case asked to clarify information regarding Manor Gardens and the suggestion that it be registered as an asset of community value and asked for confirmation that this was being done.

There was a short discussion and it was decided that registering Manor Gardens as an asset of community value was being looked at and would be investigated further once the working group can meet up after COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.

Proposed: Cllr G Webb

Seconded: Cllr D Wells

Resolved: to approve the minutes from the Full Council meeting on 4th May 2020.

Majority vote carried.

25. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE REGATTA COMMITTEE REGARDING THE CANCELLED EVENT DUE TO COVID-19 AND THEIR PREVIOUSLY AWARDED GRANT

The Chairman of the Regatta, Ed Botterill read the following statement.

'The Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta committee are incredibly sad to announce that this year's event is cancelled. We know that this will be a blow for all who love our town and the event as much as we all do but is absolutely the right thing to do in these unprecedented times.

Having read the UK Government COVID-19 Recovery Strategy and noting the Phases, Steps, and how close the proposed dates that it outlines are to our wonderful event in August 2020, it is with a heavy heart that the annual entertainment and cherished events associated with the Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta will not be taking place in 2020 and are cancelled. So please do not plan to attend over the dates that would have been our Royal Regatta, namely the 22-29 August 2020.

In line with the UK Government's COVID-19 Recovery Strategy, we hope to perhaps be able to deliver some of the Local Rowing and Sailing programme at some point much later in the year - but only if the phased and stepped recovery and all advice allows.

It has been a heart-wrenching decision to cancel our Regatta for 2020, but we can't wait to work with all of our partners, sponsors and suppliers and see all of our visitors and supporters in 2021, when we will be back bigger and better! In the meantime, we will be turning our attention to how we can support our local community at this difficult time.

We hope everyone who follows us, works with us and visits us are staying safe and well, and send our thanks to all key workers who are keeping us all going during this time.

Regatta week will commence in 2021 from Saturday 21 August, with our official opening ceremony on Wednesday 25 August 2021.'

Ed Botterill added that the Regatta committee were very keen and well prepared to hold some smaller local events during Regatta week if restrictions allow. The Regatta committee have requested that the standing licences with SHDC for the North and South Embankment remain in place. The Regatta committee then asked for the Regatta bookings for The Royal Avenue Gardens and Coronation Park to remain in place to allow them to put some events on at short notice within the existing Government guidelines and that the grant from the council that covers the cost of these spaces to remain in place for Summer 2020.

Cllr C Campos asked if item 13 on the agenda would affect Regattas booking of The Royal Avenue Gardens in any way.

Ed Botterill stated that the Regatta booking was currently still in place and that they would be happy to work with DTC on this matter.

Cllr A Edsall suggested that this is not a decision that could be reached tonight and that this issue should be taken forward to two weeks' time for an urgent discussion.

The Administrator stated that Regattas bookings were still in place and they have not been cancelled.

26. TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)

- a. Annual Governance Statement
- b. Accounting Statement

Cllr Campos said that the digital version was very small and hard to read, and it was agreed that the Finance Officer would print it out and post it to both Cllr Campos and Cllr Williams. Cllr Case asked about the asset register and the RFO explained that we now had new software and the assets would be added to this software by herself and the Properties Manager.

Cllr Evans gave thanks to the RFO and the other members of staff for all the work that had gone into this.

Cllr Allen spoke about how we needed a maintenance budget for repairs and maintenance and the RFO said that it was split up into each cost centre under maintenance and repairs.

Proposed: Cllr G Webb

Seconded: Cllr S Hibbert

Resolved: To approve the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statement on the basis that the minor things are carried out as soon as possible.

Majority vote carried.

Cllr C Campos and Cllr L Williams abstained

27. TO APPROVE THE INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT

Proposed: Cllr G Webb

Seconded: Cllr G Evens

Resolved: To approve the Internal Auditors Report

Majority vote carried.

28. TO APPROVE THE REGULAR DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS

Cllr D Case asked about the price for the electricity at the Depot and why it was so expensive.

The RFO replied that this figure was high as DTC had to take out a new contract for one year with eon as they were the only company who would connect a new supply. This has been changed to a new provider on June 1st, 2020 and therefore we do not know what the current bill will be. The RFO also pointed out that the electricity was used to power all the equipment in the depot including the hired chipper and charging of all batteries as well as heating and lighting.

Proposed: Cllr C Campos

Seconded: Cllr D Wells

Resolved: To approve the regular Direct Debit payments

Majority vote carried.

29. TO CONSIDER THE GRANT APPLICATION FROM COMMUNITY CHEST FOR £5,000

The Mayor left the meeting due to a declaration of interest in this item.

Deputy Mayor Cllr S Hibbert chaired the meeting for this item.

Cllr G Evans stated that the cost of running Community Chest is over £100 per day. Community Chest have made over 7,000 food parcels, have delivered prescriptions and shopping and counselled residents at this time. The grant will last for 50 days at current running capacity. Cllr G Evans suggested that the council go ahead and grant the funding.

Cllr R Lyon said that he thought Community Chest was a very laudable organisation, but that they did not provide copies of accounts and only provided bank statements and asked to be guided by the RFO, the RFO stated that there was only a one-page breakdown of the accounts and agreed that one figure for income, donations and fundraising did not give a true accurate recording of the money they had received.

Cllr M Ballie stated that she did not think that the accounts were up to any sort of scrutiny as they were just a list of figures and did not have any details about what the figures were. Cllr M Ballie pointed out that if the council were going to scrutinise people as per DTC's Grant Guidelines, as DTC said they would do, the accounts need to be better presented as a set of accounts and not just a list.

Cllr L Williams added that these services might not be available if the grant is not awarded but that a better set of figures was needed.

Cllr C Campos stated that she was perturbed by the accounts and the fact it is not clear how much money is in the Community Chest account. Bank statements have only been submitted up to the end of April and Cllr C Campos would like to know what figure is in the accounts today as otherwise the council is flying blind. Cllr C Campos asked for proper accounts and exactly how much money is in the Community Chest account at the present time. With this information the council could decide on the 15th of June regarding the grant.

Cllr A Edsall agreed with Cllr C Campos and was happy for the council to seek more of the accounts, statements, and current bank balance. Cllr A Edsall also voiced concerns over the size of the grant that was to be given, as there were a lot of potential demands on the council at this time. Cllr A Edsall pointed out that it would be helpful to know the exact amount of money that the council have to give to COVID-19 grants and that once the council has the full information they can make a decision in two weeks' time.

Cllr D Case asked about the monthly payments that DTC have been paying for a storage unit for Community Chest from June last year at a cost of around £240 a month and asked if this has now stopped. The RFO stated that this had been paid from May 2019 through to April 2020.

Cllr P Allen stated that the grant was about COVID-19, but that COVID-19 was not just about food and wanted to ask Community Chest exactly what was happening on the frontline as some of his electorate needed help setting up zoom calls with family and not just food parcels or meals, which are also provided by other agencies in Dartmouth.

Cllr M Baillie asked if it was different rules for COVID-19 grants and would like to know the amount of donations and other grants that Community Chest have received.

Cllr G Evans stated that current stats of people who have been helped by Community Chest with other things such as zoom call were currently with Exeter University being collated and that the information would be available soon. Cllr G Evans also pointed out that some of the donations were to be anonymous as they were under the threshold to be reported. He also stated that the accounts listed with the charities commission were available, but if the council wanted to ask for more information they could at this stage.

Cllr A Edsall proposed that the council request more information from Community Chest and that the grant application is discussed again at the next council meeting in two weeks' time.

Proposed: Cllr G Evans

Seconded: Cllr L Williams

Resolved: That Council approve this grant for £5,000 to Community Chest

Majority vote was against this proposal.

Proposed: Cllr A Edsall

Seconded: Cllr C Campos

Resolved: To ask Community Chest for more information regarding their accounts, as per the Grant Awarding Policy and to bring this back to the next meeting on 15th June 2020.

Majority vote carried.

Cllr L Williams wanted it noted that she found this response disappointing.

The Mayor returned to the meeting.

30. TO CONSIDER SUPPORTING:

a. SHDC in their relaxation of trading restrictions on South Embankment & Bayard's Cove

Cllr C Campos talked about the need for DTC to support SHDC in this matter as this would support the businesses in Dartmouth that have been struggling due to COVID-19 (Appendix D)

There was a discussion about businesses that are not situated on The Embankment and the logistics of how this plan could be actioned.

Cllr C Campos pointed out that while DTC may have some input into the decision, it was ultimately SHDC decision as it is their land.

Cllr A Edsall read out a letter from a Dartmouth Town Council tenant in relation to offering outside seating areas to other tenants.

There was a further discussion about the above letter. Cllrs felt that they must try and help other businesses at this time. It was also mentioned that the council do not know the demand for the outside space at this time and that some safety measures must be put in place if the plan is not working for the town. It was also pointed out that there is not a written proposal for Bayard's Cove, but that it has been included in case a business does.

Proposed: Cllr C Campos

Seconded: Cllr S Hibbert

Resolved: To resolve to support SHDC in their relaxation of trading restrictions on South Embankment & Bayard's Cove

Majority vote carried

b. DCC in their relaxation of parking restrictions along the west length of The Quay (outside Royal Castle Hotel)

Cllr C Campos spoke about DCC's idea to stop the parking on the Royal Castle Hotel side of the quay so that business along that stretch of road have space for customers to queue.

There was a discussion about where the spaces would be taken from and how this idea could possibly set a precedent for taking much needed parking away from the centre of town.

Proposed: Cllr R Lyon

Seconded: Cllr A Edsall

Resolved: To resolve not to support DCC in their relaxation of parking restrictions along the west length of The Quay (outside Royal Castle Hotel)

Majority vote carried

Cllr D Case abstained

There was a comment from a member of the public who thanked the Council for their support along the South Embankment, he also asked what would happen next, and Cllr C Campos said it would be up to Cllr Jonathan Hawkins to drive this forward within SHDC.

31. TO CONSIDER ALLOWING DARTMOUTH BUSINESSES TO USE DARTMOUTH OWNED EXTERNAL ASSETS TO HELP WITH TRADING (CC)

Deputy Mayor Cllr S Hibbert left the meeting due to a declaration of interest.

Cllr C Campos read her statement that had been previously circulated (Appendix E).

There was a discussion about limiting the number of tables and chairs that would be made available, the cost of using the DTC spaces and how businesses would be insured when using the space.

Cllrs felt that it would be wrong to put food businesses into Coronation Park, due to the business that is already in there and the fact that it is an important green space for the people of Dartmouth.

Proposed: Cllr C Campos

Seconded: Cllr D Case

Resolved: To temporarily allow Dartmouth businesses to use DTC owned external assets to help with trading.

Majority vote carried

32. TO CONSIDER APPROVING A PROPOSAL TO WRITE TO SHDC, DCC & ANTHONY MANGNALL REQUESTING GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR DTC'S TENANT'S IN LIEU OF POSSIBLE RENT REDUCTIONS (AE)

Cllr A Edsall spoke about the letter he had drafted to send to the above (Appendix F).

He then added that he has spoken to four tenants who have asked for a rent reduction over the COVID-19 period as they have been told that some private landlords have given a rent reduction to commercial tenants.

There was a discussion about businesses that have received Government grants to pay for their rent and the fact that DTC have both commercial and residential tenants.

It was also added that there needed to be clarification between rent holiday or no rent.

Proposed: Cllr A Edsall

Seconded: Cllr L Williams

Resolved: To write to SHDC, DCC & Anthony Mangnall requesting grant assistance for DTC's tenant's in lieu of possible rent reductions

Majority vote carried

Cllr S Hibbert re-joined the meeting

33. TO CONSIDER THE FUTURE OF DARTMOUTH'S REMAINING PHONE BOXES (DC)

Cllr D Case spoke about the phone box at Dead Man's Cross and how if the council adopt it, it will fill a gap in the defibrillator map of Dartmouth.

There was a discussion about the cost of fixing the phone box, the cost to the council to own the phone box and the defibrillator, insurance costs and what type of defibrillator would go into the phone box.

Proposed: Cllr D Case

Seconded: Cllr L Williams

Resolved: To adopt the phone box at Dead Man's Corner

Majority vote carried

34. TO CONSIDER THE CREATION OF A 2020 DARTMOUTH PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION (DC)

Cllr D Case proposed that DTC create a photography competition, that could be annual if it is well received.

There was a discussion about the different categories that would be in the competition, the terms and conditions of the competition and the possibility of a prize for the winners.

Cllrs also discussed using the photos to make a calendar to promote Dartmouth.

Proposed: Cllr D Case

Seconded: Cllr D Wells

Resolved: To create a 2020 Dartmouth photography competition

Majority vote carried

35. TO NOTE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING VIRTUAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS (with delegated authority):

Planning Committee virtual meeting on Tuesday 19th May 2020

Proposed: Cllr G Evans

Seconded: Cllr C Campos

Resolved: To approve the minutes as a true record

Majority vote carried

36. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM AND PUT QUESTIONS TO REPRESENTATIVES ON PUBLIC BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

There were none.

37. ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON A FUTURE AGENDA

Cllr G Webb – Turning the Community Orchard into a Village Green space.

Cllr D Case – said that she had three items to be carried over from tonight, adoption of phone boxes, additional defibrillators, and the DTC lottery.

Cllr C Campos - To consider contributing to a promotional and marketing fund to market Dartmouth as a destination

Cllr S Hibbert – Outdoor gym equipment costs

38. SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS FOR 30 MINUTES

Proposed: Cllr S Hibbert

Seconded: Cllr G Webb

Resolved: To suspend standing orders for 30 minutes

Majority vote carried

39. CONFIDENTIAL

Resolved: Cllr Webb proposed 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.

Majority vote carried

PART 2 – Confidential

40. TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL FROM AN OUTSIDE COMPANY TO INSTALL, MANAGE AND OPERATE A NEW PARKING METER AT THE CASTLE CAR PARK (AE)

Cllr A Edsall presented the proposal from the company and including the financial implications that this proposal could bring in.

Cllrs asked questions regarding which company would be handling the car park, as there are some companies who raise fine prices and chase people who have not paid.

Cllr A Edsall said he would go back to the company and ask them for their escalation process, how they chase people to pay the fines and how they collect the fines.

It was decided to bring this back to the next meeting when additional information had been sought.

41. TO DISCUSS ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES (*CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council*).

There were no items

The meeting finished at 21:50

Appendix A – Report from County & District Councillor - Cllr Hawkins

South Hams have been given a number of new grants to help and support Businesses over the past few weeks from Central Government It has been a constant change of rules regulations that have been passed down to all Councils including Town and Parishes Just when you think you are on top of them they change Discretionary Grants came into place last Tuesday South Hams have been passed down £2.3 million Aimed Mainly at those businesses that have not had help previously, we in the South Hams have worked with all other Districts in Devon on a County wise approach Marine industries have been included in this scheme as locally these are obviously important to areas like ours and where ruled out of previous schemes as most have limited or no on land facilities I have been working closely with a number of businesses to offer help

Government have given District £78,000 to help redesign streets to allow temporary changes to pavements and streets in town Centres Devon County has asked Town Councils to come forward with schemes they support, this is important Consideration to removal temporarily of on street parking need to have Town Council and business support

We have been working with Businesses along the Embankment so see if a Co ordinated approach can be made to allow outside seating In the past this has been refused on Health and Safety with concerns of people being attracted to cross the road If we can get support for this, this would be for this year, and permanent provision would have to be considered on how this works this year If done properly and tastefully it could be a plus to the Embankment But we must remember this is an area for relaxation and promenading not just eating or drinking

Bayard's Cove

The new Mayflower 400 benches are now all installed and look a great deal better than the old tired wooden ones

Again thanks to Mayflower 400 in helping this project

Recovery plan

As you know there has now been 3 meetings to discuss how we can all work together to promote Dartmouth as we come out of lock Down Jo Butler from Visit South West has come forward with a campaign to raise awareness that Dartmouth is looking forward to welcoming visitors back as and when we can I would like to mention Cathy and Adam for all their work in this I have offered a grant from my County Fund to help pay for this I would urge you as the Town Council to help financially and re direct some of the money allocated to Special Events that sadly have been cancelled to this campaign The season if and when we are allowed to welcome visitors back will be short, so we need to promote the off season to extend guests to our town This will be essential to save many of our businesses

Schools

As you will be aware schools and Academies have now re opened as from today

Stoke Fleming path

There has been a request to open a path between The Academy to join up the path to Stoke Fleming This has been a long running aspiration for a very long time, I approached Nick Wood from DALAG, but sadly again the land owners are not supportive This as we know is a very busy road for pedestrians

Defibulators

Diana has put a very well researched project to buy 4 more to cover all areas of Dartmouth I with Rose and Hilary are happy to offer £500 each total of £1500 towards this project

Appendix B – Report from District Councillor - Cllr Rowe

S.H.D.C.REPORT FOR MAY 2020 FROM ROSEMARY ROWE.

So what can I say, we are in unprecedented times. No one could have foreseen the situation we find ourselves in. Nothing much Council wise has changed since April when I reported that we had held two Full Council Meetings via Skype.

We, the councillors keep in contact frequently via Skype, emails, tele.calls etc. With officers and members of council as well as our M.P.s for help and to exchange information and ideas. It is not a bit like being at Follaton House and having personal contact which we were so used to. However, it will be useful when we get back to some kind of normality to use some of what we have been doing since 13th March to improve our services. The offices have been closed and home working is now the norm. And it keeps us pretty busy.

There have been various grants coming out from Central Government which The Council have been administrating and continue to do so. The latest one is entitled Discretionary Business Grant which is aimed at small businesses who have as yet, not been able to access any grant funding to date. This will go live on the S.H.D.C Website on May 26th and all the application details will be on there. A list of business categories suggested includes tourism (including small B. &B. `s), Food & Drink & Hospitality supply chain & The Marine sector. If anyone knows of a small business which as yet a been unable to access any financial assistance, please tell them about this latest grant available.

Car parks which had been closed in tourist areas have now reopened and car parking charging has recommenced. But to date no public toilets have been reopened because of the risk factor.

The recycling centres run by Devon County Council have also reopened.

As you can imagine The Councils finances are pretty depleted as are those of the businesses and our residents particularly with the job situation. The Council will be working on recovery plans with town centres, tourism and businesses to do whatever we can to get up and running again.

At this point I would like to thank The Parishes for all their hard work in working with established groups and starting new ones as well. To look after all those who need support and will continue to do so for a long time. To all our residents who help to look after each other through these hard times. Sadly the position we are in at present is pretty bleak .We will get through it, we must stay positive.

Take care and stay safe.

Rosemary.

Appendix C - District Councillor - Cllr Bastone (Appendix C)

May Activity Sheet

- May. 1. Weekly joint Leaders/Deputy Leaders/Chief Exec/Deputy Chief Exec Skype Briefing.
Weekly Assets Skype briefing.
4. Assets Skype follow up.
Dartmouth Town Council meeting by Zoom.
6. Weekly joint Leaders/Deputy Leaders/Chief Exec/Deputy Chief Exec Skype Briefing.
7. District Councils Network executive Covid recovery call by Zoom.
Executive briefing by Skype.
12. Exceptional Informal Executive Briefing by Skype.
13. Assets catch-up by Skype.
Weekly Leader/Deputy Leader/Chief Exec/Deputy Chief Exec Skype Briefing.
Kingswear Parish Council by Zoom.
14. Exec and SLT fortnightly catch-up by Skype.
Executive informal weekly meeting by Skype.
15. Weekly joint Leaders/Deputy Leaders/Chief Exec/Deputy Chief Exec Skype Briefing.
18. Dartmouth Recovery Group meeting by Zoom.
20. Weekly Leader/Deputy Leader/Chief Exec/Deputy Chief Exec Skype Briefing.
Discretionary Rates Panel meeting by Skype.
Fortnightly Finance briefing by Skype.
21. Informal Council by Skype:
Financial Landscape: National, Regional and South Hams.
Discretionary Grant Fund Draft Policy.
Fusion update.
22. Weekly joint Leaders/Deputy Leaders/Chief Exec/Deputy Chief Exec Skype

Briefing.

25. Dartmouth Recovery Group meeting by Zoom.
26. Executive chat Skype meeting.
27. Assets catch-up by Skype.
Weekly Leader/Deputy Leader/Chief Exec/Deputy Chief Exec Skype Briefing.
28. Exec and SLT fortnightly catch-up by Skype.
Executive informal weekly meeting by Skype.
29. Weekly joint Leaders/Deputy Leaders/Chief Exec/Deputy Chief Exec Skype Briefing.

Appendix D - The case for temporarily relaxing outside trading restrictions in Dartmouth South Embankment and Bayard's Cove

During the first meeting of the Dartmouth Recovery Plan Forum, it became abundantly clear that if our cafés, restaurants and pubs have to rely on their much reduced indoor capacity, due to social distancing measures, it will not be viable for them to open. The only way to mitigate this issue is to allow them to trade outside in the form of extra tables and chairs. South Hams District Council own South Embankment and Bayard's Cove; therefore, it is ultimately their decision. However, permission is far more likely to be granted if DTC has already indicated that the Town Council has no issue with the relaxation of restrictions in principle. In fact, traders along the South Embankment and Bayard's Cove have already come together to create a unified seating plan. This will be put before SHDC, who will have to consider Health and Safety issues, in addition to COVID-19 restrictions. I hope DTC will raise no objections if these plans match both sets of criteria. This is only a temporary measure until the end of 2020.

Appendix E - The case for temporarily relaxing outside trading restrictions in Dartmouth Coronation Park, Market Square and Royal Avenue Gardens

As these assets are owned by DTC, it is solely this Council's decision whether the restrictions on outside trading are relaxed in these areas. I would recommend that traders approach the Council with their proposals for utilising these three outdoor areas either individually or preferably as a group. As above, all requests would be on a case by case basis and would need meet Government COVID-19 measures as well as more generic Health and Safety standards. Businesses would provide their own outside furniture. The relaxation of restrictions would end on 31/12/20. As an aside Cllr Hawkins has offered DTC £1,000 from his County Budget to replace the aged Tea Hut tables and chairs. Properties Manager is researching our options.

Appendix F - Draft Letter to SHDC, DCC & Anthony Mangnall

Regarding the need for grant funding for Dartmouth Town Council Tenants to assist them with the payment of their Rents.

To Whom it May Concern

We are writing to you to request assistance over an anomaly that has arisen regarding Town and Parish Councils ability to assist their tenants with their rents during the COVID19 Crisis. Rent is often the biggest single monthly outgoing for any small tourism business. This burden now, is slowly dragging many businesses under, whilst they are closed or trading with a minimal income. With an uncertain and truncated tourism season ahead, many are telling us that they genuinely fear that they will not survive the long Winter off-season ahead. This is all despite most of them receiving their Government Business Grants many weeks ago.

As this crisis for businesses continues to grow, it has become evident that many private landlords in Dartmouth have negotiated reductions in the rents paid by their tenants, in order to assist them. However, there is a problem for Town and Parish councils here. As public bodies, they are unable to strike private and confidential deals with individual tenants. Set against this, neither can they financially afford to offer each and every tenant a meaningful rent reduction. The result is that council tenants are inadvertently disadvantaged over those with private landlords.

As a result of this, we would like to request that grant funding is made available, either through existing or new sources, for town and parish councils such as ours to use to alleviate the current rental burdens of our tenants. We understand that certain grants are available for Town and Parish Councils to offset any financial losses, but it remains unclear as to how these funds are currently accessed or whether these could be used to assist our tenants at this time.

I hope you can see the unfairness of the situation in which our tenants find themselves and that you can assist us in trying to remedy this situation.