

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES  
COMMITTEE HELD VIRTUALLY ON MONDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> MARCH 2021**

**PRESENT:**

There were 8 Councillors present:

Cllrs: C Campos; A Edsall; G Evans (Chair); Sally Hibbert (Deputy Mayor); D Shepherd; Cllr G Webb (Mayor); D Wells (Vice Chair); G Yardy

**ATTENDANCE:**

Town Clerk: C Pritchard-Williams; RFO: Ali McGrigor; Administrator: R Searle;

Two representatives for the Dartmouth Visitor Centre: Karen Perrow & District Councillor Hilary Bastone and one member of the public.

(Richard Rendle)

**PART 1 - Open to the Public**

**8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr N Bodinnar

**9. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Yardy declared an interest in item 20 as a director of the Dartmouth Visitor Centre, which is an unpaid role

**10. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST VIRTUAL FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING ON MONDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021, AS A TRUE RECORD**

**Proposed:** Cllr G Evans

**Seconded:** Cllr G Yardy

**Resolved:** To approve the minutes of the virtual Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021, as a true record

**Majority vote carried**

**11. TO CONSIDER ADOPTING THE NEW TREASURY AND INVESTMENT POLICY (RFO)**

The RFO explained that this had been introduced into the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide. It was something that the Council needed to have in place and that this would need to be reviewed on an annual basis.

*Cllr Edsall arrived at 19.03*

**Proposed:** Cllr D Wells

**Seconded:** Cllr C Campos

**Resolved:** To approve the new Treasury and Investment Policy

**Majority vote carried**

**12. TO CONSIDER APPROVING THE NEW RESERVES POLICY (RFO)**

The RFO again explained that this had been introduced into the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide and was something that the Council needed to have in place. This would need to be reviewed on an annual basis.

The RFO also said that it explained the difference between general reserves and the earmarked reserves and how they were accounted for.

**Proposed:** Cllr S Hibbert

**Seconded:** Cllr D Wells

**Resolved:** To approve the new Reserves Policy

**Majority vote carried**

**13. TO CONSIDER EXTENDING THE COUNCIL SPONSORSHIP SCHEME TO DARTMOUTH GREEN PARTNERSHIPS (Cllr Webb)**

Cllr G Webb said that Dartmouth Green Partnerships (DGP) were an asset to the town and do amazing work.

In the past they have occasionally requested a grant for up to £5,000. Recently the Town Council had introduced a sponsorship scheme and he would like to add DGP into this.

Cllr C Campos agreed that DGP did a wonderful job and that she was happy with this sponsorship. However, she would like anyone receiving sponsorship from the Town Council to acknowledge it in any literature they produced.

Cllr A Edsall added that it was important to remember that these sponsorships were the heavyweights who require the Town Council support and this was different from other grants which were considered on a case by case basis.

Cllr Evans said that whilst he was happy to do this, he would like to look through the list of grants that the Town Council had given out on a regular basis in the past, to see if there were any other charities or organisations, who could be eligible for sponsorship.

The RFO said she would forward a list of grants given out over the last four years.

**Proposed:** Cllr G Webb

**Seconded:** Cllr A Edsall

**Resolved:** To extend the councils sponsorship scheme to Dartmouth Green Partnerships up to £5,000 for the financial year 2021-2022

**Majority vote carried**

**14. GRANTS**

**a) Dartmouth Visitor Centre – £5,000**

Cllr G Yardy requested that this be moved to the confidential section. Cllr G Evans agreed and said he would allow the representatives to remain in the meeting for this discussion and then leave before the vote.

**b) Youth Mental Health Foundation - £177 or £271**

Cllr C Campos said she would like to support this for the full amount of £271  
Cllr G Yardy agreed this was a worthy cause.

**Proposal:** Cllr C Cathy

**Seconded:** Cllr G Yardy

**Resolved:** To award £271 to Youth Mental Health Foundation from the current financial year's grant budget.

**Majority vote carried**

**15. TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER APPROVING A NEW CODE OF PRACTICE FOR BUSKERS**

Cllr A Edsall spoke about this initiative to introduce something to help monitor busking in Royal Avenue Gardens after receiving complaints. The Clerk and the Properties Administrator had done some research and after discussions it was thought that this was the best way forward.

This code of practice would be displayed in the gardens and it was hoped that buskers would read it and abide by it. If there were persistent buskers who did not abide by this code of practice, then the Council could ask the local Police Constable or PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) to assist. Cllr A Edsall added that there was also the potential option of asking SHDC to become involved in helping to monitor the level of noise, but this wouldn't be a quick route.

**Proposed:** Cllr A Edsall

**Seconded:** Cllr C Campos

**Resolved:** To approve the new Code of Practice for buskers on Dartmouth Town Council land

**Majority vote carried**

**16. TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER APPROVING THE REVISED MEMORIAL PLAQUE POLICY**

The Administrator said that the Town Council were running out of available space for people to sponsor a bench on Council land and that this new policy would replace the old one. It should be a better solution for both members of the public and the Town Council.

Cllr G Edsall suggested the policy was tweaked to say that when a plaque was purchased it would be in place for 10 years rather than the life of the bench and at the end of the 10 years the owners would be offered the opportunity to renew it for a further 10 years or it could be removed to the Memorial Wall for free.

**Proposed:** Cllr G Evans

**Seconded:** Cllr D Wells

**Resolved:** To approve the new Memorial Plaque Policy (which replaces the previous policy) with the above amendment.

**Majority vote carried**

**17. TO REVIEW THE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE CEMETERY**

The Administrator said that she had spent time researching and updating the rules and regulations and guidelines for Longcross Cemetery to enable everyone to work together. She said that the local Undertaker, the Groundsman and the Properties Manager had been consulted and they were happy with this draft.

**Proposed:** Cllr S Hibbert

**Seconded:** Cllr A Edsall

**Resolved:** To approve the new Rules and Regulations for Longcross Cemetery

**Majority vote carried**

**18. TO CONFIRM THE SALE OF THE COUNCIL'S GENERATOR PREVIOUSLY BOUGHT BUT SURPLUS TO REQUIREMENTS.**

The Clerk explained that this was to confirm (for auditing purposes) that the Council had sold a generator that was purchased a few years ago and was surplus to requirements, for a total of £349.26

Councillors noted this

**19. TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Council were asked to RESOLVE to exclude the press and public "by reason of the confidential nature of the business" to be discussed and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

**Proposed:** Cllr G Evans

**Seconded:** Cllr G Yardy

**Resolved:** To enter the confidential section of the meeting, but to allow District Councillor Hilary Bastone and the Dartmouth Visitor Centre representative: Karen Perrow to remain for the discussion regarding the Dartmouth Visitor Centre grant, but not for the vote.

**Majority vote carried**

**PART 2 – Confidential**

The following item was moved from above into the confidential section

**20. GRANTS**

**a) Dartmouth Visitor Centre – £5,000**

Cllr Yardy presented a report on the Dartmouth Visitor Centre (DVC) website. There was a discussion regarding what the money would be spent on which was proposed to reconfigure their counter to allow for more display and retail space and to upgrade the computer systems which were currently running old Microsoft software.

Cllr C Campos asked about how the website would be making money, and Cllr G Yardy said it was still early days and under review.

Cllr Evans asked if the license was ready to sign and there was a discussion regarding the outstanding issues to do with the finer details.

Cllr D Shepherd asked if anything had happened regarding applying for funding outside of the Town Council and Cllr G Yardy said he had now spoken with the gentleman who had done the previous applications on behalf of DVC, and he now had a list of potential projects, the costs per hour to do this work and template documents from previous applications.

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Cllr Shepherd said she had names of people willing to volunteer and Cllr G Yardy asked her to forward his details on to them.

Karen Perrow confirmed that they had been working with an outside company who have been working on funding bids but their big stumbling block has always been the lack of a lease for security.

**Proposed:** Cllr G Yardy

**Seconded:** Cllr A Edsall

**Resolved:** To approve a grant for £5,000 to the Dartmouth Visitor Centre to come out of next years budget.

**Majority vote carried**

### 21. TO REVIEW THE HIRE CHARGES FOR THE GUILDHALL IN RELATION TO CARETAKING REQUIREMENTS

There was a discussion regarding whether a caretaker/member of staff needed to be on site during Guildhall bookings or whether a caretaker/member of staff could only open up the building at the beginning and then lock up the building at the end of the hire period.

There was also a discussion regarding whether staff who were caretaking could be paid rather than having to take TOIL.

Cllrs generally felt that they would prefer a member of staff to be on site throughout bookings but asked for the Properties Manager to circulate figures and for this and bring it back to the next Finance and General Purposes

*Cllr D Shepherd left the meeting at 20.28*

### 22. TO REVIEW THE FOLLOWING CHARGES AND RENTS AND APPROVE ANY ADJUSTMENTS NECESSARY:

Cllr G Webb declared a personal interest in the discussion regarding allotments and didn't take part in the discussion.

Cllrs discussed the separate charges

- a) Wedding ceremony charges (updated)  
Cllrs approved these suggested charges
- b) Cemetery charges at Longcross Cemetery  
Cllrs agreed to increase these charges by 10%
- c) Allotments at Milton Lane  
Cllrs agreed to increase these charges by 10%

*(However after seeking guidance from the Allotment Society, following the meeting, these price increases will not be implemented until September 2022)*

- d) Market tolls  
Cllrs agreed to increase these charges by 10%
- e) Market & Community Corner event hire charges  
Cllrs agreed to increase these charges by 10%
- f) Coronation park charges  
Cllrs agreed to increase these charges by 10%

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- g) Royal Avenue Gardens (including hut)  
Cllrs agreed to increase these charges by 10% but to leave the RAG hut at the existing price.

**Proposed:** Cllr S Hibbert

**Seconded:** Cllr D Wells

**Resolved:** To approve the above increases which will take place from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 but all bookings already taken would be honoured at the previous costs.

*The meeting finished at 20.49*