

DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
OF DARTMOUTH GUILDHALL ON MONDAY 21ST OCTOBER 2019

PRESENT: Cllrs: M Baillie; N Bodinnar; C Campos; D Case; G Evans (Chair);
S Hibbert; R Rendle; D Wells (Vice Chair).

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: C Pritchard-Williams; Finance Officer: A McGrigor; Cllr
Shepherd; Dartmouth Chronicle: Emily Baker and one members of the
public

PART 1 - Open to the Public

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Webb & Cllr Yardy

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

39. GRANT

DARTMOUTH BUSINESS CLUB - £150

This grant was to purchase an air quality monitor

Cllr Campos thought it was a reasonable request and that it would be good to ascertain the level of pollution around the higher and lower ferries.

Cllr Wells spoke about how the person monitoring it should be properly trained and was concerned about how it was a lot of money for this piece of equipment when we could simply put another sign up asking people to turn their engines off.

Cllr Evans gave a background to this grant and explained that the Dartmouth Business Club were worried about the air quality in Dartmouth and the idea was to buy a monitor to check the air quality in town.

Cllr Evans spoke about how any results would be enforced.

Cllr Evans confirmed that this was the full cost of the machine.

Cllr Wells said that you can go online and look at the air quality across the whole of the UK so didn't think this was a good use of public money.

Cllr Rendle said that this was the responsibility of SHDC via environmental health, and if the business club were concerned about this then they could be part funding this themselves and asking for a donation from the Council.

Proposed: Cllr Evans

Seconded: Cllr Hibbert

Resolution: To recommend to Full Council that this grant is refused on the grounds that the Dartmouth Business Club could part fund it themselves, and if there is a deficit, they could go to SHDC in the first instance.

Seven Cllrs were in favour, one abstention

Cllr Rendle added that DTC have no authority to monitor this.

[Amended: The decision was not upheld at the Full Council meeting on 04/11/2019 and it was agreed that it should be discussed at the next Full Council or Finance Committee meeting]

40. TO PURCHASE AN ELECTRIC PUSH BIKE FOR THE GROUNDS TEAM

There was a discussion with regards to purchasing an electric bicycle for the grounds team and it was generally thought that this was too expensive.

Proposed: Cllr Rendle

Seconded: Cllr Evans

Resolution: To recommend to Full Council not to purchase an electric bike. Seven Cllrs were in favour, one abstention

Cllr Case said that she thought they had originally asked about purchasing a push bike and asked if that was still an option, and Cllr Campos said that we hadn't received any costings for a push bike, but this could be considered.

Cllr Case also mentioned that she had an old electric bike that she no longer used and if it was suitable, she would give it to the Open Spaces team to use free of charge.

41. TO DISCUSS UPGRADING CORONATION PARK TO ALLOW USE AS A 24HR COMMUNITY LANDING SITE FOR DEVON AIR AMBULANCE TRUST.

Case spoke about this idea to install suitable lighting so that the Devon Air Ambulance (DAA) can use Coronation Park as an approved landing site in the dark, which would be from 5pm until 7am in the winter.

Cllr Case said that the total cost would be around £1500 but there was a grant available from the DAA to create these community landing sites for around £600 available towards the labour costs.

Cllr Case said that the lights would belong to DTC so all maintenance would fall on DTC and that she'd been told it was around £8 per year.

Cllr Rendle suggested putting £2,000 into a shadow budget for this for next year because there wouldn't have been any budget allocated to this, Cllr Case asked if there was a possibility for this to happen in this year's budget as the grant may not be available next year.

Cllr Evans said he was in support of this but needed a little more information from the DAA as to when the funding from them was available until.

Cllr Shepherd asked if this could come out of the Dartmouth Trust money for this year and the general consensus was that this would be good use of the Public Purposes Share of the Dartmouth Trust money.

Proposed: Cllr Evans

Seconded: Cllr Wells

Resolved: To recommend approval to Full Council that the Council apply for the grant from the DAA and allocate the remainder needed either from the Public Purposes Share of the Dartmouth Trust for this year or put it into a shadow budget for next year.

42. TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSAL FROM YOUTH GENESIS OF PROVIDING FUNDING FOR £10K FOR YOUTH SERVICES

Cllr Rendle said that this £10,000 could also be put into the shadow budget for next year.

Cllr Evans agreed but said that we needed to draw up good terms and conditions to ensure they look after the building and that wear and tear is kept to a minimum.

Proposed: Cllr Evans

Seconded: Cllr Campos

Resolved: To put it into the shadow budget for next year, but to ensure we have good terms and conditions with Youth Genesis.

All Committee members were in favour

43. TO DISCUSS THE AMOUNT OF MONEY FROM THE PUBLIC PURPOSES SHARE OF THE DARTMOUTH TRUST TO BE TRANSFERRED INTO THE RESERVES ACCOUNT

There was a discussion about transferring money from the Dartmouth Trust Account into the Dartmouth Town Council current account and then transferring some of it into our reserve account because we do not currently have the recommended amount of six months reserve.

Cllr Rendle said he would like the opportunity to sit down with the Chairman of Finance to discuss the money from the Dartmouth Trust in more detail.

Proposed: Cllr Evans

Seconded: Cllr Campos

Resolved: To transfer the money from the Dartmouth Trust account into the Dartmouth Town Council current account and then to transfer enough into our reserve account to support us for six months.

All Committee members were in favour

44. TO DISCUSS THE PURCHASE OF A CHIPPER FOR THE OPEN SPACES TEAM

There was a discussion about purchasing a chipper as opposed to hiring one.

Cllrs felt that this was not a good saving and that it appeared that it was cheaper to hire it.

Cllrs thought that this would be better discussed at the Parks and Open Spaces Committee.

Proposed: Cllr Evans

Seconded: Cllr Wells

Resolved: To move this decision to the Parks and Open Spaces Committee to be considered for the next financial year.

All Committee members were in favour

45. TO DISCUSS THE PROVISION OF A MONITORING ALARM SERVICE FOR THE GUILDHALL, OLD MARKET IVY LANE & BUTTERWALK

Finance Officer explained that two of the Council building have alarms, but they are not monitored, and it would be good practice to have alarms fitted into two other buildings. This came to light because an alarm went off in the Butterwalk.

The Chairman said that this should go back to the Corporate Property Committee for a decision and the new Corporate Property Manager should be involved in the decisions of how this is monitored.

Proposed: Cllr Evans

Seconded: Cllr Campos

Resolved: To recommend to Full Council that this be moved to the Corporate Property Committee.

All Committee members were in favour

46. TO DISCUSS THE BUDGET AND ARRANGEMENT OF A SCRUTINY MEETING

The Chair said that the scrutiny meetings have already been arranged: one for Tues 22nd October 2019 at 2.30pm and the other for the 6th November at 6pm. The Chair reminded all that we have to be careful about what & how the Council spends money, as we have large projects to do and maintain, with funding being reduced and stopped from SHDC (i.e. asset transfer funds). The Chair agreed with Cllr Rendle's suggestion of having a shadow budget. The committees will have their input at the above meetings and one of the largest to look at is Personnel & secondly Parks and Open Spaces.

The Chair said that we will not be giving grants to anyone that applies without having very clear information and validation of the information provided by the applicants. The Chair wants a standard scrutiny of all grant applications. Cllr Case said that is stated in new agreed grant policy.

The Chair stated that DTC should be aware that if something went wrong, although reasonable amount in the accounts, we need to have enough to pay for our valuable listed buildings before the insurance money is received. Cllr Campos stated budgeting is a two-way thing, look at how much we'll get in as well as how much we need to pay out. The Chair said he need to look at the usage of our assets: buildings and gardens. Cllr Baillie said look at one area at a time, potentially in a working group. The Chair suggested it was put under the Corporate Properties to look at increasing bookings and promoting the assets. Cllr Shepherd said to possibly add the promotion of the assets to the market working group especially Royal Avenue Gardens as they are linked. Cllr Campos spoke about the work that was being planned to update the website, also council's Facebook page which are both good promotional places.

A member of the public asked if the market could be kept open longer especially in the summer evenings.

The Chair would like to have a meeting with Cllr Wells & Cllr Rendle to discuss the suggestion of a shadow budget.

A member of the public left the room

The Chair stated that there was no need to go into confidential section.

PART 2 – Confidential

47. TO DISCUSS THE DARTMOUTH VISITOR CENTRE FINANCIAL UPDATE

No information had been received from the Dartmouth Visitor Centre, so there was no discussion.

Meeting closed 19:20