

**DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL**  
**CHAMBER OF DARTMOUTH GUILDHALL ON MONDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2019**

**PRESENT:** There were 13 councillors present at the meeting.  
Cllr: G Webb (Mayor); S Hibbert (Deputy Mayor)  
Cllrs: N Bodinnar; C Campos; D Case; A Edsall; G Evans; T de Galleani; R Lyon; D Shepherd; M Webber; D Wells; G Yardy.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: C Pritchard-Williams; Administrator: R Searle; Properties Administrator: K Brown; Town Sergeant: R Lambden; County and District: Cllr J Hawkins; District Cllr H Bastone; Dartmouth Chronicle: E Baker and 13 members of the public.

**PART I - Open to the Public**

**114.MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor announced the standard emergency evacuation procedures. He requested that mobile phones and other devices be set on silent or turned off. Anyone intending to record any part of the meeting was asked to declare this. The Mayor announced that Cllr R Rendle has had to retire from the Council with immediate effect due to health reasons. He wished him a speedy recovery and thanked him for all his hard work over the years for the town and people of Dartmouth.

**115.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Dartmouth Town Cllrs L Williams and M Baillie. Apologies were also received from District Cllr R Rowe.

**116.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests.**

Cllr Rob Lyon declared an interest in agenda items 10 and 11 as part of the Mayflower 400.

**117.QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Cllr Bastone asked a question about the lights that are on The South Embankment and if they are owned by Dartmouth Town Council. The Mayor passed the question to the Clerk to answer. The Clerk said that the lights were funded by the 'Snowball' which had raised money for Christmas lights, and added that they were not technically owned by the Town Council. There was a short discussion about who owned the lights and how long they were on for. Cllr Bastone added that he had received complaints from residents of The South Embankment about the lights and that they have asked that the lights were only used in the summer at big events. Cllr Hawkins added that the electricity for the Embankment was paid for by Devon County Council and they decided to discuss this at a later date.

A member of public said he found it extraordinary that at the same time the lights on the South Embankment were installed, lighting had been reduced in other parts of

the Town where security was more of an issue. He added that there was not a lot of crime on the South Embankment but knew that there were parts of Town that were more vulnerable. The Police have always advised this resident that lighting was a good deterrent, therefore this was not a selfish issue, as if the lights were reduced on the South Embankment for most of the year, this light could be used in other parts of the Town where he felt it was needed.

Cllr Hawkins added that Devon County Council do not own the lights but felt that the lights should be turned off at midnight and not used for the whole season.

The Clerk noted that the Town Council did not have a key to access the switch for the lights, but that the Council would ask Devon County about this.

Cllr Edsall added that he felt there was a vested interest in the Town Council managing this issue and in deciding what was appropriate and what bulbs were used. He suggested that this should be discussed at a Parks and Open Spaces or Corporate Property meeting.

#### **118.TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS FROM**

- **County Councillor**

There was a verbal report from Cllr Hawkins.

Cllr Hawkins gave his thanks to Cllr Rendle for his hard work and dedication to Dartmouth.

He attended the following meetings:

- with Cllr Bastone and Cllr Rowe with Baker Estates, who are building the new houses at the top of Dartmouth.
- Fusion at Dartmouth Leisure Centre to talk about the Youth Leisure Nights that will be held on the third Friday of the month.
- Went with Cllr Yardy to speak to Stagecoach regarding a bus service to Torbay Hospital. Costings have been received and are between £200,000 and £300,000 a year, which needs to be found. He will be having another phone call on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December to discuss this further with Stagecoach.

- **District Councillors**

Cllr Rowe had submitted a written report which had previously been circulated to all Cllrs (Appendix A)

Cllr Bastone had submitted a written report which had previously been circulated to all Cllrs (Appendix B)

Cllr Bastone also gave a verbal report

- Cllr Bastone, along with Cllr Hawkins have formed a sub-committee to help the Council become dementia friendly, which was a big issue in Devon.
- He had been working on SHDC budget for 2021.
- SHDC had been putting together a plan to deal with climate change, which included 160 actions. A full report would be available soon

Cllr de Galleani asked if Cllr Bastone was worried about climate change? And had anyone noticed that Baker Estates had cut down all the trees down on the land they were developing for housing?

Cllr Bastone replied that Baker Estates had not cut down all of the trees and his understanding was that as the new roundabout was going in and with it being slightly set back from the road, Devon County Council had insisted that the trees needed to be cut down to give a clear view of the road.

Cllr de Galleani added that she found it difficult when the talk was about climate change and S106 money was being spent to widen roads and put in roundabouts as this was not good for the environment.

Cllr Bastone replied that when the planning application was agreed to, SHDC had insisted that there was some planting done on the site to replace the trees that would have been cut down. He also added that on the plans, there were areas of land that were designated to be planted with trees.

Cllr Hawkins added that everyone had looked at the plans that were entered and that they had been adhered to. The plans at the future West Dart development had wider roads and grass verges with trees through all of the estate.

Cllr de Galleani pointed out that Dartmouth was told it would be getting two electric charging points at the Park and Ride and two at Mayors Avenue Car Park.

Cllr Bastone confirmed this and said that at the present time, officers were putting together a financial plan to find the money for the units. While there were grants available, the onus was still on the District Council to provide the funding. The two car parks in Dartmouth were on the priority list.

A member of the public asked if there was a timescale on this plan. Cllr Bastone replied that the charging points wouldn't be put in before April 2020.

Cllr Yardy asked Cllr Hawkins how the Local Health Authority in Exeter was able to extract £750 per newbuild flat to help pay for the healthcare of the additional residents. With the Baker Estates, was there a similar calculation of money that would be attributable to providing health services for new residents of the town?

Cllr Hawkins said this was a District Council issue, when the s106 funds were looked at and negotiated there was money put aside for Health and Wellbeing, education and affordable housing.

Cllr Bastone added that the District Council would be looking at introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy, which meant SHDC could receive more money from developers than they do at present.

Cllr Hawkins added that this would help towards Highways infrastructure and other things the County Council provide, which the s106 money didn't do.

Cllr Yardy pointed out that from 450 houses, £340,000 could have been levied from the new Baker Estate, which could be spread over several different amenities for the community.

Cllr Bastone said that the S106 was going to provide money, but that most of it would be spent on affordable housing, sport and leisure.

**119.TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 4<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2019**

Members reviewed the minutes of the previous Town Council meeting  
Cllr Case wanted to clarify that on page 10 she had asked about the three different surveys to seek clarification on whether any had resulted in clear findings.

**Proposed:** Cllr Webb

**Seconded:** Cllr Evans

**Resolved:** 14 Cllrs approved the minutes as a true record.

1 Cllr abstained

**120.TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:**

- Finance Committee meeting on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
Members reviewed the minutes of the previous Town Council meeting  
Cllr Case stated that on page 3 with regards to funding, she appreciated that DVC believe year on year funding would give them more security, but DTC still need to look at every item.  
**Proposed:** Cllr Evans  
**Seconded:** Cllr Case  
**Resolved:** 14 Cllrs approved the minutes as a true record.  
1 Cllr abstained
- Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
Members reviewed the minutes of the previous Town Council meeting  
It can be noted that the Planning Committee has delegated powers in respect of planning recommendations.  
**Proposed:** Cllr Evans  
**Seconded:** Cllr Wells  
**Resolved:** All Cllrs approved the minutes as a true record.

**121.TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANNING FOR DARTMOUTH - DC**

Cllr Case gave a presentation about the Community Emergency Plan for Dartmouth (Appendix C)

Cllr Campos asked if the Kingsbridge Emergency plan was community or Council lead?

Cllr Case responded that there was a Town Council element to the plan, but that she had spoken to Towns who had plans in place which had been both Council led and community led.

A member of the public who was an ex-councillor spoke about how the Council at that time had created a flood plan in 2011 and suggested Cllr Case should review that. Cllr Case thanked the speaker and confirmed that she had a copy of this draft and had reviewed this alongside more recent documentation from elsewhere.

Cllr de Galleani stated that Dartmouth's flood risk was comparatively low.

Cllr Case said that she had spoken with the Environmental Agency to ask if they thought Dartmouth had a cause to have a Community Emergency Plan and they responded that Dartmouth was a priority area for them.

Cllr Edsall asked if Cllr Case saw herself driving this plan forward at this point to the next stage and Cllr Case stated that she would like to push this forward but would look for expertise elsewhere in the community and would co-create this with other agencies.

**122.TO CONSIDER THE CREATION OF A WORKING GROUP TO DRAFT THE DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN – GW**

The Mayor said that this item would be moved to January Full Council meeting

**123.TO CONSIDER THE STATEMENT FROM THE DM400 WORKING GROUP RELATING TO DM400 AND AGREE A WAY FORWARD – CC**

Cllr Campos stated that a few months ago, the Finance Committee was approached to make a final payment to the Dartmouth Mayflower 400 group. When Cllr Campos investigated it, she discovered that the original agreement had been set up as match funding, therefore the Council were only obliged to pay £40,000 if the project had raised £400,000. At that point, Cllr Campos felt that she should investigate the project funding and the way it had been handled more generally and set up a working group, which comprised of Cllr Campos; Cllr Edsall; Cllr Wells & Cllr Rendle. Over the past two months, the working group has analysed all the documents they could find and worked out the group's recommendations.

Cllr Campos added that there were two documents, the first was the statement relating to the Dartmouth Mayflower 400 group, because it was felt that there was some confusion that they were being investigated along with the Council, but this was not the case. Cllr Campos wanted to read the statement out, and if the Council agreed to it would be released to the public and the public would know the status between the Dartmouth Mayflower 400 group and Dartmouth Town Council.

Cllr Campos read out the statement Appendix D – WORKING DOCUMENT NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE PRIOR TO DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL APPROVAL

Cllr Campos then asked for a vote on whether the Council approved the statement.

**Proposed:** Cllr Campos

**Seconded:** Cllr Shepherd

**Resolved:** That the above statement be approved.

Eight Cllrs approved: Cllrs Bodinnar; Campos; Edsall; Evans; Shepherd; Webber; Wells; Yardy

Two Cllrs objected: Cllrs Case; de Galleani

Three Cllrs abstained: Cllrs Hibbert; Lyon; Webb

**124.TO CONSIDER THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DM400 WORKING GROUP AND AGREE A WAY FORWARD – CC**

Cllr Campos read out Appendix E: OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS EMERGING FROM DTC DM400 WG

There was a discussion about the observations and recommendations between members. Cllr Case wanted it noted that she did not agree with the observations being described as findings on this agenda, as they were opinions and the findings had not been shared with Full Council before a vote was called for in public to approve them. She also didn't agree with how the investigation was carried out. Cllr Case also voiced concerns about moving to vote to approve all six recommendations without discussion as to the feasibility and implications of adopting them. She enquired as to why the working group's recommendations made no reference to Dartmouth Town Council's updated Grant Awarding Policy, approved by Full Council earlier in the year.

Cllr Edsall responded that this enquiry had been done in an open and transparent manner.

Cllr Campos responded that she would circulate the findings the next day.

**Proposed:** Cllr Edsall

**Seconded:** Cllr Wells

**Resolved:** That the recommendations from the DM400 Working Group were accepted going forward

Eight Cllrs approved: Cllrs Bodinnar; Campos; Edsall; Evans; Shepherd; Webber; Wells; Yardy

One Cllr objected: Cllr Case

Four Cllrs abstained: Cllrs de Galleani; Hibbert; Lyon; Webb

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

There were none

**126.TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

There were none

**127.TO RECEIVE ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

Parking mitigation

Update on hospital transport

Neighbourhood plan terms of engagement – Cllr Evans

**Proposed:** Cllr T de Galleani

**Seconded:** Cllr S Hibbert

**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.

**PART 2 – Confidential**

**128.TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF THE NEW RECEPTIONIST**

There was a brief discussion about the appointment of the new receptionist.

**Proposed:** Cllr Case

**Seconded:** Cllr de Galleani

**Resolved:** All Cllrs approved the appointment of the new receptionist.

*The meeting ended at 8:22pm*

## **APPENDIX A**

### **REPORT FROM ROSEMARY ROWE FOR NOVEMBER 2019**

We have held three meetings of particular importance this month.

Starting with the Budget Workshop, sadly only about half the members attended for what are very important discussions for the next financial year 2020/2021. We went through the various options which are available to us and how we want to spend money and delete some spending to balance the books. With consideration on the limit to the amount we can increase Council Tax. Councils have by law to present a balanced budget to the electorate. We will be doing further work within our committees and the outcomes will be presented to The Executive before being presented to The Full Council for approval in February 2020.

Web casting. We have been doing some work on this for some time and starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> December all committee meetings will be going live

Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Discussions took place on subjects including Community Safety, Safeguarding, and Electric car parking points.

Climate change. We have a working group working on this and they will be presenting a Draft Plan to Full Council meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

We had a Special Council meeting on Thursday afternoon 28<sup>th</sup> Nov, when the main item on the Agenda was Polling Stations which has come at a very good time. There has been a review of Polling Stations to make sure that every area is adequately covered. However about 30% of the electorate now have postal votes.

Reminder that there is a Town & Parish Cllrs. Meeting taking place at Follaton House on Wed. 4<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30 p.m. when District and County representatives will be present to talk about budgetary requirements for the ensuing year among other matters.

## **APPENDIX B**

### ***Activity sheet for November from Cllr Hilary Bastone***

- Nov.6. Development Management.
- Finance update meeting.
- Weekly meeting with Chief Exec, Deputy Exec and Leader.

7. Executive briefing on the Capital Programme.

Audit:

Agenda: Grant Thornton Audit Progress Report and Sector Update.  
Grant Thornton Annual Audit Letter.  
Treasury Management Mid-Year Review.  
Strategic Risk & Opportunity Monitoring - Regular Update.  
Sundry Debt.  
Update on Progress on the 2019-20 Internal Audit Plan.  
Internal Audit Charter & Strategy 2019-20.  
Committee Workplan for the 2019/20 Financial Year.

2020/21 Draft Budget setting workshop.

10. Remembrance Sunday:

Kingswear Church Service.  
Laying of wreaths at the Ferry Slip.  
Setting poppy crosses at the War Graves at Kingswear Cemetery.  
Laying of wreaths at Noss Shipyard.

11. Dartmouth Town Council Finance meeting.

15. Devon Building Control Partnership meeting.

Executive Briefing.

18. South Hams Dementia Forum.

19. Opening of Dartmouth Mayflower Heritage Trail.

20. Webcasting Launch training.

Finance update meeting.

Weekly meeting with Chief Exec, Deputy Exec and Leader.

21. Overview & Scrutiny:

Agenda: Executive Forward Plan.

Community Safety Partnership - Annual Report.

Safeguarding Update.

Electric Car Charging Points – Update.

Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Guidance on Information Commissioner's Office Procedure.

Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter.

Housing Report.

Update from the Climate Change & Biodiversity Working Group.

Task and Finish Group Updates:

(a) Leisure Review.

(b) Locality Service.

Annual O+S Work Programme.

25. Stoke Gabriel Parish Council meeting.

27. Meeting with Matt Hancock (Health Minister) and Anthony Mangnall

(Conservative Candidate for the Totnes Constituency) at the Dartmouth Health & Wellbeing site.

Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan Partnership Board.

Agenda: Frequency of Partnership Board Meetings.



Update on SPD and SCI.  
Plymouth National Marine Park.  
Plymouth Policy Area Local Greenspace DPD – Regulation 18.  
Managing Rural Development DPD – Regulation 18.  
CIL Review-briefing on next steps and timetable.  
Draft Joint Local Plan Authorities Monitoring Report 2019.  
Transforming Cities Fund – Update.  
JLP Team Updates.  
JLP Delivery Risk Register.

Charity for Elspeth Mary Carr Recreation Ground (Salcombe) Trustee meeting.  
Assets update meeting.

28. Meeting with Baker Estates.

Visit to Langage Business Park.

Special Council:

Agenda: Polling District and Polling Places Review 2019.

Brixton Neighbourhood Plan.

Appointments: Future IT Platforms Joint SH/WD Member

Working Group and Devon Audit Partnership.

Reports of Bodies.

Special Council:

Agenda: Honorary Alderman – Nomination.

29. Heart of the South West Joint Committee:

Agenda confidential.


Meeting regarding Kingswear Neighbourhood Plan.

**APPENDIX C**

# Building Community Resilience

## Emergency Planning for Dartmouth

Cllr Diana Case - December 2019  
E: [CllrDianaCase@DartmouthTownCouncil.gov.uk](mailto:CllrDianaCase@DartmouthTownCouncil.gov.uk)



### What is Community Resilience?

Community resilience is the sustained ability of a community to utilise available resources to respond to, withstand and recover from adverse situations.


We can enhance our community resilience here in Dartmouth by harnessing our resources and expertise to better prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies in a way that supports the work of emergency responders.

Considering community resilience and planning for an emergency does not increase the likelihood of an emergency arising...but will help us if it does.

Cllr Diana Case - December 2019

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## What is a Community Emergency Plan?



- Created and owned by the community
- Captures local knowledge and expertise
- Details actions to be taken before, during and after an emergency
- Enables the community to respond quickly during an emergency
- Complements and supports - but does not replace - the legal obligations of Category 1 & 2 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Cllr Diana Case - December 2019 3

## Who else is supporting Community resilience?

So far I've  
spoken to...





Cllr Diana Case - December 2019 4

## Why prepare a Community Emergency Plan?

- Better understand risks we may face
- Prepare for local emergencies
- Helps us as a community to respond quickly and efficiently in an emergency...looking after our ourselves until other agencies arrive
- Register our plan on a central database so its accessible to emergency responders
- Raise local awareness of actions we can all take to minimise risk and impact to people and property
- Provide help for the most vulnerable
- It may not prevent an emergency but it may reduce its impact and/or likelihood

Cllr Diana Case - December 2019

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## What goes into a Community Emergency Plan?

- Assessment of potential local risks
  - e.g. for floods: Locations at risk of flooding, Sources of flooding
- Actions to take during an emergency
- Local volunteers to help during an emergency
- Important contact numbers
- Local resources
  - e.g. Devon Air Ambulance Community Landing Sites, Defibrillator locations, Community shelters
- Vulnerable people, properties, locations

Cllr Diana Case - December 2019

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**Next step?**

**Invite partner agencies and our community to a public meeting to...**

<b>1 Inform</b>	<b>2. Engage</b>	<b>3 Commit</b>
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- *Learn about community resilience from experts*
- *Hear how other Devon communities have embraced community resilience*
- *Learn about the support and expertise available should we decide to develop an Emergency Plan*

- *Raise awareness of opportunities to help*
- *Share stories and experiences of local emergencies*
- *Share knowledge about the community support and facilities already in place*

- *Decide if / how / who takes this forward to create a community-led Emergency Plan for Dartmouth*
- *To act together to help ourselves, our homes, our neighbours and our community*

Cllr Diana Case - December 2019 7



If you're interested in learning more or have questions, suggestions, expertise or energy to offer, please do get in touch by email to: [CllrDianaCase@DartmouthTownCouncil.gov.uk](mailto:CllrDianaCase@DartmouthTownCouncil.gov.uk). Thank you.

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**APPENDIX D**

WORKING DOCUMENT NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE PRIOR TO DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL  
APPROVAL

As we have been at pains to point out from the outset, our Working Group's investigation has solely centred on the role DTC has played in the funding of DM400. As volunteers ourselves, we are very mindful that many people in Dartmouth have worked incredibly hard to ensure DM400 is the best possible event for the Town.

Our forensic trawling through Council documents has uncovered a cavalier disregard by the previous Council for both proper procedure and the use of public money. We are all convinced this exercise was necessary, in order to ensure that moving forward, public money is handled by the Council judiciously, correctly and with total transparency. To this end we are making a series of recommendations to ensure that this council, and hopefully future ones, handle public money in a more responsible and correct way.

Regarding DM400 we all believe that we should now look forward. We would like to emphasise that the DM400 team has behaved entirely properly throughout the project. We do not recommend that DTC should ask for any of the funds paid by the Council to the project to be returned, as these monies have already been committed, and would also like to take this opportunity to wish DM400 every success and look forward to an update on the projects impact on visitor numbers in the coming months.

WORKING DOCUMENT NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE PRIOR TO DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL  
APPROVAL

## **APPENDIX E**

### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS EMERGING FROM DTC DM400 WG**

#### **1. PROCEDURE NOT FOLLOWED**

From failing to adhere to the original terms of the funding for Mayflower 400, to the Finance Committee Chairman and a Councillor working with DM400, approving grants and payments of some £26,000 for the Mayflower trail without any debate or discussion at Finance Committee or Full Council, this whole process has seldom followed proper council procedures. Why was the lack of external funding not queried and why were payments made on the say so of only two councillors? Why were agreed sums not even placed in the budget? Some £32,000 was paid to DM400 without following the correct procedure as only £55,000 was secured from other

sources. Why weren't payments questioned after it became obvious that the project was not going to attract the level of investment needed to trigger 10% match funding from DTC. Moving forward, recipients of Council grants must use council money for the purpose for which it was granted and be prepared to account for expenditure down to the last pound.

**RECOMMENDATION** As a new council we must undertake to follow procedure to the letter. Large sums of expenditure should be flagged and discussed at Full Council, so everyone is aware of and approves how council funds are being spent.

**2. IS IT DTC'S PLACE TO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT LARGE SCALE PROJECTS?**

Should DTC ever financially support such a huge project again? As a council, what should our priorities be? If a project such as this can't stand on its own two feet commercially, then is it the place of DTC to fund it?

**RECOMMENDATION** To consider whether it is the place of DTC to commit large sums of public money to major projects if they are unable to attract proper funding from other sources.

**3. COUNCILLORS MUST STAND UP FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVE IN**

Reading the minutes, it is evident that several councillors were uncomfortable with how the funding of DM400 diverged from the way it was originally structured. But they allowed their concerns to be brushed off.

**RECOMMENDATION** As councillors we must stand up for what we believe is right. This WG is an example of how this current council should work. Every Councillor on DTC should be unafraid to speak out and be receptive to opposing views. We must ensure that every councillor's view is taken into consideration and put the interests of DTC at the heart of every decision we take.

**4. RESPONSIBILITY TO A FUTURE COUNCIL**

Controversially a large payment of £16,200 was made to DM400 by DTC, the day before the election. There is some debate and disagreement as to whether this payment had contravened the Purdah rule, but its timing was unfortunate to say the least. It could be seen as an attempt to win votes and for that reason the payment should never have been actioned. In an election year an outgoing council has a responsibility to leave the Council in the best possible shape for an incoming one. While setting a budget and making some commitments is unavoidable an outgoing council should be mindful that it is not ethical to saddle a new council with large commitments that they did not sign up to.

**RECOMMENDATION** – Wherever possible in an election year defer decisions on big commitments until after an election to allow incoming councillors to make the choices that will affect their four-year term. Also be mindful of that activity in the Purdah period should be subject to detailed scrutiny.

**5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Having the Chairman of DM400 also serving as a DTC councillor, sometime Mayor and member of the Finance Committee led to a huge conflict of interest. In many of

the minutes, he eloquently puts the case for why DTC should be supporting DM400's applications for funds but fails to ever consider the interests of DTC.

As a council we must be more robust in preventing Councillors with vested interests from putting across a case without fully considering the impact on DTC.

**RECOMMENDATION**

If councillors with an external interest are unable to protect the interests and position of DTC first and foremost, then other councillors should be nominated to argue the case for DTC in order protect its interests.

**6. DOUBLE STANDARDS**

One of the most disheartening aspects of trawling through the minutes of 4 years of DTC Finance Committee Meetings during this enquiry, was seeing many small community projects applying for small sums of assistance and either being rejected without any proper consideration or made to leap through hoops of fire for their money. This is in total contrast to the handling of DM400's grant applications during this time which were agreed for extremely large sums of money with little or no oversight or regulation. This has not been lost on the wider town and has brought this council as a result into disrepute.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Every grant application to the Council should face the exact same levels of impartiality, scrutiny, qualification and oversight depending on the size of the grant applied for. The greater the size of the grant application the greater the level scrutiny the grantees should expect.

Cathy Campos  
29/11/19