



DAWLISH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the
Annual Town Meeting
held at The Manor House, Dawlish on
Wednesday 11 April 2017 at 7 pm

Present: Chairman: Councillor Martin Wrigley (Mayor of Dawlish)
Together with 13 Councillors representing the Town, a member of the press
and 4 members of the public.

In attendance:
Andrew McKenzie, Town Clerk

Prior to the meeting being opened, the Chairman advised that due to staff turnover in the office the Annual Civic Awards would be held later in 2018.

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held at the Manor House, Dawlish on Wednesday 12 April 2017 were approved for signature by the Chairman.

2 The Clerk introduced the Interim Annual Report for the financial year 2017-18 as set out in the agenda report.

Resolved that the report be received and noted.

3 Report on his term of office by the retiring Mayor of Dawlish Councillor Martin Wrigley

Councillor Martin Wrigley reported as follows:

Writing this report, the Town is eagerly awaiting the completion of the Exeter Road works and looking forward to a pothole-free experience on our main road to the North.

This 'Spring' has been remarkable – with two major snowfalls and another cold snap forecast it feels like the seasons are all wrong, but we have changed the clocks for the summer and the season of events will be soon underway.

My year as Mayor has gone very quickly – it feels like just yesterday that I was looking forward to an 8-day carnival and the full schedule of events and shows over the summer of 2017. From my first Mayoral event with the Twinning

association, choosing the American car I'd like to drive home in at Cofton through to all of the amazing activities in the centre of Dawlish, I have been privileged to be part of a fantastic year for the Town.

It has been a year of change at the Council, we now have a team in place to take us forward with confidence, and I'd like to thank all of the Council staff past and present for their patience and dedication through the year.

In the year we have been looking at what the Council can do to help tackle some of the anti-social behaviour issues we had in the Town, and after working with the local police and looking at some of the areas concerned, I'm pleased to say that recently police reports of anti-social behaviour have dropped down to zero. This is very welcome and something we must aim to maintain and build upon.

The Council considered Lea Mount Gardens and what the Town wanted from that area and concluded that we wanted to enhance the area and make something of the WWII remains and build a tribute to Dawlish history and the contributions of local people including the Home Guard. Discussions are on-going with Teignbridge in terms of maintenance options, and I'm pleased to say that this park is now included in the planning process for improvements and developments in the Boat Cove / Coryton cove area.

Throughout the year the WWI commemoration project has been holding services for the fallen of that conflict. Next year is the anniversary of the end of the conflict, and there will be much to mark it. I would like to commend the group for keeping the project running for the full duration, and thank them for their work. One area of focus for this is the Memorial Gardens, and the Council is negotiating to continue the lease of the area from Teignbridge so that our volunteer team can continue their excellent work making that a space of peaceful contemplation and a worthy tribute to sacrifices of the past. I would like to thank our volunteers for all that they do there.

Recently the Council has set up a Lawn Working Group to consider a vision for the Lawn that the whole Town can get behind. We have seen several projects suggested for the Lawn, but until we get our neighbourhood plan up and running, we have had little to guide and combine these projects into a coherent whole. I anticipate that the Lawn Working Group will build upon previous good work and deliver a consensus view. As with every area that is so close to the hearts of so many people in Dawlish, I know that some may be disappointed – whatever the group comes up with – but I hope that the group will manage to air the discussions, alternatives and options so that we can find the best vision of the lawn for the most residents.

Towards the end of 2017 we had a flurry of interest in the Town on a national level after someone left a comment on TripAdvisor concerning signs. They pointed out that we had a proliferation of negative signs and that we had significant duplication. Since then we have started removing some of the

obviously redundant signage, and the lawn is looking better for it. We are hoping to have new simpler, more positive signage to replace the remainder, and I am expecting that to come before the Council in the coming months.

Our Black Swans have had a fantastic year, and another clutch of cygnets are currently wandering around the Lawn. I'd like to thank our wardens for all the work that they have done to keep them safe – even when the roof of the area collapsed under the weight of the recent snow.

And coming back to snow and storms, the railway took another small battering this year, and we are looking forward to the work to be carried out by Network Rail to improve the line's resilience. This is starting with investigations on Kings Walk starting very soon, looking to re-enforce that section of the defences. I suspect that we can expect to see a constant presence in the Town of people working on the walls, tracks, cliffs and tunnels for a good number of years.

The storms and snow and road-works and all has highlighted the need to re-visit our emergency response planning and the Town's resilience overall, and the Council has resolved to review what we can do and how we can build on what we learnt from 2014.

I am looking forward to a 2018 that has a continuing improvement in the working relationship between Dawlish and Teignbridge and working together we can achieve a lot more for the Town and improve our Town and the environment. The creation of the new Dawlish against Plastic group is the latest example of how the residents of Dawlish are keen to act to improve our Town and our life here.

As a final thought I would like to thank everyone who stands up to be counted and contributes to the multitude of groups, associations, committees and activities in the Town. You really do make this Town proud and a place that people want to live. It has been an honour to be mayor this year, and I hope to continue to do everything I can for Dawlish.

Thank you.

4 Report on her term of office by the retiring Chairman of the Civic Amenities Committee, Councillor Alison Foden.

Councillor Alison Foden reported as follows:

This is the third report that I have given as the Chair of the Civic Amenities Committee, in my third year as a town councillor, and it has been an interesting year with many challenges.

I'd like to start by saying thank you to all the office staff, to Andrew, the new Town Clerk, and to Don and David, the outside services team. We wouldn't be

able to function and achieve the things that we have done without the support of the Dawlish Town Council staff, so thank you.

It has been a very difficult year for the Civic Amenities Committee in that our meeting frequency was changed last year to meeting bi-monthly; 2 months is a long time in between making a decision at one meeting, and being updated on whether the decision has been actioned at the next meeting. In this council year there have been only 5 Committee meetings.

We have a good working relationship with the Browns Brook Allotment Association and have agreed with them that all allotment plot-holders be signed up to membership of the Association at the same time as signing their annual contract with the Council. This ensures that each allotment plot is covered by the Brown Brook Allotment Association's insurance. When we receive reports of works that need doing at the allotments, we ensure that these are done, including the hedge cutting, and replacing the gate.

We agreed that as the Civic Amenities Committee we would receive update reports at each meeting on the footpaths in the parish, and also reports on the waterfowl. This year has seen the black swans nesting several times and the birth of numerous cygnets.

We learned this year that both the play park at Little Week Close, and the Skate Park on Sandy Lane were declared unsafe in the RoSPA reports that Dawlish Town Council had requested. We are in the process of acquiring quotations for replenishing these play areas to meet safety regulations, and hope that these parks can be revitalised with equipment as soon as possible.

Whether or not to renew the lease of the War Memorial Gardens is an ongoing issue, and was referred for decision back to full town council. We are still awaiting a decision on renewing the lease of the gardens from Teignbridge District Council; this is dependent on the terms of the lease being decided.

My thanks go to Margaret Swift and her team of volunteers for their sterling work, time, and planning for the upkeep of the Dawlish War Memorial Garden, for looking after this cherished place in the centre of our town.

Three Committee members and I conducted a town centre audit last October and agreed a list of needs around the town centre to be actioned. (I am still learning which areas in Dawlish are managed by Dawlish Town Council, and which assets and functions are the responsibility of Teignbridge.)

This Committee is working to agree a regular garden management plan for the Manor House gardens, and also for the Lea Mount area. We are also working to ensure that the play park at Carhaix Way is soon re-opened, and that the play park on the new Gatehouse estate is maintained to meet current safety legislation.

We will continue to aim to work in partnership with Teignbridge for good management of all our Dawlish civic amenities and public space.

At CAC we are in the process of looking at what section 106 monies are available to be spent on our civic amenities. These are funds which are paid to us by housing developers of large developments to be spent on community and infrastructure projects. We hope to be able to apply for funding for future projects in our communities in Dawlish.

The Dawlish in Bloom floral display competition will be happening again in 2018, after being revitalised last year.

I would like to thank all the councillors who do support the work of the Civic Amenities Committee, and again thank the outside services staff and the office staff for their support this year.

5 Report on his term of office by the retiring Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Humphrey Clemens.

Councillor Humphrey Clemens reported as follows:

As with previous years the Interim Annual report covers the financial activities of the Council over the past year and I would like to thank Yola and Andrew for making my job a lot easier than it would otherwise have been.

The Council's commitment to providing funding through the grant schemes and Community infrastructure funds, highlighted in the Interim Report, make a huge impact on the success of community groups, events and businesses that make the Town of Dawlish a pleasant place to live in, work in and visit.

The council's finances are again in a healthy position and for the 6th consecutive year there has been no increase in Precept for band D properties, in fact there is a slight decrease for the current year. I would like to put on record our thanks to Teignbridge District Council for passing on 48,530 of Government support grant again, the only District in Devon to be still doing so although this will be the last year it will happen as Government funding of Councils continue to be cut.

This is the first time for many years that there hasn't been major expenditure on the Manor and it is pleasing to see a healthy income coming from room letting for a wide variety of uses. Last year I reported on the Council taking over the running of the Riverside Centre and I am pleased to report that it is becoming a valuable asset to the Town and Council.

At the July meeting of the F&GP there was presentation by the then Town Centre Manager on the possibility of a play park on the Lawn between the Band stand and the bowling green. It has received overwhelming support in a consultation with 76.9% of those that voted in favour.

A Teignmouth Town Cllr. said that it was the best thing that happened in Teignmouth bringing in visitors that was a boost to businesses and the Dawlish Chamber of Trade said it would be a great asset for 52 weeks of the year.

Members agreed that funding should be secured first as there would be no point progressing further with the project only to find that funding could not be obtained.

It was resolved by majority the 91,531 section 106 money and 33,000 Community infrastructure money that TDC confirmed was available should be used to provide a playpark on the lawn.

Further funding has been pledged from another source but it is time sensitive so will need to be progressed in this financial year if we are to benefit from it.

A lot of people have expressed concerns to me that no progress has been made on this project, so I hope that this year will see it brought forward. It's a bit like Brexit, those who were not in favour trying to thwart the will of the majority

And finally, I would like to thank Yola for her help and Cllrs. Lisa Mayne and Terry Lowther for their help in the budget setting process. It was a particularly difficult task this year and we had to call in the help of our accountant.

6 Report on her term of office by the retiring Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor Pauline Bloomfield.

Councillor Pauline Bloomfield reported as follows:

This last year has been quite difficult and demanding. Last year I advised that no Council in Teignbridge would be receiving hard copies of planning applications but via their website, in line with national policy. It does mean that anyone on the Planning Committee does require being computer literate to enable them to look up all the applications and study them prior to the meeting. This does take some time in particular when some applications are not very clear, and if you have a major application.

I would like to thank Cllr Taylor for meeting up with me prior to the meeting to enable us to go through the PowerPoint applications that have been set up by the office and ensure that we do know the site of the applications in question.

We have held sixteen meeting this year with an average of nine applications a meeting. These have encompassed major, tree pruning in a big way this year, and much infilling.

To name but a few

We had a further 15 dwelling for Little Leigh, Holcombe,

Various applications for the Secmaton Area development and hopefully a grant which will enable the through road to be built,
The 12 hole Safari Golf course at Tucks Plot,
21 Intermediate Affordable houses at Peppermint Park.

From a historical point of view the old St John's Hall and the Old Brewery in the town are currently being turned into accommodation.

The Railway Carriages at the Warren are to remain and be renovated, and finally it would appear that the majority of static holiday caravans are being changed to 50 week lets.

It is good to know that the Redrow site Warren Grove will be completed by Xmas and that there will be 34 affordable/social homes together with the flats. With the increase in residents it is also rewarding to see that the application for the extended Dawlish Surgery has been completed.

I do hope that in the future SWWA will let us or TDC know what proposals they have for the whole of the Parish as we are experiencing many bursts from old pipe work which causes chaos when it coincides with the beginning of the main summer tourist season – fighting in the aisles of Sainsbury for water to drink and toilet usage.

I re-iterate that we do meet every two or three weeks and the residents of Dawlish are welcome to attend these meetings, from this you would probably learn a lot about developments which are proposed in the Parish, and your input would be very welcome.

My thanks go to the Manor House Staff in particular Yola Mitchell who has clerked our meetings and for guiding us through the change from hard copies to website planning.

Thank you

7 To receive a report from the Chairman of the Dawlish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Councillor Rosalind Prowse reported as follows:

I am very sorry to have to report that this has not been a successful year in bringing forward a NP for Dawlish to be "made".

In spite of the work done in the first 6 months of the year it was decided that we had got to the stage where we would need professional assistance.

We asked for and were granted financial assistance from DTC which would also enable us to apply for grant funding to pay for a consultant. Due to the major

changes that took place in Dawlish TC offices and the change of NP Officer at Teignbridge the project was put on hold.

At the beginning of the year when a new town clerk came into place I had a meeting at which it was decided to write to consultants in this area who specialised in this work. The town clerk also asked other councils in the area for recommendations as several smaller parishes had been able to have plans made. He wrote to 6 and to date has not had any replies. The town clerk has had a meeting with the new Teignbridge officer to discuss the situation.

We will continue to work on a NP as Teignbridge are now, 5 years into the present made plan, looking to update and continue to 2040. We are having Locality meetings on this at Teignbridge including boundary changes. It is most important that we are part of the process and accepted into the updates.

A valuable lesson I have learnt is that if the NP for Dawlish is contrary to Plan Teignbridge it will not be accepted and therefore, not "made".

I shall continue to pursue the matter during the coming months as I am sure we all realise how important it is to look after our town between now and 2040 as we are going to see a further amount of development in that time.

9 Residents' Participation

There had been no requests by residents to participate in the meeting.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 7.37 pm

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Chairman