

Dawlish Town Council
Minutes of a Meeting of the
Town Council
held at The Manor House, Dawlish on
Wednesday, 9 January 2019

Present:

Councillors Mayne (Mayor), Foden (Deputy Mayor), Clemens, A. Fenne, G. Fenne, Goodman-Bradbury, Lowther, Mawhood, Prowse, Robins, Tamlyn, Taylor and Wrigley.

In attendance:

Andrew McKenzie – Town Clerk, and 6 members of the public, two of whom wished to speak.

Urgent Items

The Mayor Advised there would be an urgent item taken at the end of the agenda in relation to the possibility of the town centre being included in a trial 20 mph scheme being run by Devon County Council.

The following minutes will be considered for approval at the next meeting of the Town Council and may be subject to change until that time.

Public Participation

A resident of Sea Lawn Terrace thanked the Town Council for its support whilst discussions had been ongoing throughout 2018 regards the streets lights on what is an unadopted road. She advised the County's Cabinet had met and agreed to continue to fund the street lights.

A member of the Brownsbrook Allotment Association spoke to minute number 141 and, whilst acknowledging the need for the Council to manage its finances prudently, requested that any increase to pitch fees was not disproportionate.

Part I

131 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Almond and Bloomfield.

Resolved that the apology be noted.

132 AGREEMENT OF THE AGENDA BETWEEN PARTS I AND II

There was no Part II.

133 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

134 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

135 DEVON & CORNWALL POLICE

No report had been received.

136 MINUTES

Members considered the minutes of the previous meeting.

Resolved that the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 5 December be approved as a correct and accurate record subject to typographical errors being corrected.

137 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES FOR ADOPTION

Resolved that the minutes set out below, approved by the relevant Committee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting, be adopted:

- Planning Committee – 15 November 2018

138 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUCEMENTS

Good evening, I would like to wish you all a happy and healthy New Year and hope you all had a wonderful Christmas.

My engagements this last month have been very varied, but I have enjoyed every one of them.

Dec 7 – presented certificates to the Volunteers of OpenDaw.

Dec 10 – in the afternoon I attended the Teign Estuary Steering Group at Old Forde House, and in the evening Kingsteignton's Carol Service.

Dec 11 – I had my first visit to a prison when I attended the Carol Service at Denbury Prison.

Dec 12 – I enjoyed a wonderful evening of musical entertainment at a fundraiser for the Helen Foundation which took place at Powderham Castle.

Christmas Day was extremely busy. In the morning I visited Palm Court, Barton House and The Rise nursing homes and at Sefton Hall I was in time to visit all the residents with Father Christmas. At lunch time I dropped into the Strand Centre to deliver presents to the 70-80 volunteers that attended the wonderful Christmas Lunch and entertainment that was provided for them. The atmosphere was so good, and it was really nice to see elderly people enjoying themselves that most probably would have spent Christmas Day alone. I would personally like to thank everyone who contributed to the day, be that giving money, time or goods.

I had a phone call early in the morning of Christmas Eve from a lady who lived in Dawlish. She had a very large Christmas cake and she wanted it to go to a good home. Well it was enjoyed by everyone who popped into the Strand Centre on Boxing Day.

139 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Clatworthy

A brief report as I cannot be with for the January Town Council meeting as I will be away but I plan to be with you for the February meeting:

- 1. Regarding the Link Road I have been told work in earnest is stalled due to Homes England failing to agree and sign the funding agreement. Having said that work is underway with the Ecology, Ground investigations and Flood risk but consultants have yet to be appointed and other legal matters are progressing.*
- 2. Following a recent meeting between TDC, SWWA and DCC regarding the Strategic sewer I have been advised that the SWWA proposal has been reviewed by DCC Development Control and the proposal has no conflict with the Dawlish Housing Infrastructure Fund Project. It was excellent that SWWA contractors left Exeter Road at Shutterton open over the Christmas period for the benefit of motorists as promised.*
- 3. At a recent meeting up-dating members about the Teign Estuary Cycle trail we were informed that the bid for funding from the Coastal Community Fund was unfortunately unsuccessful and alternative sources are being sought.*
- 4. The resurfacing of part East Cliff Road is to commence on 2nd January with the planings taken to Dawlish Gardens Trust to extend the car park.*
- 5. This year 20 local organisations will benefit from grants made from the Locality Budget available to members.*

6. Finally, I attended 114 meeting in 2018 which is less than previous years having left the Cabinet after 11 years.

140 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor Prowse

This period covering Christmas and New Year has mostly been about supporting the activities of organisations around Dawlish. As far as District is concerned the conduct of Councillors continued to be looked at and I had a meeting with the new Solicitor to the Council who is also the Monitoring Officer. We agreed that there is much to be done and I would have further update meetings with her in February and that a full Standards Committee would take place at the end of that month. This has now been confirmed for 27 Feb. 2019

The Planning meeting on 18 Dec. was very interesting (as always) particularly from the Enforcement angle. As Chair of the Enforcement Group I expressed the opinion of all members that it is most important we support the Enforcement team who have a difficult job and a large workload. We had 2 applications to consider and there was 100% vote in favour of action.

Teignbridge closed for the Christmas/New Year period but re-opened with site visits to the Wolborough site which is a large development within the Local Plan. We also had a visit to Neilson House, Teignmouth which has a major application in for re-development. The next day was Executive when the first budget plans were discussed and are now out to consultation. They will be coming to both O&S and Full Council. Tomorrow I am attending a rail consultation in Exeter which may shed some light on future plans.

I hope all members and residents are aware of the disruption which takes place in February with line closures due to bridge works.

On the Dawlish front it has been as always, a period of support talking to residents who have queries. St Gregory's Church has it is now usual, Christmas Tree festival. The Vicar has just been appointed Rural Dean of Kenn.

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year

Councillor Clemens

Councillor Clemens had attended the following meetings:

- *Attended the Teign Estuary Partnership meeting;*
- *Teignbridge Leadership meeting;*

- NA3 Masterplan; and
- Executive on 8 January

In addition to these meetings, he had had regular meetings with officers regards his portfolio of Planning and Housing at Teignbridge.

Councillor Wrigley

Councillor Wrigley advised the main issues was the work on getting the Public Spaces Protection Order was still progressing and would be reconsidered by the Full Council on Monday, 14 January. The recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee had not been taken on board by the Executive and therefore the decision was called-in a second time to be considered by the Full Council. The main issue of contention was the number of dogs that could be walked at any one time.

Teignbridge continued to set its budget for the forthcoming municipal year; it was good to the monies from CIL and S106 were accounted for which meant funds were available for the play park on The Lawn. The Clerk has been progressing talks with Teignbridge regards this.

We have established there is no current and ongoing plan for the dredging of The Brook. Both they and the Environment Agency are of the opinion that dredging does not alleviate flooding; this is regulated by the weirs. We have established the approx. is between £5-10K per segment. Previous thought of ongoing cycle of different segments was in place but this is not the case. I will do what I can to keep progressing this to get a dredging plan in place now we know that the price is not insurmountable.

We heard in the County Councillors report that the sewerage works would be in place until 12 February and would then be moved to the side roads going up towards Lady's Mile so not much longer to wait there.

Councillor Mawhood requested clarification as to what was meant by 'segment'. Councillor Wrigley confirmed it was the area of water between weirs.

140 TOWN COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor Foden

12th December 2018

I was delighted to be invited to open the Christmas Tree Festival at St Gregory's Church in Dawlish. I was asked to choose a favourite out of all the decorated trees,

which was very difficult. A lot of time and imagination had gone into the designs for each tree.

In the end I chose the Dawlish Twinning Association's tree as my favourite, and highly commended the tree decorated by Cofton W.I., and also highly commended Dawlish Museum's Tree.

141 BROWNSBROOK ALLOTMENTS

Members received and considered a report of the Town Clerk which requested consideration of increasing pitch fees by 21% in 2019, and then either instigating a 5% or 10% increase annually thereafter. The report highlighted that the rent the Luscombe Estate (currently £1250) increased every 5 years by 25%, payable by the Town Council. Increasing pitch fees would not only help to cover that cost, but also surpluses could be ringfenced to maintenance and other works at the site so that it paid for itself.

Councillor Mawhood expressed concern with the proposal to increase the plot fee initially by 21%. She acknowledged the Council always had to seek the best use of public money. She submitted the following:

- The original plan drawn up by the Council was misleading and appeared to have been produced from a map rather than from a site visit; the plots varied considerably in size;
- Alterations were made to increase the number of plots to that originally advertised;
- Plots were never at the size nationally recognised of 10 poles or 250m² but even then some were much smaller than others and would she suggested each plot was measured and then charged per square metre to make it more equitable;
- The council was applying more or less the yearly average rental but based on what size – she was aware plots in other locations could be much larger; and
- The landowner required considerable increases in its rent every 5 years however she suggested that the Council could subsidise the allotments to some degree as was the case in other areas – the Council should be encouraging people to provide good wholesome foods.

Councillor Mawhood proposed that: The Council investigate rentals on other sites in relation to plot sizes and seek information on other sites which are subsidised. Once information was received it would be able to set the fees accordingly. She also requested that the Council was proactive in requesting other sites for additional allotment space either by advertisement or requesting information from the District and neighbouring Councils.

Councillors Lowther and Prowse voiced support for charging per square meter and seeking additional sites to address the Council's current waiting list for allotment plots.

Councillor Wrigley supported the proposal and was saddened that the Allotment Associated had not been consulted prior to the report being presented but thanked the Clerk for the thorough report before Members. He did believe a 21% increase was a little too high to bear in one go; had rents been increased in 2017 and 2018 the Council would not be in the position it finds itself in. He stated he did believe a smaller increase was necessary; if the increase was reduced this year and increased £5 annually it would be in a much more graduated way.

Councillor Taylor submitted it would not be right to penalise allotment holders for the Council's lack of increasing pitch fees in previous years but believed an increase was necessary all the same. Councillor Taylor did not consider it necessary to move away from the present formula of charging per plot to create additional burdens for allotment holders and council staff in calculating such fees.

Councillor Clemens submitted that the Town Council was obliged to provide allotments for public use and proposed an amendment that a 10% increase occur in 2019 with a 5% increase thereafter.

In addressing comments made by Members, the Town Clerk advised that:

- The previously circulated report centred around 21% increase initially and then either a 5% or 10% increase annually thereafter; this had been based on the report and same proposals submitted by Councillor Wrigley to the Council in February 2017;
- The plots at Brownsbrook had been professionally measured by Cliff Jones Technical and Educational Ltd; then there were 30 plots ranging in sizes from the smallest at 104m² to the largest at 173m². Of the current 31 plots, the average size was 135m²;
- He was unaware how the fees were set initially but Members needed to bear this in mind as it would either need to be an increase per plot or per square meter;
- Newton Abbot Allotment Association currently charged £63.75 for a full plot for new members, they did have discounts for over 60s, for renewing members which could be introduced;
- Clerk colleagues across the country were asked for their charges and whilst the forum did not advise which Council they were responding from,

responses varied from 150m² for £88, 52m² for £52 whilst another charged 55p per square meter and on the basis of an average plot at Brownsbrook being 135m², this would equate to £74.25;

- The National Allotment Association stated that *it does not endorse the use of benchmarking of other allotment providers in the determination of rents, as this fails to take account of differences between localities in present and future costs and the resources available to meet them. The Society believes that rents should be always determined on the basis of particular localities;* and
- The average size plot recommended by the Society was 250m² which on the basis of Brownsbrook would only yield 16 plots which would reduce current availability by 15 plots.

The Clerk advised there was no malice on the part of the Council towards allotments holders in proposing these increases; it was trying to achieve a positive balance to realise a surplus which could be used specifically for maintenance and improvements at the allotment site and therefore paying for itself. He agreed that the Council should be seeking additional sites.

In response to a question, the Clerk advised there were currently 28 persons on the waiting list for an allotment plot which demonstrated demand.

Councillor Wrigley asked to amend Councillor Clemens' amendment, that if we went with a 10% increase in 2019 and investigated all other options towards implementing in 2020 in conjunction with the association on a size-based pricing, this might then allow us a basis by which to manage future sites should they become available.

At this juncture, Councillor Clemens withdrew his amendment and Councillor Wrigley's amendment now concerned the original proposal from Councillor Mawhood.

At this juncture, Members voted by acclamation to suspend Standing Orders to allow a representative of the Allotment Association to address the meeting.

The representative believed Members were addressing the issue with a considered approach, it made sense to investigate further and bring further proposals back to an appropriate meeting.

At this juncture, Members voted by acclamation to reinstate Standing Orders.

Councillor Mawhood reiterated her original proposal. Councillor Wrigley reminded Members of his amendment to the proposal. Councillor Mawhood agreed to the inclusion of the amendment in her proposal, and Councillor Wrigley withdrew his amendment.

Prior to the vote, the Clerk suggested to Members that in accordance with the minutes from 1 February 2017 where Members had resolved that fees should be set at the October Council meeting for fees being introduced the following year, that this be used as the deadline by which to bring a report back for the setting of fees for 2020. Members voted on the proposal and it was

Resolved unanimously that for 2019 there would be an increase of 10% on current rents from £50 to £55, and that investigations and consultation with the Allotment Association takes place with a report back to the Council at its October 2019 meeting with a view to charging for pitches on either a square meter or plot by plot basis. In addition, the Town Clerk be authorised to seek additional allotment sites for the benefit of the town.

142 COMMUNITIES TOGETHER FUND

Members considered a deferral from the Finance & General Purposes Committee as to what projects, if any the Council should support and/or bid for in the new round of funding (previously the Electors Fund), and considered the proposal submitted by the Exe Estuary Partnership.

The amount available for the Council and community groups to apply for from within Dawlish was £12,773 and projects must be for the benefit of residents from one or more parish and be supported by more than one Town or Parish Council.

The Exe Estuary Management proposal was for the creation of an integrated series of signage, interpretation panels and viewpoint markers along the west side of the Exe Estuary. This would be a cross-parish project between Dawlish Town Council, Powderham Parish Meeting and Starcross Parish Council. In respect of Dawlish, the project would see a new information lectern and frame at the newly regenerated Cockwood Harbour. In total the project would cost in the region of £3,746 which would be apportioned between the three Council's and their respective allocations.

Councillor Wrigley proposed that the proposal be approved.

Resolved that the Exe Estuary Partnership proposal be given the support of Dawlish Town Council.

It was further **Resolved** that the Clerk contact neighbouring authorities and local community groups to draw attention to monies available and encourage applications

to be submitted to Teignbridge District Council where their organisations provided cross-boundary benefits.

143 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

The Mayor invited Councillor Wrigley to present an urgent item.

Councillor Wrigley had been advised on 8 January that Devon County Council currently had a Task Group looking at evidence regarding the benefits of employing 20pmh speed limits. There is a possibility they may look at introducing these limits in town centres and residential areas. There is also a possibility that they may wish to have pilot areas to take part in this.

The Lawn Working Group had seen there was a strong demand for there to be such a limit around the town centre and other areas.

In order to be considered to see if the town wished to participate should it happen, we would need some form of support for this therefore a vote in favour from the Council would enable us to be considered for such a pilot if it were to take place.

Councillor Mawhood on behalf of the Civic Amenities Committee there was pressure to have this limit around the town with regard to the Waterfowl and the fact they were able to free roam across the streets surrounding The Lawn.

The Mayor asked whether specific roads needed to be identified; Councillor Wrigley confirmed at this stage they did not.

Councillor G. Fenne questioned whether he and Councillor A. Fenne, being Highways Officers, were able to vote. They therefore abstained.

Resolved that Dawlish Town Council expresses an interest in being included in a 20mph speed limit trial with Devon County Council, should such a pilot scheme become available.

The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8.01 p.m.

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Cllr Lisa Mayne
MAYOR OF DAWLISH