



DAWLISH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the
Annual Town Meeting
held at The Manor House, Dawlish on
Wednesday, 13 March 2019 at 7 pm

Present: Chairman: Deputy Mayor Alison Foden together with 7 Councillors representing the Town

In attendance:
Andrew McKenzie, Town Clerk

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held at the Manor House, Dawlish on Wednesday 11 April 2018 were approved for signature by the Chairman.

2 Members considered the Annual Interim Report 2018/19 which had been previously circulated.

Resolved that the report be received and noted.

3 Report on her term of office by the retiring Mayor of Dawlish Councillor Lisa Mayne

Councillor Mayne reported as follows:

I can't believe how quickly this year has flown by and I will be sad to see my time as Mayor come to an end, I have enjoyed every second of it. Each and every engagement that I have attended has been completely different in its own way.

Christmas in Dawlish was wonderful last year, so many events happening. On Christmas Day I dropped into one of the Christmas lunches being held in the town for the less fortunate; I never fail to be amazed by the kindness of the residents of this lovely town who volunteer so much of their time and help with projects that wouldn't happen without them. I would encourage each and every one of you that has time to spare, even if it's just an hour a week to consider doing this. Many of the volunteer organisations are part of my Mayoral Charities – if you'd like to support the wonderful work they do, tickets are available for purchase for my Civic Evening on 30 March which is being held to raise funds. Further details can be obtained from Dawlish Town Council but hurry, tickets are selling out fast!

The sun is shining as I write this, and Dawlish is getting ready to welcome another season full of visitors to our town that we are so lucky to live in. I would just like to wish you all good health and happiness in the coming year and thank you for the kindness shown to me during my year as Mayor.

Thank you.

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

Councillor Mawhood reported as follows:

Throughout the last year the Civic Amenities Committee has been working hard to progress a variety of projects, both in respect of maintenance and improvements. We are obliged to follow certain procedures when spending public monies and this means that some matters take much longer than would be wished for.

Benches

CAC has long hoped to replace benches on Kings Walk and this is still the case however this will be reviewed as necessary after the proposed major works to the sea-wall are completed.

Swans

Sadly, a black swan was attacked by a dog on The Lawn and this then became the subject of an investigation by Teignbridge District Council, who own the land, and also the Police. The dog owner was later successfully prosecuted.

The incident raised many concerns regarding the welfare of the swans and the waterfowl in general and there were many representations from members of the public. The CAC took the matter very seriously and has continued to pursue various requests and suggestions. As a result, TDC was contacted regarding one suggestion that the path alongside the Brook be made a dog free path. We have no response so far. However, another suggestion, that signs indicating free-range waterfowl on the roads coming into the Town has been pursued and begins to look more promising. We hope to agree a plan with DCC in the near future.

The Swans were particularly keen to raise families in the last year, regularly nesting and laying eggs which resulted in a number of cygnets many of which had reached adulthood. Naturally there is a limit to how many Swans can realistically be kept on the Brook especially with regard to keeping a healthy breeding stock.

According to one of the regular reports to CAC we also have approximately 50 other waterfowl comprising several interesting breeds.

In addition, CAC is following a proposal to replace the rather poor-quality fencing from the waterfowl enclosure along the Brunswick and up to the next footbridge, with quality fencing to match that elsewhere along that side of the Brook.

We are also in the process of arranging the installation of an information board concerning the swans, on the West side of the Brook in Tuck's Plot which was designed by the Warden who assisted during last Summer.

You will be aware that for some time the path on the East side of Tuck's Plot has been periodically blocked by large and rather ugly barriers in order to protect the swans which have been nesting on the island below the beacon? These are soon to be replaced with specially designed gates which can be locked closed or open according to when the swans or cygnets need protection.

Littleweek Play Park

CAC was made aware of the deterioration of this play park some time ago and following a site visit by members of CAC we closed off the climbing apparatus as a matter of Health and Safety. Although the park is inspected annually by ROSPA we agreed that it was not in a good condition and we decided to approach the Finance and General Purposes Committee for funding to carry out renovation. A further visit to the site enabled members to make contact with some of the users, who prepared a 'wish list' which has formed part of our brief and enquiries towards a new Play Park. Subsequently we have followed the necessary processes and we believe that in the very near future we will be in a position to appoint a company to carry out the work, intending that it will be completed early this year.

Cutting of Grass verges

CAC is responsible for arranging the periodic mowing of the grass verges around the Town, other than the splays at the junctions with main roads which is the responsibility of Devon County Council. The first mowing takes into account the need to allow the narcissi to die back. Last year CAC also arranged for weed eradication on the edges of the roads.

Town and Parish Audit

Once again CAC arranged another Audit of works needed for example to drains/potholes/road signs etc, This was carried out by members identifying various problems and also by including matters brought to the Council by residents. The Clerk has forwarded matters contained in the Audit to the relevant Authorities for action and the Audit is up-dated as works are dealt with and/or as others are brought forward.

Liaison with TDC officer re green spaces.

CAC holds regular meetings with the TDC officer responsible for the management of green spaces here and those things presented to him at our last meeting in October are currently being dealt with. The Chair and other available members meet for a walk around the Town with the officer to identify any problem areas

needing attention, such as gaps in planting, overgrown hedges and footpaths and so on. Included are those problems brought to us by residents. A report is then produced for the purpose of our records and this allows us to prompt if any works are outstanding. The officer involved is most helpful and photographs everything which needs attention so that he can give staff specific orders for the work.

Community Notice boards

Latterly CAC has begun to seek out designs and groups or organisations willing to take responsibility for Community Notice Boards. One of the first will be at the renewed Little Week Playpark.

There are many other tasks undertaken by the CAC for the benefit of the community and it is always most satisfying to see problems solved and good ideas come to fruition.

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:

At the time of writing this report I have not had the advantage of seeing the interim report that I am sure will be available for you all to see tonight. In that report will be the financial statement of the council, not knowing what is in it I will give a brief report on issues, but I may repeat facts that are on the interim report.

As of up to October 2018 we have been paid 48,674 Community Infrastructure Levy with a further 54,696 due from current demand notices. This represents 15% of the total CIL collected by Teignbridge from new housebuilding in the parish. It will be broadly up to the town for which those funds are used.

This current year is the last year we will benefit from the Government Support Grant that Teignbridge have passed on to us to the amount of 48,530 so the budget setting process for the year beginning April 2019 has been more challenging. We have been able to deliver a budget with only a 5p increase on a band D property partly because we benefit from the extra houses being built and paying Council Tax. I would like to thank Cllrs. Lowther, Nickless and Goodman-Bradley and Yola and Andrew for their attendance and support in the budget setting meetings.

It has taken a few years, but the accounts have finally been made more user friendly since being brought back into house. The previous administration moved to external accountants and the various budget lines became impossible to follow.

We are still at the forefront in delivering community grants without which many groups and events in the parish would suffer. To date, because we are not yet at

the end of the financial year, I calculate that we have given 52274 in major grants and in excess of 2500 in the small grants scheme.

The major grants include:

- Assist Teignbridge
- Dawlish Transition
- Chamber of Trade
- Dawlish Carnival Celebrates
- Dawlish Warren Tourism
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- East Teignbridge Community Transport
- Dawlish Warren Arts festival
- Royal British Legion
- Dawlish Local History Group
- Strand Community Trust
- Dawlish Action for youth

We have pledged 10,000 towards Dawlish to Holcombe cycle route although progress is slow to stagnant as the town council cannot agree with DCC's proposed routes through the town. We have also pledged £600 a year for Teignbridge to cut the growth in front of the shelters on the paths up to and on Lea Mount. We are also still financing the four cuts of the road verges annually that makes such a difference to the presentation of the Town.

We finance the hanging baskets that have looked incredible again this year.

One disappointment for me is that in my report last year I mentioned the presentation from the then Town Centre Manager on the possibility of putting a play park between the band stand and the bowls green which was reported to have received 76.9% support in a consultation. A Teignmouth Cllr. told us 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 52 weeks of the year.

It was resolved by a majority that £124,531 held in S106 and CIL money should be used to provide a playpark on the lawn. A further £19,000 grant was also available but was time sensitive so has now been lost.

I also reported that a number of people expressed concerns that no progress had been made but I had hoped it would be brought forward this year and that it was a bit like Brexit, the minority thwarting the will of the majority. Well, nothing has changed, we are no nearer to having a play park on the lawn and it doesn't feel like we are near to getting the brexit people voted for. One party even adopted a policy at Conference to oppose the decision of the largest democratic vote in this country's history.

This will be my last Year as Chair of F&GP having served eight years in total with a break of four years between. The last four there has been no overall increase in a band D property precept. The previous spell there were increases because we elected to take over a transfer of assets from Teignbridge including Tucks Plot, the Museum, the Lawn the Toilets etc. with a ten-year decreasing pot of money to help with cost that amounted to well over 600,000.

It would have been a pioneering project for Teignbridge as it hadn't been done before and would have helped lead the way to other transfers of power to Town and Parish Councils.

The incoming Council couldn't see the potential of owning these assets and handed them back to Teignbridge. As time passes, I think the folly of that decision will become obvious as towns and Parishes will be expected to take over assets without the financial help, however that remains to be seen. I often hear Cllrs. saying they would like to propose doing things in the parts of the town, but we are not the owners so cannot progress with it.

I would like to take this final opportunity to thank members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for their support and Yola for her help in clerking and preparing the agendas.

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

.....
Chairman