

DAWLISH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Civic Amenities Committee
held at The Manor House, Dawlish on
Wednesday, 19 June 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

Present

Councillors Mawhood (Chairman), Dawson, Foden, Heath, James, M. Lowther, Prowse, Taylor and Woods.

Officers in attendance

Andrew McKenzie – Town Clerk and Angie Weatherhead - Events, Projects and Tourism Officer.

Public Participation

There were two members of the public present.

The Waterfowl Warden spoke about the recent incident of the disappearance of 5 cygnets and an adult black swan. Lack of evidence meant it was difficult to ascertain if it was a fox, another predator or theft, some feathers had been left behind. The predator had to be sufficiently large to scare off the adult swan. The sixth cygnet died of shock the next day.

The Chairman of Brownsbrook Allotment Association (BBAA) gave an update on new fencing being installed with extra posts and rails being ordered. By the Association doing the work had saved costs. The Secretary of Association had written to allotment associations elsewhere for details of plot fees. The Chairman of BBAA presented a summary table of fees which indicated the lowest was 14p per square metre rising to 27p per square metre. Plot size was about 200 to 250 square meters on average. Brownsbrook plots as measured were 61p per square metre with an average size of 100 square metres. There were anomalies such as where a half plot was greater than a full plot in one case. Very few allotment associations owned their own land.

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

10 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Wrigley.

Resolved that the apologies be noted.

11 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There had been no requests for dispensations.

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

13 MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2019 be circulated by email and considered for approval at the next meeting in July.

14 DAWLISH WATERFOWL

Standing orders were suspended.

In response to questions from Councillors the Waterfowl Warden reported 7 eggs from the swans at the bottom of the Brook had not hatched and all the eggs had been fertile. Once the swans moved off the nest further investigations would be undertaken. The gates for Tuck's Plot would be installed next week taking 1 to 3 days.

Standing orders were reinstated.

Resolved that the Environment Agency be made aware of the gate works at Tuck's Plot and work on the Swan Information Boards be followed up by officers.

15 HUMANE FOX TRAPS

Councillors discussed the issue of humane fox traps. Councillor Dawson presented a paper questioning whether foxes were responsible and whether the traps would be a good use of public money. Other alternatives such as deterrents and a Swan Cam were suggested.

Standing orders were suspended.

The Waterfowl Warden was asked whether there was sufficient protection for the waterfowl. He advocated increasing the fence height by the Brunswick so the mesh would be at the top of the railings.

Standing orders were reinstated.

Resolved that

(a) Councillor Taylor and Woods explore the possibilities for higher fencing, copying the Town Clerk into emails, returning to a future meeting of the Committee for a decision; and

(b) that officers explore the feasibility of Swan Cam.

16 FREE RANGE WATERFOWL SIGNAGE

Resolved that Cllr Foden and officers investigate possible signage to be affixed to Devon County Council road signs to warn of waterfowl ahead.

17 BROWNSBROOK ALLOTMENTS

The Committee received a report on the recent inspection of the allotment for Japanese knotweed. Only one small tiny visible stem had grown back, and it would be treated in September.

Resolved that the update be noted.

18 ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP

Two members had been appointed.

Resolved that Councillor Taylor be appointed to the working group. An informal visit on site would be arranged by BBAA before the first meeting of the group.

Standing orders were suspended.

The Chairman of BBAA expressed their appreciation for the Council's support and looked forward to the working group meeting.

Standing orders were reinstated.

Resolved that thanks be expressed to the Chairman and Secretary of BBAA for their work on plot fees.

19 TOWN AND PARISH AUDIT

The Chairman noted the audit was continuously updated and works were shortly to begin on the pavement near the Shaftesbury Theatre. Items could be added to the audit which would then be presented to Teignbridge District Council and other authorities for action. TDC and the Police had been notified of a possible anti-social meeting place in the trees in the Manor House Gardens.

Resolved that a map of verges be sent to Councillors for information.

20 DAWLISH WAR MEMORIAL

Resolved that the unveiling of the extra names on the war memorial is on Friday 28th June be noted and that there was a need for additional volunteer gardeners in relation to this event.

21 BENCH ON THE STRAND

Resolved that the bench should be checked weekly by Outside Services, and officers should progress further remedial works or replacement.

22 MANOR HOUSE GARDENS

The Chairman reported on a forthcoming meeting with two professional gardeners recommended by Teignbridge District Council on a possible planting schedule. Detailed plans would be reported to a future meeting.

Resolved that the update be noted.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.26 p.m.

Councillor Val Mawhood
CHAIRMAN