



Dulverton Town Council

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The Clerk

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Dulverton Town Council

Held on Wednesday 3rd May 2017 at 6.30pm, in the Town Hall, Dulverton.

Present: Councillors: Mr Nick Thwaites; Mr Mrs Judy Ernest; Mrs Christine Dubery; Mr Ian Fleming; Mr Gerry Lewis and Mrs Margaret Rawle. There were no members of the public.

Apologies: Mr Steve Ford and Mr Chris Nelder.

Election of Chairman: Mrs Margaret Rawle proposed that Mr Nick Thwaites be invited to chair the Parish Meeting, seconded by Mrs Judy Ernest and carried.

Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 4th May 2016 were read by the Clerk, were accepted and signed. Proposed by Mr Fleming, seconded by Mrs Ernest and carried.

Matters Arising:

None.

Reports from Local Organisations/Clubs:

Streamcombe Allotment Trust:

Councillor Rawle reported that two grants had been awarded during the last fiscal year, to the Dulverton Litter Pickers and the Dulverton Dance Club.

The account stands at £9,000.

The criteria remain strict; however, applications are encouraged.

U3A:

Councillor Lewis informed those present that the organisation continues to thrive. New members would be most welcome.

Dulverton & District Young Peoples Project:

Councillor Judy Ernest, Chairman of the DDYP, stated that the previous six months had been particularly difficult; only three Trustees are in post, more are urgently required.

The building is now in a particularly poor state of repair. Mrs Ernest believes that funds are available for a further three months. The future is therefore somewhat uncertain.

Dulverton Gardening Club:

Councillor Christine Dubery was pleased to report that the club continues to be popular, offering a talk and outing every month. A plant sale is held annually and the Dulverton & District Flower Show is organised. Members work closely with the local schools, helping to create beds to grow produce etc. As a result both schools have received RHS awards.

Dulverton Cricket Club:

Councillor Christine Dubery informed members that there existed two senior teams and one junior team.

There has been a huge improvement in the cricket pitch due to the application of loam funded by Dulverton Town Council

Dulverton Netball Club:

Councillor Christine Dubery reported that the team continues to be successfully, several members having recently passed coaching awards,

Sports Field Management Committee:

Cllrs, Ian Fleming and Nick Thwaites were pleased to report that DTC and the Sports Field Management Committee were very close to agreeing and signing a new Lease Agreement.

Town Hall Committee:

Councillor Christine Dubery stated that there had been improvements made to the sound system, both wireless and wired. A small meeting room was now available for hire. Thanks were extended to the Co-op for funding.

There has been an increase of the use of the facilities generally.

Future maintenance projects include repairs and maintenance to the roof and the refurbishment of the bar area.

Dulverton Players:

Members were informed by Cllr. Christine Dubery that two full productions had been staged and had been well attended. However more volunteers are required particularly with regards the technical side.

Community Bus:

Despite the increase of 20% VAT imposed by Somerset County Council the service is still being used regularly. New volunteer drivers have been sourced and the service is being advertised on the website and the display of posters around the Town. Concessionary fares are still available.

Report from the Mayor/Chairman

The Chairman, Mr Nick Thwaites provided a brief report on some of the successful projects and accomplishments achieved by the Town Council this year.

- Creation of a Town Management Committee: To spread the increasing responsibilities faced by members.
- Lion Stables Toilet Facilities: The successful transfer of asset without the necessity to close the facilities. The successful tendering for related services and the decision to offer the facilities free of charge.
- Farmers Market: To underwrite the events and provide some administrative assistance to the organising Committee.
- Dulverton by Starlight: To accept financial responsibility for the supply of the large trees and lights.
- Abbots Way Pond: The pond has undergone a comprehensive clean and de-silting process and an agreement reached to install equipment to ensure long term sustainable and environmental improvements.
- Town Environment: The purchase of ten new litter bins and a concerted effort to rid the town of rats that were reportedly increasing in numbers.
- Sports Field: The near completion of a new Lease Agreement between DTC and the Sports Field Management Committee.

- All Saints Church: The issues concerning the refurbishment of walls have been resolved between the parties concerned, the tenders for both walls being awarded to G.A. Sully and Sons.
- Traffic Management: Considerable work was undertaken to identify areas where the parking of vehicles either restricted access or caused hazards to other motorists. Members successfully persuaded Somerset County Council to implement parking restrictions where necessary and impose a 20mph speed limit throughout the town.
- Defibrillator: A defibrillator has been obtained and will be situated in the Lion Hotel vestibule. Training will be arranged for volunteers.
- Flood Defence Project: Members worked in partnership with the Environment Agency etc. to successfully develop a Flood Plan and ensure that all the necessary training was given and equipment accessible in the event of a flood. The project has already been tried, tested and proved to be a considerable asset.
- South West Water Sewerage Pump: Campaigning successfully to get the noise and smell pollution reduced.
- Kemps Way: Successfully campaigning to persuade West Somerset Council to fill in the pot holes.
- Cemetery: Having carried out a public survey to ascertain residents' opinions concerning the future of the cemetery members worked hard to ensure that there were enough grave plots available to meet the need for at least the next 8 years.
- Accounting Software: The installation of a new software programme that will provide greater details for members and the public as to the current financial situation and budgets.
- Implementation of an appraisal system and the review of job descriptions and contracts.
- Undergrounding of Cables & Street Lighting: After many years of continued pressure being applied by past and current members of the Council the project is finally near completion.
- Car Parks: Members worked continuously throughout the year to represent Dulverton residents with regards West Somerset Councils proposals to increase charges etc. by attending meetings in Williton, lobbying members and writing to the officers involved.
- Exmoor Lawns - The proposal to transfer the asset to Dulverton Town Council is being carefully considered bearing in mind the financial costs involved.
- Exmoor Parish Lengthsman Scheme: Continuing to administer the scheme on behalf of the other parishes involved.
- Youth Club: Continuing to provide considerable financial support and encouragement to those volunteering to attempt to preserve the facility.
- Magna Housing - Ensuring that the relevant authorities are aware of the housing needs in Dulverton, attending meetings and helping residents complete application forms.

Other issues that members have been greatly involved with concern:

The supply of dog poo bags for use by dog walkers.

In an attempt to stop large vehicles from entering Dulverton unnecessarily members have liaised with Mid Devon Council to erect signage at Exebridge and successfully persuaded S.C.C. to erect warning notices at the entrance to Lady Street.

The Chairman noted that once again members of the public did not attend.

The Chairman concluded by stating that a written submission had been received from Mr Silverlock containing several false statements. Unfortunately, he did not attend in person to support his claims. Consequently, the majority of such claims were unsubstantiated, contrary to the written record and in Cllr.Thwaites view clearly false.

Report from the Clerk:

Finances – Year Ended 31st March 2017: Members will be presented with the Financial Return and a summary of Receipts & Payments as at 31st March 2017, along with the closing balances for their approval at the Council meeting to be held at the meeting scheduled for 8th May 2017.

Members will note that although the reserves remain high resolve, committed and ring fenced expenditure amounts to over £75,000. This does not include the cost of refurbishing the Church Yard wall.

According to the Governance and Accountability Regulations, the Annual Return and the Notice advertising the rights of the public to view the accounts will be displayed on the website. The documents will be published as required on 2nd June 2017, the inspection period being from 5th June 2017 until 14th July 2017.

Internal & External Audits 2016/17: Those present were informed that the internal audit has been undertaken and considered by the Finance Committee. The external audit is due on or before 5th June 2017.

Those present expressed their thanks to the Chairman, Mr Nick Thwaites, the Clerk Miss Mandy Rose and the Administrative Assistant, Mrs Sylvia Gosling for their work over the past year.

Public Comment:

Mr Les Silverlock: A written submission stating Mr Silverlocks' views with regards 'asset stripping' by West Somerset Council and Somerset County Council and his suggestions with regards possible solutions, was read aloud to those present by the Clerk.

Mr Chris Nelder: The Clerk, as requested by Mr Nelder thanked Mr Thwaites, on his behalf, for his work, time and commitment while acting as Chairman to the Council.

Meeting Closed:

7.35pm

Chairman.....