



Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Held on Wednesday 9th May 2018 in the Town Hall, Dulverton, commencing at 6.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors: Mr Keith Coulman; Mrs Christine Dubery; Mrs Judy Ernest; Mr Gerry Lewis and Mrs Margaret Rawle and four members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Mr Ian Fleming and Mr Piers Wood (DTC), and Mr Bruce Heywood (W.S.C.)

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN: Mrs Rawle proposed that Mrs Dubery be invited to chair the Parish Meeting, seconded by Mrs Ernest and carried.

MINUTES of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 3rd May 2017 and published on the website were read by the Clerk, were accepted and signed. Proposed by Mrs Ernest, seconded by Mrs Rawle and carried.

MATTERS ARISING: None

REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS /CLUBS:

Streamcombe Allotment Trust: No grants were awarded during the previous financial year. Applications for deserving causes would be welcome. The AGM has yet to be held and a new Trustee appointed.

U3A: Continues to thrive. As always, would welcome new members.

Dulverton & District Young Peoples Project: The Youth Club is going from strength to strength. Since last year the number of junior members has increased by 172% and seniors by 130%. An 8 week activity programme is in operation.

The premises is being hired out for events and is being used by the Toddler Group until it can return to the Congregational Church.

At the end of March the Youth Leader was forced to resign as his tenancy had expired and he could no longer afford to live in Dulverton. He was very proactive and will be missed.

An Administrator has been appointed to act as mentor to the Youth Workers whilst being trained and to undertake necessary administrative tasks. A cleaner has also been appointed.

Funding has been kindly donated to meet the cost of training for local youth workers to become qualified.

General funding continues to be a problem. Funding exists only for the next nine months. Existing sources tend to fund single projects rather than the financial sustainability of the facility.

The continuing viability of the club will rely on future funding and the involvement of more volunteers.

Mrs Ernest was thanked by those present for the amount of work and personal time she has committed to the Youth Club.

Dulverton Gardening Club: The number of members has increased and enjoy various organised trips and talks. The Club is involved with both local schools. The Infant School has achieved the RHS Gold Award and the Junior School the Silver Award.

Dulverton Netball Club: The club have an increasing membership and as a result run two teams, has two coaches and two umpires.

Dulverton Cricket Club: The club now has only one senior and one junior team. Indicative of a reduction in membership. The bad weather has had a very detrimental effect on the field this year; however the covers have been repaired and placed back in situ.

Flood Action Group: The scheme has proved to be a success. Safety training is to be offered to volunteers in the near future and a third store shed is to be erected as soon as practically possible. There exists a gap between the existing flood defence and the Barle Bridge which needs to be addressed. Possible funding may be forthcoming from the Somerset Rivers Authority.

Sports Field Management Committee: The new Lease Agreement with the Town Council has been signed and the individual Agreements with the clubs finalised.

Town Hall Committee: The bar has been refurbished and there exist plans to redecorate the hall once the heating system has been fixed. The Thrift shop continues to do well and provides the majority of the funding required to maintain the Town Hall.

Dulverton Players: The Players have undertaken two full productions this year, including a pantomime, which was well attended. They are constantly seeking further involvement with regards back stage operations as well as actors.

Dulverton Cinema: Two films are being shown monthly and continue to be well attended.

Community Bus: The service is still being regularly used and is popular with residents.

Family & Toddler Group: The facility thrives, with an average attendance of between ten and twenty children. There also exists an opportunity for parents to meet and chat on a regular basis.

The Voice: Five hundred copies are printed monthly and the publication receives up to 350 hits electronically.

Heritage Centre: It has been a successful year. Finances have improved, losses declined. Membership tends to be minimal as a considerable amount of work is involved; volunteers continue to be sought. It still remains the most popular tourist attraction in Dulverton, visitor numbers being sustained annually. The existing exhibition has been organised by the Butterfly Trust.

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR/CHAIRMAN:

Town Management Committee: The creation of this committee has proved to be successful and it remains very pro-active.

Lion Stables Toilets: The ownership has been successfully transferred to Dulverton Town Council with a minimum of cost to the parish. The Clerk commented that all the comments she had received directly concerning the maintenance of the facilities were positive.

Farmers Market: The event goes from strength to strength and continues to be supported by the Town Council.

All Saints Boundary Wall: The refurbishment of the wall has been completed at a cost of over £75,000 to the parish. Some re-instatement of the lower terrace is still being undertaken.

Defibrillator: The facility has been installed in the foyer of the Lion Hotel and is available for public use.

Exmoor Lawn: The transfer of asset from West Somerset Council to Dulverton Town Council is progressing.

REPORT FROM THE CLERK:

Finances – Year Ended 31st March 2018: Members will be presented with the Financial Return and a summary of Receipts & Payments as at 31st March 2018, along with the closing balances for their approval at the Council meeting to be held at the meeting scheduled for 14th May 2018.

Those present were informed that the reserves at 31st March 2018 amounted to £112,067.73, resolved, committed and ring fenced expenditure amounts to £42,222.67.

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 29th May 2018, the inspection period being from 4th June 2018 until 13th July 2018.

Internal & External Audits 2017/18: 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 4th June 2018.

The Clerk commented that there currently existed three councillor vacancies and that as a result the existing members are undertaking a considerable amount of extra responsibility. West Somerset Council has not received any requests to hold an election from residents; she would therefore welcome

enquiries from anyone interested in being co-opted as a member of the Council.

The Chairman thanked Mandy Rose (Clerk) and Sylvia Gosling (A.A.) for their work over the past year.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dulverton Nursey: Concern was raised regarding the proposal to dramatically cut services as from September 2018. It is considered that the new hours available will prove unworkable for many families, exacerbated by the fact that there will be no provision for children under the age of two.

The decision has been challenged by parents which has resulted in Somerset County Council providing finance from the Sustainability Fund and the existing service being maintained until December 2018. It is hoped that some re-organization, involving the restructuring of various organisations will create a sound business case and a sustainable future.

A Working Group is being set up to work with the school to help increase publicity and investigate ways of obtaining greater sustainability. The support of the Town Council would be greatly appreciated.

Traders Association: Mrs Claire Saville has volunteered to be the Traders Association representative with regards liaison between the Association and Dulverton Town Council.

Mr Ivan Gunn: DTC members were requested to consider the following questions:

- *What action is the Town Council taking to encourage businesses to come to Dulverton and what action is the Town Council taking to encourage start-ups by local people?*
- *What action is the Town Council taking to encourage residents to stand for Council; so that it is better balanced?*
- *What action is the Council taking to help inform our residents of the Council's works and needs?*
- *Is the Council looking at the increase in second home owners?*

Mr Chris Nelder: Wished to take the opportunity to thank members of the Council for their efforts and achievements over the past year.

MEETING CLOSED: 8.00pm

Chairman.....