



Dulverton Town Council

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The Clerk

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Minutes of the Meeting of Dulverton Town Council

Held on Monday 10th August 2020 at 7.00pm, using remote video conferencing.

Present: Chairman/Mayor: Mr Gerry Lewis. Councillors: Mrs Christine Dubery; Mr Alan Ottey; Mrs Louise Parrish; Mr John Preston; Mrs Margaret Rawle; Miss Kathryn Vellacott; Mr Piers Wood; Mr Nick Thwaites, Somerset West & Taunton (S.W.A.T.).

Deferment of Business for Comment by the Public: None

Apologies for absence and acceptance of any reasons offered if agreed:

Cllr. Mrs Judy Ernest (DTC) and Cllr. Mrs Frances Nicholson, Somerset County Council (S.C.C.)

Declarations of Interest:

Cllr. Dubery with regards the Sports Field.

Chairman's Comments & Meeting Management: None

Questions for County and District Councillors:

Cllr. Mrs Frances Nicholson - S.C.C.

In Cllr. Mrs Nicholson's absence members were informed that the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) concerning the 20mph speed limit through Dulverton is about to be advertised and the Task Order package is being prepared for issue to the contractor in August. Providing there are no issues with the TRO construction will commence in September/October.

Cllr. Mr Nick Thwaites - S.W.&T.C:

Car Park Charges: It was confirmed that parking charges will be reinstated as from 31st August 2020.

Small Business Grant Scheme: The closing date for the scheme is 14th August 2020. Town and Parish Councils are now eligible for this grant if they have a Business Rates liability and are receiving Small Business Rates Relief. Cllr. Mrs Dubery intends to submit an application as soon as practically possible.

Minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2020 circulated: were approved and signed. Proposed by Mrs Dubery, seconded by Mrs Rawle and carried.

6573 Update of action points resulting from the last meeting:

6567 S.C.C. Unitary Body Consultation:

Cllr Mr Alan Ottey reported that he had attended via video conferencing, a meeting organised by S.A.L.C., held on Thursday 16th July 2020, attended by senior representatives from the district and county to discuss the Somerset unitary debate and local government re-organisation. A discussion also took place concerning the SALC co-commissioned LGR report that focuses on the potential role for the sector in the future, regardless of what happens with the unitary bid.

Members were informed that there was no general consensus of opinion as to the way forward, amongst the Parish/Town Councils that took part.

6568 Dulverton Promotion Project:

Members were informed that interviews of prospective candidates had been undertaken and subsequently a successful candidate identified.

However, no commitment has been made to date as funding is still to be secured. Various funding sources have been approached including the Exmoor National Park authority, the Exmoor Trust and Somerset County Council. There is also the possibility of personal donations, specifically to be used for the future use of Exmoor Lawns.

6574 Accounts:

Financial Statement: See Appendix A

RESOLVED: That the Financial Statement as per Appendix A is approved. Proposed by Mr Preston, seconded by Mrs Rawle and carried.

Payments for approval: See Appendix B

RESOLVED: That the payments as per Appendix B are approved. Proposed by Mrs Rawle, seconded by Mrs Parrish and carried.

Members were informed that the external audit had been completed by PKF Littlejohn LLP. In their opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. Notice of the conclusion of the audit has been published accordingly.

6575 Committees:

Minutes to be approved by the relative Committee members and be adopted as part of this meeting:

Grounds Committee Meeting – 20th July 2020

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Grounds Committee meeting held on 20th July 2020 are approved. Proposed by Mrs Parrish, seconded by Mr Ottey and carried.

Members were informed that the new benches and picnic tables have been ordered and were expected to be delivered in approximately four weeks' time. The new play equipment (cone climber) is currently being installed in Kings Corner recreation ground.

Furthermore, a new hand blower has been purchased, as resolved, and is currently in use.

Pound Walk: It was reported that Pound Walk is looking unkempt and untidy. Cllr. Mrs Rawle agreed to report the matter to Somerset County Council.

Town Management Committee Meeting – 20th July 2020

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Town Management Committee meeting held on 20th July 2020 are approved. Proposed by Mr Wood, seconded by Mrs Dubery and carried.

Cllrs. Mr Piers Wood and Mr Alan Ottey met with Mr Thomas Thurlow, (Historic Buildings Officer, Exmoor National Park Authority) on Wednesday 5th August 2020 to discuss concerns raised regarding the general appearance of some of the buildings in the Town Centre. Mr Thurlow confirmed that he was well aware of the issues raised and pointed out further issues which he considered needed attention.

Mr Thurlow also agreed to investigate the ownership of the deep gully which runs at the side of and behind Risdon Hosegood Solicitors and feeds a drain at the top of Banks Square and is possibly part of a drainage system. Due to the presence of debris in the gully, there is concern that it could result in flooding.

Farmers Market: It was reported that the event held on 25th July 2020 had been successful and that Government guidelines concerning Covid19, social distancing and sanitising procedures had been adhered to.

Dulverton by Starlight: The event, in its historic form, has been cancelled this year. There will be no firework display, however the Christmas trees will be installed and the lights switched on as usual. There will also be on-line events in which the public can participate. S.W.A.T. will be approached by the Starlight Committee requesting free parking as usual on the first Sunday in December 2020.

Cllr. Mrs Dubery requested from members copies of any videos or photographs they may have of previous Starlight events.

Bus Shelter: Members thanks were extended to Cllr. Mr Piers Wood who voluntarily undertook to repaint and refurbish the bus shelter.

6576 Somerset Association of Local Councils:

RESOLVED: To approve payment of the affiliation fee for the period April 2020 to March 2021, payable to Somerset Association of Local Councils amounting to £384.06. Proposed by Mr Wood, seconded by Miss Vellacott and carried.

6577 Late Correspondence:

Correspondence noted by members.

6578 Questions for Members who have attended additional meetings:

Small Town Webinar – Wednesday 5th August 2020. Hosted by S.W.A.T. and attended by Cllrs. Mr Gerry Lewis, Mrs Christine Dubery and Mr Alan Ottey. Discussion revolved around the use of emergency funding available to help and support high streets recover, diversify and grow following the impact that Covid19 has had on them.

Members were informed that funding may be allocated to Dulverton and that a small committee consisting of representatives from DTC, the Traders Association, the Heritage Centre and the Town Hall Committee is to be created.

6579 Issues to be raised with permission of the Chairman:

Social Housing: The remaining new six Shared Ownership properties at Allers View/Barn Close are also available now through the Homefinder site. People can bid for them if they are registered on Homefinder.

NatWest Mobile Bank: Cllr. Mr Gerry Lewis agreed to ascertain when the service is likely to resume.

Exmoor Panel Meeting – 1st September 2020: Cllrs Mrs Margaret Rawle and Miss Kathryn Vellacott agreed to attend.

Chairman

