

**DARTMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL**  
**CHAMBER OF DARTMOUTH GUILDHALL ON MONDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: N Bodinnar, T de Galleani, A Edsall, R Lyon, M Webber, G Webb (The Mayor); D Wells

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: C Pritchard-Williams; Properties Administrator: K Brown; DTC Groundsman: R Harkness; DTC Gardener: M Horan; Cllr R Rendle, Cllr D Case; six members of the public.

**A G E N D A**

**PART I - Open to the Public**

**17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr S Hibbert (Deputy Mayor)

**18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr R Lyon declared a personal interest in Item 4 Mayflower Statue and Pennants

**19. REGULAR UPDATES**

**The Groundsman gave his report**

**Sites**

**Royal Avenue Gardens**

- Summer bedding stripped
- Cut grass 32 times over last 6 months
- Regular dead heading
- Spring bedding to plant including 3000 bulbs for the great show in spring

**Coronation Park**

- Cut weekly from April to September
- Play area inspected on a weekly basis

**Castle Estate**

- Castle and Warfleet grass cut regularly
- Footpaths to be cut back over winter
- Wall opposite Gunfield Hotel to be cut back

**Longcross**

- New section has been cut 10 times over summer. Looks much improved on last few years

**Orchard**

- Great work on footpath through eastern paddock with the BRNC Cadets and materials donated by RGC
- Plenty of apple picking events
- Tree bases have been cleared to allow apple collecting

**Churchyard**

- Cut 10 times this season
- Still have shrubs and trees to plant

**Winter Projects**

- Rebuild Newcomen beds
- Lay foundations for Royal Naval Association
- We have started work on the Old Cemetery which is going well
- Tree lifting at Coronation Park, RAG and the Cemetery
- Level Surface at the middle play area gate in Coronation Park
- Open view at Sugary Cove Picnic Area
- Bramble removal in the Orchard
- Further work on shrub beds in Coronation Park
- Free graves at Longcross Cemetery
- Build composting bays at the depot
- Replant hedge on Townstal Road that has died
- Reinstate Coronation Park
- Replace the fence in the Orchard

The Groundsman has completed a business case for buying a shredder from the underspend of this year's budget. This will be discussed with the Finance Officer and Cllrs before being brought forward to the next Parks and Open Spaces committee meeting or Finance Committee meeting.

### Questions

Cllr Webb asked about the steps on the Castle Estate that join Castle Road down to the Tea Rooms, Stumpy Steps and the steps leading down to these steps are marked on Google Maps as the South West Coast Path, do Dartmouth Town Council have any responsibility concerning these?

The Groundsman stated that surface and the railings of the steps would be dealt with by Devon Highways, but if it was overgrown vegetation on the steps it would be Dartmouth Town Council.

The Clerk and Cllr Wells added that Dartmouth Town Council are the owners of Stumpy Steps. Cllr Lyon added that we were the owners of Stumpy Steps and that the agreement with the Castle Ferryman is that they clean and repair them through the lease they have between DTC, SHDC and themselves.

There was a discussion about the South West Coast Path being a Bridleway or a Footpath, but that Devon County Highways would be responsible for this if it is shown on the Devon County Council Bridleways map.

Cllr Wells added that Dartmouth Town Council needed written clarification from Devon Highways about who is responsible for this. He also read out an email from the Castle Ferry that includes the daily cleaning schedule of the steps and the deep cleaning schedule of Stumpy Steps.

Cllr de Galleani asked about the dripping tap at Longcross Cemetery, the Groundsman added that this had been fixed.

Cllr de Galleani asked if the gates to the children's playpark in Coronation Park could be changed to open inwards, as at present they open outwards onto Coronation Park and she had received complaints from parents. The Groundsman said that this may mean that the gates need to be changed and that he would check legislation EM1176 about this. A discussion was had about why the gates were made to open outwards into the park. The Clerk found the legislation on the ROSPA website <https://www.rospa.com/Play-Safety/Advice/Gates> which stated that normally gates should open outwards except when opening outwards may

cause a hazard to others, this is because dogs find it easier to push a gate rather than pull it and can therefore access a gate that opens inwards more easily. Cllr de Galleani asked for the Market Square Trees to be added to the tree lifting list. The Groundsman confirmed he had added them to the list. Cllr Edsall then stated that he had heard only positive things about the Open Spaces Team and the Gardens. This was echoed by Cllr Wells.

### **Dartmouth Green Partnerships report**

Cllr de Galleani gave a Dartmouth Green Partnership report.

- Some baskets have been taken down due to weathering
- Some baskets are still up but will be taken down shortly
- Bulbs have been ordered for next year
- DGP are working with the Mayflower 400 for some displays
- Next year moving away from orange begonias with a completely different scheme
- Orange begonias will be given away, some will be basketed up for the shops in Dartmouth if they want them
- Have secured £20,000 from the Postcode Lottery for the greenhouse which takes the funding to halfway
- Have worked with BRNC, the Regatta Committee, Rotary and Dartmouth Caring this year
- Would like it noted that the Dartmouth Green Partnership free hours have saved Dartmouth £20,000 this year in labour costs.

Cllr Lyon asked for Dartmouth Town Council to discuss helping Dartmouth Green Partnership financially with the completion of the greenhouse now that the ground is in Dartmouth Town Council Ownership. £60,000 is needed for completion of the greenhouse. £60,000 has been raised already to bring the total to £120,000. Cllr Wells asked for this to be passed to the Finance Committee.

## **20. GENERAL**

- **s106 MONEY - Update from meeting with SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL, and discuss money from the Dartmouth Quay £1581.79 to be used on tree management within Dartmouth area – Cllr AE**

Cllr Edsall said that he had attended a meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September which opened up a lot of potential opportunities. South Hams District Council (SHDC) came to appraise Dartmouth Town Council on the s106 money either currently available or that would become available from the current housing developments. A substantial amount of money has been set aside specifically for parks and open spaces usage and SHDC want DTC to start planning on what they would like to do with the money when becomes available several years down the line. It is ringfenced for parks and off-site playing fields.

In Ivybridge, the Council have set up a sports forum which will set up a joined-up sports strategy to spend the money over a wide range of sports and activities throughout the town. This will look at how to leverage this money with additional funding for sports clubs that serve the town through multiuse club houses and pitches.

Cllr Edsall said he would like to set up a working party to do this, a member of the public mentioned that there is unofficially a Dartmouth Sports Group who formed 10 years ago and that she was still the secretary and would be happy to contact the clubs to re-instate this club and to have representatives from the Council on it.

There was a discussion about this and Cllr Webber said that once the group was set up that this should go to the next Full Council meeting to be discussed and choose a representative from the Council for the group.

**Proposed:** Cllr Edsall

**Seconded:** Cllr de Galleani

**Resolved:** That once the group is set up, that this be moved to the next Full Council meeting and a representative be voted onto the Dartmouth Sports Group to help with discussions on the s106 money.

Cllr Edsall added that there is money currently available for tree management. The Groundsman stated that they were looking to work on the large horse chestnut tree at the Castle Estate that is in danger of collapsing. The allocated money would cover half of the work.

**Proposed:** Cllr Edsall

**Seconded:** Cllr de Galleani

**Resolved:** To spend the allocated tree management money on the horse chestnut tree on the Castle Estate.

Cllr Edsall added that there is also money available from the Ivatt Road Development of £16,995 for Collingwood Play Area or Youth facilities at Norton. Need to identify what this money could be spent on, and the Groundsman suggested letting the young people of Dartmouth help decide what the money is spent on. Cllr Wells added that this should be moved to the next Parks and Open Spaces meeting.

Cllr de Galleani asked about the s106 money that is coming from the Baker Estate development and how it would work with Stoke Fleming Parish Council as they will be getting the precept from the new estate. Cllr Edsall replied that it was mentioned the s106 money must be spent for the benefit for the people who are living on that estate. Cllr de Galleani stated that Stoke Fleming Parish Council should be asked if they would like a representative on the Dartmouth Sports Group as the development is in their Parish.

- **To discuss the Dartmouth Mayflower 400 displaying pennants around the town**

*Cllr Lyon declared a personal interest and left the room for the Mayflower 400 discussions.*

Cllr Wells asked if there were any objections to having the pennants around Dartmouth on the railings in Royal Avenue Gardens and the Boatfloat along

with buildings such as the Market to promote the Mayflower 400 celebrations.

Cllr de Galleani stated that her only objection would be that if the pennants are made from cotton cloth, they may go mildewy in the rain which could look tired after time.

Cllr Wells asked who would be doing the upkeep of the pennants when they were up on display and any repair work needed.

Cllr Edsall asked for someone from Mayflower 400 to come to the meeting to ask questions about the pennants, such as where they are going, how long they will be up for and who would be looking after them.

Cllr Diana Case left the room to ask Cllr Lyon about the pennants. Cllr Lyon, through Cllr Case stated that the pennants would be A4 size, there are over 4,000 of them and they have been made worldwide. They will go up before the Candlelit Procession and remain for the duration of the Mayflower celebrations.

Cllr Webb added that they were going to be up for a year and who would put the other signs back up that the Mayflower 400 had taken down.

Cllr Wells added that the Old Dartmothians need to be asked if the pennants can be put on the fountain and the railings in the Royal Avenue Gardens.

Cllr Bodinnar stated that the Mayflower 400 needed to ask permission to put the pennants up on listed buildings.

Cllr Edsall stated that they would look dreadful after being out for a whole winter through to May next year and it may be best to put them up from Spring through to October to keep them looking there best.

Cllr de Galleani stated that we should ask questions to Di Lyon about the Pennants and suggested that Dartmouth Town Council invite Di to come to the next Parks and Open Spaces meeting at the end of October to discuss this and show samples.

- **To discuss the responsibility for the Dartmouth Mayflower statue being positioned in the Capstan beds on the South Embankment.**

Cllr Wells said that SHDC have asked if Dartmouth Town Council will take ownership of the statue with a license from them as the statue will outlive the Mayflower Committee.

Cllr Webber stated that it is on SHDC land and that the statue looked like it could be vandalised easily, and that SHDC wanted DTC to take responsibility for repairs for something on SHDC land. She suggested that a fence could be added. Cllr Webber also stated that we should not take on something that could cost DTC money when it is not on DTC land.

Cllr Edsall added that if DTC took ownership of the statue, we should be able to remove it due to vandalism.

The Groundsman added that it would be concreted in with a large footing and that Dartmouth Green Partnership will plant different grasses around the bottom of it.

Cllr Edsall thought that the statue would be a positive addition to The Embankment, but that it is in a bed that is not on DTC land.

Cllr Wells added that the statue in a prominent place on the Embankment outside the Yacht Club and is unlikely to be vandalised.

Cllr de Galleani stated that DTC should take the hit for the statue as otherwise SHDC may not let the statue be put in at all and it is due to go up in 11 days and if it is vandalised DTC retain the right to have it removed.

Cllr Webber stated that SHDC seem to give DTC things that need money spending on them and as the statue is in a SHDC bed they should look after it.

Cllr Edsall added if the statue was going into one of our beds we would look after it, but that SHDC have agreed for the statue to go into a SHDC owned bed and should therefore be looked after by them, if they want to upset the town by saying no it is up to them.

Cllr Case asked if the Mayflower / SHDC could maintain the statue and the bed, and then once the Mayflower 400 Committee had ceased to exist, they could possibly offer it to DTC to maintain along with a goodwill gesture of some money to look after it that would cover future works to the statue. If SHDC are not willing to do that, Cllr Case agrees with Cllr Webber that we should not take on the bed.

Cllr Edsall added that if the statue is to be unveiled in eleven days, SHDC will have to accept responsibility for it as it is on their land.

All Cllrs agreed that more information about the statue was needed and the costs and agreement looked at

Cllr de Galleani pointed out that the agreement was for the statue, information board on Bayard's Cove and trail markers around Dartmouth.

Cllr Edsall stated he would not be comfortable for anyone to sign the contract without it being looked at by the Councils solicitor.

Cllr de Galleani asked if a 10-year lease could be issued instead of a 99-year lease.

The Clerk suggested that the Mayflower 400 sign a lease that ends after the Mayflower celebrations next year, which would give the Council time to discuss with SHDC further.

Cllr Bodinnar pointed out that the Mayflower 400 are responsible for the statue until a lease is signed.

**Proposed:** Cllr de Galleani

**Seconded:** Cllr Webber

**Resolved:** Propose to ask for additional information and costings from SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL about the lease and that the lease remains with the Mayflower 400 committee until Dartmouth Town Council have had time to consider this.

All Committee members agreed to this.

- **To discuss Seagulls being removed from the list of protected birds – Cllr Wells**

Cllr Wells received an email from the member of the public who stated that gulls have been taken off the endangered list. Cllr Wells feels that prevention should be used instead of culling as we should not be culling wildlife.

The Groundsman stated that the wildlife act protects gulls and that they can only be culled for health and safety reasons.

Cllr de Galleani read from the Wildlife Act, which states that it makes it illegal to intentionally or recklessly damage or kill or destroy an active nest and its contents.

Cllr Wells stated that the main reason for gulls coming into the town is a lack of waste management and that prevention should be used such as plastic eagles to abate the problem.

Cllr de Galleani added that the Groundsman have removed bins from the Royal Avenue Gardens to prevent rats and seagulls, which has worked well.

Cllr Edsall stated that Dartmouth Town Council is committed to discouraging gulls in the town and culling is not a priority.

There was then a discussion about Seagull Sacks.

## **21. JAWBONES**

- **To discuss DTC leased piece of land at Jawbones**

Cllr Webb stated that the Clerk has been in contact with SHDC about the lease, which was a draft for composting on the land. Since the lease was drafted, Dartmouth Town Council have developed the depot at the bottom of College Way. There is five years left to run of the lease. If a container was put on the land with temporary planning permission, it could only stay for five years and would have to go to SHDC to change the permitted use. After five years, the charity or business on the land would have to go back to SHDC to renegotiate the lease that would cost £2,500 a year. This is more complicated than first thought and SHDC would like more information on how the land would be used and requires more investigation.

Cllr Lyon added that this lease was originally discussed with SHDC about composting after the Sunday tip at Jawbones was closed. This was agreed with SHDC to be a depot for the gardeners, for compost and two or three storage containers. The site was agreed with SHDC at a cost. During the continued discussions with SHDC regarding the transfer of assets, they also added areas of woodland around the Castle Estate, and in return SHDC agreed to give the land at Jawbones for free. Overall, the BRNC site worked better for the Open Spaces Team. Cllr Lyon has discussed with SHDC about the possibility of the Jawbones site being used for trailer parking for the proposed new slipway in Dartmouth.

Cllr Webber suggested that with the extra knowledge, Cllr Webb could go back to SHDC for a further discussion on the matter.

## **22. CORONATION PARK**

- **To discuss permitting the upgrade of the lighting at Coronation Park to enable the Devon Air Ambulance to land at night. – Cllr Case**

Cllr Case said that she had spoken to the Devon Air Ambulance (DAA) about the current landing sites in Dartmouth. The DAA did not think that Dartmouth had adequate landing sites and asked if Coronation Park could be added as an additional landing site in town. DAA have money put aside

for part funding for this, with the view of getting 250 sites set up around Devon. SHDC were asked for this three years ago and had no objection, but this didn't materialise. All the DAA need to make Coronation Park suitable for night landing is for the light column to be brought down and new suitable lights added to this and a switch box in the electricity green cupboard. Cllr Case wanted to check that this was OK with the committee before taking this forward. The lights would only turn on when they are activated by the pilots at night and cannot be turned on otherwise. The total cost to the Council would be around £1,300 and the Council would receive a grant of £300 for the work.

Cllr Wells stated that this would be very good for the town and its inhabitants.

**Proposed:** Cllr Tessa

**Seconded:** Cllr Bodinnar

**Resolved:** To recommend that the costs for fitting floodlights to the identified pole in Coronation Park to enable the Devon Air Ambulance to land at night, be put on the next Finance Committee Agenda.

All committee members thought that this was a good idea.

- **To discuss alternative uses for the tennis courts in winter – Cllr CC**

Cllr Edsall asked on behalf of Cllr Campos why the tennis courts can't be used for other things in the winter when tennis is not being played on them. Cllr Wells stated that this was trialled in Totnes but the tennis court and fences were damaged due to football and basketball use.

Cllr Lyon added that tennis courts are very expensive to resurface.

A member of the public who uses the tennis courts stated that the usage of the tennis courts is the same during the winter unless it is icy. There are times when the tennis courts are not being used, but these are the same as in the summer.

Another member of the public stated that the Regatta tournament would not happen if the courts had extra lines painted on them.

Cllr Webber stated that everyone around the table would be against the multi usage of the tennis courts.

- **To discuss council land recommendations for short term and long-term trailer park – Jawbones**

Cllr Edsall would like the Slipway Committee and the Harbour Master to come and present to the Parks and Open Spaces Committee about the trailer parking as they would like the Council to take over the Quarry behind the depot for trailer parking.

The Groundsman disagreed, adding that this was not the place to discuss it as the trailer park presents very specific health and safety issues to the Open Spaces Team.

Cllr Wells said that the Slipway Committee would have to talk to the MOD about the quarry.

It was agreed that this issue needs to be discussed fully at another meeting when more information is available.



Cllr Edsall will organise for the Slipway Committee to present at a future Parks and Open Spaces meeting.

*Five members of public left the meeting at 19:51*

**23. ROYAL AVENUE GARDENS**

**To discuss the use of Royal Avenue Gardens in respect of advertising – Cllr RR**

Cllr Rendle asked for the conditions for hiring the Royal Avenue Gardens to be reviewed as many of the rules are being ignored.

*Cllr Webb left at 19:58*

**Resolved:** Have the rules and regulations discussed for Royal Avenue Gardens in a future General Purposes meeting. Office to circulate current rules for Cllrs to discuss.

**24. DEPOT**

**To discuss the possible new slipway and BRNC depot regarding trailers – Jawbones/CP**

This item was covered in the earlier items

**25. VERGES / STREET SPRAYING**

**To discuss Community Payback Scheme's reply regarding street spraying**

Cllr Edsall asked for this to be moved to the next Parks and Open Spaces meeting due to time constraints.

Cllr de Galleani added that Dartmouth Green Partnerships worked with the Community Payback Scheme and it worked very well.

Cllr Wells stated that they may not be able to conduct street spraying as they would need a license to do this.

**26. BUDGET**

**Update on budget**

The budget will be looked at in the next Parks and Open Spaces committee meeting.

**27. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

- Items for the Neighbourhood Plan
- To discuss Community Payback Scheme's reply regarding street spraying
- S106 money from the Ivatt Road development
- To invite Di Lyon of the Mayflower 400 to talk about the pennants
- Budget

**PART 2 – Confidential**

There were no items

*The meeting closed at 20.05*