

TEIGNMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, 31 MAY 2022 AT 6.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, BITTON HOUSE

Present: Cllr. I. Palmer - Town Mayor
Cllr. J. Atkins – Deputy Town Mayor
Cllr. R. Ash
Cllr. D. Cox
Cllr. A. Henderson
Cllr. D. Matthews
Cllr. J. Orme (*left at 7.50pm*)
Cllr. R. Phipps
Cllr. E.S. Russell
Cllr. C. Williams
Cllr. P. Williams

In attendance: Mr. I. Wedlake - Town Clerk
Miss. A. Winston - PA to the Mayor and Clerk
Cllr. M. Wrigley - Devon County Councillor
Members of the Public

1. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting of the Town Council held on 4 May 2021 were presented by the Mayor.

Cllr Phipps proposed to approve as a true record the Minutes, seconded by Cllr Atkins and agreed. Cllr Cate Williams abstained as she was not a Town Councillor at the time.

2. Questions from Parishioners

The Mayor invited questions from Parishioners.

Resident of Bitton Park Road - gave background information about her experience of liaising with the Town Council regarding the introduction of the pay and display scheme in the Bitton House car park. She outlined three proposals 1) to have a clear path of communication between the car parking working group, Assets and Facilities Sub-Committee and the Town Council 2) to have the initial fee of £400 for a permit honoured 3) that the permit is in the name of the person, not the property. All proposals were seconded and agreed by those in attendance.

Resident of Bitton Avenue – conveyed three examples of people who have been directly impacted in a negative way by the pay and display scheme 1) someone who

is less active than before because they worry when they leave that they may not be able to get a free parking space upon return 2) someone who has medical problems and needs to park near their property 3) a carer who could not pay the £1 overnight charge and ended up sleeping in their car. The proposal to ask Councillors to consider removing the overnight fee was presented and seconded by a resident of Chelsea Place.

A resident who sits on the Car Parking Working Group – expressed that she continues to be disappointed and nothing has happened in the past year. She questioned how the Park Hill car park is included in the scheme and stated that questions raised at the previous meeting have still not been addressed. She conveyed that her experience has been demoralising and disrespectful. The proposal that the pay and display scheme should be a standing item on the Full Council agenda was presented and seconded by a resident of Bitton Avenue.

A resident of Bitton Park Road – gave an account of the problems caused as a result of the pay and display scheme, for example, having to move the car at 5.55pm to try and find a free parking space. She thanked West Ward Cllrs for trying to help and be the bridge between residents and the Full Council. She stated that residents are inconvenienced and asked why the Town Council is making life even harder especially given the current cost of living. The proposal was presented to remove the 6.00pm time limit so people do not have to move their vehicle, seconded by a resident of Bitton Park Road.

A resident of Alexandra Terrace – focussed on the lower car park in Park Hill saying that this car park is ideal for large vehicles. She said there has been an increase in commercial vehicles parking on Alexandra Terrace since the pay and display scheme was introduced. The resident relayed a few rumours regarding what this area may be used for. She asked for transparency and collaboration and implored Councillors to work with them and sort the problem out.

A resident of Bitton Avenue – conveyed she had looked at the council's accounts and asked about the cash available. The Clerk said the council set a precept without having a budget. Cllr Atkins added that a Finance Officer is in post on a temporary basis to resolve the budget issue. The resident asked Councillors to consider if the council has a moral duty to review the charges given the changes in the economy.

A resident of Exeter Road - asked why Freedom of Information requests have not been dealt with and asked about the document which states a fee of £400 for a parking permit. The Clerk conveyed that the action was delegated to the Clerk at the time and that a fee of £520 was agreed in line with the charge at Quay Road car park. The Clerk said the main priority is to set a budget.

A resident of Bitton Park Road - asked how much money is needed to do up Bitton House. The Clerk replied that the intention is that Bitton House should pay for itself and not be a burden on the community and that the pay and display scheme will pay for the car park only, the quote for re-surfacing is approximately £200,000. He asked how many permits are available as the website states there is a waiting list.

A resident of Haldon Avenue – spoke about the blue flag status and asked why is the council adopting policies and procedures which could jeopardise the blue flag status, for example, by charging event organisers to have toilets open which they may not be able to afford and then results in people urinating and defecating in other places. The Clerk said the cost of running the toilets is upwards of £200,000 a year and the cost passed to event organisers is for extra cleaning. The proposal to review the charging structure for not for profit events was presented and seconded.

A resident of Chelsea Place – presented a proposal to cancel or suspend parking charges given the current climate situation, seconded by a resident of Alexandra Terrace.

A resident of Chelsea Place – expressed that he had tried to sell his house recently but the majority of viewers would not proceed due to there being no parking.

A resident of Bitton Park Road – presented a proposal that people who work at Bitton House should pay for a parking space, as nurses now have to pay to park. Seconded by a resident of Bitton Park Road.

Nurse – conveyed that residents are tired of meetings and feel that the Town Council is not listening to the residents.

A resident of Bitton Park Road – expressed that they do not think it is a fair point that Bitton House and the car park are separate cost centres as it is a selling point when having a wedding that there is a car park. She conveyed that the poorest part of the community are funding the scheme and the decisions the council made impact residents directly.

Cllr Matthews - proposed to reverse enforcement on Park Hill car park until they have consulted with residents, as agreed at a Full Council meeting. Seconded by Cllr Orme.

Cllr Henderson – expressed that hardly anyone is parking in Park Hill car park. He made the proposal to scrap the overnight charge, seconded by Cllr Matthews.

A resident asked if those who have a permit will be reimbursed. The Clerk replied that the Town Council is in a contractual agreement with Devon County Council.

Cllr Orme – conveyed that she is ashamed to be a part of the council at the moment and that communication is really poor. She said she had asked whether some sub-committee meetings could be done via zoom to make it easier for Councillors who still work to attend but had not received a reply.

Cllr Matthews – requested that meetings revert back to 6.30pm start.

A volunteer at the Alice Cross Centre – said there is no sign directing people to the centre and asked if one could be put up. Cllr D Cox will take this item forward as it is a Devon County Council matter. Cllr Russell suggested a letter from the Town Council could be sent in support of a sign.

The Mayor said comments and proposals have been recorded and thanked everyone for attending.

Cllr Matthews proposed to proceed to review as a collective the proposals presented, seconded by Cllr Phipps and unanimously agreed.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.

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TOWN MAYOR

Bitton House, Teignmouth
1 June 2022