



Ashburton Town Council

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 7.30PM IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE TOWN HALL**

Present: Cllr Slater, chairman
Cllrs Ashford, Khan, Distin, Brewer, Giles, Baker, Dennis, Nutley and Hitchcock.

In attendance: The deputy clerk and eight member of the public

047/15GP Apologies

There were no apologies received. Amendment Cllr Daw had given his apologies.

048/15GP Public comments/statements. The public may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes on items on the agenda or items that may be considered for a future agenda at the chairman's discretion.

One member of the public wished to speak

A refugee welcome group has been set up on Facebook with over one hundred members to date and she hoped to interest the town council in its aims. She gave details of her background. She wished to town to extend the hand of friendship.

The aim of the group is to lobby for refugees to be welcomed into the county and community ie genuine people escaping impossible situations.

She applauded the fact that the UK government spend more in aid than any other country but thought that taking 20,000 refugees over five years was not enough.

She asked the town council to think about how it could support the group and refugees.

She said that people are saying that we should put our house in order first but what sort of house have we got if people are in crisis and we do nothing.

She said perhaps the town council could declare to agree to take some refugees and also to help put pressure on local authority to bring some refugees to this area. She stated that the refugees from Syria come from a beautiful country. She believed that this is a time when people would look back and say this is the time when things changed and we needed to be able to look back and say we had done our best to help the refugees.

049/15GP Declarations of interest. To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

050/15GP Minutes of the previous meeting of 22 July 2015

These were signed by the chairman as a true record.

051/15GP Matters arising from the previous minutes of 22 July 2015

There were no matters raised.

052/15GP Information discussion with Glendinnings

Cllr Slater welcomed Barry Wilson and Ian Glendinning. Mr Wilson stated that they had been in consultation with Dartmoor National Park Authority. They had commissioned technical documents, spoken to neighbours. There had been some changes to the plans since the previous consultation including moving the proposed road to the edge of the quarry and widening Balland Lane. They are hoping to submit the planning application at the end of October. 44 had attended the consultation during the day.

The town councillors then took time to view the proposals and ask questions of Mr Wilson and Mr Glendinning.

053/15GP Parish boundary stones update

The deputy clerk read an email from the DCC Bridge Inspector, which stated:

Having reviewed this request I can confirm that in principal we would not have an objection to these works, there are a number of issues which would need to be finalised before they could proceed. Firstly, at least 2 of the bridges are listed (Holne and Dart Bridges are grade II listed) and consent would need to be obtained from the relevant conservation officer at the district council for each bridge. Secondly, the works would require external funding as these are non-essential works and couldn't be funded from Devon County Council's bridge maintenance budget. Thirdly, the works would have to be undertaken by approved contractors to ensure the required standards for workmanship and safety are met, a key element of this would be traffic management whilst working at the bridge.

It was decided that the clerk should firstly get some quotations for the works and then bring back to another meeting for discussion.

RECOMMEND: CLERK TO OBTAIN COSTINGS.

054/15GP Queen's birthday celebrations

The Queen's official 90th birthday celebrations are on 12 June 2016.

Councillors discussed this in detail and it was decided that a committee of volunteers from the community should be set up to decide on events to mark this, such as a street party for children and a cream tea for pensioners in the town hall. The primary school

should be involved. Money for this could be set in the precept and also fund raising events.

RECOMMEND: CLERK TO ADVERTISE FOR VOLUNTEERS.

055/15GP General discussion on refugee crisis (Cllr Nutley)

Cllr Nutley stated that he, Cllr Barker and Cllr Dennis had all been contacted regarding the crisis. Councillors discussed the crisis in detail and the activities happening in town regarding raising funds.

- Kenwyn would be of no use for housing refugees as all amenities had been removed.
- Cllr Dennis stated that TDC had been discussing what the government is doing. Refugees may be housed in certain areas. Cllr Khan stated that this may result in the creation of ghettos.
- Cllr Khan stated that this was an opportunity for the town council to make a statement to the powers that be. We can show kindness and integrate refugees into the community. We should help them as any other human beings.

It was decided that Cllr Khan would draft a letter, distribute to councillors for discussion and this would be brought to the next Full Council meeting.

RECOMMEND: CLLR KHAN TO DRAFT LETTER FOR DISTRIBUTION TO COUNCILLORS AND THEN TAKEN TO FULL COUNCIL FOR VOTE.

056/15GP Matters raised by councillors for information only or possible inclusion on a future agenda.

- The deputy clerk stated that the housing needs surveys would be delivered in the next day or two and could councillors come to the clerk's office on Monday to pick these up for delivery.
- It was noted that the double yellow lines had still not been painted outside the Victoria Inn in North Street.
- Cllr Khan gave councillors details of the winter pressure plan being implanted at Ashburton and Buckfastleigh hospital and Bovey Tracey hospital. She also gave details of the proposals for the hospitals long-term future.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm.

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CHAIRMAN