

The Dover Society
Minutes of the Executive Committee, held on Thursday 19 September 2013
at St Paul's Parish room, Dover

Present: Derek Leach (Chair), Jeremy Cope, Sheila Cope, Glyn Hale, Beverley Hall, Patricia Hooper-Sherratt, Alan Lee, Mike McFarnell, Jean Marsh, Pat Sherratt, Terry Sutton, Mike Weston.

1. Apologies

Susan Jones, Alan Sencicle

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Item 4 Chairman's Report Ray Newsam had also considered the draft reply to DDC Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

3. Matters Arising

A request from Clive Taylor for The Dover Society to make up a table of 6 for the Wine and Wisdom event at the River Village Hall on 30 November. JC to email members.

The question was asked if the Society sent out too many emails. The consensus of opinion is no.

4. Chairman's Report

Paul Watkins had announced the TV screen in the Market Square will be removed.

Crundall Plaque – DL satisfied that when the land was bought by William Crundall's father there was a house on the land. He will check the Temple Ewell Electoral Register to see whether the Crundall family ever lived there. If his father was there we can assume his son was also living there.

Weatherspoons and the cinema building in Castle Street. There is a project put forward by the Hoteliers Association to put up netting and banners over the building at a cost of £8K and Adeline Reidy has asked The Dover Society for a contribution towards the cost. There was a possible conflict of interest as the society is instigating S215 action for Weatherspoons to bring the building up to an acceptable level and could at the same time contribute to the community and not the owner tidying it up. This would help Weatherspoons not to do anything and undermine our own work. TS proposed we contribute £250 towards the cost and seconded by JC. A vote was taken with 3 in favour and 7 against. A second proposal was made to give nothing. The vote was 3 against with 7 in favour. The Chairman would explain our reasons to Adeline Reidy

DHB. Had a meeting with the CEO, Tim Waggott. He is keen to do more with the community and make better use of the DHB assets. He is keen for Dover to be a destination and not just a port that people pass through. The idea of a Dover Heritage Trail was put forward and The Dover Society was asked if they had any more ideas from the community. The Chairman had said that The Dover Society would consider any joint projects including Lottery Fund bids. DHB had agreed to give £200 to Dover Film Festival..

Port Community Forum. TS attended the inaugural meeting of the PCF on 5 September with DHB's Tim Waggott in the chair and with DHB's Chairman George Jenkins. The meeting was not very well attended compared with Port Consultative Committee meetings, which it succeeded.

Mr Jenkins stressed he and his Board were determined to keep the Port of Dover as a Trust Port and told of discussions with the Minister of Transport to moderate restrictions including financial that prevented DHB playing a more pivotal role in the Dover community.

Two of seven candidates were elected to the committee to represent the general public on the committee. It was decided to leave to the next meeting, in November, the election of a chairman of the forum. Messrs Jenkins and Waggott are keen the forum should not be a DHB dominated group.

As already circulated by DL there was a general discussion about DHB's Heritage strategy and DHB's restricted powers to deliver regeneration. This led to long discussion about how tourism, especially from cruise liners, to Dover could be improved. Those attending including three from DDC, including the leader and Chief Executive, representatives from Dover Town Team, DTC, the White Cliffs Country Tourism Alliance. Port Chaplainry service, and Kent University but others are to be invited. Increasing traffic through the port was reported.

Barbara Buczek was preparing a paper for the next meeting of PCF re places of interest in Dover for people to visit- possibly a Bluebird Trail with Lottery Heritage Fund and English Heritage support. There could be more than one trail and way marked by a bluebird symbol and possibly a sculpture on the roundabout at the Eastern Docks. These are ideas only at present. Christine Waterman has suggested establishing a Port Heritage Centre, showing the history of the port from its Charter of 1606, working with P&O.

Mike McFamell has asked DS to consider sponsoring Charlene Mineau on a 6-month placement. She could help with the Town Hall tours, Western Heights, Dover Tattoo and Dover Film Festival. This would not incur any costs to the society and the University would pay for all her needs. She will need a base and will be managed by MM. There was no objection to this.

Constitution – JC had obtained informal legal advice. It was suggested that we take no further action. Our constitution aims are broadly based and there is a sweeper clause in 2 (iii) (m). To do all such other things as are necessary for the attainment of the said purposes. In addition 2 (iii) (a) To promote civic pride in the area of benefit is another cover all clause. In addition everything is recorded by minutes, voted upon and made public with open AGM. We don't have secrets from our members or the public. The advice is that if we have a change then we will be in for changes down the years.

The Chairman referred to the unfortunate sequence of emails and press coverage following his email to Executive members about the Welcome to Dover sign. After discussion it was agreed that whilst correspondence between committee members is rarely confidential, anything circulated to Executive members should not be disclosed to third parties without consulting the Chairman or Press Officer. It was also agreed that discussions between members should always be courteous and respectful no matter how strongly opinions may differ.

5. Secretary's Report

Nothing to report.

6. Treasurer's Report

The figures had been circulated by email to committee members prior to the meeting.

This report covers two months since our last meeting.

Subscriptions received for two months for this financial year totalled £62.00 and £16.00 for the next financial year 2013/2014.

Received £47.50 from Newsletter advertising.

A donation of £250.00 was given to the society to go to the projects fund by a member who wishes to remain anonymous. JC has sent a thank you letter to this member.

The society received a very substantial and generous donation from one of our past chairmen and founder member Jack Woolford who wishes that this money be put into the Town Hall Fund which we have done. Our Chairman has sent Jack a letter of appreciation and thanks, informing him that The Town Hall fund has benefited from his generosity. The Town Hall fund has also received £140.50 collected on Town Hall tours during July and August and the publication fund received £444.00 from the sale of the Town Hall booklets

I put in a claim for "Gift Aid" covering the last financial year on the subscriptions and donations received. This has been paid in full by HRMC and we received in "gift aid" £849.26.

Paid out £36.00 for our annual subscription to CPRE.

Adams Printers were paid £695.00 for the July newsletter and a further £65.00 attributable to the Newsletter being posted out to members out of the area.
Stationery and printing costs covering the two months came to £22.97.
Under miscellaneous £50.00 was paid out in connection with our website.
Chartwell joined the list of financially completed functions with a surplus of 30p. The outing to Brick Lane will be in profit of about £30.00 and will appear in next month's statement.

7. Membership Secretary's Report

We have six new members: Mr Alan and Mrs Jennifer Taylor of Temple Ewell, Mr Roger and Mrs Sue Knight, Whitfield RK Graphics, Mr John and Mrs Michelle Cooper of Laureston Place. Last allocated number 1165, total members are 459.

8. Projects

- **Cowgate** – Had a good mowing day.
- **River Dour** – The July meeting confirmed Ray Newsam as Chairman and JC as Secretary, and the intention is to submit a catchments partnership bid with WCCP. RN attended East Kent Catchments Improvement Group meeting in Ashford on 24th July at which details of a bid were finalised, made jointly with South East Rivers Trust and Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership for River Stour for ease of administration (oversubscribed, £1.6m requested from £1m pot, expecting decision any day). It was also a good opportunity to meet EA staff and others with an interest in East Kent rivers, and a good presentation on 'The Ripple Effect' causing silting by EA staff. The monthly river clean-ups have continued, July found a grenade, August staff from Affinity Water joined in, September was first (for a while?) held on a Sunday morning RN has been in contact with Angling Trust re Voluntary bailiff training scheme, Building Bridges campaign which targets Eastern European offenders, and Rick Warner fronting DEFRA supported National Angling Strategy has visited, awaiting his report
RN and JC had a meeting with Roger Walton of DDC to discuss matters of joint interest General working relationship - RDSG, DDC, WCCP, EA town and parish councils (we might know results of catchments partnership bid with luck by then Help from DDC Community Support Officers for grant applications (justification by resident surveys etc) eg Identify DDC riparian right areas (Barton Path etc) Involvement with Kearsney development? Developing angling on the river. River Fest next year or subsequently - DDC support, Pencester /Kearsney venues for activities? Buckland Mill development contact?

You Decide grant bid being submitted today to improve equipment used by clean-up volunteers
Plaques - Tallis Wording agreed and designs being prepared. Keottlitz seems a dead duck.

9. Refurbishment

From Nigel Collor on Wetherspoons

As you are no doubt aware this building was the first property in England to bear the name Granada and was a jewel in Sidney Bernstein's empire. He used to bring people into town to see it.

Later it became the ABC and people from all over East Kent enjoyed stage shows there featuring some of the top artists of the day.

Then it became a Night Club, firstly Images and then Snoops, and some massive alterations were carried out before it was closed.

For a number of years now it has been owned by the pub chain J.D. Wetherspoon who have done absolutely nothing to the building but kept it in a deteriorating state to what it is now - buddleia growing from it and a very unattractive appearance all round. The inside is apparently completely ruined. The front, and just the front up to the first floor, has recently been painted and soon, following some work by Adeline Reidy and others, a number of banners, around 8 feet high I understand, will be attached to the front of the building.

Over the past year or so Dover District Council has, in partnership with the Dover Society and Dover Town Council, has been contacting property owners in the town, particularly Castle Street and the Market Square in an attempt to get their buildings looking better and improving the look of the town. There has been a degree of success but some owners are not yet getting on board - one of these is J. D. Wetherspoon regarding the Granada building. At a meeting this afternoon it was decided that we would like to challenge Wetherspoons harder as a large outfit should be treated no different to our smaller property owners. With this in mind, some of us have been tasked to contact local community groups to ask if they would kindly send a letter or email to DDC to back the case. I hope that you will be able to do this on behalf of the Dover Society.

Letters should be sent to:
Christopher Allen
Community Safety, CCTV & Parking Manager
Dover District Council
White Cliffs Business Park
Whitfield
Dover, CT16 3PJ

Emails should be sent to:
christopherallen@dover.gov.uk

I do hope that we can rely on your support.

- a) Other matters
 - 1. Old Unitarian Church in High ST
 - 2. Big Screen
 - 3. Seafront toilets – a letter any help
 - 4. Farthing property in Castle St – sec215 candidate
 - 5. Norman St satellite dishes – SP's email copied to PS
 - 6. Brighter Dover update – irrigation concern
 - 7. Seeking permission for JL to visit Old Post Office in King St
 - 8. PB to email RW for explanation for end to street recycling bins

Pathways

Connaught Rd – now KCC registered as a right of way. We should offer a working party to remove fencing.

We shall take on clearance of Upper Road Path

Police liaison group – JC proposed joint approach from Planning Cttee and Refurbishmetn Cttee.

MP Charlie Elphicke's email. I should be grateful if you would deal with the following queries. The Society has an Executive meeting next week and, if at all possible, I would like to pass on your comments:

- 1. On 26th June I wrote asking if there was any progress in the start of the parking scheme at Priory Station. I understood you were taking the matter up with Network Rail.
- 2. There is considerable roadside litter on the A2, A20. We have queried the matter with DDC and understand that litter clearance on A roads of this type is their responsibility, unlike motorways, which are dealt with by the Highways Agency. DDC faces continued cuts in its funding and we understand partly due to the Highways Agency approach there is a likely annual cost of £60,000 to the Council for its contractor to undertake the work. Dover, despite the port traffic, has no motorways and to add insult to injury has to clean the verges. We understand that at a recent conference held in Dover, visitors made some sharply critical comments on the litter on the approaches to the town. Surely the Transport Ministry can change the terms so that the Highway Agency is responsible for the cleanliness of the major roads in the District.
- 3. Last night at the People's Port AGM you commented on the poor state of the seafront. Whilst the eastern end of the parade up to the Seafront Flats can leave

something to be desired (the A20 does not help) from then on to the Clock Tower looks fine and something most of us take pleasure in walking along (providing we don't want to use a toilet). At the recent U3A meeting you described your ideas for making something of the Western, Wellington and Granville Docks, which is something that I guess many of us would support. Is this the area you were referring to?

10. Town Hall Refurbishment/Guided Tours

On Dover Heritage Open Day we were very busy with many visitors from abroad and from the South East.

Not yet had the meeting with Roger Walton about the future of the building.

11. Social Secretary's Report

For the Wine and Wisdom evening we have tried to obtain food at the best possible price, but are finding it increasingly difficult and feel we can no longer keep the price at £6 per ticket.

PHS proposed an increase the price to £7 per person. This was agreed.

Entertainment booked for the Christmas Feast, for £90 plus free meals

The Chairman congratulated PSH on all three trips this year.

12. Planning

- **DTIZ** – there is no visible signs of any development starting. Sought information from DDC following recent approval of Planning Application DOV/13/00457 in respect of Demolition of existing buildings to provide etc. etc. DDC ongoing meetings with the Development Partner following revision to original planning application this assumed as the multi-plex cinema. No confirmation of when CPO's will be served. Our Committee's view is that the DDC legal team are again failing.
- **Buckland Hospital** – see comments under correspondence. However we desperately need to get media coverage.
- **DHB and Seafront** – DHB have set up a Community Group. DPPTL continue with their Community Port and ongoing meetings with Government Ministers, not assisted by the continual change of Transport Minister.
- **DCC** – Land Sites. Still awaiting final report from DDC following the consultation period. The Dover Society made comments.
- **Dover District Green Infrastructure Plan** – No further information. Possible Plan update at some future date.
- **ABC Cinema, Castle Street** – No further information than reported at the 7th May meeting. Castle Street Society initiative discussed and felt that The Dover Society is pressing for Section 215 notice that this may affect our position if supported as strong feeling that the owner should improve the building. With over 70 properties that The Dover Society has identified as requiring improvement under Section 215 if financial support given by the society to one, which is a major multinational business, how does this affect smaller businesses and private owners if they sought financial assistance.
- **Consultation re Open Space Policy and Standards** – Comments made to DDC await eventual report.
- **Western Heights** – No reported items.
- **River Dour Cycle Route** – Nothing further than that reported on at the 7th May meeting.
- **Section 215 Stage One (Town Centre/Castle Street etc)** – No alteration to that reported on the 4th June meeting other than ABC cinema as above. The first full S215 notice in respect of 1 Athol Terrace progressing to court.
- **Section 215 Stage Two (Folkestone Road)** – Update walk-about to be arranged.
- **Section 215** - Help to members. No new requests. The Louis Armstrong public house served with full S215 Notice. This is the third property.
- **Update on police (following request at Executive)**
- **English Heritage at Risk**-as per comments made at 7th May meeting
- **ARWP Dover Priory Station** – Still waiting for KCC to attend. Have repeated request through DDC Enforcement Officer.

- **Options for a new Lower Thames Crossing Consultation Document –**
Responded favouring option C but not supportive of the option C variant that would upgrade Bluebell Hill at a cost of £1.8 billion. Our comment is the money could be better spent on upgrading the A2 from Lyden to Dover thus taking off the pressure of M20/A20 and town pollution.
- **Parking at Dover Priory Station –** MP has pressed Network Rail. Have sought latest from DDC who state “this is moving along” and that a Traffic Count is required to the Transport Assessment in a neutral month is being carried out during September, also active dialogue with Network Rail, South Eastern and landowner.

DTC Planning Committee

Last meeting on 2 September and the minutes are on DTC website. The next meeting will be on 30 September. Note DTC Planning Meeting on 5 August about a street trading consent.

Correspondence

Continued correspondence with regard to hospital. Unable to attend, as a member of the public, the last Health and Wellbeing Board Meeting. Understood that CCG have favoured “Intermediate care beds” to be provided at care homes. At a CCG/KCC workshop that PS attended. It was clear that Care Homes would not ideal as in general nursing staff did not have the full nursing experience and that nursing homes would not provide “step up/step down” facilities and would only be used by the elderly population as not suitable for younger people. Re-emphasising at every opportunity the need to protect surplus land that EKHUFT will sell off upon completion of new hospital/polyclinic. It is essential that if at any future date additional facilities are able to be provided, including bed facilities, that there is adequate land to extend the hospital.
No comments made to any individual planning applications.

AOB

AS raised concern about 18 Firth Street with removal of wall and garden. Assume for parking. This following a similar action at 37 Castle Avenue that was supposed to have KCC Highways agreement but still no dropped kerb or protection of a drain.
PS to write to DDC (Nadeem Aziz)
BH drew attention to a planning application on this week's list. Will action in usual way with comments from Planning Committee members.

Date of next meeting on 8 October at 17.30 hrs at Castle Lea.

13. Press Secretary's Report

Nothing to report.

14. Editor's Report

Nothing to report

15. Publications

Nothing to report.

16. Any other business

The “Atherton's at home” is on 6 October at midday.

Some of the Town Hall guides are Kent/Dover greeters and would like to do guided walks. DTC is not being very cooperative, but it could be done under the society's umbrella. Our public liability insurance should be sufficient and it was agreed that we confirm with insurers before going any further.

TS informed the committee of a new Christian Free School being set up in Whitfield for 250 pupils. They are planning to start with 30 pupils and the fees are £250 a month. They want to raise enough money to buy or lease 7 acres in the area.

AL requires two members to research the enquiries received by email on various topics such as families in the area. We would not charge but could request a donation.

MM requested the cost of advert for Film Festival. Agreed £35 to be paid.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday 10 October, at 7.30 pm at St Paul's Parish Rooms, Dover.