Town Team Meeting
0930-1100
Wednesday 15th June 2022
The Ilfracombe Centre
Minutes

Present:

Neil Ingram – One Ilfracombe Dan Lester – D&SFRS Simon Overney – D&SFRS Kev Patterson – D&SFRS Paul Nolan – D&SFRS Netti Pearson – NDC / ITC Rob Townsend – ITC, Town Maint Op Alan Matthewman – ITC (Town Clerk) Lena Lliffe– NDC (Car Parks)	Eric Hayes – Ilfracombe Access Group Stuart Coslett – Fore St Association Terry Elliott – ITC, Friends of Tyrell Hosp Bert Gear – ITC Cllr Bridget Gear – Ilfracombe in Bloom Barbara Clark – Event 4 Ilfracombe Rich Rodd – ITC Facilities Manager John Waran – IBTA Georgia Carlo-Paat – Harbourmaster
Apologies: Mike Jones – NDC (Parks)	

1. Neil Ingram (NI) welcomed everyone and thanked them for taking the time to attend especially the 4 representatives from the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (D&SFRS). Round the table introductions were made.

2. NI outlined that this was effectively a re-launch of the One Ilfracombe (OI) Town Team and that is was hoped that over the forthcoming months that more Ilfracombe service providers, groups and organisation would be represented.

NI reminded the group of the background and the aim of the One Ilfracombe Town Team:

"In March 2014, the One Ilfracombe Town Team was launched with the aim of creating a safer, cleaner and greener town that local people can be proud of.

The Town Team was originally made up of around 40 members of public services who already worked in Ilfracombe but then joined forces to improve the service they offer. The team included members of the Police, Fire, Ilfracombe Town Council, South West Ambulance Service, North Devon Council, the Harbour Master, Ilfracombe Museum and the Tourist Information Centre.

With local service cutbacks, a drastic drop off in volunteers and with the aftermath of a pandemic to deal with, the Town Team has struggled.

2022 has seen the resurgence of the Town Team and this continues as more of the public services are again engaged within the town with a common focus to best address the topics that are being voiced directly by the local community."

The Town Team was not created to operate on a strategic level but to achieve its main aims at "street level" with the co-operation of the numerous services each of the members brings to the table.

NI also emphasised that the intention of these meetings was to focus on the topics that were currently at the forefront of the Ilfracombe Community from directly communicating and listening to what is important for Ilfracombe residents and business owners.

In this instance the questions raised at the Annual Town Meeting on the 26th May would effectively form the Top 5 items that are the "Talk of The Town" at this meeting.

It was also stressed that a list of actions would be created at each meeting.

3. **The Talk of the Town** - These are the current Top Five issues, as voiced by the Ilfracombe Community.

a. **Vacant, unsecured buildings in disrepair**

Cllr Terry Elliott (TE) provided an update on the worsening situation in relation to the numerous local vacant and unsecured buildings in disrepair. TE stressed the imminent threat to life that these building posed to the community, especially the draw for groups of youths and for rough sleepers.

The D&SFRS team stated that in relation to the Glen Tor fire that a risk analysis was undertaken by them and reported to the owner. 10 days later those same officers were alongside their colleagues fighting the fire at the property.

In relation to the Devon Bay Hotel there had been reports of children being in the building. The owners were contacted and the business was secured. In this instance D&SFRS assisted due to the owner who was very cooperative and helpful in addressing the issues identified.

Which organisations were ultimately responsible for what was complicated and not wholly clear with NDC Building Control having a responsibility to make buildings secure but only when there the structure was dangerous although from the legislative side there were issues where owners were not present.

NDC Environmental Health also have a part to play in the reporting process but due to a lack of understanding as to the scope of this it was suggested that Jeremy Mann (NDC), NDC Building Control and D&SRFS get together to discuss a strategic way ahead.

From a One Town Team perspective this would include the creation of a flow chart for a reporting process/submission of concerns over local vacant, unsecured buildings in disrepair.

Kev Paterson (KP) also stated that with the direct link between groups of people seeking access to these sites and Anti Social Behaviour any future discussions and plans must include Devon & Cornwall Police (D&CP)

Due to the strategic nature of this proposed discussion it was deemed that this was outside of the remit for the Town Team. It was suggested that with OI Board members being present on the Ilfracombe Regeneration Board alongside NDC and ITC representation that this may be the ideal platform to approach to facilitate the meeting.

It was also suggested that these issues are not unique to Ilfracombe and that finding out what was being done by other Local Government Councils would be a good idea.

Actions:

NI to approach the IRB to suggest they act as a platform to facilitate a multi-agency meeting to plan a way ahead and identify a reporting system/flow chat for use at "street level".

ITC to investigate how other Local Government Councils are addressing the same issues.

b. **Anti Social Behaviour - modified cars, CCTV, youth gang, lack of police presence**

Modified Cars / Speeding

Unfortunately D&CP were unable to attend this meeting due to it clashing with a community outreach session taking place at Ilfracombe Tesco the same day.

The use of speed bumps was discussed but as pointed out by Cllr Bert Gear (BG) recent speed bump research indicated that these had little effect on reducing speeding.

Eric Hayes spoke about the Community Speed Watch group which had been set up via the Hele Community Group and wondered whether an expansion of this to other speeding "Hot Spots" manned by trained volunteers was worth exploring. Whether this is possible or not from both a police training perspective and identifying willing volunteers across the town will be followed up on.

Following her most recent discussions with the Police, Lena Lliffe (LL), highlighted the fact that without vehicle registrations and descriptions the Police have nothing to use to further any investigations. She also mentioned that the same issues with modified vehicles was also prevalent in Barnstaple.

Following these discussions, two proposals were suggested by D&SFRS that their Prevention Road Safety Team work alongside D&CP with a potential targeted day of action. This led to a further proposal for a Community Action Day and potential D&SFRS involvement at events such as Ilfracombe Round Table Birdman.

The Town Team will also request clarification from D&CP as to the correct procedures for reporting instances of Vehicle Anti-Social Behaviour. This will include whether video and/or photographic evidence gathering was the way ahead, especially when identifying vehicles through their registration details.

NI stressed the importance to **REPORT – REPORT - REPORT**

Whilst recognising that calling 101 was more often or not a laborious process, with no evident outcome, all instances must be reported otherwise the crime stats for Ilfracombe will never be a true representation. It was a general consensus at the meeting that the e-mail version of 101 provided a far more useful and efficient option.

It is intended to approach D&CP to request an ITC hosted public Q&A meeting in the near future.

Time prohibited discussionon the subjects of CCTV, youth gang, lack of police presence however all of these issues were raised at the Annual Town Meeting, details of which are shortly to be available on the ITC website.

Actions:

ITC to formally approach D&CP to request an ITC hosted public meeting.

NI to request clarification from D&CP on the correct procedures for reporting instances of Vehicle Anti-Social Behaviour.

NI to explore the possibility of a Community Action and/or Targetted Action Day with Ilfracombe D&SFRS

c. **Drains / Street Cleaning**

In relation to blocked drains NI stressed the importance of the need to **REPORT – REPORT – REPORT** using Report a problem - Roads and transport (devon.gov.uk)

One option for street cleaning that was discussed was the potential for ITC to take on street (primarily pavement) cleaning in addition to the services provided by NDC.

The Harbourmaster stated that her team were using a battery powered street cleaner with bowser to good effect on a daily basis in the harbour area. Richard Rodd (RR) expressed interest as to whether this would be a suitable purchase for ITC.

Action: RR to view Street Cleaner in use and discuss potential purchase with ITC Town Clerk

An issue was raised in relation to organised street and area cleans by local volunteer groups. The issue being that once green material was removed how did they go about getting this green waste taken away?

Action: NI to discuss with RR on how to rectify this.

Rob Townsend (RT) said that the ITC decision to not use herbicides, albeit it ecologically sound was resulting in poor results in cleaning areas and rapid regrowth of unwanted vegetation. It is believed NDC do not have this issue as their teams still use chemicals for vegetation clearing and prevention tasks.

Netti Pearson (NP) identified that there were steam and foam cleaners out there that reportedly did as good a job as herbicides without impacting the environment.

RR expressed concerns with the steam and foam system as they are reliant on boiling water on the back of the van but they will investigate potential alternatives such as a portable barrow system and generator.

Action: RR to investigate the steam and foam options.

NI suggested that OI continue to promote the reporting of overgrown trees and vegetation via Report overgrown trees and vegetation - Roads and transport (devon.gov.uk) The taking of a picture and submission on the website only takes 2 minutes.

In relation to blocked drains NI stressed the importance of the need to **REPORT – REPORT – REPORT** using Report a problem - Roads and transport (devon.gov.uk)

d. **Littering, Waste Collection, Bins**

NP stated that improved litter signage was needed.

The new litter bins at Wildersmouth have been well received as have the additional collections.

Action: NI to work with NP on how this can best be achieved using NDC resources.

e. **Roads & Parking**

Parking was the primary concern discussed with NI asking whether an online campaign was possible in conjunction with D&SFRS to highlight how irresponsible parking could lead to loss of life when emergency service access was prevented.

Action: NI to follow up with Ilfracombe Fire Team.

LL clarified that NDC were responsible for enforcement of off street parking restrictions and DCC were responsible for on street parking restrictions.

4. AOB

a. Barbara Clarke (BC) asked for an update on the replacement finger posts. Alan Matthewman (AM) informed the meeting that the finger post signs were due for delivery later today *(post meeting note: arrived pm following day)*.

The issue of fitting the posts was still proving to be somewhat problematic with the old finger posts being fused to the posts they are mounted on. Thus far efforts to remove these have been unsuccessful.

b. Concerns were voiced over the Golden Coast site and it's safety, initial response was to report this to the IRB however the following update was received post meeting:

"NDC Environmental Health have visited the site and the officer has ensured temporary repairs have taken place to make the hoardings safe. The EH Officer has said that the site owner will also make further improvements to the hoardings and that he will be making a return visit to inspect this."

c. John Waran (JW) stated that he had a current ongoing complaint in place relating to noise pollution, air pollution and vibration along St Brannocks Road. JW responded to the previous issue of Anti Social Behaviour and suggested the setting up of dummy CCTV cameras as a deterrent. The Harbourmaster pointed out that this was illegal.

d. The suggestion was made that Suse Rolfe (NDC Neighbourhood Officer) be approached to find out what powers could be put into force to stop bird feeding at the Market Arches.

Action: NI to speak to Suse Rolfe.

5. Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 13th July 0930 The Ilfracombe Centre