

IVYBRIDGE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Monday 16 May 2022

The Watermark, Ivybridge

Present:

Cllr S Hladkij (Town Mayor)
Cllr V Abbott
Cllr L Budd
Cllr A Khong
Cllr T Lannin

Cllr T Munro
Cllr L Rea
Cllr A Spencer
Cllr R Wilson

In attendance:

Cllr R Croad (County Councillor)
Cllr V Abbot (District Councillor)
Mr J Parsons (Town Clerk)
Mrs L Lane (Minutes Secretary and Administration Officer)
Mrs J Gilbert (Assistant Town Clerk)
Mrs P Cleal (Senior Finance Officer)
Mr Vincent (Press)
Mr Churm (Press)
88 Members of the Public

Apologies: Cllrs Cade, Dredge, Parsons, Pringle, A Rea

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the Annual Town Meeting.

22/1 Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 15 April 2019

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 15 April 2019 (previously circulated) were received. Mr Aust confirmed and Cllr Wilson seconded and the Minutes were agreed to be accepted.

22/2 Mayor's Report: To receive a report from the Mayor on the activities of Ivybridge Town Council during the period 2019-2022

The Mayor thanked former Cllr Laity for her work as Mayor during Covid which was a very challenging time for Council. She also thanked Shirley Weeks for her work on the community response and all the volunteers who helped.

She then presented the following:

Ivybridge during 2019-2022...

COVID

- Council continued to operate throughout Covid – including meetings and keeping parks open and looked after
- Officers and Councillors worked throughout
- Supported the Community Response through staffing and running helpline, supporting volunteers and the Community Connector and So Social to coordinate help
- Town Council kept The Watermark going through external grants and furlough to be ready to open as soon as safe – protecting a hard earned facility



Ivybridge during 2019-2022...

COVID

- Community strengthened –
 - Shops survived, opened and thrived
 - Events happened and were supported as sense of community grew
 - Long term support networks and friendships formed
- Worked with PL:21 to deliver new quiet cycle routes



Ivybridge during 2019-2022...

Events

- Tour of Britain
- Christmas 2021



Ivybridge during 2019-2022...

Community

- Ivybridge in Bloom – achieved two awards at SWIB – supported by Town Council via plants and watering
- Christmas Hampers 2020 & 2021 – instead of a dinner, volunteers and financial support from sponsors including local businesses & County and District Councillors, enabled delivery of hampers on Christmas day to those alone at Christmas.



Ivybridge during 2019-2022...

Community Support from Town Council

- Grants to support delivery of Citizens Advice, Youth Leisure Nights, RBL Remembrance Sunday event, Fireworks at the Rugby Club, Ring and Ride and more
- Part funded Community Connector role with South Hams CVS
- Supported and coordinated volunteers for Christmas Day dinner in 2019
- Parish Paths Partnership – supported DCC by helping to maintain and improve paths with help from volunteers including a new accessible path into Longtimber Wood, in partnership with Dartmoor National Park.



Ivybridge during 2019-2022...

Biodiversity

- 1000s of trees
- Wildflower meadows
- BioBlitz day at Filham



Ivybridge during 2019-2022...

Town Council projects in progress

- Filham Consultation, and Masterplan now in place and Section 106 funding ring-fenced to deliver £100ks of improvements
- Butterpark to be used to create homes for local people and adults with learning disabilities
- Rewilding and managing land for informal recreation



Ivybridge during 2019-2022...

Other Town Council day to day activity

- Managing and maintaining around 100 acres of open space and parkland
- Running The Watermark providing cultural and entertainment as well as a community hub
- Provide land for the Allotment Association
- Subsidised spaces for community use and to facilitate organisations to deliver services
- Managing Woodlands Cemetery



Ivybridge during 2019-2022...

Town Clerks

- Previous Town Clerk Lesley Hughes retired in December 2020
- She was Town Clerk since 2001. Lesley has since sadly passed away and will be greatly missed.



- New Town Clerk, Jonathan Parsons was appointed in late 2020 but has worked for the Town Council for nearly 10 years.



During the presentation The Mayor thanked the following people:

- Cllr Croad for his work to bring the Tour of Britain to Ivybridge.
- Ivybridge in Bloom for their hard work making the town look beautiful.
- All the volunteers who were involved in the Christmas hampers.
- The volunteers who have helped with projects within the town such as the works in Longtimber woods.
- The Senior Finance Officer for her work on Woodlands Cemetery.
- All Council Officers for their work particularly through some very challenging times during the last few years.

22/3 Other Reports: To receive reports from the County and District Councillors and representatives of other community groups and organisations serving Ivybridge during the period 2019-2022.

District Councillor Victor Abbott provided the following report:

Ivybridge Town Council Annual Meeting, Monday 16th May, 2022, 7pm

Contribution as a District Councillor – Cllr Victor Abbott

Good evening. There hasn't been an Annual Town Meeting for some time so this covers some historic data too.

I'm one of four District Councillors for Ivybridge, being one of two for Ivybridge East. I was also elected a Town Councillor in March. I attend Ugborough Parish Council as the eastern edge of my Ward (North Filham, Filham & Lucerne Fields) are all in Ugborough Parish.

Apart from meeting some of you face to face, in the 5 months of this Calendar Year I have been in email contact with 39 residents from Ivybridge East and 16 from adjacent Wards. This is double the rate of the previous two years. Many conversations are about recycling and waste collections; many are about Aldi. However, I'm also able to intervene with the staff at the District Council and it can sometimes be useful to have a District Councillor working with you. Over the last 12 months, I have helped in getting waterways cleared, fly-tipping removed, addressing problems with planning applications, consulting over damage resulting from the waste collection lorries, clearing footpaths, maintaining benches, and bringing in help over environmental health issues.

Next week, I'm hoping the contractors will be able to meet their long-awaited schedule to clear the trees (downed by Storm Eunice in February) between Rivers Close and Exeter Road.

Each District Councillor has an annual small pot to support local initiatives. Over the last three years, I have been able to apply this to the arts, sports, mental & physical health, new mothers, schools, youth, social employment, a children's playground, an adult playground, and environmental action. If you have something that needs pump priming (rather than continual support), please contact a District Councillor for your Ward.

Something positive about the District Council. I knew little about local politics before I was first elected in 2019 but I have come to know some of the staff at both Town and District. They live in this, our community. They are like us, wanting the best for our community. The District is not out to do for Ivybridge; they are not lazy; they are caring individuals who work hard. There is a battle on at the moment and you'll know from the questionnaire results, from Facebook, and from submissions to the planning website that there are opinions on both sides. Don't believe the other side are baddies – just calmly argue your case. This is what I am doing, on Thursday.

And to end on 'engagement' – I am grateful to have been elected to the Town Council in March but only 12% of the electorate came out to vote. We need you on the Town and the District Council. We need you to understand the Councils and the roles they play; to stand for election; to campaign in an election; to vote – because your vote matters; and to challenge those elected as to what on earth we/ they are doing - telling us your, own good ideas!

Thank you!

Residents voiced their disappointment with the continued poor service from FCC with regard to brown bin collections, commenting that surely the contract should contain penalty clauses

Cllr Abbott responded that the current excuse from FCC is that they are suffering from staff shortages. He feels it needs to be taken out of debate and to another level at SHDC.

The Mayor advised residents to ensure that they continue to report missed collections to ensure that SHDC have a full picture of what is happening in the town.

Cllr Lannin provided a verbal report from PL:21

PL:21 was originally set up to try to help Ivybridge move forward from the use of fossil fuels.

Pre Covid they were working on a walking and cycling plan to make it easier for people to use active travel to get into Ivybridge. They hope that it will soon be accepted by SHDC and DCC. This is being used as a framework to feed back on other planning proposals and to try and ensure that developments have routes through to the station and the town. Also aiming to improve cycle links to Bittaford and Plymouth. They have organised litter picks on the River Erme and are working with Sustrans to provide family cycle rides.

Cllr Lannin thanked Ivybridge Town Council for its support.

A resident queried why the new developments to the East are being built without solar panels.

Cllr Lannin said she felt it was shocking – and that they are still fitting gas boilers. The developers have to work within the national planning framework and PL21 have been lobbying their MP.

A resident queried whether it would be possible to use the river for energy.

Cllr Lannin advised that the only possible site was by the old mill but the leat has now been blocked by the developer.

Skate South Devon

Representatives from Skate South Devon were unable to attend the meeting but had provided the following slides and words which the Town Clerk presented.

Skate South Devon

*Strengthening Communities
Through Skateboarding*



Planned Engagement and Activities

- Continue to advocate for the best wheeled-sports facilities in the South Hams here in Ivybridge
- Work in partnership with ITC to deliver a ground-breaking facility at Filham
- Free coaching and beginner skateboard sessions during the summer in collaboration with Skåteboard GB
- Art workshops in partnership with the Clay Factory and talented local artists
- UK premiere of an important skateboarding documentary - 'Made In Venice' at the Watermark
- Exploring the possibility of temporary art installations around Ivybridge - for example at the current skate park
- Working with local businesses to develop positive returns for the community

Skate South Devon CIC is a grassroots, non-profit community organisation - we represent the interests of wheeled sports users, including those who skateboard, BMX and scoot. Our organisation has been working in partnership with Ivybridge Town Council (ITC), South Hams District Council (SHDC), Devon County Council (DCC) and local residents to examine the current provision in Ivybridge. Our organisation aims to grasp a once in a generation opportunity to create opportunities for exercise, creativity and expression that will not only aid the COVID-19 recovery effort but, by building a unique and ground-breaking platform, will bring wide reaching benefits to the community through ongoing physical and mental health, cultural, social and economic benefits. Our vision now forms part of the Filham Masterplan and also introduces a wider strategy for Open Spaces, Sports and Recreation (OSSR) within the town that can support its emerging identity as a centre of sporting excellence within the South Hams.

Our goal is to deliver outstanding, nationally significant, wheeled sports facilities in Ivybridge. But alongside this we are already building the relationships and infrastructure necessary to support our wider social aims. Skateboarding and BMX are now Olympic and clearly truly inspirational - the award of young sports personality of the year went to Sky Brown after her performance at the Olympics as the youngest ever GB medal winner! We have ambitious plans for wheeled sports in Ivybridge, a proud sporting town, to help girls and boys, the young, old and even wheelchair users. We believe our vision will have a big impact on our community that will go beyond what traditional pitch-based sports clubs can offer.

A resident queried the site as they thought that SHDC had not got an alternative site for the skate park if it is removed in order to build Aldi in the Leonards Road car park.

The Town Clerk explained that they do not have a replacement site. The multi wheeled sports facility is an additional facility and is planned for the area behind the Cadet Centre at Filham Park. This is a Town Council initiative not SHDC.

A resident queried why Totnes have a large facility.

The Town Clerk commented that this is on SHDC land.

22/4 Written Questions: To consider any matters submitted to the meeting in writing by electors of this parish.

No questions were submitted to the meeting in writing.

22/5 Matters Arising: To consider any matters to be raised in person at the meeting by electors of this Parish.

Cllr Wilson commented that when there are large events at the Rugby Club, parking along St Peters Way and Torre Close is awful. Cars park on both sides of the road on the bend. Speaking to the police has not provided any solutions. He queried what it would take to put cones on the bend and entrance to St Peters Way or to have double yellow lines on the bend and junctions. Could a traffic warden visit?

The Mayor advised that this is an issue for Devon County Council Highways but is aware that people are encouraged to use the train station car park.

A resident queried what is happening with the play area in Macandrews Field. The Town Clerk explained that when the play area was inspected The Town Council were advised that it was not safe so we have had to start to dismantle

it. The play equipment in Victoria Park also requires some attention so the Parks Committee are going to hold a consultation with residents to look at how best to spend their budget.

A resident commented that there is little provision to the east of Ivybridge. The Town Clerk advised that this is why we need to hold a consultation. The Mayor pointed out that the parks in western Ivybridge are owned by SHDC.

A resident queried whether S106 money from the Lucerne Fields development could be used for play areas.

The Town Clerk advised that sadly not, it can only be used for play areas within the new estates.

A resident queried whether exercise equipment eg pull up bars could be installed in some of the open spaces.

The Mayor commented that there used to be equipment in Longtimber Woods but unfortunately it was vandalised, however it is a good idea.

The Town Clerk advised that during the consultation on the Filham Park masterplan this sort of equipment did not feature high on the list.

A resident commented that the paving at the zebra crossing on Cornwood Road is in a bad state again. An elderly resident's walking aid had become jammed in the damaged paving.

County Councillor Croad advised that some work is being done and he will check when this is scheduled.

22/6 Aldi Planning Application: To consider the results of the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce questionnaire plus any suggestions for South Hams District Council to consider in addition to, or as alternatives to, the 'Regeneration' plans.

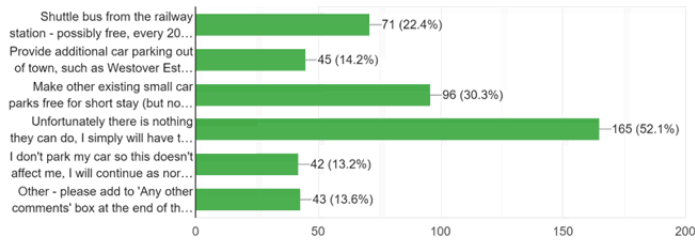
The Town Clerk went through the results of the Town Council questionnaire:

During the construction period which could be around 15 months, both Glanvilles Mill car park and the Leonards Road car park could be closed for anything from 6-12 months. This may also mean the main Glanvilles Mill bridge will also be closed during this time. How do you feel this will affect you with regard to the following:

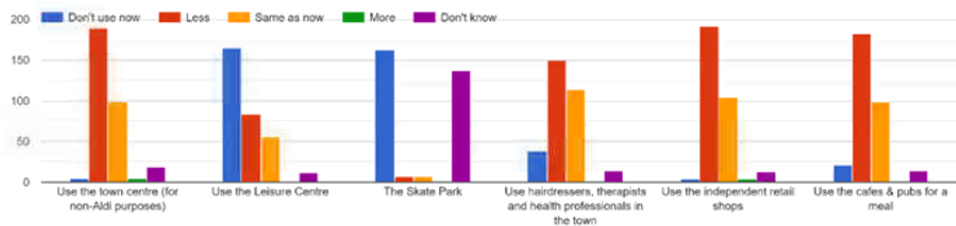


Realistically, what would be acceptable things South Hams could do to help you continue to use the town centre during the construction period?

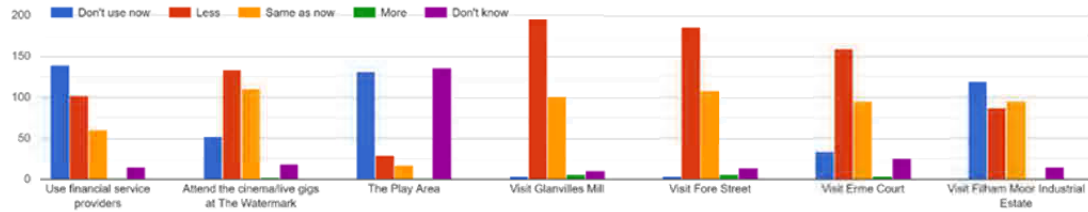
317 responses



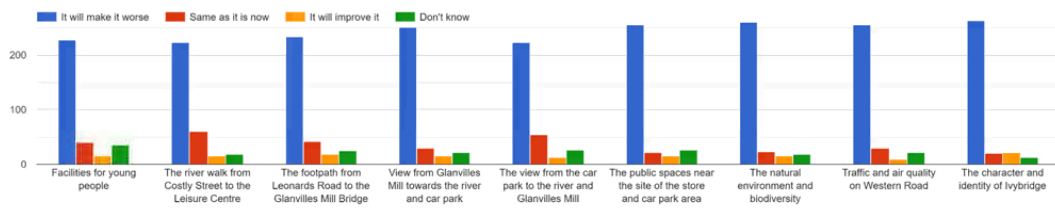
Once building work is complete, parking in the Aldi car park on the upper deck - 99 spaces - will be limited to 90 minutes for customers of Aldi only. The lower deck - 113 spaces - will be similar to the current parking provision, providing short stay and all day parking. There is currently 227 parking spaces available to the public. Will this change to parking in the town centre make you:



Once building work is complete, parking in the Aldi car park on the upper deck - 99 spaces - will be limited to 90 minutes for customers of Aldi only. The lower deck - 113 spaces - will be similar to the current parking provision, providing short stay and all day parking. There is currently 227 parking spaces available to the public. Will this change to parking in the town centre make you:

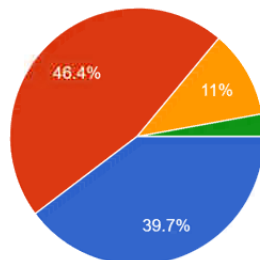


How do you feel the final plans will affect the following:



Thinking about the 'Regeneration' project in general, what would be your response to South Hams District Council:

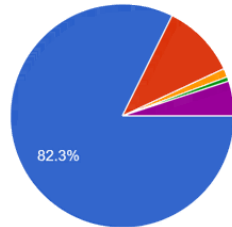
317 responses



- This planning application does not contribute to a 'Regeneration' of Ivybridge, please rethink the plans
- This planning application does not contribute to a 'Regeneration' of Ivybridge, but I would like to see a dis...
- Yes, I am happy the plans contribute to the 'Regeneration' of Ivybridge and I a...
- Other - please add to 'Any other comments' box below

Do you work in Ivybridge town centre?

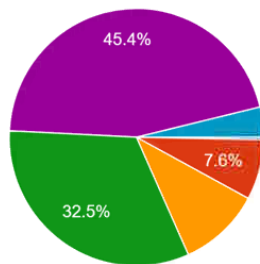
317 responses



- No
- Yes, and I am worried I will not be able to continue working in Ivybridge during construction and after completion as t...
- Yes, I currently use my car and I am happy to find alternative parking on street or in the limited small car parks...
- Yes, I currently use my car and I am happy to switch to walk/cycle/public tr...
- Yes, but I don't drive to work

Your age?

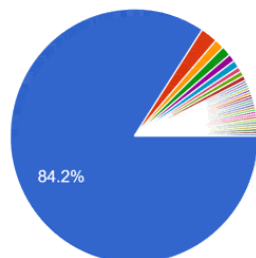
317 responses



- Under 16
- 16-34
- 35-44
- 45-64
- 65+
- Prefer no to say

Do you live in Ivybridge? If not where do you live?

317 responses



- Yes
- Plymouth
- Bittaford
- Plympton
- ?
- Ugborough
- Avonwick
- Cornwood

▲ 1/4 ▼

Regeneration of Town Centre

Should Ivybridge accept these SHDC plans or suggest alternatives?

For example:

- Facilities for young people
- Enhance river with terraces, benches, gardens
- Town signage and 'brand'
- Resurfacing and new street furniture in Fore Street
- Enhancements to open spaces around town centre eg car parks, green spaces etc
- SHDC to buy second bridge site from Glanvilles Mill to add to connectivity
- What else?

The Mayor thanked the Administration Officer for her work ensuring that the information from all the paper versions of the questionnaire was uploaded.

Cllr L Rea noted that the demographic in the questionnaire was weighted towards the older generation and asked how this relates to the demographic of Ivybridge.

The Town Clerk agreed to see whether the census information was available from SHDC.

Residents raised the following:

- Why were the plans not available in the library?
- I walk into town, if the bridge is shut and the two car parks, I will need to walk a much longer way round to access the facilities in Ivybridge and will therefore come in less often. What about other residents who have limited mobility?
- Both the ecological survey and the tree survey are misleading. The hedgerow has been termed scrub but it is an ancient hedgerow peppered with historic trees. The area of the hedgerow by the scout hut is referred to as broad leafed woodland. Feels that we need to stand up to them against this.
- SHDC have an ecologist and a tree expert who will interrogate these reports. SHDC councillors need to be sure that the planning application has gone through with no errors. Things like the age of the trees are critical to be included in the response. As the SHDC plan will be approved by SHDC there is the chance to take this to judicial review.
- Is there an ombudsman who could oversee the process?
- Concerns about putting trust into SHDC officers who have been involved in the brown bin fiasco

- Concern that free parking for Aldi will give them an unfair advantage over the Coop
- It is difficult to park now particularly when The Watermark has an event on. Both the Watermark and the Leisure Centre will suffer when the car parks are closed for works and when the number of long stay spaces are reduced. Everyone will be fighting for spaces
- Leisure Centre is funded by SHDC
- Safety issues for residents, people having to park in residential areas further out and having longer to walk back to their cars especially during the winter when the evenings are dark.
- Decked car park will provide an undercover area which may encourage anti-social behaviour
- Path between building and Town Hall will create quite a tunnel, will not feel safe to walk through here at quiet times
- Ivybridge should be a destination town. The river should be a focal point. If parking is easier then more people will come to use the town.
- People do not want to be forced to use Aldi in order to park and use the town
- Where will the breast screening unit be able to park – and if there is nowhere then the town will lose this valuable facility which saves lives
- The skate park is currently used by a lot of young people and there are no firm plans as to what will replace this
- Legality of using public money to subsidise a national company
- What other things did they consider to regenerate Ivybridge before deciding on a supermarket?
- Why can this not be sited to the east?
- Disabled parking provision, there is currently not enough and may lose more if the plan goes ahead – 2 disabled bays converted to electrical charging points
- Ivybridge is buzzing at the moment, it doesn't need regenerating
- Clear that the majority of people do not want Aldi in the car park. As 3 SHDC councillors are not at the meeting how do we communicate this to them?
- Cost of build likely to be greater than initial estimate of £9million due to prices going up. How much will the taxpayer be liable for?
- From their website, Aldi prefer freehold sites on the edge of town, minimum of 2 acres with 100+ parking spaces, prominent road frontage and good access. SHDC are falling over themselves to comply with Aldi's requirements.
- The police have put a response on the planning application to say that they cannot support the application as the majority of their concerns had not been addressed
- The plans do not do enough to encourage cycling and walking

- During the construction phase the national cycle route will be closed making it harder for people to walk or cycle into the town
- Offsetting the removal of the hedgerow by planting trees in Torr Park – but this site has already had a lot of tree planting, should be looking at a new area.
- Wildlife from river area will go due to the noise of construction and air pollution
- No detailed plans for the public realm improvements
- Concerned that with rising costs the public realm improvements may not happen
- SHDC has declared a climate emergency so would expect them to use this opportunity to include solar panels and an air source heat pump etc. However in the plans the solar provision is only the planning minimum and no air source heat pump.
- Aldi don't need councils to build for them, they have just asked for recommendations of potential sites
- Where will the Natwest van park? Will this facility be lost?
- The market traders who use the lower car park have not been consulted

Cllr Wilson asked whether the pedestrian bridges are likely to be closed due to the works.

The Town Clerk advised that SHDC / Kier have indicated that it is likely that the bridge will be closed during construction.

Cllr Croad pointed out that this is not Aldi's idea. Several years ago SHDC were told to look at their assets. The only asset they have in Ivybridge is the car park. When the plan was initially formed it looked as though they would get £100,000 per year. Now it is looking more like £50,000 per year. Is it worth upsetting residents for this sum? He added that he would be happy for Aldi to use land at the train station.

A resident queried whether this offer had been made to SHDC.

Cllr Croad explained that SHDC wouldn't want it as they would not make any money.

A resident commented that the Town Council was in favour of this development previously and wished to know whether they are still in favour. The Town Clerk commented that it was with caveats, parking being one of these. The Town Council would agree their position at the Council meeting on Monday 23 May.

A resident commented that maybe people should be writing to Aldi and making them aware that they will be upsetting a lot of people. The last thing

they want is bad publicity. Jobs will be created but jobs will also be lost in the town through the closure of the car parks. Ivybridge is a bustling town and Aldi needs to be made aware.

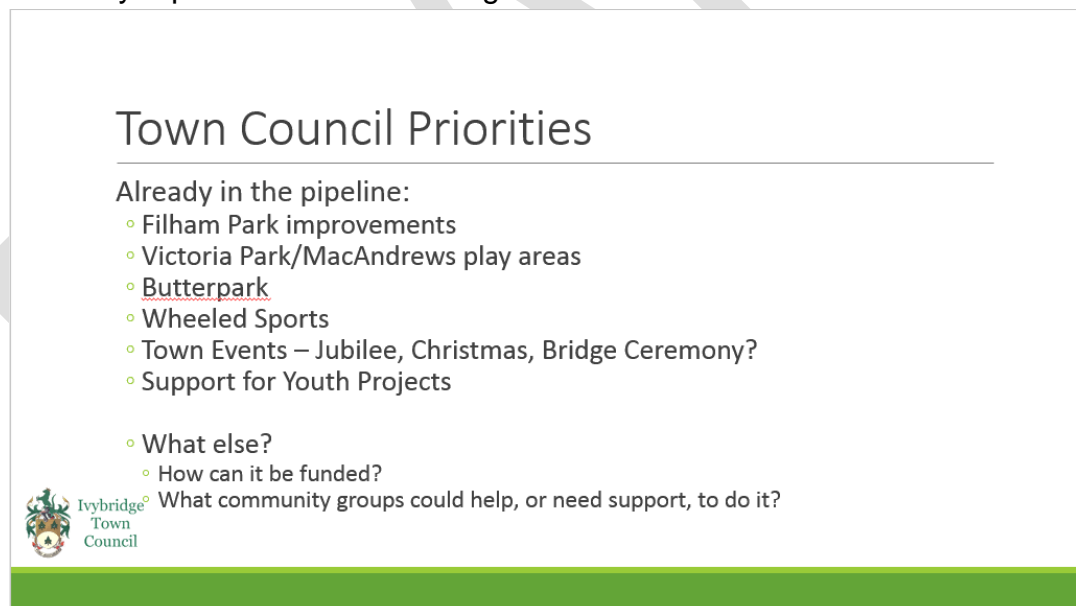
A resident commented that really good points had been raised and reminded people that if they wish to object to the application online to try to follow the planning guidelines and ensure they tick the box to say object or it will be listed as undecided regardless of the comments made.

The Mayor asked for people to raise their hands if they were in opposition to Aldi within the car park. Residents were almost unanimous in their opposition.

The Mayor then asked for a raise of hands in support of Aldi coming to the town but in another location that would not interfere with the town centre car parks. Residents were almost unanimous in their support.

22/7 Priorities 2022-2024: To consider what the Town Council should consider as its aims and priorities over the next 2 years.

The Mayor presented the following slide.



The slide is titled "Town Council Priorities" and is presented in a white box with a green footer. The content is as follows:


Town Council Priorities

Already in the pipeline:

- Filham Park improvements
- Victoria Park/MacAndrews play areas
- Butterpark
- Wheeled Sports
- Town Events – Jubilee, Christmas, Bridge Ceremony?
- Support for Youth Projects

◦ What else?

- How can it be funded?
- What community groups could help, or need support, to do it?

 Ivybridge Town Council

Residents commented on the area around the River Erme:

- The River Erme is a beautiful river but the trees are not maintained, the Ivy Bridge cannot be seen. It would be nice if the trees could be cut back sympathetically to open up the river.
- We need to be looking at the area in proximity to the river and how we can encourage wildlife

- Opening the river frontage although need to be cautious as do not want to have to fence it for safety reasons, and sympathetically so as to still encourage wildlife

The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council trim some trees but the majority are owned by SHDC.

Further comments from residents:

Ivybridge should be a destination – we don't advertise Longtimber Woods well enough.

The Mayor agreed. The Dartmoor Way starts in Ivybridge and it would be good to have better signage

Ivybridge is looking very scruffy, the verges need cutting

The Mayor reminded residents that it is no mow May and also that areas are being rewilded.

Second exit to the A38?

The Mayor advised that Highways have said no.

The roundabout at the A38 junction is dangerous and an eyesore.

The Mayor advised that this issue is regularly raised with Cllr Croad.

The area on Western Road in front of the car park has not been raked over. It could be grass or wildflowers but at the moment it is a mess.

The Town Clerk advised that this is a work in progress.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending the meeting and sharing their views.

The meeting closed at 9.18pm.

Signed

Cllr (Chairman)

Date