

Darlington & District Talking Newspaper (DDTN)



Annual General Meeting 2021

We are pleased to invite you to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on **Monday 10 May 2021 at 6.00pm** prompt. You can vote at the AGM if, on that date, you are a member of DDTN (i.e. a registered listener and/ or volunteer). Each person has one vote.

Unfortunately, this year, due to Covid-19 and social distancing rules, we have to hold it by Zoom – an internet meeting facility.

If you are unable to attend the Zoom meeting, you may appoint our joint Chair Pat Walker, as your Proxy to attend and vote on your behalf. You can specify how you want your vote to be cast on each resolution using the enclosed Proxy voting form. Completed forms must be received by the Secretary by **Friday 7 May at 5pm**.

Included with this letter are:

1. AGM Agenda 2021
2. Trustees Annual Report
3. Statement of Accounts
4. Details of the proposed resolution to accept the Appointment of Taxation Advisory Services as Auditors for 2021
5. Details of the proposed resolution to alter the DDTN constitution to increase the number of trustees
6. List of potential Charity Trustees
7. Election of Officials
8. Proxy Voting Form 2021

The documents are also available on our website. If you have any questions or comments please email or call us before the meeting. We hope you will be able to attend and look forward to hearing from you.

1. AGM Agenda - 10 May 2021 - 6.00 pm by Zoom

1	Pat Walker & David Smith, Joint Chairs to open the AGM. Noting members present and apologies received.
2	Trustees Annual Report and Financial accounts 2020 Pat Walker & David Smith
3	Resolutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To accept the Trustees Annual Report 2020 • To accept the Financial statement 2020 • To accept the Appointment of Taxation Advisory Services as Auditors for 2021 • To accept proposed change to the Darlington & District Talking Newspaper Association Constitution section 12.(3) • Election of Trustees • Election of Officials
4	Any other business
5	Thanks to members for their support, participation and attendance. Close the meeting. Pat/ David.

2. Trustees Annual Report

Pat Walker and David Smith, Joint Chairs, and Kate Grogan, Secretary would like to welcome you to the first Annual General Meeting of Darlington and District Talking Newspaper Association, following our conversion to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

All final reports have been sent to the Charity Commission for our old charity (number 700129) and that charity is now "closed"; but we wanted to start this AGM with a brief resume of what happened during that year.

2019 started with a concerted effort to find new premises. The move to new premises was prompted by the supposedly imminent sale of the Northern Echo Office building in Priestgate. According to the information we had, The Northern Echo itself was moving into offices in the Cornmill Centre but unfortunately did not have any spare space to accommodate the Talking Newspaper. We felt it was

prudent to look for new accommodation, which was suitable for our requirements, early in the process, rather than wait to be given notice and then panicking where we would go.

So in July 2019 we relocated to Birch House, 80 Eastmount Road, Darlington. The move was a big upheaval and some of our volunteers decided they did not want to undertake the extra travelling and resigned. This made life difficult in the short term to cover the rolls they vacated. We had a recruitment drive once we got settled and I am pleased to say we managed to fill most vacancies within a couple of months. Thank you to all our volunteers who went the extra mile and helped out in order to make sure we could still produce the recording each week for our listeners. We also had problems transferring the phone as we wanted to keep our usual number but transfer to a different provider. This took over two months to resolve. The new premises are very comfortable and parking is easy.

We held various events through 2019; this included an information day at the Cornmill Shopping Centre, The Mayor, Councillor Nick Wallis visiting the new premises and a bag pack at Asda. These all helped raise funds and spread information about our service. Thanks to all who attended.

The 40 year anniversary party in the summer was a great success and a happy occasion where the volunteers and listeners could get together. As this was a special anniversary we made a video recording of the proceedings to commemorate the event.

At the last AGM it was agreed to convert the charity into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). David Smith took over the process to make this happen and after a lot of form filling and form signing this was completed in early 2020. Our new charity number is 1188452. My thanks go to David for his hard work to achieve this. This report, together with that of the Treasurer (David Green) will be submitted to the Charity Commission as a full and detailed account of the work of the Association during 2020/2021.

2020 and the start of 2021 have been very difficult. We managed to hold two events before lockdown started - a match day collection at Darlington Football Club and Pat gave a talk to the Wives Group at Newton Aycliffe, to help spread the word.

In March 2020 when the government announced the Covid 19 restrictions, we stopped all recordings and fundraising to follow government regulations. Most of

our volunteers were in higher risk groups and had been told to self-isolate and to not leave their homes.

It was suggested we may be able to do a recording at home to upload onto the website. This would be very difficult to do, would be of poor sound quality, and reliant on the few volunteers who had the expertise to do this. After careful consideration it was decided this was not possible.

Once the restrictions were eased slightly on the 20th May 2020, we started a limited service. Our Secretary, Kate Grogan, (working from home), and the producers, Pat Walker, Richie Hawkins, Liam Walker and Ged Callaghan (who came into the studio/office on their own on a rota to read and record), decided they could do a limited recording and upload onto the DDTN website and also the British Wireless for the Blind Fund website each week.

This continued until mid-June when the restrictions were eased again. A risk assessment was carried out using the HSE template to ensure a safe environment for the volunteers. Hand sanitiser and disinfectant wipes were available in the office and all volunteers, who had offered to continue with their volunteering roles, were reminded to follow UK government advice and not to go into the office/studio if they, or a member of their household, were ill.

So at the Committee meeting (held via Zoom) on 15th June, it was decided we could restart the service again but to limit the number of people working in the office/studio to two people at any one time, in order to keep socially distant from each other. The producer and one reader did the recording, the copying and clearing teams were also limited to two. The news and magazine editors worked from home and could either email or post their articles in.

We would usually hold various events throughout the year to spread the word that the service is available and also to raise funds. Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions this has been much reduced.

Pat Walker took part in a live Zoom meeting of HealthWatch Darlington on Facebook, to talk about the Talking Newspaper. This recording is also aired on the HealthWatch Darlington You-Tube channel.

We did manage to invite some guests (each attended separately) to contribute to our Christmas recording. Peter Barron (ex-editor of the Northern Echo), Chris Lloyd

(Features writer at the Northern Echo), The Mayor (Councillor Chris McEwan) and Stuart Armstrong (Darlington Football Club).

The Committee continuously monitor our listener numbers. The listeners who get their recording on memory stick or CD are registered with us and we send out between 55 to 60 wallets each week. The number of people listening on line is more difficult to gauge but the numbers appear to be between 100 and 200 listeners each month, so averaging about 30 to 50 each week.

At the moment we have 49 volunteers, however, during the lockdown the service has been kept going by just 26 volunteers in their various roles.

Thanks go to all the committee members who have worked tirelessly to improve our service. Thanks also go to the auditors, Paul Pearson, for examining the accounts.

Finally, on behalf of the Committee we would like to say thank you to all of our volunteers who each help to make the Darlington and District Talking Newspaper the success it is, and thank you to our listeners for their support.

Hopefully we will get back to a new normality very soon.

3. Statement of Accounts

4

DARLINGTON & DISTRICT TALKING NEWSPAPER

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

	<u>2020</u>		<u>2019</u>	
	£	£	£	£
Donations		1,399		750
Paid Recordings		1,111		920
Fundraising		432		391
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		2,942		2,061
Bank Interest Received		116		120
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		3,058		2,181
LESS OVERHEADS				
Meeting and Travel Expenses	87		23	
Equipment Maintenance	118		103	
Telephone and Internet	218		1,354	
Postage	89		717	
Printing Stationery and Consumables	159		400	
Fundraising & Promotion	-		780	
Training & Recruitment	23		-	
Licences	47		42	
Relocation Costs	-		1,236	
Insurances	291		433	
Rent and Rates	4,440		2,220	
Sundry Expenses	-		158	
Bank Charges	82		111	
Accountancy	220		245	
Asset Purchases	-		37	
CDs & Wallets	407		446	
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		6,181		8,305
<u>NET LOSS FOR THE YEAR</u>		<hr/> <hr/>		<hr/> <hr/>
		£ 3,123		£ 6,124

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2020

<u>Notes</u>	<u>2020</u>		<u>2019</u>	
	£	£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash at Bank and in Hand	45,468		48,591	
	<u>45,468</u>		<u>48,591</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS		45,468		48,591
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>£ 45,468</u>		<u>£ 48,591</u>
 CAPITAL AND RESERVES				
Profit and Loss Account		45,468		48,591
<u>TOTAL SHAREHOLDERS' FUNDS</u>		<u>£ 45,468</u>		<u>£ 48,591</u>

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Total Receipts in the year amounted to £3,058 (2019 2,181) payments £6,177 (2019 £8,305) funds decreased in the year from £48,591 at 1 January 2020 to £45,468 at 31 December 2020.

It is the policy of the charity that cash reserves should be maintained at a level equivalent to at least 3 years expenditure. This will ensure that in the event of a significant drop in funding, current activities can continue whilst consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

4. Proposed Resolution to accept the Appointment of Taxation Advisory Services as 2021 Auditors

Paul Pearson of Taxation Advisory Services has audited DDTN accounts for many years. It is proposed the company continue to provide this service under the new charity.

5. Proposed Resolution to increase the number of trustees allowed in the DDTN Constitution under revised Section 12.3

Some of our current trustees are unable to participate in Committee work because they do not use the internet. To enable the DDTN to recruit more trustees who can participate, a resolution is proposed to increase the number of charity trustees.

Section 12 (3) of our constitution currently reads

“(3) Number of charity trustees.....

(b) The maximum number of charity trustees is 10, to include a maximum of 3 co-opted members with full voting rights.”

It is proposed to replace this clause with

“(3) Number of charity trustees.....

(b) The maximum number of charity trustees is **12**, to include a maximum of **4** co-opted members with full voting rights.

6. List of potential Charity Trustees

Candidates	Notes
Ged Callaghan	Seeking appointment.
June Goodrick	Current trustee
David Green	Co-opted Trustee from 2020. Current Treasurer
Kate Grogan	Current Secretary
Margaret Harrison	Current trustee
Richie Hawkins	Current trustee
Paul Knight	Co-opted Trustee. Served as trustee with old charity.
David Smith	Current Joint Chair
Michael Taylor	Current trustee
Pat Walker	Current Joint Chair

7, Election of Officials

Candidates	Post
David Smith (current Joint Chair)	Chair
Pat Walker (current Joint Chair)	Deputy Chair
David Green (current Treasurer)	Treasurer
Kate Grogan (current Secretary)	Secretary

DDTN Annual General Meeting 2021**PROXY VOTE**

If you cannot attend the internet Zoom AGM on 10 May 2021 and wish to vote, please complete, sign and return this form.

Name.....(IN CAPITALS PLEASE)

Address.....

.....

As a member of DDTN, I appoint the DDTN Joint Chair, Pat Walker, as my proxy to vote in my name and on my behalf at the 2021 Annual General Meeting and at any adjournment thereof.

Signed..... **Date**.....

Resolutions:

Place a cross in the appropriate box next to each resolution. The Committee recommends you vote **'for'** all the resolutions.

	Vote for	Vote against	Abstain
Accept Trustees Annual Report			
Accept Statement of Accounts			
Accept Appointment of Taxation Advisory Services as 2021 auditors			
Accept increase the number of trustees allowed in the DDTN Constitution under revised Section 12.3			

Vote on Appointment of Charity Trustees

Place a cross next to the candidates you wish to be appointed as Trustees. There are currently 10 places for trustees so you can vote for up to 10 candidates.

Candidates	Vote for Appointment
Ged Callaghan	
June Goodrick	
David Green (current Treasurer)	
Kate Grogan (current Secretary)	
Margaret Harrison	
Richie Hawkins	
Paul Knight	
David Smith (Current Joint Chair)	
Michael Taylor	
Pat Walker (Current Joint Chair)	

Election of Officers

Place a cross in the appropriate box next to each candidate. The Board of Trustees recommends you vote **'for'** all candidates.

	Vote for	Vote against	Abstain
David Smith as Chair			
Pat Walker as Deputy Chair			
Kate Grogan as Secretary			
David Green as Treasurer			

Please return this completed form by email, or using a DDTN wallet, or by post to:
 The Secretary, Darlington & District Talking Newspaper, 1D Birch House, 80
 Eastmount Road, Darlington DL1 1LA. The form should arrive **no later than Friday 7 May**. Late forms are not guaranteed to be counted.