

## **DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

### **DORCHESTER JOINT HERITAGE COMMITTEE HELD VIA THE ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING PLATFORM**

**20 OCTOBER 2020**

At a virtual Meeting of the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee held on 20 October 2020:

#### **PRESENT:**

Dorchester Town Council

Councillors: S. Biles  
F. Hogwood  
G. Jones (Chairman)  
F. Kent-Ledger  
R. Major

Officers: S. Newman  
T. Hedger

Dorset Council

Councillors: R. Biggs  
L. Fry  
S. Jones

In attendance

M. Chutter for Minute No. 16  
S. Douglas and B. Lane RKE for Minute No. 17(i)

Ancient & Honourable Guild of Town Criers  
Blue Badge Tourist Guides  
Dorchester Association  
Dorchester Chamber for Business  
Dorchester Civic Society  
Dorchester Local Nature Reserve  
Shire Hall Museum  
The Keep Military Museum

A. Chisholm  
T. Loasby  
M. Rice  
M. Woodgate  
T. James  
L. Poulsen  
A. Brown  
L. Gardner

#### 13. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Canning and D. Taylor (Dorset Council).

#### 14. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020, a copy of which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

The Deputy Town Clerk updated Members in respect of discussions with Dorset Council about the Thomas Hardy Trail. The Heritage Tourism Project Manager reported that he was

meeting with the Secretary to the Thomas Hardy Society and would raise the matter of the trail in those discussions.

15. **DECLARATIONS OF PRE-DETERMINATION**

There were no declarations of pre-determination.

16. **SALISBURY FIELDS - MOULE INFORMATION BOARD**

The Committee had before it a draft board in respect of Fordington Vicarage. Members felt that the design of the new board was excellent and some Members had some suggestions for alterations to the text. Members were asked to send any suggestions for change to the Deputy Town Clerk. The working group would give consideration to the amendments and then present the final draft to the Dorchester East Councillors for approval. It was noted that the board did have a QR code and additional information could be placed on the website which linked to that code.

Members felt that Salisbury Fields itself might benefit from having its own information board and this was agreed as a future project.

The Committee wished to thank Mark Chutter and Laura Gardner for all their work in producing the board.

**RESOLVED**

That any suggestions for amendments be sent to the Deputy Town Clerk for consideration by the working group. The amended board to be approved by the Dorchester East Councillors.

17. **HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY**

(i) **Draft Final Report from Red Kite Environment**

The Committee considered a report by the Heritage Tourism Project Manager which enclosed the final draft report from Red Kite Environment on its heritage audit and suggested opportunities for improving the contribution of heritage assets to the overall visitor experience.

Red Kite Environment then made a detailed presentation to the Committee on its report and responded to Members detailed questions.

The Committee felt that the town and surrounding area also had a lot to offer in respect of the Bronze Age period, sport tourism – football / cricket and that the History Centre could also be a draw for some visitors. Members also felt that the words slow or quiet should not be used for marketing the town although the Committee did understand the concept of that tourism niche.

In regard to the consultation Members felt that it was a shame that it had not proved possible to get more views from the Town's young people. Members also felt Dorchester Arts could play a significant part in the town becoming a cultural hub in the future.

## **RESOLVED**

That, subject to the comments set out above, the final draft report from Red Kite Environment be agreed.

### (ii) Heritage Tourism Project Progress Report

The Committee considered a report by the Heritage Tourism Project Manager which updated it on the progress of the project and reported on the next steps. Members were pleased to note that that over 900 copies of the 'Lets Explore Dorchester' publication had been given to local schools.

## **RESOLVED**

That the progress report be noted.

### (iii) Draft Heritage Tourism Strategy – Consultation Outcomes and Proposed Changes

Members had before them a report by the Heritage Tourism Project Manager which set out the results of the public consultation on the draft Heritage Tourism Strategy. The report summarised all of the responses and set out the changes proposed to the draft Strategy resulting from those responses.

It was noted that Blue Badge Guides had not been included within the Steering Group and it was considered important that they be included in the future development and implementation of the Strategy. The Chairman confirmed that a wide range of interested parties would be involved in the partnership arrangements going forward.

Members felt that the future threat to the natural environment of the proposed housing development north of Dorchester should be addressed in the Strategy. The Chairman confirmed that he would write, on behalf of the Committee, objecting to the proposed development in the strongest possible terms.

The Committee also felt that coach tourism should not be discounted completely as a part of the Strategy and also consideration should be given as to how an apprenticeship partnership with tourism providers might be possible.

The Heritage Tourism Project Manager reminded Members that they had previously agreed a sum of £900 to produce a professionally designed summary of the final version of the Strategy for online publication and reference. It was now proposed that the summary be produced in-house and be made available via the Town Council website and elsewhere as a downloadable pdf document. The Committee was agreeable to this but wished for some printed copies to be made available.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) That, subject to the comments above, the changes to the draft Strategy set out in the report be agreed with the final wording being approved by the Chairman.

- (2) That the Strategy summary document be produced in-house house and be made available via the Town Council website and elsewhere as a downloadable pdf document but with some paper copies also being made available.

18. **DORCHESTER HERITAGE OPEN DAY 2020 - REVIEW**

The Committee received a report by the Chairman on the Town's Heritage Open Day held on Sunday 13 September 2020. Members wished to thank the Chairman and the delivery team which had pulled together an excellent, covid safe, largely online, day very quickly. It was also noted that the delivery team had given their time for free which had allowed the three sponsors contributions to largely cover the cost of the event.

The Chairman informed Members that work would soon be commencing on organising the 2021 Thomas Hardy Victorian Fair and that if any Member wished to help with the organising to please let him know.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

19. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Members noted the dates for meeting of the Committee in 2021 as follows:-

- Tuesday 19 January 2021 at 7.00pm
- Tuesday 20 April 2021 at 7.00pm
- Tuesday 20 July 2021 at 7.00pm
- Tuesday 19 October 2021 at 7.00pm

20. **QUESTIONS**

No questions had been received.

21. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

Chairman.....