

Dorchester Town Council

Management Committee

15 November 2016

Present: The Mayor (Councillor T. Harries) and Councillors C. Biggs, G. Duke, J. Hewitt, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, R. Potter (Chairman), M. Rennie and K. Rice.

Apologies: Councillors A. Canning and D. Taylor.

In attendance

F. McLaren, Friends of the Borough Gardens

30. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 September 2016, adopted by Council on 27 September 2016, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

31. Management Arrangements

The Committee considered a report from the Outdoor Services Manager updating it on the work undertaken and the achievements made by the Outdoor Services Team since the last meeting of the Committee.

In respect of the proposed change of tree species from red oak to Cercidiphyllum (Katsura tree), to replace the decayed Beech at the Princes Street entrance to the Gardens Members felt that the sensory aspect of this tree would be beneficial. Alternative species were discussed including the handkerchief, birch and tricolor beech trees and it was agreed that the Katsura should be planted but that a heritage tree planting scheme be drawn up for future planting seasons.

The Outdoor Services Manager responded to other questions in respect of grass cutting at Salisbury Fields and the football pitches at Weymouth Avenue Recreation Ground.

Resolved

- (1) That the Outdoor Services Team update be noted.
- (2) That a Katsura tree be planted in place of the decayed Beech at the Princes Street entrance to the Gardens
- (3) That a heritage tree heritage tree planting scheme be established up for future planting seasons.

32. Borough Gardens – New Tennis Courts

Members considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk which updated them on the progress being made in respect of building a new set of tennis courts on the old bowling

green in the Borough Gardens, the corner of which had been identified as Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The Committee noted the good progress that had been made and that the revised timescale for completing the project agreed at the last meeting would be met with the new courts in place during Spring 2017.

Whilst discussing this matter it was reported that tennis fob holders were occasionally booking tennis courts and not turning up to play or cancelling their bookings. It was agreed that tennis fob holders should be contacted asking that they cancel their bookings should they change their minds about playing.

Resolved

That the progress report be noted.

33. Borough Gardens – Alternative Public Access

Members considered a report by the Outdoor Services Manager which proposed opening up a new pedestrian access to the Gardens next to the Borough Gardens House along Bowling Alley Walk. The existing entry in that area involved pedestrians walking through a working area and an area with vehicle and machinery movements which is a breach of health and safety safe working practice and increased the opportunity of theft from the Gardens stores.

The Committee supported the proposal and requested that some form of lighting be available for those users accessing or exiting the Borough Gardens House through the new entrance when it was dark.

Resolved

That the proposal for a new pedestrian entrance to the Gardens via Bowling Alley Walk be approved.

34. Dorchester Cricket Club

The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk updating it on the progress made by Dorchester Cricket Club to move towards it self managing the recreation Ground site independent of the Council. The report also informed Members that a notice had been received that Weymouth Avenue Pavilion was to be rated for Business Rates. The draft assessment would create a liability of £11,500 per year as from 1 April 2015. Officers were presently evaluating how this assessment might be challenged but it was unlikely that it would reduce below £7,000 per year. Officers were also evaluating the impact of the Pavilion being occupied by a Community Sports Club, such as the Cricket Club, as this could result in the liability being reduced by 80% or even 100%.

Resolved

(1) That the good progress made by Dorchester Cricket Club over the past year be noted.

(2) That the additional business rate liability of the Pavilion to the Council on its present occupation model be noted.

(3) That Officers be instructed to continue to work with the Cricket Club with a view to the Club taking on the management of the Pavilion at the earliest opportunity. The Committee to receive regular reports on progress and approve any agreement prior to occupation.

35. **Syward Close Play Area**

Members considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk on proposed play equipment for younger children at Syward Close play area. The Committee had previously agreed that some play equipment should be purchased and it was proposed to purchase a multi play piece of equipment and springies at a cost of approximately £8,000. The project to be funded from the play area reserve which held sufficient funds.

It was reported that there had been some concerns regarding medical issues associated with rubber crumb safety surfacing.

Resolved

(1) That the play equipment identified in the report be purchased for Syward Close play area at a cost of approximately £8,000.

(2) That a report be prepared for a future meeting of the Committee in respect of the reported medical concerns associated with rubber crumb safety surfacing.

36. **Summer Events Programme 2016 - Feedback**

The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk which provided feedback on the events held in the Borough Gardens and Maumbury Rings over the summer.

Members were pleased with the variety of the events and the level of attendances.

With regard to Maumbury Rings August Bank Holiday Members felt that it would be good to have an event on the Friday evening. It was confirmed that Officers were already working with Dorchester Arts with the aim of having some other event on the Friday evening. It was reported that the Love Parade timings needed improving with some additional co-ordination.

Recommended

(1) That the 2016 summer events feedback be noted.

(2) That the Maumbury Rings Festival be held again over the 2017 August Bank Holiday.

37. Allotment Charges 2017

The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk which set out the cost of the various elements of the allotments service. The cost of providing water and green waste removal received the largest subsidy. The report proposed that the green waste removal be discontinued, that the water fee element of the allotment charge be increased and that the allotment rental element of the charge remain unchanged. It was also proposed that composting bins be purchased for those that presently did not compost and a sum of £3,000 to be included as a 2017-18 special item to cover this cost.

Members also considered a representation from an allotment holder who was to be charged double fees as he no longer lived in Dorchester – notice had been given of this increase last year.

The Committee noted that discussions were ongoing with both Transition Town Dorchester and The Duchy of Cornwall regarding infrastructure on the Lubbecke Way site.

Members also discussed the issue of whether allotmenters should be allowed two plots and it was agreed that this issue should be discussed further at a future meeting. In the meantime additional plots should continue not be offered to existing allotmenters whilst there were residents on the waiting list.

Resolved

- (1) That the removal of green waste service and fee is ceased as from 31 December 2016.
- (2) That the water fee is increase to £4.50 per half plot and £6.50 per full plot as from 1 January 2017.
- (3) That there is no increase in the rent for allotment plots or the administration charge in 2017, the fees will therefore be:-

Rent - Full plot on any site	£34.00
Rent - Half plot on any site	£18.00
Water Charge – Full plot	£6.50
Water Charge – Half plot	£4.50
(excludes Frome Terrace – no water)	
Administration Fee for new tenants	£50.00

- (4) That the practice of charging double fees for non-Dorchester residents continues.
- (5) That the removal of the green waste service is replaced by a one off investment in 2017-18 of £3,000 in composting bins.

38. **Central Dorchester Scout Group**

The Committee considered a grant application from the Central Dorchester Scout Group requesting that the Council consider offering a grant towards the cost of replacing the old and inefficient heating and lighting systems at the scout hall based at Sawmills.

Resolved

That a grant of £350 be offered to the Central Dorchester Scout Group.
(Councillor M. Rennie declared a personal interest in respect of the above discussion.)

39. **Town Crier Competition**

The Committee considered a grant application from the Town Crier for a contribution towards the Town Crying competition which was held in Dorchester as a result of Dorchester's Town Crier winning the competition last year.

Members noted that if all of the grants that had been applied for were successful then the majority of the expenses would be covered. It was felt that now the event had occurred the application could be considered at the next meeting following receipt of an income and expenses statement.

Resolved

That the request for a grant from the Town Crier be considered again at the next meeting following receipt of an income and expenses statement.

40. **Cemetery Matters**

(a) **Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes**

The Committee had before it a report with details of the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial for grave spaces and the number of interments and burials of ashes together with South Chapel usage at Dorchester Cemetery, since the last meeting of the Committee.

Resolved

That the report on the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes since the last meeting of the Committee be noted.

(b) **Headstones and Inscriptions**

The Committee received and noted applications for the design of headstones and inscriptions.

Resolved

That the action of the Town Clerk in approving designs numbered 4194 to 4202 be confirmed and the Register of Memorials be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

(c) Improvements to Cemeteries

The Committee had before it a report by the Outdoor Services Manager on works being undertaken at Poundbury and Fordington Cemeteries so as to improve their look and functionality. Members particular attention was drawn to the tree work and septic tank work to be undertaken at Poundbury Cemetery. It was also noted that the supporting wall of Fordington Cemetery was in need of some maintenance which would be undertaken when the area below was being developed.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

41. Buildings Monitoring Report

The Committee received the monitoring reports for the Municipal Buildings, Weymouth Avenue Pavilion and Borough Gardens House.

In response to a question the Deputy Town Clerk explained the maintenance regime of the town's war memorial at the bottom of South Street. He also reported on all of the positive comments received in respect of the Remembrance Day Service. Members felt the arrangements for Remembrance Day worked very well this year and wished to thank all of those involved.

Resolved

That the Buildings Monitoring Report be noted.

42. Dorchester Arts

The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Dorchester Arts Board Meeting held on 12 September 2016.

It was reported that Dorchester Arts relationship with the Council was working well and that there was good progress being made with moving towards the Maltings. It was noted that Dorchester Arts was organising a tour to the Maltings and it was requested that Town Councillors might also be invited. It was felt that the Council should start considering future uses of the Corn Exchange building in anticipation of Dorchester Arts moving to their new home.

Chairman