

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE

13 MAY 2014

PRESENT Councillors V.J. Allan, R.M. Biggs, T.C.N. Harries, G.M. Jones, P.G. Mann and Trevor Jones (Chairman).

APOLOGIES The Mayor (Councillor E.S. Jones) and Councillor D.S. Roberts.

42. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 18 March 2014, adopted by Council on 25 March 2014, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

43. **END OF YEAR REPORTS**

The Committee noted the end of year Financial Statement, the Internal Auditor's report on the Financial Statement, progress on the Management Team's Action Plan, and the Annual Report.

The Town Clerk explained in detail the variations against budgets that had occurred during the financial year, and answered questions regarding utility expenditure and markets and buildings income. He confirmed that further analysis of these issues would be undertaken to identify the impact on the current budget and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Town Clerk also answered questions with regard to the Depot Loan Repayment reserve, the potential for longer term investments, and the method of asset valuation that the Town Council is required to adopt.

He also clarified a point regarding the Internal Auditor's report, and confirmed that a review of General and Earmarked Reserves would consider, among other things, the auditors comments on reserve levels.

The Chairman noted the delays in installing equipment on the Great Field and advised that he had asked the Deputy Town Clerk to ascertain whether the Great Field was sufficiently well drained before the Town Council took on liability for its management.

It was

RECOMMENDED

That the Financial Statement be noted and the numbers therein be included on the Annual Return together with the Annual Governance Statement, to be approved and signed by the Mayor.

It was

RESOLVED

That the report of the Internal Auditor, the progress report on the Management Team's Action Plan, and the Annual Report be noted.

44. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME: STATEMENTS OF POLICY ABOUT EXERCISE OF DISCRETIONARY FUNCTIONS

The Committee noted the report of the Deputy Town Clerk and it was

RESOLVED

That the Council's policy with regard to the exercise of Discretionary Pension Functions be as laid out in the appendix to the report

45. CONSULTATION ON THE CORPORATE PLAN

The Committee received the report of the Town Clerk. Support was expressed for the process for consulting residents, while one member expressed the view that electors were sceptical about consultation from public bodies, and that it was important that we listened carefully to their views. The Chairman identified the need to discuss our process with Dorset County Council, who are currently also consulting residents.

There was support for the creation of an economic forum, including representatives of both businesses and major public sector employers. It was proposed that the Heritage Committee consider how it might develop its role rather than a separate body being created that focused on exploiting the tourism benefit of the heritage sector.

It was

RESOLVED

- (1) That, the Council should consult on its draft Corporate Plan using Dorchester News, online surveys, meetings with interested groups, and following a discussion with Dorset County Council, at least one drop in event in the centre of town
- (2) That proposals to create an Economic Forum for the town be explored with key partners
- (3) That the Heritage Committee be asked to review its terms of reference with regard to focusing on the tourism benefit of Dorchester's heritage

Chairman