

Dorchester Town Council

Policy Committee

17 July 2018

Present: Councillors, B. Armstrong-Marshall (Chairman for items 1 - 2), R. Biggs, A. Chisholm, T. Harries, S. Hosford, G. Jones (Chairman for items 3 - 6), T. Jones and D. Taylor.

Also present: Councillors J. Hewitt, P. Potter and M. Rennie

Declarations of Interest: Councillors R. Biggs and M. Rennie declared non-pecuniary interests in item 6 as members of the Dorchester Youth and Community Centre Board

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Committee of 15 May 2018, adopted by Council on 22 May 2018, were taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2. Financial Report 2018-19

The Town Clerk provided an update covering the Council's Month 3 spend in relation to the budget, cash position, plus the current debt and payments position. He answered questions in relation to the procurement of utilities in partnership with other bodies and the movement of monies between non-interest and interest yielding bank accounts.

The Clerk explained a recommendation from the Management Committee requesting use of the Play Equipment Reserve and also updated Members on progress with the 3G pitch at The Avenue Stadium, including a cash flow problem that had arisen during construction.

Resolved

- a) That the Payments list totalling £300,292.36 be approved
- b) That £12,000 from the Play Area Reserve be allocated to install a swing for wheelchair users at Maiden Castle Play Area, being a net increase of £4,000 used
- c) That, in the event that West Dorset District Council does not take action to resolve the cash flow problem which they have created by the end of July 2018, the Town Council increases its short term loan facility to Dorchester Town Community Football Club, to cover cash flow shortages related to VAT on the new 3G pitch, to £60,000, to be repaid during September 2018

3. Corporate Plan Review

The Committee received a report from the Town Clerk regarding Corporate Plan milestones, which had been redrafted to take account of activities during the 2018-19 year, accompanied by a progress report. The report also identified progress on the development of a Heritage Tourism Strategy.

Members of the Committee asked questions regarding progress of the development of affordable flats on the Tennis Courts site and the related review of the Council's approach to delivering affordable housing; the future of the site set aside for allotments on Lubbecke Way, currently owned by the Duchy of Cornwall; and the Maltings Arts project. The Town Clerk agreed to include reference to targets previously missed and identify by September which projects might not be delivered during the life of the Council.

Members considered the brief for the development of a Heritage Tourism strategy. A Member requested reference be made to the need to identify how a programme of improvements to the privately owned built environment might be introduced and requested that the opportunity to bid to fulfil the brief be widely advertised. The Town Clerk indicated that the final brief would come back to the meeting in September with a proposal to allocate resource to commission the work.

4. **Local Government Reorganisation and Cuts to Services**

The Town Clerk provided an update regarding discussions with West Dorset District Council in relation to the transfer of assets and services to the Town Council, highlighting that a detailed report to the July meeting of the District Council Strategy Committee had not reached its agenda.

The Committee considered three possible options that may come forward from West Dorset District Council when it eventually considered asset and service transfers, recognising the pros and cons of each and that all options would to a degree give the Town Council a greater say in service delivery on the Wednesday Market and Public Conveniences.

The Town Clerk will report any offers made by West Dorset District Council as they arise.

5. **Electoral Review of Dorset: Draft Recommendations**

The Town Clerk presented a report covering proposals made by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for the Dorchester electoral wards to be established for the May 2019 elections to the Unitary and Town Councils.

Recommended to Council

That the Town Council offer its support for the Unitary Council and Town Council ward arrangements for Dorchester, as proposed by the LGBCE

6. **Support for Dorchester Youth and Community Centre - Update**

The Committee received and noted the update, regarding operational delivery of the Youth Club over the 18 months since it had been established. Financial targets had thus far been met, the Club was stable and it was making steady progress to expand the service it offered.

Members noted conflicting evidence regarding the need for support for organised youth activity in the west of the town, but that the Youth Centre would be well placed to offer support if it was needed and could be funded.

Chairman