

# **DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

**18th SEPTEMBER, 2007**

At a Meeting of the Policy Committee held on 18th September, 2007:

**PRESENT** The Mayor (Councillor D.J. Barrett) and Councillors M.A. Allwood, R.M. Biggs, V. Black, T.C.N. Harries, C.M. Hebditch, Trevor Jones (Chairman) and L.M. Phillips.

In attendance:

Ms. R. McKechnie, Audit Commission.

15. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17th July, 2007, adopted by Council on 24th July, 2007, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

16. **MANAGEMENT MINUTE 21 – BOROUGH GARDENS MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PLAN AND PERFORMANCE SPECIFICATION**

It was

**RECOMMENDED**

That Management Minute 21 be approved so far as this Committee is concerned.

17. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT – 2006-07**

Ms McKechnie presented the Annual Governance Report and confirmed that the Audit Commission would issue an unqualified opinion on them, although she did draw attention to two recommendations as set out in Appendix 1 to the Statement.

The Council's Financial Service Provider explained the various minor adjustments made to the Accounts during the audit process, none of which were material and which collectively resulted in a net reduction in the Council's surplus of £759.

The Committee noted that the use of resources audit was only qualified in one respect, that of demonstrating the quality of published data, and Ms McKechnie explained that this was a positive outcome and much better than that achieved by many similar and larger bodies; the Town Clerk and the Financial Service Provider reported on the action which was being taken to address this matter.

It was

**RESOLVED**

- (1) That the Annual Governance Statement be noted and that the Town Clerk be authorised

to issue the Letter of Representation accordingly.

- (2) That the Financial Service Provider be requested to make recommendations as to an appropriate de-minimis level for capitalising expenditure as recommended in the Statement.

18. **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received and noted the Council's Management Accounts for the period ended 31st August, 2007.

19. **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

It was

**RECOMMENDED**

That no further action be taken in respect of this matter.

20. **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY STRATEGY**

Further to Minute 29(2) (2006-07) the Committee a draft Information Technology Security Policy and the draft E-Mail and Internet Acceptable Use Policy and E-Mail Guidelines associated with it.

It was

**RECOMMENDED**

That the draft documents as now submitted be approved subject to the Town Clerk being satisfied that the downloading of material including embedded macros or active content would not constitute a breach of it.

21. **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

Further to Minute 10 the Committee noted that the West Dorset Parish Remuneration Panel would meet to review its recommendations as to the level of allowances for town and parish councils on 25th October, 2007 and considered a draft submission to it.

It was

**RECOMMENDED**

That the draft submission to the West Dorset Parish Remuneration Panel be approved so far as this Committee is concerned.

22. **WEST DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL – REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS**

The Committee noted that the West Dorset District Council was in the process of a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations and considered whether to make representations in connection with it.

The principal problem identified was in respect of identifying an appropriately sited polling station for the DJ register which covered part of Victoria Park and part of the Poundbury estate. Analysis of the voting patterns in May, 2007 revealed a low turn-out from the area covered by this register, presumed to be as a result of the location of the polling station at the Pentecostal Church on Cambridge Road which was itself likely to become unavailable in the near future.

Members referred to the possible future availability of potentially suitable buildings within the Poundbury Development, particularly in the vicinity of the Great Field, and suggested that the District Council should make enquiries of the Duchy of Cornwall into the specifics and timescales. In the meantime it was suggested that it might be possible to reach agreement with The Grove Pre-School Playgroup for access to their premises adjacent to Damers School or to introduce a temporary facility on a suitable area of open space.

It was

**RECOMMENDED**

That these comments and suggestions be conveyed to the West Dorset District Council.

23. **TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk on the future provision of the Council's website following the withdrawal in October of the hosting and maintenance service previously provided by the West Dorset District Council and it was

**RESOLVED**

That the proposal received from Eonic Limited of Poundbury be accepted subject to the receipt of a satisfactory reference as to their performance from a comparable body to the Council.

Chairman