

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE

20th MARCH, 2007

At a Meeting of the Policy Committee held on 20th March, 2007:

PRESENT Councillors R.M. Biggs, T.C.N. Harries, S.C. Hosford, Trevor Jones (Chairman), P.G. Mann and L.M. Phillips.

In attendance:
Councillor M.E. Rennie

Ms R. McKechnie, Audit Commission.

APOLOGIES for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor R.B. Potter) and Councillor C.M. Hebditch.

34. **ELECTIONS**

The Chairman reminded Members that this would be the final meeting of the Committee prior to the Town Council elections on 3rd May, 2007 and thanked them for their work during the preceding four years.

35. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16th January, 2007, adopted by Council on 23rd January, 2007, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

36. **FINAL ACCOUNTS – 2004-05**

The Committee considered a revised copy of the Final Accounts for 2004-05 which had been modified to take account of an error in the 2001 District Valuer's valuation of the Council's properties which had omitted the land value in respect of the Municipal Buildings, estimated at £150,000. This had been identified during the 2006 revaluation and represented a material change to the Accounts.

Ms McKechnie presented the SAS 610 report on the Accounts and the Annual Audit Letter which confirmed that, subject to the approval of the revised Accounts by the Committee, the Audit Commission would issue an unqualified opinion on them.

The SAS 610 report identified some matters which required attention, as indicated below.

Having been presented with appropriate evidence, Ms McKechnie accepted that the Council's arrangements for making payments adequately addressed the comment about dual signatories on significant expenditure.

The need for documentation of the Council's financial procedures had already been identified and was being progressed by the Council's Financial Service Provider who expected to be in a position to report on it to the next meeting of this Committee.

The concern expressed about formalising the terms of engagement of the Council's Internal Auditor had been dealt with at Policy Minute 29.

Arrangements were in hand which would ensure full compliance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) in future and the Council's Financial Service Provider assured the Committee that the concern expressed about the papers supporting the accounting treatment of the Council's Asset Management Revenue Account would be addressed.

It was

RESOLVED

- (1) That the revised Final Accounts for 2004-05 as now submitted be approved and appropriately certified by the Chairman and the Town Clerk.
- (2) That a review of the Council's level of reserves be undertaken contemporaneously with the consideration of a Medium Term Financial Strategy referred to at Minute 29.

37. **ASSOCIATION OF LARGER LOCAL COUNCILS**

Further to Minute 3 the Committee noted that the Association of Larger Local Councils had resolved to wind up on 31st March, 2007 and received a copy of a letter from the Chairman of the Association dated 13th February, 2007 concerning the distribution of the Association's remaining assets.

38. **COUNCIL CHAMBER DISPLAY**

Further to Council Minute 37 the Committee considered whether to arrange for any form of display within the Council Chamber acknowledging the achievements of identified ex-servicemen. The publicity given to this matter in the local press and in the Council newsletter subsequent to the discussion had resulted in the suggestion of three further names to be added to those already identified (Samuel Vickery and Thomas Warr); Joseph Kellaway, Gerald O'Sullivan and Lionel Queripel. Copies of the information received in support of the suggestions had been circulated to all Members together with other information about potentially qualified individuals.

Following consideration it was

RECOMMENDED

That consideration of this matter be deferred and that appropriate advice be sought in the meantime from all possible sources.

Chairman