

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE

19th JANUARY, 2010

At a Meeting of the Policy Committee held on 19th January, 2010:

PRESENT Councillors M.A. Allwood, R.M. Biggs, V. Black, T.C.N. Harries, C.M. Hebditch, Trevor Jones (Chairman) and L.M. Phillips.

APOLOGY for absence was received from The Mayor (Councillor S.C. Hosford).

34. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17th November, 2009, adopted by Council on 24th November, 2009, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

35. **MINUTES OF OTHER COMMITTEES**

The Committee received Minute 66 of the Planning and Environment Committee and Minute 50 of the Management Committee, both relating to the respective Committee's Estimates for 2010-11, and it was

RESOLVED

That these Minutes be considered at Minute 43 below.

36. **EXTERNAL AUDIT: ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER – 2008-09**

The Committee received and noted a copy of the Annual Audit Letter in respect of 2008-09.

37. **INTERNAL AUDIT**

The Committee received and noted a copy of the most recent report of the Council's Internal Auditor together with the Town Clerk's explanation of the one point raised in it.

38. **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received and noted the Council's Management Accounts for the period ended 31st December, 2009.

39. **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

The Committee received and noted an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period to 31st March, 2014.

40. **GENERAL FUND AND SPECIFIC RESERVES BALANCES**

Further to Minute 11 the Committee considered the report of the Financial Services Provider on an appropriate level of General Reserve which it would be prudent for the Council to maintain.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED

That the recommendations set out in the report be approved and that the Council maintain a minimum General Reserve in 2010-11 of £265,549.

41. **21st CENTURY COUNCILLOR CONFERENCE**

The Committee considered the report of Councillor Hebditch on her attendance at this Conference which had been organised by the Improvement and Development Agency and held in Nottingham on 5th November, 2009.

The report set out certain suggestions for future action which could be considered by the Council and, following discussion, it was

RECOMMENDED

That Councillor Hebditch be requested to discuss the practical implications and potential benefits of the various suggestions with the Town Clerk and to report back to a future meeting of this Committee.

42. **THE FUTURE ADMINISTRATION OF DORCHESTER'S CEMETERIES**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk on the request received from the Dorchester Joint Burial Committee for the Council to assume responsibility for the burial function in Dorchester with effect from 1st April, 2011 and on the outcome of consultations about the proposal with Winterborne Herrington Parish Meeting and the staff involved.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the request received from the Dorchester Joint Burial Committee be agreed and that the Council assume direct responsibility for the management and operation of the burial function in Dorchester with effect from 1st April, 2011 in the interests of economy and efficiency.
- (2) That the general and specific reserves accumulated by the Joint Committee be

preserved intact for their original purposes within the Council's accounting framework.

- (3) That the facility for single fee burials be extended to residents of Winterborne Herringston in perpetuity in recognition of their longstanding membership of and support for the Joint Committee.
- (4) That the Management Committee be requested to give detailed consideration to the practical issues arising and, in doing so, be informed of this Committee's opinions that it is unnecessary to appoint a dedicated Cemeteries Panel but that the practice of undertaking an annual inspection of the cemeteries should continue.

43. **DRAFT BUDGET AND ESTIMATES – 2010-11**

(a) Planning and Environment Committee

The Committee considered the draft Estimates for the Planning and Environment Committee as approved by that Committee at Minute 66 and it was

RECOMMENDED

That the draft Estimates for the Planning and Environment Committee be approved so far as this Committee is concerned.

(b) Management Committee

The Committee considered the draft Estimates for the Management Committee as approved by that Committee at Minute 50.

The Financial Services Provider drew attention to the incorrect inclusion in the Revised Estimate for 2009-10 of a sum of £3,000 for Monthly Cleaning Contract under Buildings and Cultural Activities, the deletion of which would affect the totals shown on the Budget Summary and other summaries and it was

RECOMMENDED

That the draft Estimates of the Management Committee be approved so far as this Committee is concerned subject to the deletion of the sum of £3,000 for Monthly Cleaning Contract from the Revised Estimate for Buildings and Cultural Activities for 2009-10 on Page 8.

(c) Policy Committee

The Committee considered its draft Estimates for 2010-11.

It was

RECOMMENDED

That the draft Estimates for 2010-11 as now submitted be approved.

(d) Budget for 2010-11

The Committee considered the Budget for 2010-11 and the precept required.

It was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the Revised Estimates for 2009-10 and the Estimates for 2010-11 be approved subject to the modification set out at (b) above.
- (2) That a precept in the sum of £1,118,922 be levied on the West Dorset District Council in respect of the financial year 2010-11 requesting that payment be made in two equal instalments on 1st April and 1st October, 2010.

(Councillor L.M. Phillips declared a personal interest in those elements of the Estimates relating to Allotments as he is an allotment holder and took no part in the discussion of or voting on those elements.)

Chairman