

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE

21st SEPTEMBER, 2010

At a Meeting of the Policy Committee held on 21st September, 2010:

PRESENT The Mayor (Councillor L.M. Phillips) and Councillors R.M. Biggs (in the Chair), V. Black, T.C.N. Harries, C.M. Hebditch and S.C. Hosford.

In attendance:

Councillor A. Harries, Ms Z. Nicholson and Ms J. Watson – British Heart Foundation;

Mr. J. Oldroyd – KPMG LLP.

APOLOGIES for absence were received from Councillors M.A. Allwood and Trevor Jones.

12. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20th July, 2010, adopted by Council on 27th July, 2010, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

13. **HEART TOWN PROJECT**

The Committee received a presentation from the representatives of the British Heart Foundation on a proposal to identify Dorchester as one of 50 Heart Towns which were proposed to be created in 2011, in part to mark the Foundation's 50th Anniversary.

There were no financial implications for the Council of the proposed designation, although the Foundation hoped for support to raise awareness of the importance of heart-related health care including publicity and a promotional presence at events.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED

That no objection be raised in principle so far as the Council is concerned to the proposed designation subject to the consideration at the next meeting of this Committee of detailed information about what would be required or expected of the Council should the proposal proceed.

14. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT – 2009-10**

The Chairman welcomed John Oldroyd of KPMG LLP, the Council's External Auditors who was attending the meeting to answer Members' questions on the ISA260 report to those charged with governance which had been previously circulated; it was anticipated that unqualified opinions would be issued at the end of September on both the accounts and value for money audits.

The representative of the Council's Financial Service Provider explained that a number of non-material technical and presentational adjustments had been made to the Final Accounts during the process of the audit but the only material amendment related to a change in the method used to account for the statutory charge for capital which had the effect of reducing the General Reserve by £34,000. The representative also reported that this reduction was still less than the budgeted reduction in the General Reserve for 2009-10. The Committee received and noted a revised copy of the Final Accounts which had been amended to take account of adjustments made during the audit.

The Town Clerk reported that arrangements were in place to ensure that 'nil returns' about related party interests were sought from Members in future. He circulated a draft Management Representation letter for the Committee's consideration and it was

RESOLVED

That the auditors' report to those charged with governance be noted and that the Town Clerk be authorised to issue the Management Representation letter accordingly.

15. **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received and noted the Council's Management Accounts for the period ended 31st August, 2010. The representative of the Council's Financial Service Provider drew particular attention to the reduction in income revealed by the report which was almost entirely attributable to a reduction in the surplus arising from the operation of the market and to continuing pressure on staffing budgets as a result of the need to cover ongoing long-term sickness absences.

16. **SPONSORSHIP**

In accordance with Council Minute 29(1) the Committee considered the report on the possibilities for, and potential consequences of, formal commercial sponsorship of a range of activities and facilities offered by the Council.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED

That no change be made to the Council's current approach to sponsorship, namely that sponsorship be not actively sought but that individual proposals put forward be considered on their merits.

17. **THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE**

The Committee received and noted a report prepared at the request of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman which indicated that the cost of each visit to the Council's website during the period 1st September, 2009 to 31st August, 2010 cost 0.6881p.

The report also sought instructions on the Council's response to the request from the Government for local authorities to publish details of all expenditure exceeding £500.

It was

RECOMMENDED

That the Town Clerk and the Financial Services Provider be requested to arrange for information on all of the Council's expenditure other than personally sensitive information to be published on the Council's website with effect from the earliest possible date.

Chairman