

# **Dorchester Town Council**

## **Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel**

**3 June 2026**

**Present:** Councillors P. Dickenson, S. Jones, K. Reid, M. Rennie, R. Tarr and S. Williams.

**Apologies:** There were no apologies.

### **1. Election of Chair 2026-7**

It was proposed, seconded and

#### **Resolved**

That Councillor M. Rennie be elected Chair for the remainder of the 2026-27 Council Year.

### **2. Election of Vice-Chair 2026-7**

It was proposed, seconded and

#### **Resolved**

That Councillor K. Reid be elected Vice Chair for the remainder of the 2026-27 Council Year.

### **3. Declaration of Interests**

No declarations of interest were declared.

### **4. Markets Operation - Update**

The Panel considered a report by the Markets Officer which updated it on the work undertaken to date to ensure a successful handover of the Fairfield market operation to the Town Council from the previous contractor. It also updated Members on the activity of the Cornhill Market which was also now operated by the Town Council.

Members were informed that the Town Council had appointed a new Markets and Communications Officer who would be helping with promotion of the market and all other aspects of running a market, so he would be in a position to continue with that work once the temporary Markets Officer position ended in a couple of years.

In regard to promotion the Panel felt that it was important not to forget traditional print advertising in local newspapers, local magazines, posters etc.

It was reported that the possibility of a new Monday market was being investigated to operate in Cornhill and further down South Street in front of the vacant shops and banks.

## **Resolved**

That the Markets operation – Update report be noted.

### **5 Markets – A Future Vision**

Members considered a report by the Markets Officer which put forward a number of options in regard to developing the Markets offer at Fairfield. The document was a first draft and would evolve as different interested parties submitted their views and ideas.

The report set out thoughts and ideas for discussion in respect of Fairfield, the indoor market, North Linney's, South Linney's, Fairfield lock ups, car park area, site maintenance and improvements to buildings.

The Panel considered the options for the indoor market and felt that it should remain and that some urgent attention be given to it to make it watertight and to significantly improve its appearance. Members were circulated with a drawing showing what the building could look like if the proposed works to re-clad the building, improve signage and repair the roof were agreed. The total cost of the improvements was £70,000 proposed to be funded jointly by the Panel and Town Council. Dorset Council to fund the works to the North Linney's.

Members felt that if work was proposed for the roof then the installation of solar panels should be considered.

It was reported that a pre planning application was to be submitted shortly in respect of the proposal, previously agreed by the Panel, to remove a part of the North Linney's due to their unsafe condition.

In regard to minor site maintenance works it was proposed that the Town Council and Dorset Council establish an agreement to allow minor maintenance works to be arranged by the Town Council, using local traders whenever possible, and then reclaimed from Dorset Council as freehold owner. All works to be previously agreed by Dorset Council. This would allow for works to be carried out swiftly.

Members felt that the Bullring would be a good location for displaying information about the heritage of the market, tourism information and should be young people friendly.

The Fairfield Road water garden project was due to commence in the autumn and Members requested that Chris Peck, Dorset Council, be invited to the next meeting to give the Panel an update on progress.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That the works proposed to improve the indoor market building, at a cost of £70,000, be approved, funded jointly by the Panel and Dorchester Town Council.

(2) That the possibility of having solar panels on the indoor market roof be investigated.

(3) That discussions take place between officers of Dorset Council and the Town Council with a view to establishing a protocol for minor site maintenance.

(4) That Chris Peck, Dorset Council, be invited to the next meeting to give the Panel an update on progress in respect of the Fairfield Road water garden project.

6. **2026-27 Financial Update**

The Panel had before it a report from the Responsible Financial Officer which gave an update on the financial position of the Markets Panel.

It was noted that the 2025-26 outturn report was not yet available.

**Resolved**

That the Financial Update be noted.

Chair.....