

At the **MEETING** of the **DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Dorchester on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2013:

**PRESENT** The Mayor (Councillor E.S. Jones) in the Chair.

Councillors V.J. Allan, K.E. Armitage, D.J. Barrett, R.M. Biggs, A.J. Canning, T.C.N. Harries, S.C. Hosford, T. James, Trevor Jones, G.M. Jones, F.E. Kent-Ledger, P.G. Mann, R.B. Potter M.E. Rennie, D.S. Roberts and D. Taylor.

In attendance:  
Inspector S. Marsh of Dorset Police.

**APOLOGIES** for absence were received from Councillors C.S. Biggs, A.J. Lyall and T. Loakes.

31. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013 were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

32. **COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor welcomed the young people who had shown interest in the Youth Council, and invited their views regarding items on the agenda. A member of the Youth Council identified support for proposals for bags to be provided at the Great Field for dog walkers.

The Mayor thanked Councillors Kent-Ledger, Potter, the Mayors Secretary, Mr J. Palmer and Ms M. Lane for taking part in the Mayor's team at the Swimathon in October, where the team raised £460 for the Lions Appeal.

The Mayor reminded Councillors that Carols in the Borough Gardens would take place on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

The Town Clerk updated Councillors regarding the pilot scheme for changed office opening hours.

He also advised Councillors regarding an informal private briefing to be made by the developer of the Charles Street site, Simons, to take place at 6.00 pm on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2014.

Finally the Town Clerk advised the Council regarding the retirement of Mr C. Membury, of the Outdoor Services Team, on 31 December 2013, after 15 years of service with the Council. The Mayor advised Council that she would write to Mr Membury to thank him for his service to the town.

33. **QUESTIONS**

No questions had been received in accordance with Standing Order 12(3).

34. **PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – 7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Community Speed Watch presentation, minute 40, was to be rescheduled to the January Committee meeting.

The Town Clerk agreed to recirculate the letter referred to in the resolution at minute 40.

It was

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2013 be adopted.

35. **PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – 4<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2013**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

A Member sought information regarding the Council's policy on shop fronts, particularly in relation to corporate images, in the town centre. The Chairman confirmed that the Council had no policy but took advice from the District Council's Listed Buildings Officers when appropriate.

It was

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2013 be adopted.

36. **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 12<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2013**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

The Mayor welcomed Mr M. Lucas and footballers from the Dorchester Town U16 Gladiators FC to the meeting. They advised the Council regarding their recent trip to Lubbecke, and thanked the Council for their grant towards the transport costs of the young footballers. It was noted that a team of footballers was to visit Dorchester in 2014.

On receipt of a question from a Councillor the Chairman confirmed that no decision had yet been reached by the Committee regarding paying for additional Dog Warden services to focus on dog fouling problems encountered at the Great Field.

In response to a question the Town Clerk confirmed that it was intended that the proposed Changing Rooms at Poundbury would be funded from planning gain monies.

It was

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2013 be adopted.

37. **POLICY COMMITTEE – 19<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2013**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

The Chairman gave some context to the resolution at minute 20, focusing on the significant heritage assets being managed by the Town Council. He emphasised the Town Council's support for the Shire Hall project. The Mayor made information about the project available to all Councillors.

A Member identified that it would be beneficial to separately list the key corporate risks identified in the Risk Register. The Town Clerk agreed to report this to a future meeting of the Policy Committee.

On a question from a Member the Town Clerk confirmed that, with regard to the Apprenticeship scheme, while travel costs might be reimbursed, it was unlikely that these would be significant if an apprentice was appointed from the Dorchester area.

It was

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2013 be adopted.

38. **POLICE MATTERS**

Inspector Marsh reported on the crime statistics for Dorchester for the period since the last Council meeting, and updated Members on current police issues and initiatives.

He noted an increase in shoplifting offences, but also a high detection rate locally. He also identified a drop in alcohol related crime since the summer, and outlined preventative activity to be carried out by Dorset Police over the Christmas period. A Member provided additional information regarding activity by the Dorchester Crime Protection Panel.

Inspector Marsh provided information to support the Council's consideration of the consultation by the PCC on reductions in the opening hours of the front desk reception of Dorchester Police Station from 3 x 8-hour shifts to 2 x 2-hour shifts, supplemented by "Yellow phone" access to the Police Incident Centre in Bournemouth. He also identified that a number of tasks, including the review of bail conditions, driving documents and fire arms certificates remained to be resolved.

Inspector Marsh answered the Members concerns with regard to loss of visibility of the Police, the potential impact on unreported crime, and the potential drop in public confidence in the Police. He explained that the choice being faced by the Police was between 10 front line officers or cuts to civilian front desk reception staff, both of which cost £500,000. Inspector Marsh identified that the Police were recruiting Police Officers for the first time in 4 years. He also identified a local initiative involving attendance at Dorchester Library, to increase the visibility of the Police.

After a comprehensive question and answer session it was

## **RESOLVED**

That the Council notes with regret the proposals made by the Police and Crime Commissioner, but acknowledges the dilemma that Dorset Police is facing regarding the prioritisation of its resources. The Council supports any initiative to increase Dorset Police's visibility, including the use of community space provided by other public providers, and will work to encourage co-operation across the public sector in the use of public buildings. The Council wishes to play a role in promoting awareness among residents of how they can access Police services.

The Council rose at 7.55pm.

Mayor

## **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

At the conclusion of the meeting members of the public asked questions related to the following issues: -

Crime in Victoria Park, whether Dorset County Council's policy of turning street lights off at night had worsened the situation.

Vehicles with headlight defects.

Neighbourhood Planning.