

At the **MEETING** of the **DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Dorchester on Tuesday 28th January, 2014:

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

Councillors V.J. Allan, C.S. Biggs, R.M. Biggs, T.C.N. Harries, S.C. Hosford, T. James, G.M. Jones, Trevor 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, Ms J. Bazalgette, Dementia Action Alliance.

APOLOGIES for absence were received from Councillors K.E. Armitage, D.J. Barrett, A.J. Canning, A.J. Lyall and T. Loakes.

39. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 26th November 2013 were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

In relation to minute 32 a Councillor raised concerns about the proposed relocation of the church as a result of the Charles St retail development. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should write to the District Council seeking confirmation of the latest position, and also that a meeting be organised for Councillors to discuss the recent Simons presentation.

40. **COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor welcomed members of the Youth Council to the meeting, identifying that since the meeting in November 2013 the Council had acted on their proposal to introduce bag dispensers for dog waste.

The Mayor identified concerns raised by residents regarding the content of art created by local artist, Peter Sheridan, underneath the Damers Road Railway Bridge, specifically in relation to the inclusion of a gun. Mr Sheridan addressed the Council regarding the issue, offering alternative ideas. The Chairman of the Youth Council addressed the Council identifying that, on balance, they had no strong opinion against the content of the art, but were impressed with how it had been created. After comments by Members the Mayor invited Mr Sheridan to consider the final content for the art when completing it, which he agreed to do.

The Chairman of the Youth Council expressed their support for the site to the rear of the Bowls Club at Sandringham, as the preferred location of a new Free Running circuit. The Mayor invited the Youth Council to play a role in identifying suitable signage for the facility.

A member of the Youth Council also provided feedback regarding issues on parking in the Queens Avenue area. It was agreed that the Youth Council's secretary would write to 1610 Leisure asking for the item of parking to be included on the agenda for their next liaison meeting.

Finally the Town Clerk advised the Council that a Selection Committee will be held on Tuesday 11th February 2014 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber.

41. **QUESTIONS**

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

42. **PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – 2nd December 2013**

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

The Council discussed the approach taken by the District Council regarding consultation on car parking charges (minute 54). It was

RESOLVED

- (1) That West Dorset District Council be invited to a future meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee to discuss issues arising from the recent consultation on car parking charges, including how the consultation process had been conducted, the implications of higher long stay parking charges for workers, the potential additional impact on parking in residential streets, and lighting and vandalism on the Fair Field Car Parks.
- (2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 2nd December, 2013 be adopted.

43. **PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – 6th JANUARY 2014**

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

The Town Clerk advised that the date of the Queens Avenue Parking Issues consultation (minute 66) would be announced at the next meeting of the Committee.

It was

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 6th January, 2014 be adopted.

44. **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 12th NOVEMBER 2013**

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

The support of the Youth Council for the location of the Free Running Equipment (minute 43), which concurred with the views of users, was noted.

It was

RESOLVED

- (1) That, further to minute 43 of the Management Committee, the new Free Running Equipment be located at Sandringham, to the rear of the Bowls Club.
- (2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 14th January, 2014 be adopted.

45. **MAYORAL SELECTION COMMITTEE – 21ST JANUARY 2014**

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Deputy Mayor be requested to have discussions with the Members occupying the first six places on the list submitted, and to report back to a Meeting of this Committee to be held on Tuesday 18th March 2014, or earlier if the Deputy Mayor considered it appropriate.
- (2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 21st January, 2014 be adopted.

46. **POLICY COMMITTEE – 21ST JANUARY 2014**

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

The Chairman spoke in support of the recommendation at Policy Minute 29, noting that, while in a good financial position at present, the Town Council needed to prepare for a number of future challenges and opportunities, including the loss of Council Tax Support Grant, the continued growth of the town, the potential for loss of services provided by the County Council and the District Council, and the possible need for future capital investment in the town's services. Members of Council were reminded of the need to systematically review all sources of income and expenditure in the near future.

With regard to the Revenue Budget the Chairman particularly noted the positive outcome of the review of grass cutting in cemeteries, and commended the introduction of the Living Wage for the Council's staff, recognising that the idea came initially from outside the Council.

He proposed that the Council accept a precept of £1,162,423 for 2014/15, identifying that this represented an increase of 1.95% to local taxpayers, a continuation of the Council's "little and often" policy of Council Tax rises.

It was

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Council adopt the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget 2014/15 as laid out.
- (2) That for 2014/15 the Council Tax Band D charge be set at £173.12 and that a precept in the sum of £1,162,423 be levied on the West Dorset District Council in respect of the financial year 2014/15 requesting that payment be made in two equal instalments on 1st April and 1st October, 2014.
- (3) That the following Special Items are included in the budget:-
 - Community Speed Watch equipment £1,000
 - Skate Park fencing/access £6,500
 - Cemeteries Memorial stability testing £2,000
 - Corn Exchange works investigations £3,500
 - WW1 Commemorations £5,000
- (4) That, in the event that Government introduces regulations that would alter the process for setting the proposed tax increase, a special meeting of Council be called.

Council debated the recommendation to discontinue contributions to the CCTV scheme (Policy minute 32).

The Town Clerk provided feedback from Weymouth & Portland Borough Council that requested that the Town Council continue to provide some financial support to the scheme. Inspector Marsh provided examples of how CCTV had been used recently in support of criminal investigations, and explained that pictures provided by CCTV was occasionally used to provide information in support of prosecutions.

Members considered the reduced level of service on offer, the limited number of incidents being identified in Dorchester, the issue of value for money, and the lack of clear evidence to indicate that CCTV prevented crime or led to prosecutions. After a motion to continue financial support at a reduced level was defeated by a vote it was

RESOLVED

That the Town Council should end its contributions to the CCTV scheme.

It was also

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 21st January 2014 be adopted.

47. **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 a general decrease in crime incidents, but noted an increase in thefts from sheds and outbuildings, and an increase in drug related arrests following one specific Police action.

Inspector Marsh provided information regarding anti-social behaviour at the Fair Field Car Parks, which was noted for future discussion with West Dorset District Council, and the Borough Gardens.

48. **DEMENTIA ACTION ALLIANCE**

The Council received a presentation from Ms J. Bazalgette regarding the Alliances progress in raising the awareness of dementia related issues in the Dorchester area. Ms Bazalgette has been invited to discuss with the Town Clerk how the Town Council might provide practical support.

The Council rose at 8.10 pm.

Mayor

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

Work associated with stability testing of Cemetery Memorials
CCTV and Dementia