

Dorchester Town Council

Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council

27 January 2015

Present: Mayor P. Mann and Councillors V. Allan, K. Armitage, D. Barrett, T. Harries, S. Hosford, T. James, G. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, A. Lyall, R. Potter, M. Rennie, D. Roberts and D. Taylor

Apologies: Councillors C. Biggs, R. Biggs, A. Canning, S. Jones and T. Jones

31. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 25 November 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

A member raised a question regarding the lack of meetings of the Crime and Reduction Panel, to which an answer was provided. In response to a question the Town Clerk confirmed he would be inviting the Ambulance Service and Fire Service to future meetings of the Council.

32. Communications & Questions

The Mayor welcomed Mr Jeff Hodgson and his wife Angela to the meeting, and presented Jeff with a gift of a photograph album to mark his retirement as an Honorary Macebearer for the town.

The Mayor notified the Council of the death of Mrs Beth Boothman, a former Mayor of Dorchester on two occasions. Members stood to remember her.

The Mayor congratulated Lucy Armstrong on her appointment as a Girls Rights Ambassador to the Plan UK Youth Advisory Panel, and also notified members of Lucy's intention to stand for the UK Youth Parliament in February, then invited comments from the Youth Council on the issues covered by agendas during the current cycle.

The Youth Council asked the Council to consider a policy on the use of e-cigarettes in its buildings, and it was agreed this would be presented to a future Management Committee. The Youth Council expressed support for the Council's initiatives on apprentices and the potential move of Dorchester Arts to the Municipal Buildings. A member sought clarification on Dorset County Council's support for the apprenticeship scheme. The Mayor thanked the Youth Council for their continued involvement in the Carnival Committee.

The Mayor reported receipt of a letter from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, who were seeking support for an initiative to commemorate 150 years

since Lincoln's death, and the Mayor read out his reply affirming the value of Lincoln's contribution to democracy.

The Town Clerk identified that a Special Meeting of Council is to be held on 24 February 2014 to discuss the Dorchester Arts move, and that a Selection Committee was likely to be programmed for the same evening.

33. Planning and Environment Committee – 1 December 2014

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

A councillor asked that changes be made to minute 60, relating to the work of Dorchester Area Community Partnership in regard to cycle lanes in the town. In response to a question regarding cycle lanes on Poundbury the Chairman of the Area Partnership confirmed its intention to focus on Safer Routes to School during 2015.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 1 December 2014 be adopted.

34. Planning and Environment Committee – 5 January 2015

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

In response to a question a member identified that the Slyers Lane wind turbines application appeared to be on track for consideration by the District Council in the late spring.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 5 January 2015 be adopted.

35. Management Committee – 13 January 2015

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

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 13 January 2015 be adopted.

36. Mayoral Selection Committee – 20 January 2015

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

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Mayoral Selection Committee held on 20 January 2015 be adopted.

37. **Policy Committee – 20 January 2015**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted. Councillor G. Jones introduced the recommendation at minute 34, relating to the Budget for 2015/16.

Members debated the budget proposal. An amendment was put to the budget that the precept should remain at the 2015/16 level. This amendment was lost 2 votes to 10. On a vote of 10 to 2 it was

Resolved

- 1) That Council adopt the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget 2015/16 as laid out in the document to be presented to Council, including:
 - a) The Council Tax Band D charge of £176.50
 - b) The precept at £1,209,555
 - c) A new Service Growth Reserve, with a transfer of £80,000 in 2015/16
 - d) The allocation of specific items totalling £18,000 as identified in the Revenue Budget book, in line with a request made by the Management Committee

- 2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 20 January 2015 be adopted.

A member raised concerns at the lack of meetings of the Task Group working on the Dorchester Arts relocation to the Municipal Buildings project. The Town Clerk agreed to arrange more dates for the group to meet before 24 February when a Special meeting of Council would consider the issue.

38. **Police Matters**

Sergeant Neil Woods of Dorset Police updated the meeting on the latest crime activity for the Dorchester and Sherborne area. Generally crime levels remained static and at low level, with crimes against property falling while there had been an increase in assaults and theft. The priority for the forthcoming period would be on drugs and domestic abuse. Sergeant Woods was also able to announce the appointment of 4 new PCSOs from February.

Responses were provided to questions relating to front desk provision, the police precept, and road traffic accidents.

The Council rose at 8.05 pm.

Mayor

Following the meeting at an open public question time a resident raised a concern about the de-listing of the gateway to HMP Dorchester. The Town Clerk agreed to investigate the issue.

A resident asked the Council to consider whether they could make the next step to becoming a fully accredited living wage employer, focusing on the wages paid by contractors. The Town Clerk agreed to investigate this issue.

A resident asked whether the Town Council would consider filming its meeting and making them available via the internet. Members invited the Town Clerk to look into this.