

Dorchester Town Council

Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council

29 November 2016

Present: Mayor T. Harries and Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, R. Biggs, A. Chisholm, G. Duke, J. Hewitt, S. Hosford, G. Jones, S. Jones, T. Jones, A. Lyall, R. Potter, M. Rennie, K. Rice, P. Stein and D. Taylor.

Also: Reverend Canon T. Woodhouse, the Mayor's Chaplain, Sergeant G. Want of Dorset Police, Mr. Andrew House of DCH Charitable Trust

Apologies: Councillors C. Biggs and F. Kent-Ledger.

35. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 27 September 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

Councillor R. Biggs provided an update on Syrian refugees. Of 54 places allocated to Dorset County Council to manage, 12 refugees aged under 18 had arrived, although most had chosen to reside outside the county, continuing to receive support from DCC Social Workers. It was anticipated that the first refugee families would arrive in Dorset during December.

36. Communications and Questions

Sergeant Ged Want of the Dorchester Neighbourhood Police Team addressed the meeting regarding local policing and crime issues. Overall crime levels were down, although cases of anti-social behaviour had increased; shoplifting remained the highest caseload. Typically 100-150 crimes were reported each month in the town. Recent initiatives included responding to anti-social behaviour in Holmead Walk and work to tackle drug networks operating in the town. Sergeant Want provided responses to questions regarding the 101 service and the collection of the crime statistics.

Andrew House of the Dorset County Hospital Charity Appeal addressed the Council regarding the fundraising effort to raise £1.75 Million to improve services for cancer patients in the Dorchester area.

The Mayor presented a small gift on behalf of the Town Council as a sign of the Council's appreciation to John Hallett, who retired as Mace Bearer in May 2016 having served in the role for over 13 years.

The Mayor highlighted a busy autumn, with the visit of HM Queen Elizabeth II, the Council's Service of Unity, and Remembrance Day services taking place. He noted

the celebration of the Chamber of Commerce 100th anniversary and congratulated the Town Crier on achieving the distinction of winning the National Championship for the ninth time. He looked forward to the Christmas events. Finally he reported the death of Mrs Gladys Gundry, who had been Mayoress to Wally Gundry in 2001.

A councillor asked that the BBC be reminded that Poundbury is part of Dorchester, not a separate village or town.

37. Updates from Partner Authorities

Councillor T. Jones provided an update of recent work at Dorset County Council, covering progress in creating additional school capacity, the disposal programme for redundant DCC buildings and a significant programme of highway works, largely resulting from the DTEP initiative.

In providing a verbal update regarding the work of West Dorset District Council Councillor R. Potter highlighted the largely inwardly focused nature of the work at present, including local government reorganisation, partnering with North Dorset and preparation for new governance arrangements resulting from the May 2016 referendum. Strategic work at present included the commencement of consultation regarding the Local Plan review, the work of the S106 Panel to allocate £2.0M of accumulated Recreation funds and testing the market for the future development of Charles Street. He also noted the recommended transfer of the TIC to the Library.

He responded to questions regarding levels of District Council reserves and the likelihood of their use to benefit West Dorset residents prior to local government reorganisation and the potential this might create to support affordable housing.

38. Planning and Environment Committee – 3 October 2016

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

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 3 October 2016 be adopted.

39. Planning and Environment Committee – 7 November 2016

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

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 7 November 2016 be adopted.

40. **Management Committee – 15 November 2016**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted. It was noted that Minute 36 was a resolved item of the Committee.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 15 November 2016 be adopted.

41. **Policy Committee – 22 November 2016**

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

Resolved

- a) That the Annual Return for 2015-16, including the certificate of BDO, is approved
- b) That up to £60,000 of savings arising from transferred responsibilities associated with maintaining and cleaning The Walks are used to improve the public realm on The Walks and in South Street, with an audit of public realm that requires improvement to be submitted to a future meeting
- c) That the Town Council does not wish to advocate that Dorchester should be included within the National Park boundary at this time, but that the progress of the proposal should be monitored
- d) That, with regard to the Risk Register
 - a. The assessed high level strategic and operational risks, as amended, be noted and approved
 - b. The strategic, operational and opportunity risk registers, as a whole, be approved
- e) That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 22 November 2016 be adopted.

The Council rose at 8.00 pm.

Mayor

Following the meeting, during an open democratic session a resident commented on the level and quality of consultation being carried out by the public sector at present.