

# Dorchester Town Council

## Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council

27 July 2020

The meeting was conducted using Zoom videoconferencing.

Present: Mayor R. Biggs and Councillors, S. Biles, A. Canning, A. Chisholm, L. Fry, J. Hewitt, F. Hogwood, S. Hosford, G. Jones, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, D. Leaper, A. Lyall, R. Major, R. Potter, M. Rennie, R. Ricardo and D. Taylor.

Apologies: Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall and T. Harries.

10. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 18 May 2020 were confirmed and will be signed by the Mayor as a correct record at the next opportunity.

11. **Presentations, Communications, Questions and Motions**

Daniel Cadisch, Chief Officer at Citizens Advice, presented their experience of the caseload during lockdown and the issues that were likely to emerge as the town comes out of lockdown. He recognised the role of volunteers, collaboration with other volunteer groups and new ways of remote and on site working that had allowed services to continue to be provided.

The key issues during lockdown related to employment and shielding and Daniel recognised that these would continue to dominate during the recovery period, along with a building debt caseload which had been on hold. Citizens Advice were seeking to establish a Specialist Employment Unit to assist both employees and employers to respond to the changed circumstances. The Mayor thanked Daniel for his report.

The Mayor reported his attendance at the opening of the new scoreboard for Dorchester Cricket Club. He also highlighted ongoing meetings with Chris Loder MP, inviting Members to raise issues for his attention. He had been approached by the Peace Partnership and had asked the Clerk to report to a future meeting regarding the possibility of declaring Dorchester as a peace town.

12. **Planning and Environment Committee – 1 June 2020**

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 1 June 2020 be adopted.

13. **Planning and Environment Committee – 6 July 2020**

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 6 July 2020 be adopted.

**14. Management Committee – 13 July 2020**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted. A Member commended the community wildflower initiative and new play equipment at Salisbury Fields.

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 13 July 2020 be adopted.

**15. Policy Committee – 20 July 2020**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted, with one recommendations for Council decision. The Chairman clarified that final decisions relating to new debt and the role of Dorchester Arts in managing the Municipal Buildings remained subject to decision at Council level.

**Resolved**

- a) That the Council develops an implementation programme to include
  - Procurement of the reroofing of the Council Chamber, Corn Exchange and apse (cost estimate £820,000)
    - To include discussions with users to keep the building closed to deliver these works at the earliest opportunity
  - More detailed development of the Offices over Biomass option, being
    - Submission of a planning application to Dorset Council for a two storey extension into the Car Park (cost estimate £460,000)
    - The conversion of the upper space into offices, on the assumption that once completed, the Town Council would move into this space, possibly with other community partners
    - The conversion of the ground floor into a multi-use space, specifically meeting the needs of groups to meet, for food preparation for casual hires, and dressing room space for performers, as well as facilities for disabled staff and users (cost estimate for these two parts £520,000)
  - Preparation of a loan request for up to £1.4 Million from the Public Works Loan Board, to supplement the use of existing Earmarked Reserves totalling £400,000
- b) That a Task and Finish Group is established, consisting of the Mayor, Chairs of Policy and Management Committee and the relevant Outside Body Representative, to discuss options for the future involvement of Dorchester Arts in the operation of the building
- c) That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 11 May 2020 be adopted

**16. Dorchester Heritage Joint Committee – 26 May 2020 and 21 July 2020**

Council noted receipt of the draft minutes.

17. **Update from Dorchester Ward Members of the Dorset Council**

Councillor S. Jones identified that the Local Plan consultation would commence in October and that a meeting would soon take place regarding s106 monies.

Councillor Rennie identified the Covid 19 related impact on the Housing Register of placing the homeless in emergency accommodation and also noted a meeting to be held to distribute car boot funds.

Councillor Canning reported the successful rollout of the new sitting out licences, and responded to concerns raised by a Member related to the space occupied by the Reloved café. He also highlighted future consultation was due on cycle routes. Councillor Fry reported that the activity of the Dorchester Community Support Group would be suspended as lockdown ends.

Councillor Biggs identified the work of the Audit and Governance Committee on new corporate KPIs and highlighted its role in reviewing councillor complaints.

One of the Councillors confirmed that traffic wardens were operating as usual on illegal parking issues. It was confirmed that, while Dorchester Library would reopen, the staff working at the TIC were still working on other duties.

Mayor

Council rose at 8.00pm.