

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

DORCHESTER JOINT HERITAGE COMMITTEE

28 JANUARY 2019

At a Meeting of the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee held on 28 January 2019:

PRESENT:

Dorchester Town Council	Councillors: G. Jones F. Kent-Ledger
	Officer: S. Newman
West Dorset District Council	Councillors: A. Canning (Chairman) J. Dunseith S. Jones
Blue Badge Tourist Guides	T. Loasby
Dorchester Association	M. Rice
Dorchester Chamber for Business	A. Chisholm
Dorchester Civic Society	T. James
Dorset County Council	R. Biggs
Dorchester Local Nature Reserve	K. Hebditch

33. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C. Biggs (Dorchester Town Council), J. Murden (Dorset Natural history and Archaeological Society), A. Bright (Shire Hall) and C. Copson (The Keep Military Museum).

34. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2018, a copy of which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

35. **DECLARATIONS OF PRE-DETERMINATION**

There were no declarations of pre-determination.

36. **ROMAN TOWN HOUSE**

The Committee received a presentation from Mr S. Wallis, Dorset County Council's Senior Archaeologist updating Members on the project to refurbish and improve the setting of the Roman Town House.

Mr Wallis gave some history of the Town House and the issues associated with its present set up. The issues included patch pointing falling from the ceiling of the covered structure, anti-social behaviour behind the Town House, broken roof slates, poor access etc.

Mr Wallis then gave details of the proposed project which included a new access, work to open up the site, improved interpretation, new amphitheatre for events, removal of old structures etc.

Work had been progressing on obtaining consents which were required prior to submitting a single phase bid to HLF which would hopefully be submitted later in 2019.

Members very much supported the project and the progress made, they also felt that there was a need for improved signage from the front of County Hall and also a need for a couple of disabled parking spaces. In response to a question Mr Wallis felt that the new Dorset Council would be committed to the project.

The Chairman confirmed that the Committee had previously agreed to financially support the project if other funding partners needed to be identified.

The Committee thanked Mr Wallis for attending the meeting and for the very useful presentation.

37. **DORSET ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE WEEK – DORCHESTER EVENT – SUNDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2018 AND PROPOSED EVENT SUNDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2019**

The Committee considered the 'Open Dor' evaluation report which had been prepared to give feedback on the success of the 2018 event and which also included some recommendations for future events.

Members felt that a timetable flyer and central information point might be useful for future events.

The Committee felt that the event had been successful and that it should be undertaken again on Sunday 15 September 2019. The recommendations contained within the evaluation report were also supported.

RESOLVED

That the event be supported again on Sunday 15 September 2019 with the Committee funding the cost of the road closures.

38. **A THOMAS HARDY DAY FOR DORCHESTER**

The Dorchester Chamber representative and G. Jones updated the Committee in respect of the proposal for a 'Thomas Hardy Day'. It was suggested that the event be held on Sunday 2 June 2019 to coincide with the annual Thomas Hardy birthday celebration. A group of interested parties had been established to progress the proposal.

The Committee was supportive of the proposal and agreed that it would cover the cost of the road closures. It was noted that there was a need for an administrative resource to support the group and that there would also be a need for a good number of volunteers to manage the road closures on the day.

RESOLVED

That the event to be held on Sunday 2 June 2019 be supported and that the Committee fund the cost of the road closures.

39. **DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL – HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY**

Further to Minute No 23/2018, the Committee noted that the Town Council Policy Committee had agreed to meet with Heritage partners and potential contractors to explore the potential for commissioning work on a Heritage Strategy for Dorchester.

Members were also circulated with a draft letter on behalf of the Committee to West Dorset District Council seeking funding of up to £50,000 towards the Heritage Strategy project.

RESOLVED

(1) That the Town Council Policy Committee decision be noted.

(2) That the draft letter to West Dorset District Council be agreed and sent.

40. **ROWAN HOUSE BLUE PLAQUE**

The Committee was reminded that it had previously agreed to support the proposal of a blue plaque, to be placed on Rowan House, in respect of Captain G R Sullivan VC who had resided in the property and who was commemorated on the Town's war memorial.

The owners of the property were keen to progress with the blue plaque and to have an official unveiling and had requested that the Committee consider contributing £400 towards the cost of the plaque and installation. The owners were also asking for assistance with the proposed unveiling ceremony.

Mr K. Wilson attended on behalf of the owners and presented a mock-up of the proposed blue plaque. Mr Wilson also asked that the Committee write to the Duchy of Cornwall supporting the owners suggestion to The Duchy that HRH Prince Charles unveil the blue plaque.

RESOLVED

- (1) That a contribution of £400 be made to the cost of the blue plaque.
- (2) That the Committee supports the request for HRH Prince Charles to unveil the plaque.

41. COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION POST LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that at the present time the Committee constitution stated that there shall be three Councillors from Dorchester Town Council and three Councillors from West Dorset District Council. These Councillors had voting rights. Dorset County Councillors within the Dorchester electoral divisions were also invited to attend but did not have voting rights.

From April, Dorset County Council and West Dorset District Council would cease to exist and would be replaced by the new Dorset Council unitary authority.

The new Dorset Council would need to give consideration to those bodies it wished to be represented on and how it would appoint Members to them.

Members noted that the review of the constitution would therefore need to be undertaken following the establishment of the new Dorset Council but felt that a letter should be sent to the new Dorset Council stating that the Committee did wish to continue and to urge it to appoint Members to it.

RESOLVED

That the new Dorset Council be informed of the Committee's desire for the Heritage Committee to continue and that the new Council appoint Members to it as soon as is possible.

42. COMMEMORATION OF 1623 EMIGRATION TO MASSACHUSETTS

The Committee gave consideration to correspondence received from a member of the public in respect of a suggestion for a celebration, in 2023, of the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the first ship taking folk from Dorchester to found a new settlement in Massachusetts.

Members felt sure that the Committee would wish to be a partner in such a commemoration but felt that it would be more appropriate for the newly constituted Heritage Committee to decide upon following Local Government Reorganisation.

RESOLVED

That a commemoration of the 1623 emigration to Massachusetts be supported in principle but that the newly constituted Heritage Committee give the matter further consideration following Local Government reorganisation.

43. **QUESTIONS**

No formal questions had been submitted.

44. **URGENT ITEMS**

The representative from the Local Nature Reserve reported back to the Committee on the Supporting Historic Highstreets: The Visitor Economy event held recently.

45. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee should be a budget meeting and be held on Monday 25 March 2019 commencing at 7.00pm.

Chairman: