

Dorchester Town Council

Management Committee

9 July 2019

Present: Councillors S. Biles, A. Canning, L. Fry, J. Hewitt, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger (Chairman), D. Leaper, R. Major, R. Potter, M. Rennie, R. Ricardo and D. Taylor.

In Attendance

Councillors A. Chisholm, T. Harries and S. Hosford.
J. Bowerman, Duchy of Cornwall (Minute No. 2)

Apologies: Councillor A. Lyall.

1. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 12 March 2019, adopted by Council on 26 March 2019, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2. **The Great Field**

(a) Update

The Committee welcomed Mr J Bowerman from the Duchy of Cornwall who updated Members with progress in developing the Great Field. The Committee noted the timescales for tree and shrub planting, play equipment installation, amphitheatre, pavilion and path network. Mr Bowerman responded to Members detailed questions.

(b) The Poundbury Pavilion

Members had before them a report by the Town Clerk which set out the background and arrangements in respect of the new Poundbury Pavilion which was to be built at the Great Field by the Alcohol Education Trust. The Pavilion would assist the Town Council in a number of ways including the provision of a basic toilet provision at the Great Field.

The Committee felt that a contribution to support AET to facilitate toilet provision within the new building and also equipment for the outdoor space, should be made by the Council.

It was also felt that it might be necessary for the toilets to remain open longer than proposed and that an agreement may need to be reached regarding ongoing maintenance and standard of provision.

Resolved

That a contribution of £20,000 be allocated to support AET to facilitate toilets within the building and equipment for the outdoor space.

3. **Site Visits**

The Committee considered the notes of the site visit, to which all Members of the Council had been invited, held on 21 May 2019 (Appendix 1 to these minutes). It was noted that discussion had commenced with The Duchy of Cornwall regarding the marking out of the cemetery extension land.

The Deputy Town Clerk agreed to follow up with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission about the graves in Fordington Cemetery which appeared not to be being maintained.

Resolved

That the notes of the site visit be received.

4. **Management Arrangements – Outdoor Services**

The Committee considered a report from the Outdoor Services Manager updating it on the work undertaken and the achievements made by the Outdoor Services Team since the last meeting of the Committee. The Outdoor Services Manager responded to Members detailed questions.

The Committee noted the appointment of the new Head Gardener and the improvements already made by him and the team in the Gardens. Members also felt that the area around South Gate was much improved and that notices should be put up so that the general public were informed about areas being developed for wildflower.

Resolved

That the Outdoor Services Team update be noted.

5. **Dorchester Christmas Market**

The Committee considered a report by the Town Clerk on the proposed arrangements for the proposed Dorchester Christmas Market due to be held in the Borough Gardens between 6 and 8 December 2019. The report noted that Weldmar had expressed concerns that the potential return from the event was limited without the opportunity for an additional source of income, either with the Council meeting the cost of lighting up the Gardens, or by charging visitors to the event for access to the Gardens.

Members felt that the Gardens should remain free entry and that a one off contribution for this year only, up to a maximum of £6,000, be contributed to the event. It was suggested that two 'free parking' days could be allocated to that weekend and that Weldmar could collect in lieu of parking charges to help increase income.

Resolved

(1) That the Gardens should remain free entry and that a one off contribution for this year only, up to a maximum of £6,000, be contributed to the event.

- (2) That the possibility of having two 'free parking' days be explored.

6. **Sandringham Facilities**

Members received a report on the facilities at Sandringham Sports Centre and how they had been managed in 2018-19. The report also set out a request from Dorchester Bowls Club for the Council to surrender the four large changing rooms to the Club so it may develop its offer to its Members. The Youth Football Club wished to continue using the pitches, Groundsman store and Official / First Aid facilities but would be willing to see the changing rooms surrendered to the Bowls Club.

Resolved

That, subject to the outcome being considered equitable to all parties, the four changing rooms at Sandringham Sports Centre be permanently surrendered to Dorchester Bowls Club.

(Councillor T. Harries declared a non-pecuniary interest in the above matter.)

7. **Corporate Plan**

The Committee had before it a report by the Town Clerk on the establishment of a new five year corporate plan for the Council. It was noted that the largest part of the Council's budget and staff resources were focused on those things that the Council delivered operationally such as parks, open spaces and play areas. Members felt it would be worthwhile to review the operational services on a site by site (or event) basis and through that process agree direction for each element. In order to assist Officers with this work it was felt appropriate to establish a task and finish group.

Resolved

- (1) That a more structured approach to reviewing the Council's operational services, as set out in the Town Clerk's report, be established.

- (2) That a services review task and finish group be established to assist the review process consisting of The Chairman of the Committee and Councillors S. Jones, R. Major, R. Ricardo and D. Taylor.

8. **Elizabeth Place Bonfire**

Members considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk on the issues related to the unauthorised bonfire at Elizabeth Place open space. The Committee felt that it would be very difficult to stop the bonfire being built each year and that it would undoubtedly continue. The Committee felt that should a local group come forward to manage the bonfire the Council should work with it with a view to formalising the event.

Resolved

That the bonfire at Elizabeth Place open space continue to be unauthorised until such time as a local group comes forward to work with the Council on the event.

9. **Volunteer Centre Dorset – Sponsorship Request**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Volunteer Centre Dorset asking whether the Council would wish to contribute towards its Volunteer Awards Evening.

Resolved

That Volunteer Centre Dorset be asked to complete a grant application form for consideration at the next meeting.

10. **Dorset Architectural Heritage Week 2019**

Members considered a request for a contribution towards the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee's High Street Heritage Day due to take place on 15 September 2019 as a part of the Dorset Architectural Heritage Week. The Committee had been provided with an evaluation of the 2018 event and a draft budget for the event.

The Committee wished to support the event and agreed to contribute a grant of £555 to cover the cost of the event's security.

Resolved

That a contribution of £555 be made to the 2019 Dorset Architectural Heritage Week Dorchester event to be held on 15 September 2019.

11. **Requests for Financial Assistance**

The Committee considered various requests for financial assistance.

Resolved

(1) That the grant application from Plastic Free Dorchester in the sum of £250 be agreed.

(2) That the grant application from the Dorchester and District Gardening Club in the sum of £110 be agreed.

12. **Cemetery Matters**

(a) **Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes**

The Committee had before it a report with details of the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial for grave spaces and the number of interments and burials of ashes together with South Chapel usage at Dorchester Cemetery, since the last meeting of the Committee.

Resolved

(1) That the report on the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes since the last meeting of the Committee be noted.

(2) That, for future meetings, the report be not circulated but instead placed on the Council's website.

(b) Headstones and Inscriptions

The Committee received and noted applications for the design of headstones and inscriptions.

Resolved

That the action of the Town Clerk in approving designs numbered 5067 to 5081 be confirmed and the Register of Memorials be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

13. Buildings Monitoring Reports

The Committee received the monitoring reports for the Municipal Buildings and Borough Gardens House.

Members noted that the Municipal Buildings car park gates had not been operating and requested that a report be prepared for Committee on the use of the car park and the cost of maintaining the gates.

Resolved

- (1) That the Buildings Monitoring Reports be noted.
- (2) That a report be prepared for a future meeting of the Committee on the use of the Municipal Buildings car park and the cost of maintaining the gates.

14. Dorchester Arts

The Committee noted the minutes of the Dorchester Arts Board meeting held on 23 April 2019.

15. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

Resolved

That in view of the fact that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the following matters the public and press representatives be excluded from this meeting during their discussion.

16. Municipal Buildings Lift

The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk on the tenders received to replace the lift in the Municipal Buildings.

It was noted that representatives of the Access Group had met with the Deputy Town Clerk and had suggested that the new lift have a remote call button which Members felt was reasonable.

Resolved

That the lowest tender received, which was from Stannah Lifts, be accepted and that officers now work with the company to submit a Listed Buildings Planning Application with the new lift being installed as soon as possible following receipt of the necessary consents.

Chairman

Notes of a Site Visit held on 28 May 2019 at 10.00am.

Sites visited – Poundbury Cemetery, The Great Field, Borough Gardens, King's Road Playing Fields, St George's Road allotments and Louds Mill Depot.

Attending: Councillors S. Biles, L. Fry, J. Hewitt, F. Hogwood, S. Hosford, D. Leaper, T. Lyall, R. Major, R. Potter and M. Rennie.

Adrian Stuart, Town Clerk.

Steve Newman, Deputy Town Clerk.

1. Poundbury Cemetery

The Deputy Town Clerk updated Members on the work that had recently been undertaken at the cemetery, the work that was still in progress and work that was planned in the near future:-

- The earth bund had been removed and new north westerly boundary wall had been completed.
- The additional road network had been completed.
- Disturbed soil from the building works and been re-seeded.
- Work had commenced on chasing out the cracks and cleaning the original northerly wall in readiness for it to be painted with Keim breathable paint later in the year.
- Work would commence during the summer with a new cleft chestnut post and rail fencing with an entrance arch to the green burial area together with wildflower planting following the work being undertaken to create the correct soil conditions.

The Town Clerk identified the land adjacent to the southern boundary of the cemetery which was potentially earmarked as land for an extension to the cemetery. Members felt that the Town Clerk should initiate discussions with the Duchy of Cornwall regarding delineating the area on the ground sooner rather than later.

2. The Great Field

The Deputy Town Clerk reported on the consultation exercise undertaken by the Duchy of Cornwall in respect of the development of The Great Field which was intended, when complete, to be transferred to the Town Council. The proposals for The Great Field included:-

- Extensive tree and shrub planting.
- The provision of an amphitheatre area.
- A new statement play area.
- A new café and offices to be provided and managed by the Alcohol Education Trust.
- A network of paths around the area which Park Run had already expressed an interest in making use of.

3. The Borough Gardens

The Deputy Town Clerk informed the Group of the refurbishment to the Gardens and the House which had been carried out in 2006-07. It was also reported that a new Head Gardener had been

appointed and he would be commencing his duties mid June 2019. The Town Clerk reported on the various costs associated with the Gardens and the work that had been undertaken by the Outdoor Services Manager to integrate the outdoor services staff as a whole. It was noted that Members would be asked to give further consideration, at some stage, to the options available for the greenhouse area (and operation) and surrounds and tennis courts one and two.

Members walked the Gardens and their attention was drawn to the Highway work being undertaken at the Princes Street entrance and the work proposed for the surfacing surrounding the Gregory Memorial Fountain.

The Group felt that the Gardens were a great asset to the town and were being managed to a high standard which was also reflected by the Garden's green flag status.

4. King's Road Playing Field and Play Area

The Group visited King's Road playing field and play area. It was noted that there was no longer a demand for football on the playing field and that it was now generally little used. The sports arena, older children's play equipment and the enclosed play area were popular.

The Town Clerk informed Members of the idea of creating a wildlife walk from King's Road Playing Fields, across the river and all along Lubbecke Way to Long Bridge. This matter would be considered further during the development of the new corporate plan.

5. St George's Road Allotments

Members visited the allotment site and was updated regarding the number of sites and plots around the town and the current allotment waiting list (there was not one) and the efforts that had been made to reduce the subsidy for the service, which was now very small, paid by the town's council tax payers.

The Group noted that the notice board at the St George's Road allotment site was to be moved to a more appropriate position and the gated entrance closest to St George's Road had recently had the slope angle reduced enabling better access to that end of the allotments.

6. Louds Mill Depot

Members visited the Louds Mill Depot and noted its facilities. The Town Clerk reported on the installation and benefits of the solar panels which had recently been fitted to the roof of the depot.

The Group felt that the depot was a very useful facility and was still in good condition and fit for the future.

Meeting closed 1.15pm.