

Dorchester Town Council

Management Committee

11 March 2024

Present: The Mayor (Councillor A. Chisholm) and Councillors L. Fry, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger (Chairman), R. Potter, D. Leaper, K. Reid, D. Taylor and M. Rennie.

Apologies: Councillors R. Major and R. Ricardo.

In attendance:

Councillors R. Biggs and J. Hewitt.

Officers: Tony Hurley (Assistant Town Clerk – Corporate), Carl Dallison (Assistant Town Clerk – Outdoor Services) and Emma Scott (Community Development Officer).

49. **Declaration of Interests**

None.

50. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 15 January 2024, adopted by Council on 29 January 2024, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

51. **Outdoor Services – Update Report – Late Winter**

The committee received the update report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services) with highlights including the completion of the mess facility extension and installation of air source heating at Borough Gardens, and the refurbishment of the beacon at Salisbury Field. Cllr Canning enquired about improving the appearance of the old tennis courts and Carl Dallison stated that surrounding bushes could be trimmed. Cllr Fry asked that the Outdoor Service address the poor condition of a bench on Bridport Road. Cllr Jones enquired about responsibility for cutting the grass outside South Walks House and Carl Dallison confirmed that the town council was only responsible for the strip adjacent to the line of trees on South Walks.

Resolved:

That the Outdoor Services update report for Late Winter 2023-24 be noted.

52. **Carpet Bedding Design in Borough Gardens**

The Assistant Town Clerk presented two design options and highlighted that the D-Day design would not be ready for the 80th anniversary of D-Day on 6th June. Cllr Hewitt did suggest the 75th anniversary of the Commonwealth but this was not supported by members.

Resolved:

That design option 1 celebrating the 50th anniversary of Dorchester Town Council be approved for the Borough Gardens' shield bed.

53. Vehicle Procurement

Carl Dallison outlined the report and the benefits of the proposed use of a procurement framework for acquiring a new electric vehicle for the Outdoor Services team. The alternative of hydrogen powered vehicles was discussed but not considered viable. The committee expressed its support for the move to electric vehicles as a contribution to the council's carbon reduction programme.

Resolved:

- a) That the use of TPPL to undertake a framework procurement exercise to obtain quotations for the supply of electric vehicles be agreed and that, once completed, the vehicle should be purchased.
- b) That the Policy Committee be requested to agree to release up to £70,000 from the Vehicle and Equipment Replacement Reserve to fund the purchase of the electric vehicle.

54. Dorchester Youth Council Update

The Community Development Officer, Emma Scott, presented an update on the Dorchester Youth Council (DYC), which was flourishing with a growing and diverse membership. Both Cllrs Jones and Rennie had attended recent meetings and welcomed its reinvigoration. They noted that the young people involved had grown in confidence as a result. Cllr Leaper suggested that perhaps DYC members could talk to adults in Poundbury about youth engagement and facilities. Cllr Jones suggested that any new councillors following the election in May could meet with DYC to learn more about its activities. The Mayor suggested that there be regular updates on DYC to each meeting of Full Council.

Resolved:

That the update report on Dorchester Youth Council be noted.

55. Memorial Safety Policy & Testing Programme.

The updated memorial safety testing policy and programme was considered by members.

Resolved:

That the updated Memorial Safety Policy be adopted and the proposed monument testing programme is approved.

56. Landscaping at Fairfield Road.

Members discussed the proposed designs for landscaping works at the Fairfield Road public

realm improvements. Cllr Rennie stated that the Markets Panel had seen the designs and was supportive and pleased with the level of public consultation so far. Cllr Jones suggested that any public benches should have tables with wheelchair spaces. Cllr Fry requested that the scheme include trees that would not need pollarding. Cllr Biggs stated that the scheme looked good but was concerned about night-time security for pedestrians.

Resolved:

That the Town Council undertakes future maintenance of the new Fairfield Road public realm improvements (excluding the trees) once the works are completed.

57. Proposals for D-Day 80th Anniversary

The committee considered the proposals for the 80th anniversary events on Salisbury Field and around Dorchester in partnership with local cultural organisations.

Resolved:

That the proposals for the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of D-Day be approved.

58. Grant Applications

The Committee considered various requests for financial assistance and also noted Dorchester Youth Council's comments on the applications.

Resolved:

- (a) That the South-West Dorset Multi-Cultural Network be awarded a grant of £500 towards the cost of the One World Festival in Borough Gardens.
- (b) That the William Barnes Society be awarded a grant of £300 towards an archiving project.
- (c) That Dorchester Family Support be awarded a grant of £500 towards a project to provide food parcels for local children.
- (d) That Shire Hall Museum be awarded a grant of £200 towards a youth LGBTQ+ writing workshop.
- (e) That a request from the Dorchester Sheroes project for a grant of £500 towards schools' engagement was not agreed and further information as to schools' willingness to be engaged be supplied if the application is resubmitted in future.
- (f) That the Thomas Hardy Society be awarded a grant of £500 towards the cost of staging the *Six Men of Dorset* play.
- (g) That C Side be awarded a grant of £500 towards the cost of the Express Yourself programme of art and music activities for young people.
- (h) That the Thomas Hardy Society be awarded a grant of £195 towards the cost of students attending the annual conference.

59. Minutes of the Twinning & Cultural Activities Panel

The minutes of the Panel were considered and noted.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Twinning & Cultural Activities Panel be noted.

60. **Minutes of the Dorchester Arts board meeting**

The minutes of the Dorchester Arts board meeting were considered by members.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Dorchester Arts board meeting minutes be noted.

61. **Cemetery Matters**

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

The report which detailed the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial for grave spaces and the number of interments and burials of ashes, and the use of the South Chapel, at Dorchester Cemetery since the last meeting of the Committee had been circulated with the agenda.

Resolved:

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.

(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 5398 to 5405 be confirmed and the Register of Memorials be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

62. **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.

63. **Dorchester Bowls Club**

The confidential report of the Town Clerk was discussed. Members expressed concern if any suspension of rent lasted more than one year and it was important for the club to have a plan for addressing its operating costs and exploring fundraising options. Cllr Chisholm suggested that grant recipients should be asked to attend the Annual Town

Meeting to present their activities. Cllr Rennie proposed that, if the club's rent was suspended for one year, then there should be a meeting between the club's management and the Town Council (Management Committee Chair, Vice Chair and Town Clerk) so that the club could present its future financial plan.

Resolved:

- a) That the rent charged by the council to Dorchester Bowls Club be suspended for 2024.
- b) That the Dorchester Bowls Club be requested to present their future financial plans to the Chair and Vice Chair of Management Committee.

Chairman.....