

## **Dorchester Town Council**

### **Minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee held via the Zoom Video Conferencing Platform**

**4 January 2021**

Present: The Mayor, Councillor R Biggs, and Councillors A. Canning, L. Fry, S. Hosford, E.S. Jones, G. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, R. Major, R. Potter (Chairman), M.E. Rennie and R. Ricardo.

Apologies: Councillors, J. Hewitt and T Harries.

Also in attendance: Councillors S. Biles, F. Hogwood and D Leaper.

#### **57. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor L. Fry stated that as a member of Dorset Council's Area Planning Committee, he would keep an open mind on the planning applications and consider all information available at each stage of the decision process. He would take part in the debate but not vote on planning applications at this meeting.

#### **58. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 December 2020 were confirmed and approved to be signed by the Chairman.

#### **59. Dorset Council Local Plan Consultation**

The Committee considered the Local Plan Consultation document produced by the Town Clerk and a summary of the Local Plan policies and questions.

The Committee were concerned that the proposed local plan was not reactive enough to situations such as the Covid 19 pandemic and the new local plan would need to offer flexibility to adapt to similar situations.

The Committee heard that it had not been officially announced by the Dorset Council as to when the consultation would go live.

The Committee approved the recommendation that a DOR13 Liaison Group, consisting of the Chairs of the Planning and Environment and Policy Committees, supported by the Town Clerk and Planning & Environment Clerk, work with DPC Ltd to develop the Council's response to a stage to be considered by the Committee and subsequently Full Council during the March cycle.

The Committee were invited by the Chairman to send their individual responses to the questions as posed by the Dorset Council to the Chairman and Committee Clerk by 20 January 2021 to be collated and presented at the

meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee to be held on 1 February 2021.

The Committee recognised the need to appoint a new Vice Chairman of the Planning and Environment Committee due to the approved non attendance of the existing Vice Chairman. It was agreed that a new Vice Chairman would be appointed.

**Resolved**

- I. That a DOR13 Liaison Group, consisting of the Chairs of the Planning and Environment and Policy Committees, supported by the Town Clerk and Planning & Environment Clerk, work with DPC Ltd to develop the Council's response to a stage to be considered by the Committee and subsequently Full Council during the March cycle.
- II. That a new Vice Chairman of the Planning and Environment Committee be appointed.

**60. Dorset Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy Consultation**

The Committee considered the proposed response to the Dorset Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency strategy Consultation.

The Committee were concerned that the questionnaire only allowed opportunity for a limited response, and requested that a covering letter with further detail to the responses be submitted to the Dorset Council.

The Committee authorised the Clerk to the Committee to respond to the consultation subject to amendments and with the submission of a covering letter.

**Resolved**

- I. That the Clerk to the Committee respond to the consultation with a covering letter.

**61. The Ramblers' Charter for Walking Neighbourhoods**

The Committee considered the Ramblers' Charter for Walking Neighbourhoods. The Committee felt that Dorchester already met much of the criteria required and felt that it would be beneficial for the Town to sign up to the Charter.

The Committee felt that the Charter would be beneficial to the Town as it would encourage organisations to work together to achieve the goals of the Charter.

A Councillor suggested that a representative of the Dorset Council be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the Walking Audit that was being completed by the Dorset Council.

### **Resolved**

- I. That Dorchester Town Council sign up to the Ramblers' Charter for Walking Neighbourhoods.
- II. That an Officer from the Dorset Council be invited to a future meeting to discuss the Dorset Council's Walking Audit.

### **62. Planning Applications for Comment**

The Committee considered the planning applications referred to the Council for comment by Dorset Council (Appendix 1).

A member of the public addressed the Committee regarding applications WD/D/20/002452 and WD/D/20/002452 54 HIGH WEST STREET, DORCHESTER, DT1 1UT. The member of the public was concerned that although it was understandable that an application had been submitted to convert the shop to residential use, it was concerning that the applicant wished to retain the large shop window that would be difficult for future occupants to heat the property in an environmentally efficient and economical way and would be unsympathetic to the existing Street Scene.

The Committee agreed with the concerns that had been raised and anticipated similar applications in the future in light of the declining demand for retail and the Covid 19 pandemic. The Committee requested that the Listed Building Officer from the Dorset Council be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the Committee's concerns with a view to creating a policy for the change of use of retail premises to residential in the Town Centre to ensure that such conversions are carried out in a way that is sympathetic to the street scene and environmentally friendly and economical for the future occupants.

### **Resolved**

- I. That the Dorset Council's Listed Building Officer be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss creating a policy for the conversion of retail premises to residential premises within the Town Centre.

### **63. Minute Update Report**

There were no Minute Updates to report.

### **64. Planning Issues to Note**

There were no Planning Issues to report.

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**East Ward (Councillors T. Harries, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger and R. Major)**

No applications received.

**North Ward (Councillor A. Canning)**

**N1. [WD/D/20/002452 54 HIGH WEST STREET, DORCHESTER, DT1 1UT](#)**

Conversion from shop (Class E) to residential use (Class c3).

In light of the Covid 19 situation and the declining retail demands the Planning and Environment Committee were supportive of the change of use from shop to residential use. However the Committee had grave concerns that the proposed retention of the shop window would make it difficult for the residents to heat the property in an environmentally efficient and economical way. The Committee felt that it would be advantageous for the appearance of the property in the street scene and for the inhabitants if the shop window was replaced with windows that were in keeping with the Georgian façade and similar to nearby properties, particularly as the property is within the Conservation Area.

**N2. [WD/D/20/002453 54 HIGH WEST STREET, DORCHESTER, DT1 1UT Listed Building Consent](#)**

Change of use from shop (Class E) to residential use (C3).

In light of the Covid 19 situation and the declining retail demands the Planning and Environment Committee were supportive of the change of use from shop to residential use. However the Committee had grave concerns that the proposed retention of the shop window would make it difficult for the residents to heat the property in an environmentally efficient and economical way. The Committee felt that it would be advantageous for the appearance of the property in the street scene and for the inhabitants if the shop window was replaced with windows that were in keeping with the Georgian façade and similar to nearby properties, particularly as the property is within the Conservation Area.

**West Ward (Councillors L. Fry, J. Hewitt and R. Ricardo)**

No applications received.

**South Ward (Councillors G. Jones, R. Potter and M. Rennie)**

No applications received.

**Poundbury Ward (Councillors R. Biggs and S. Hosford)**

No applications received.