

Dorchester Town Council

Policy Committee

23 February 2016

Present: Mayor R. Potter and Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, A. Chisholm, T. Harries, S. Hosford, G. Jones (Chairman) and T. Jones.

Apologies: Councillor R. Biggs

In attendance: Councillors Hewitt, S. Jones, Rennie and Rice

34. **Borehole, Soakaway and Water Distribution System in the Borough Gardens**

The Town Clerk outlined the proposal to drill a borehole to abstract water for use in the Borough Gardens, and to construct a water management system to move water to where it is required.

A resident raised questions about how the Gardens might be adapted to future potential changes in climate and whether water should be captured for reuse above ground.

Members of the Committee sought assurance that water used in the Childrens' play fountain was safe to drink and required that this issue be addressed with the Council's insurer and the Environmental Health Officer as part of the management plan for the project.

Resolved

That the tender price submitted by Simon Moore Water Services, as modified by subsequent discussion, is accepted

35. **The provision of Affordable Housing on the Trinity Street Tennis Courts site**

The Town Clerk presented a report considering options for the development of affordable housing on the tennis courts and other smaller sites in the town. He updated the report by confirming that a local Housing Society did not wish to pursue sites in the Town Council's ownership as they were investigating other development options.

A member identified his concerns about the financial cost of relocating the tennis courts to the Bowling Green. Members of the Committee asked questions about the choice of Hastoe as a partner for the development of the scheme, whether liaison had taken place with Historic England and emphasised the need to discuss the project with Whetstones.

Resolved

That the Town Council pursue the development of the Trinity St Tennis Courts site for affordable housing.

36. **Support for Dorchester Youth Centre**

The Town Clerk introduced a report outlining progress being made to sustain the Dorchester Youth Centre following the withdrawal of funding by Dorset County Council.

Members of the Youth Centre Management Committee were developing a Business Plan for discussion with Dorset County Council. It was recognised that an early indication of support from the Town Council will allow them to focus on fundraising and staffing issues during the early years of an alternative arrangement, which in the long term should allow the Town Council's contribution to reduce.

Members of the Council's Task and Finish Group spoke in support of a funding proposal contained in the Town Clerk's report and explained the energy that now existed within the Management Committee which was focused on ensuring the Centre continued to operate. A member asked that an audit of youth facilities and organisations in the town be carried out so that the role of the Youth Centre could be placed into a wider context and ongoing discussions could take place about how best to use the available infrastructure.

Resolved

That, subject to receipt of a satisfactory draft Business Plan, a conditional offer to a new operator of the Dorchester Youth Centre is made as follows:-

- (a) That for 3 years from 1 April 2016 the Town Council guarantees to meet 50% of total operational costs, capped at £30,000 pa
- (b) The Town Council signals that from 1 April 2019 onwards it expects to meet no more than 33% of total operational costs, capped at £20,000 pa
- (c) That a one off grant of £3,000 is made available immediately to be drawn on should the Management Committee need to get professional advice regarding the setting up of an appropriate body to run the Centre
- (d) That an audit of services and facilities provided to youth across the town is undertaken during 2016

Chairman