

Dorchester Town Council

Policy Committee

22 March 2016

Present: Mayor R. Potter and Councillors R. Biggs, A. Chisholm, T. Harries, G. Jones (Chairman) and T. Jones.

Apologies: Councillor B. Armstrong-Marshall and S. Hosford

In attendance: Councillor Rennie

37. Minutes

The Minutes of the Committee held on 19 January 2016, adopted by Council on 26 January 2016, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Minutes of the Committee held on 23 February 2016 were read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

38. Finance Report

The Financial Controller presented a finance report covering the 11 months to 29 February 2016. The report gave details of the Council's cash position, reserves, balances and other non-budget expenditure, debtors, included a list of payments from 1 November to 29 February 2016 and the latest report of the Internal Auditor.

The Town Clerk highlighted two Internal Audit recommendations which he had rejected. The Financial Controller responded to questions regarding accounting nomenclature and the speed with which the Council paid its suppliers.

Resolved

- a) That the Payments list totalling £172,087.73 is approved
- b) That from 1 April 2016 Payments lists are provided on the website only
- c) That the report of the Internal Auditor and the response of the Town Clerk is noted

39. Corporate Plan

The Town Clerk provided the final pages of the Corporate Plan, which had been updated following the adoption of the budget, plus a draft summary Plan and a Consultation plan to be completed by 24 May 2016.

He responded to questions regarding the consultation programme, and members explored opportunities to engage with residents. A member asked that the task related to Engagement in discussions related to Local Government reorganisation be changed to a short term priority.

Resolved

- a) That the changes to the Corporate Plan as noted in the report are approved, with the transfer of one Governance task reprioritised as Short Term
- b) That the Consultation Plan is agreed and progressed, and that the Town Clerk develop a simple questionnaire for use with residents at the Beacon Lighting event on 21 April 2016.

40. General Power of Competence

The Town Clerk explained in broad terms the legislative framework that underpinned the Council's activities and identified the requirements that needed to be satisfied before the Council was able to adopt the General Power.

Recommended

That the Council adopts the General Power of Competence

41. Community Development

The Town Clerk provided a Job Description and Person Specification for the post previously approved and outlined options for the salary of the post. Members discussed the options available in setting the salary and it was agreed that the ability to drive and own a car was an essential criteria.

Resolved

- a) That the Job Description and Person Specification is approved
- b) That the post is graded scp 24 – 30, with the final salary offered being directly related to experience and knowledge

42. Fields in Trust Centenary Fields Scheme

The Town Clerk provided information regarding the proposed dedication of the area of land south of Holmead Walk as a Centenary Field. Members discussed the importance of engaging with parties who had a stake in the history and commemoration of the Great War.

Resolved

That, subject to constructive discussions with local stakeholders the Council supports the proposal to dedicate the Holmead Walk land as a Centenary Field,

43. Dorset County Museum – Loan and Application for a Capital Grant

The Committee received confirmation that the original loan advance to the Museum had been repaid, but that cash flow would remain an issue for the Museum throughout construction of the new buildings.

The Town Clerk explained that an opportunity was being prepared for Councillors to visit the Museum to gain a greater understanding of the project, prior to a grant application being submitted to the Council's Cultural Capital Grant Fund, but that this might be delayed in the short term due to unforeseen circumstances.

Resolved

- a) That a second loan be advanced to Dorset County Museum on similar terms to that recently repaid
- b) That a letter be sent to the County Museum indicating a wish to discuss a grant from the Council's Cultural Capital Grant Fund

44. **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 representatives of the press be excluded from this meeting during their discussion.

45. **Debt Write Offs**

Resolved

That two debts totalling £150.00 are written off

Chairman