

Dorchester Town Council

Policy Committee

19 March 2019

Present: Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall (Vice Chairman – in the Chair), R. Biggs, A. Chisholm, T. Harries, S. Hosford, T. Jones and D. Taylor.

Apologies: Councillor G. Jones.

Also present: Councillors J. Hewitt and M. Rennie.
T. Mitchell and A. Stillman, Dorchester Area Community Land Trust (Minute No. 34).
S. Watson, Wessex CLT Project (Minute No. 34).

31. Minutes

The Minutes of the Committee of 22 January 2019, adopted by Council on 29 January 2019, were taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

32. Financial Report 2018-19

The Committee received the Town Clerk's update covering the Council's Month 11 spend in relation to the budget, cash, debtors and payments, as well as the second internal audit report for the year.

Resolved

- a) That the Payments list, totalling £267,421.71, is approved.
- b) That the Internal Audit report and the response of officers is noted.

33. Corporate Plan Update at 28 February 2019

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk covering progress against milestones set within the Corporate Plan, in particular focusing on discussions with West Dorset District Council regarding the transfer of administrative workloads associated with the Dorchester Markets Panel and Heritage Tourism Strategy Development.

Members felt that it was important for the new Town Council to keep monitoring the Market and for the new Dorset Council to be strongly encouraged to make an early decision on the Panel recommendation.

The Committee expressed its disappointment in the strongest terms that West Dorset District Council had failed to resolve the matter prior to it ceasing to exist.

It was reported that the Markets Panel at its last meeting had also agreed to adopt an action plan of improvement by the end of the year in respect of Lower Fairfield. Members felt that it would be useful for this agreement to be reported to the next Full Council.

Following discussion the Committee noted the arrangements in respect of the development of a Heritage Tourism Strategy.

It was felt that the Corporate Plan progress in respect of the WW1 sculpture be amended to 'Part completed' until a plaque about the sculpture was installed.

Recommended to Council

- a) That, in order to safeguard the future management of the Markets Panel, the Council supports the recommendation of the Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel to transfer the following management functions to Dorchester Town Council
 - Governance Administration
 - Financial Administration
 - Car Boot Fund Administration
 - Liaison with Market Operators
- b) That the new Corporate Plan include a watching brief in respect of the Market operation.

34. Dorchester Area Community Land Trust and the Tennis Court Site

The Committee considered a request from the Trust that the focus of the project should move from affordable homes for sale towards affordable homes for rent.

Mr A. Stillman from the Dorchester Area CLT addressed Members in support of the proposal and responded to Members detailed questions.

The Committee wished to record its thanks to the Dorchester Area CLT for all of its hard work to date in respect of this project.

Resolved

That the development of the West Walks site for 15-20 flats for rent by DACLT and Places for People Housing Group on the basis of the Heads of Terms attached to the report, be agreed.

(Councillor A. Chisholm declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of the above matter.)

35. Review of Town Council Governance Arrangements

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk regarding a Member Task and Finish Group review of Member governance arrangements.

Members noted the importance of new Member mentoring and agreed that this should be included within the list of induction and training opportunities.

Recommended to Council

That the report of the Task and Finish Group is noted and that, where change is proposed, the Town Clerk develops ideas that can be considered for implementation by the new Council when it is elected in May 2019.

36. **Assets held by Dorset County Museum**

The Town Clerk's report identified a request from the Museum to clarify the loan conditions for two historical assets belonging to the town, a Standard Bushel measure dated 1601 and a set of 17th century town stocks.

The Committee felt that it was important for it to consider any further items for potential disposal identified by DCM as part of its cataloguing exercise.

Resolved

That, after approximately 134 years on temporary loan, the two items mentioned in the report are permanently transferred to the collection of the Dorset County Museum.

Chairman