

Dorchester Town Council

Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council

23 March 2020

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Council followed Government advice and did not meet together. It was recognised, however, that there was a need to continue to conduct the business of Council and that alternative arrangements needed to be improvised to allow Members to engage in the business of Council. The following procedure has been observed for this meeting.

- A full Agenda was dispatched to all Members of Council by e-mail on 18 March 2020 and placed on the Council's website
- Members were invited to submit questions and comments regarding items on the Agenda by 0900 on Monday 23 March 2020. A number of questions were received, along with confirmations from other Members that they had no questions.
- The Mayor and Ward Members of the Dorset Council were invited to provide written updates by 0900 on Monday 23 March, which have been included in these Minutes. As there was no opportunity for Members of Council to ask questions regarding the updates prior to these Minutes being drafted, any questions by Members relating to the updates will be added as an Addendum to these Minutes along with an appropriate answer
- These Minutes were circulated to all Members by e-mail at 1700 on Monday 23 March 2020 with a request for e-mailed approval. The following Members submitted their approval by 2400 on Tuesday 24 March 2020.

For: Councillors

Against: Councillors

- These Minutes will be submitted for ratification at the next available full meeting of the Town Council
- Should Government advice subsequently create a requirement for an alternative process to be undertaken the Council and Town Clerk will seek to comply with that requirement

44. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 27 January 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

45. Communications & Motions

The Mayor explained that the Town Clerk was monitoring Government guidance regarding a potential delay to the Annual Meeting of Council, at which a new Mayor

is appointed. The Town Clerk will report in writing if the opportunity to delay the meeting arises.

The Mayor confirmed the cancellation of all civic and public events until the end of April, with further cancellations inevitable. He invited Members to keep up to date with the regular e-mails from staff, which cover a range of operational decisions which officers are having to take in a fast moving situation; he invited Members to actively e-mail their support, or indeed to register any concerns with accompanying reasons, regarding the decisions being taken.

The Mayor also expressed his sadness at the loss of Sid Atkinson, the Council's Outdoor Maintenance officer, who died in March. The Town Clerk would record in the Minutes the Council's gratitude for the work that Sid had undertaken during his time with the Town Council.

46. Planning and Environment Committee – 3 February 2020

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 3 February 2020 be adopted.

47. Planning and Environment Committee – 2 March 2020

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

Regarding Minute 78 a Member asked for a report on the likelihood of the bollards separating Coburg Road from Poundbury being removed. The Chairman agreed that the Town Clerk should seek a response from Dorset Council Highways regarding their long term plans for this part of the road network.

Regarding Minute 78 a Dorset Council Member reiterated their intention to confirm the Council's support regarding parking restrictions at Mellstock Avenue/ Weatherbury Way when the issue was considered at future Dorset Council meetings.

Regarding Minute 83 a Member asked whether the Town Council should take a more active interest in this site. The Town Clerk confirmed that the issue was already on a long list of issues to be considered through the Corporate Plan, but that Members would need to prioritise some significant issues when they eventually decide the direction of the plan. Meanwhile he had raised the issue informally on several occasions with officers of the Dorset Council and was monitoring any statements from the developer.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 2 March 2020 be adopted.

48. **Management Committee – 9 March 2020**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 9 March be adopted.

49. **Policy Committee – 16 March 2020**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted, with three recommendations for Council decision.

Resolved

- a) That, in regard, to the Strategic and Operational Risk Register, considered at Policy Committee on 18 November 2019, the amended high level strategic and operational risks and the registers as a whole be approved
- b) That the Municipal Calendar as laid out in the Appendix 1 to the minutes of the Policy Committee is approved
- c) That the Town Clerk prepares a report for a future meeting of the Policy Committee with a proposal to discharge the obligation of the Annual Town Meeting 2021 through a separate event, the date to be confirmed
- d) That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 16 March 2020 be adopted

50. **Update from Dorchester Ward Members of the Dorset Council**

Councillor Rennie identified that changes are being proposed regarding the constitution of the Dorset Council and agreed to pass information on to the Town Clerk for circulation once it became available.

The Councillor also identified the response being co-ordinated by the Dorset Council to respond to the Covid-19 outbreak. The Town Clerk confirmed that he would continue to circulate all updates from Dorset Council regarding both services and the community response to Covid-19.

The Clerk was also monitoring changes to the meeting cycle of the Dorset Council, and their response to the idea of virtual meetings, in order to inform any future decisions by this Council. He also confirmed that guidance regarding meetings was anticipated shortly from NALC.

Mayor

The Annual Town Meeting for Dorchester, due to commence on conclusion of the meeting, was cancelled due to the Covid-19 outbreak.