

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE

20th MARCH, 2012

At a Meeting of the Policy Committee held on 20th March, 2012:

PRESENT Councillors V.J. Allan, R.M. Biggs, T.C.N. Harries, Trevor Jones (Chairman), P.G. Mann and D.S. Roberts.

In attendance:

Councillors S.C. Hosford, E.S. Jones, A.J. Lyall and M.E. Rennie.

APOLOGIES for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor T.C. James) and G.M. Jones.

45. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17th January, 2012, adopted by Council on 24th January, 2012, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

46. **MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT PANELS**

(a) **Resources Panel – 12th March, 2012**

The Panel considered the Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Panel held on 12th March, 2012 (for Minutes see Appendix I).

It was

RECOMMENDED

(1) That Minutes 8, 9 and 10 of the Resources Panel held on 12th March, 2012 be approved and, in particular, that the Committee agrees with the conclusion of the Panel regarding its satisfaction with the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for internal audit.

(2) That Panel Minute 11 be considered at Minute 51 below.

(b) **Risk Management Panel – 13th March, 2012**

The Committee considered the Minutes of the Meeting of the Risk Management Panel held on 13th March, 2012 (for Minutes see Appendices II and III), noting that the meeting of the Panel had been inquorate.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That, subject to (2) below, the Minutes of the Risk Management Panel held on 13th March, 2012 be adopted in like manner as if a quorum had been present and, in particular, that Panel's conclusions following its review of the strategic and operational risk registers be supported.
- (2) That the Risk Management Panel and the Arts Panel be requested to jointly review the Risk Register in so far as it refers to the operation of the Council's Summer entertainment programme.
- (3) That a report on possible ways to improve the member-level input to the Council's risk management arrangements be considered at the next meeting of this Committee.

47. **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received and noted the Council's Management Accounts for the period ended 29th February, 2012.

48. **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

Further to Minute 40 the Committee considered the report of the Financial Services Provider on short- and medium-term financial considerations following the refusal of the Council's application for loan sanction, the submission of which had been approved at Council Minute 48(1). The report included a revised Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period ending in 2016-17.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the Council's existing practice of maintaining earmarked reserves for specific purposes be continued.
- (2) That the Council be recommended to make application for loan sanction in the sum of £60,000 in respect of the proposed external repairs to the Municipal Buildings on terms to be agreed by the Town Clerk following consultation with the Chairman of this Committee and the Financial Services Provider.

- (3) That the Town Clerk be requested to report to the next Meeting of this Committee on possible ways of achieving one-off savings of £20,000 in 2012-13 and that no unavoidable commitments be entered into until that report has been considered.
- (4) That consideration of the recommendation relating to the repayment to West Dorset District Council of the Sunday Car Boot Sale monies be deferred pending the consideration of a report from the Financial Services Provider on the circumstances giving rise to the holding.
- (5) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period ending in 2016-17 appended to the report be approved so far as this Committee is concerned and that the consequent reduction of all possible earmarked reserves to a nil balance at 31st March, 2012 be noted.

49. **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The various documents, policies and procedures mentioned below, comprising some of the documents contributing to the Council's arrangements for corporate governance were due for review. In the interests of economy it was not proposed to circulate copies of all of them to all Members but to make them available for inspection.

Constitutional

- Code of Corporate Governance
- Data Protection Policy
- Member-Officer Protocol
- Member Development and Training Strategy
- Procurement Strategy
- Publication Scheme
- Role of Town Councillors

Financial

- Asset Management Plan
- Treasury Management Policy

Personnel

- Appeals Procedure
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Complaints Procedure
- Confidential Reporting Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Disciplinary Rules
- E-mail and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

- E-mail Guidelines
- Equality Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Information Technology Security Strategy
- Personal Achievement and Development Scheme
- Safety Policy
- Sickness Absence Control Policy
- Stress Management Policy

Other

- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

It was

RESOLVED

- (1) That any Member who considers that any amendments are necessary to any of the documents be requested to inform the Council Offices by 30th April so that the matter(s) can be addressed at the next meeting of this Committee.
- (2) That the Town Clerk be requested to arrange for all documents underpinning the Council's corporate governance arrangements to be placed in an appropriate area on the Council's website.

50. **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

It was

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 matter, the public and representatives of the press be excluded from this meeting during its discussion.

51. **RESOURCES PANEL – 12th MARCH, 2012**

In accordance with Minute 46(a)(2) above the Committee considered Minute 11 of the Meeting of the Resources Panel held on 12th March, 2012 (for Minute see Appendix I).

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That Minute 11 of the Resources Panel held on 12th March, 2012 be approved and, in particular, that the specific recommendations relating to the proposed retirements of the Town Clerk and the Senior Administrative Assistant on 30th June, 2013 set out in the Confidential Note supporting Minute 11(b) be approved.
- (2) That the Arts Panel be requested to give initial consideration to the title, job description and employment basis of the proposed new employee to be engaged to deliver the Council's programme of free entertainment and to report to the Resources Panel.
- (3) That a report on the various other issues referred to in the Confidential Note be submitted to the Resources Panel in due course.

Chairman

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES PANEL

12th MARCH, 2012

At a Meeting of the Resources Panel held on 12th March, 2012:

PRESENT Councillors T.C.N. Harries, Trevor Jones (Chairman), P.G. Mann and R.B. Potter.

In attendance:
Mr. R. Symons, South West Councils

APOLOGIES for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor T. James) and Councillor S.C. Hosford.

8. **INTERNAL AUDIT**

(a) **Review of Effectiveness**

The Panel reviewed the effectiveness of the Council's internal audit arrangements and it was

RECOMMENDED

That the Council expresses its satisfaction as to the effectiveness of its arrangements for internal audit.

(b) **Terms of Engagement**

The Panel considered the standard Terms of Engagement of Accounts and Audit Services Limited for the provision of the Council's internal audit service for 2012-13.

It was

RECOMMENDED

That the Terms of Engagement be approved and that the estimated cost of £1,843.20 for providing the service be noted.

(c) **Programme – 2012-13**

The Panel considered the internal audit programme for 2012-13 proposed by Accounts and Audit Services Limited taking into account the guidance contained in the latest edition of the Practitioners Guide and incorporating additional tests considered appropriate for the Council in view of the level of activity in which it is engaged, including a test of the accuracy of reported performance data as recommended by the Council's external auditor.

It was

RECOMMENDED

That the proposed internal audit programme for 2012-13 as now submitted be approved.

9. **MEMBER AND STAFF TRAINING**

The Panel received and noted a report detailing training delivered to members and staff during 2011 and 2012 to date.

10. **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

It was

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 matter the public and representatives of the press be excluded from this meeting during its discussion.

11. **REVIEW OF SALARIES AND STAFFING LEVELS**

(a) Current Position

The Panel received and noted a schedule setting out information on current staffing levels and salaries.

(b) Review of Staffing Arrangements

Further to Policy Minute 23 the Panel considered the report of the Director of South West Councils on his review of the Council's staffing arrangements in anticipation of the expected retirement of the Town Clerk on 30th June, 2013 and Mr. Symons answered Members' questions on it.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED

That the various decisions now agreed and set out in the accompanying confidential note be recommended to the Council.

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

RISK MANAGEMENT PANEL

13th MARCH, 2012

At a Meeting of the Risk Management Panel held on Tuesday, 13th March, 2012:

PRESENT Councillors R.M. Biggs (Chairman) (NOT A QUORUM)

In attendance: Carly Galloway – West Dorset District Council.

APOLOGIES for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor T. James) and Councillor A.J. Lyall.

1. **COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLANNING**

The Panel welcomed Carly Galloway from West Dorset District Council who gave a presentation about community resilience planning. The National Security Strategy defined community resilience as ‘communities and individuals harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves in an emergency, in a way that complemented the response of the emergency services’. The representative believed that local people knew how to help their community best in an emergency and that helping each other was something most communities would do naturally; however having a plan would facilitate this response.

The representative circulated a template for a Community Emergency Plan and it was felt that there could be benefit in preparing such a plan to complement the Council’s existing Business Continuity Plan, Winter Maintenance Plan etc.

It was

RECOMMENDED

That the Deputy Town Clerk be requested to prepare a draft Community Emergency Plan for consideration at a future meeting of the Risk Management Panel.

2. **STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTERS**

(a) **Review of the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers**

The Panel reviewed the strategic and operational risk registers which identified the risks faced by the Council. The risk scores and actions required were revised accordingly. A number of new risks were identified which related to financial oversight by the Council, a major incident at a Council run outside event, failure to maintain plant and machinery, security and insurance of public art/civic assets and theft of metal from Council assets. The risks related to trees also needed to be amended to reflect the actions

being taken in respect of bleeding canker and the need for a discussion regarding the Christmas lights contract coming to an end after Christmas 2012.

In respect of financial oversight it was felt that one of the risk controls should be for Members to be offered training in how the Council's finances were prepared, monitored etc.

Members noted that in accordance with previous instructions those risks which scored a '1' had been removed from the registers.

It was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the strategic and operational risk registers, as amended, be approved.
- (2) That all Members be offered training in how the Council's finances are prepared, monitored etc.

(b) Opportunities in the Risk Management Process

The Panel had before it a draft addition to the Council's Risk Management Policy (see Appendix I) which set out a framework for assessing opportunities that might arise in the future. The addition to the Risk Management Policy was agreed subject to the matrix colours being changed to shades of blue with light blue being low opportunity through to dark blue being high opportunity.

It was

RECOMMENDED

That, subject to the amendment set out above, the addition to the Council's Risk Management Policy to address opportunities be approved.

(c) Review of Opportunities

The Panel considered any opportunities that might arise and scored and recorded them within the newly created opportunities section of the Council's risk registers.

It was

RECOMMENDED

That the opportunities section of the Council's risk registers be approved.

3. **BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN**

The Panel agreed the draft Business Continuity Plan subject to some additional detail regarding which officers would wait at home until requested to attend and the date the plan was last reviewed being included at the end of the plan.

A copy of the plan should be located at the front and back doors of 19 North Square.

It was

RECOMMENDED

That, subject to the amendments set out above, the draft Business Continuity Plan be approved.

7(a). ASSESSMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

Each opportunity will be assessed in terms of its likelihood of occurrence and the potential positive impact on the Council. The following are the criteria by which each opportunity will be assessed:

Likelihood:

Category	Probability	Possible Indicators
Very High (4)	>90%	A clear opportunity is already apparent which can easily be achieved
High (3)	>60%	An opportunity that maybe achievable but which will require further work
Possible (2)	>10%	An opportunity that could happen but would need full investigation and a considerable amount of further work
Unlikely (1)	<10%	Opportunity is unlikely to happen and would require excessive work to achieve

Evaluation of Positive Impact:

Impact on Performance	Risk Threat
Exceptional (4)	Income/Savings >£25,000 Exceptional improvement to service and or environment / extensive positive press coverage
Major (3)	Income/Savings >£15,000 Major improvement to service and or environment / positive press coverage
Moderate (2)	Income/Savings >£5,000 Moderate improvement to service and or environment / some positive press coverage
Minor (1)	Income/Savings less than £5,000 / Minor improvement to service and or environment / minor positive press coverage

