

Dorchester Town Council

Management Committee

9 May 2017

Present: The Mayor (Councillor T. Harries) and Councillors J. Hewitt, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, T. Loakes, K. Rice (Vice-Chairman in the Chair) and D. Taylor.

In Attendance

Councillor P. Stein.

S. Scotchmer, local resident, in respect of Minute No 73.

Apologies: Councillors C. Biggs, A. Lyall, R. Potter and M. Rennie.

71. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 14 March 2017, adopted by Council on 28 March 2017, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

72. Site Visits to Council Owned Properties and Sites

The Committee considered the notes of the site visit, to which all Members of the Council had been invited, held on 11 April 2017 (Appendix 1 to these minutes).

Resolved

That the notes of the site visit be received.

73. Sports Arena – Mountain Ash Road Area

Local resident S. Scotchmer addressed the meeting in support of a sports arena piece of equipment in the area as there was still a large number of children playing in the street. He urged the Committee to progress the project as soon as possible.

The Committee then considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk which outlined the estimated costs and approvals required for a sports arena to be located on land at Hawthorn Road allotments. With regard to cost it was noted that the Council had not earmarked any funds at this stage. It was anticipated that there would be grant funding available for at least a part of the cost, including from Sports England. The report also set out information regarding the number of allotment holders that would be effected, the statutory notice period and the need for Secretary of State Consent. Additionally the report gave information regarding the inclusion of a play area at the same location which might be a consideration dependent on the outcome of the discussions by the Policy Committee regarding the Council's agreed key corporate objective of providing affordable housing in the town.

With regard to funding it was noted that the Youth Council had supported this project and it may well be better placed to apply for grant funding.

Members felt that it would be sensible to make a final decision on the scope of the project once the Policy Committee had completed its deliberations in respect of sites for affordable housing but felt that allotment holders could be consulted at this stage so as to be able to make some progress.

Resolved

That a final decision on the scope of the project be made once the Policy Committee had completed its deliberations in respect of sites for affordable housing but that allotment holders be consulted at this stage so as to ascertain their views.

74. Management Arrangements

The Committee considered a report from the Outdoor Services Manager updating it on the work undertaken and the achievements made by the Outdoor Services Team since the last meeting of the Committee. The Mayor reported that he had officially opened the boardwalk which was a huge improvement, consideration might need to be given to placing a bin near to the picnic bench. The Mayor also thanked staff for their huge amount of help in respect of setting up for the Mayor's fun day which had recently been held in the Gardens. It was noted that the Himalayan Balsam pulling at the Nature Reserve undertaken last year happened during bird nesting season and it was requested that consideration be given to that issue this year.

Members also noted that the suckers needed removing from various Highway trees around the town, that Dorset County Council had again been undertaking work to the Max Gate roundabout which was maintained by the Town Council and that the middle bollard at the end of Salisbury Street was not functioning. It was also reported that the damaged tree at South Street end of South Walks was not looking as if it would survive.

It was requested that the fencing currently preventing access to the old bowling green in the Gardens be re-aligned so as to enable the toilets to be accessed.

Resolved

That the Outdoor Services Team update be noted.

75. Tirah Memorial – Borough Gardens

The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk on the position of the information board in respect of the Tirah Memorial in the Borough Gardens.

Resolved

That the Tirah Memorial information board remain in its present position.

76. **Weymouth Avenue Pavilion**

(a) Dorchester Cricket Club

The Committee had before it a report by the Deputy Town Clerk on progress made with the Cricket Club regarding it taking over the management of the pavilion at the earliest opportunity. The report also included a draft Heads of Terms for the transfer of the Pavilion and associated structures to the Club.

The Deputy Town Clerk responded to Members concerns with regard to the Club's first year cashflow, the rental income from the Boxing Club being paid to the Cricket Club and the possibility of space at the Pavilion being used for purposes not consistent with community use, particularly if the Boxing Club moved away from the Pavilion at some stage in the future.

Recommended

That Weymouth Avenue Pavilion and associated structures be leased to Dorchester Cricket Club in accordance with the draft Heads of Terms enclosed with the report. The lease to be operative from the earliest date achievable.

(b) Dorchester Boxing Club

Members considered a report by the Town Clerk on a proposal for the Boxing Club to occupy currently underused space at Weymouth Avenue Pavilion. This would involve the conversion of two changing rooms and corridor space, plus a small part of the remaining two changing rooms resulting in a space of approximately 90 square meters. Conversion costs had been estimated at £60,000 which was proposed to be funded from the Club's S106 allocation, its own funds and an application to the new Sport England Community Asset Fund, there was no requirement for the Council to contribute. The Club would lease this part of the building for £3,000 per year with an initial lease period of 10 years with a right to extend on similar terms. The rent would be payable to whoever managed the Pavilion. The Boxing Club was in favour of the proposal and it is proposed that the Club occupy the site by Christmas 2017.

Recommended

That Officers be authorised to conclude negotiations with Dorchester Boxing Club on the terms set out in the report.

77. **Cemetery Matters**

(a) Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes

The Committee had before it a report with details of the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial for grave spaces and the number of interments and burials of ashes together with South Chapel usage at Dorchester Cemetery, since the last meeting of the Committee.

Resolved

That the report on the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes since the last meeting of the Committee be noted.

(b) **Headstones and Inscriptions**

The Committee received and noted applications for the design of headstones and inscriptions.

Resolved

That the action of the Town Clerk in approving designs numbered 4225 to 4237 be confirmed and the Register of Memorials be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

(c) **Fordington Cemetery – Laying Down of Headstones**

Members were informed that Fordington Cemetery was presently being topple tested and so far five large headstones had found to be unsafe. It was proposed to contact the last known relative/Exclusive Right of Burial holder to inform them that the headstones were unsafe and request that they take action to remedy the situation within a specified period of time. If no response was received, which was likely as the headstones were all very old, then the headstones would be laid down on the grave with the inscription facing upwards – the cost of which would total approximately £640.

Resolved

That action proposed in Minute No 77(c) above be agreed.

78. **Buildings Monitoring Report**

The Committee received the monitoring reports for the Municipal Buildings, Weymouth Avenue Pavilion and Borough Gardens House.

Members reported that the Corn Exchange hand driers in the ladies toilets were not working and requested that defibrillator maintenance be checked and included on the monitoring report.

The Mayor requested that for the General Election West Dorset District Council be asked if it could arrange some form of voting space downstairs in the Municipal Buildings as a back-up should the lift to the Council Chamber fail.

In respect of the Borough Gardens House it was felt that it would be beneficial for there to be a glass recycling bin placed in the kitchen.

Resolved

That the Buildings Monitoring Reports be noted.

79. **Dorchester Arts**

The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Dorchester Arts Board meeting held on 21 March 2017. The Council's representative on Dorchester Arts reported that Dorchester Arts was investigating the use of hard plastic glasses and that Members would be invited on a hard hat tour of the Maltings.

Chairman

Notes of a Site Visit held on 11 April 2017 at 9.30am.

Sites visited – Poundbury Cemetery, Fordington Cemetery, Weymouth Avenue Pavilion, Weymouth Avenue Cemetery and Maumbury Rings.

Attending: Councillors A. Chisholm, G. Duke, J. Hewitt, T. Jones, T. Loakes and R. Potter.

Steve Newman, Deputy Town Clerk.
Carl Dallison, Outdoor Services Manager.

1. Poundbury Cemetery

The Outdoor Services Manager explained to Members an issue with the septic tank which was continually being filled with run off water from the road during periods of rainy weather. The septic tank then had to be emptied at a cost to the Council. Dorset County Council Highways had introduced some grips at the road side which had helped and the drain across the entrance to the cemetery had been extended to remove run off water to the drain. Whilst helping these improvements had not solved the problem. It was therefore proposed that the drain covers be built around and lifted. Members agreed to this solution.

Members expressed some concern that the boundary wall had not lasted well and requested that some investigation with the Duchy of Cornwall and elsewhere, be made into possible remedies.

Those attending then viewed the cemetery, which was considered to be in good order.

2. Fordington Cemetery

The Group visited Fordington Cemetery which was considered to be in good order. A number of ideas were proposed in respect of helping wildlife and wild flowers in the area and this would be investigated further with the help of Councillor Loakes.

3. Weymouth Avenue Pavilion

The Deputy Town Clerk reminded Members of the new bill for Business Rates for the Pavilion of £11,000 per year and the Council's previous agreement for the cricket club to take it over as soon as possible subject to final agreement on the detail.

It was also reported that all of the changing rooms were no longer required and two of them could be converted into a permanent home for the Dorchester Boxing Club. Members viewed the area and the proposed plans. Both the Boxing Club and the Cricket Club were supportive of the proposal.

Members were supportive of the proposal, which would cost in the region of £60,000 to be funded from the Boxing Club s106 monies and possible grant applications.

4. Weymouth Avenue Cemetery

Members viewed the cemetery and the chapels and were pleased with the condition of them. It was noted that the path edgings were all in the process of being cut back. This maintenance work had been noticed by funeral directors who had complimented the Council on the improvement.

5. Maumbury Rings

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members of the work which had been completed recently which included re-forming the steps at the northern and southern end of the Rings and the installation of three new information boards and the removal of the old board. It was noted that the boards, particularly the one under a tree would need regular cleaning. The position of the boards had been stipulated by Historic England and could not be moved.

It was identified that front of the pavilion required re-painting.

Meeting closed 12.40pm.