

# Dorchester Town Council

## Policy Committee

21 November 2017

**Present:** Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, R. Biggs, A. Chisholm, T. Harries, S. Hosford, G. Jones (Chairman), T. Jones and P. Stein

**Also present:** Councillor J. Hewitt

**Declaration of Interest:** Councillor T. Jones declared an interest as a life Vice-President of Dorchester Town FC, did not take part in the debate regarding, and did not vote on, recommendation 15 d).

### 14. Minutes

The Minutes of the Committee of 19 September 2017, adopted by Council on 26 September 2017, were taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 15. Financial Report 2017-18

The Town Clerk provided an update covering the Council's Month 7 spend in relation to the budget, cash position, current debt and payments position and reported receipt of the first Internal Audit report for 2017-18.

He responded to questions regarding outstanding debts, the audit recommendations on timesheets, and clarified that the Payments list included the transfer of £700,000 to the Council's National Savings and Investment account.

#### **Resolved**

- a) That the Payments list totalling £935,048.76 is approved
- b) That the first Internal Audit report and the officer response to it is noted

The Town Clerk introduced a paper regarding the use of the Corporate Projects Reserve and the current projection for the growth of the unallocated part of the Reserves. He also highlighted recent presentations made by partners involved in important local projects and explained how draft recommendations were phrased to safeguard any contributions that the Council might make to partner schemes.

The Committee carefully considered the draft recommendation for each project.

#### **Recommended to Council**

- c) That the Town Clerk agree the purchase of interpretation aids equipment identified by the Shire Hall Trust, within a budget of £10,000 to be allocated from the existing Sport and Cultural Projects element of the Corporate Projects Reserve
- d) That, with regard to the development of a third generation artificial football pitch at The Avenue Stadium, the Town Clerk be authorised to match, pound for pound,

sums raised from local community sources up to a maximum of £50,000, to be released should project costs reach the current estimate of £500,000

- e) That £250,000 is reserved as a future contribution to The Maltings arts project if it is able to achieve its overall funding target, or to develop the Municipal Buildings as an arts venue in the event that The Maltings project is not delivered

## 16. **Corporate Plan Review**

The Committee received a report from the Town Clerk regarding progress on tasks identified within the Corporate Plan.

Members cautiously welcomed proposals to develop a new governance arrangement for the development of a strategy to resolve Traffic and Parking difficulties in the town.

The Town Clerk highlighted that, following discussions with District Council Planning officers, Magna Housing were now keen to commence a programme of consultation on potential housing schemes on recreation sites that the Town Council might be willing to release. A further report would be made to the January meeting.

As part of the Tourism signage project Members asked that appropriate signage and information be considered for some of the important statues in the town centre. A Member also asked that a report be presented to the Management Committee with more detail on plans for WW1 commemorations during 2018.

A Members sought further information regarding the Great Field consultation exercise and the Town Clerk explained the extra steps being undertaken to collect the views of young people.

Members discussed how the development of a clear vision for the town might help to clarify the Council's approach to issues such as retail development, Local Government Reorganisation and the Local Plan Review.

The Town Clerk was reminded of the request to introduce Direction of Travel indicators to the Performance Management report.

## 17. **Strategic and Operational Risk Register – Annual Report**

The Town Clerk presented the annual risk review report. The report highlighted the key risks the Council was managing and also identified that a full list of risks was available from the Deputy Town Clerk.

Members discussed the emerging risk of new European Data Protection regulations and asked that a risk be added for this item. Members invited the Town Clerk to review the risk score for Fireworks, which appeared to be overstated.

### **Recommended to Council**

- a) That, subject to the risk associated with Fireworks being reviewed, the assessed high level strategic and operational risks be approved

- b) That the register is updated to recognise the risk associated with managing new Data Protection regulations
- c) That the strategic, operational and opportunity risk registers, as a whole, be approved

18. **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.

19. **Staffing Issue**

The Town Clerk provided information regarding a current staffing issue, which the Committee considered fully and carefully.

**Resolved**

- a) That, with regard to the role under consideration, should the Town Clerk consider it to be in the mutual interest of the Council and the post-holder, he be authorised to remove the post from the establishment, and, if appropriate, make the post-holder redundant
- b) With regard to a separate but linked issue, no action is to be taken for up to six months from March 2018, to be reviewed by the Committee at the end of that period

Chairman