

Dorchester Town Council

Annual Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council

5 May 2021

Present: Mayor R. Biggs and Councillors, B. Armstrong-Marshall, S. Biles, A. Canning, A. Chisholm, L. Fry, T. Harries, J. Hewitt, F. Hogwood, S. Hosford, G. Jones, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, D. Leaper, R. Major, R. Potter, M. Rennie, R. Ricardo and D. Taylor

Apologies: Councillor A. Lyall.

1. Election of Chair

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor G. Jones become Chair of Council for the period to the next annual meeting of Council.

Resolved

That Councillor G. Jones become Chair of Council for the period to the next annual meeting of Council.

Councillor G. Jones took the Chair.

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Biggs become Vice-Chair of Council for the period to the next annual meeting of Council.

Resolved

That Councillor R. Biggs become Vice-Chair of Council for the period to the next annual meeting of Council.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 March 2021 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. Communications & Motions

The Mayor confirmed that letters of condolence had been sent to HM Queen and HRH The Duke of Cornwall following the death of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. The Mayor had attended a memorial service organised by the Lord Lieutenant at Wimborne Minster.

The Mayor also announced the death of John Antell, who served two terms as Mayor in 1994/95 and 1998/99, recognising in particular John's interest in the twinning arrangements with Lubbecke. He also announced the death of Les Cuff, who had played a role in remembrance events over many years, and invited Members to mark their passing with a short period of silence.

Finally he expressed his thanks to Ken Lambert, who was retiring from his role as the allotment representative for Herringston Road for many years; at Ken's request a walnut tree had been planted on the allotment site.

4. Annual Business

Council considered appointments to Committees, Outside Bodies and for its Bank Mandate, as well as reports on the General Power of Competence and the Annual Governance Statement.

In response to a question from a councillor the Clerk confirmed that adopting the General Power of Competence did not make the Council eligible for recent Affordable Housing funding announced by Government.

A Member identified the high attendance record of Members for meetings held via Zoom during the past year.

Resolved

- a) That appointments to Committees, Joint Bodies, Outside Bodies, and to manage the Council's bank mandate are as laid out at Appendix 1 and 2
- b) That the Council adopts the General Power of Competence for the period to the next Annual Meeting of Council
- c) That the Council approves the signing of the Annual Governance Statement 2020-21

Council considered the financial out-turn for the 2020-21 year, including reports of the Internal Auditor and the draft Accounting Statement for 2020-21.

Resolved

- d) That the Internal Audit report for the year 2020-21 is noted
- e) That payments made from 1 – 31 March 2021, totalling £166,408.50, are approved
- f) That Council approves the Accounting Statement 2020-21

5. Request from Citizens Advice Central Dorset

Council carefully considered a request for financial support for the continuation of an Employment Advice Unit service that had been set up initially as a result of the growing caseload managed by Citizens Advice as a result of the Covid pandemic.

A councillor raised a question regarding the process for the request in relation to the Council's small grants application process. Members commented on the relationship between the 30% caseload and the request for 50% funding, as well as a lack of information on other potential funding.

A number of Members expressed strong support for both the Citizens Advice service and the Employment Advice initiative, recognising the potential for the demand for employment rights advice to grow in the aftermath of Covid and Brexit.

Resolved

- a) That a grant of £13,600, funded from the Corporate Projects Reserve, is offered to Citizens Advice Central Dorset, to enable them to continue to deliver the Employment Advice service through to March 2022

- b) That the Town Clerk continue discussions with CACD regarding the potential for a longer term grant, based on relevant caseload, should the service be needed beyond April 2022; bringing a proposal for consideration by Council when setting the 2022-23 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy

6. **Metal Detecting Policy**

Council considered a request from a detectorist to obtain permission to detect on Salisbury Fields, along with a report from the Deputy Town Clerk considering the wider issues arising from the request.

A Members asked for clarification regarding the potential for a by-law to enforce a no detecting policy.

Resolved

That Council does not approve the request to detect at Salisbury Fields and that metal detecting should not be permitted on any land within the Council's ownership.

7. **Planning and Environment Committee – 6 April 2021**

Following typographical amendments 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 6 April 2021 be adopted.

8. **Planning and Environment Committee – 26 April 2021**

Following typographical amendments 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 26 April 2021 be adopted.

9. **Dorchester Heritage Joint Committee – 20 April 2021**

The draft minutes of the Committee were noted.

10. **Dorset Council Matters**

Councillor Rennie identified that the Council had secured significant Government funding towards additional responsibilities arising out of the Domestic Abuse bill.

Councillor Biggs invited Members to note comments made regarding the planning application submitted for new play equipment at The Great Field.

Councillor S. Jones identified positive news regarding the future of St Mary's School at Shaftesbury which would lead to the provision of specialist support services within the county for the first time in some years. She also identified the adoption of a new Cultural Strategy.

Councillor Fry identified that the Council had now exceeded its affordable homes target for 2020/21.

11. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned until Monday 24 May, when the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the next civic year will take place.

Council rose at 8.20 pm.

Mayor

Dorchester Town Council - Committee Membership 2021-22

Appendix 1

Councillor	Council	Planning & Environment	Management	Policy	Markets Joint Panel	Heritage Joint C'ttee
R. Biggs (Mayor/Dep. Mayor)	Y	Y		Y		
G. Jones (Chair/Mayor Elect)	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
B. Armstrong-Marshall	Y			Y		
S. Biles	Y		Y			Y
A. Canning	Y	Y	Y			
A. Chisholm	Y			Vice Chair		Y
L. Fry	Y	Y	Y			
T. Harries	Y	Vice Chair		Y		
J. Hewitt	Y	Y		Y	Y	
F. Hogwood	Y			Y	Y	Y
S. Hosford	Y	Y		Chair	Y	
S. Jones	Y	Y	Y		Y	
F. Kent-Ledger	Y	Y	Chair			
D. Leaper	Y	Y	Y			
A. Lyall	Y		Y		Y	
R. Major	Y	Y	Vice Chair			Y
R. Potter	Y	Chair	Y			
M. Rennie	Y	Y	Y		Y	
R. Ricardo	Y	Vice Chair	Y			
D. Taylor	Y		Y			
	20	14	13	8	6	5

Dorchester Town Council – Outside Body Representation

Appendix 2

Internal Roles		Appointed
DAPTC inc Larger Towns Rep	A. Chisholm The Mayor	2021 Annually
Charitable Trusteeships		
Dorchester Municipal Charities (2)	J. Hewitt S. Hosford	2016 2011
Ashley Churchill & Thorner Trust (2)	R. Major R. Ricardo	2019 2019
Other Bodies		
Dorchester Arts	F. Kent-Ledger	2015
Dorchester Association L. History & Arch.	D. Leaper	2021
Dorchester BID	R. Ricardo	2021
Dorchester Bayeux Society	R. Major	2021
Dorchester Lubbecke Society	S. Hosford	2021
Citizens Advice Central Dorset	S. Biles	2021
Dorchester Youth & Community Centre	M. Rennie	2019
Dorchester Tourism Partnership	S. Hosford (Reserve R. Potter)	2021
Heart of Wessex Rail Partnership	A. Chisholm	2019
Thomas Hardy Society	S. Jones	2021
Transition Town Dorchester	F. Hogwood	2019
Volunteer Centre Dorchester	S. Biles	2019
Bank Mandate Signatories		
T. Harries, S. Jones, R. Potter, M. Rennie, D. Taylor		