

Dorchester Town Council

Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council held in the Council Chamber

28 November 2022

Council commenced at 7.00pm

Present: The Mayor (Councillor J. Hewitt) and Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, R. Biggs, S. Biles, A. Chisholm, L. Fry, F. Hogwood, S. Hosford, F. Kent-Ledger, G. Jones, S. Jones, D. Leaper, A. Lyall, R. Major, R. Potter, M. Rennie, R. Ricardo and D. Leaper.

Apologies: Councillor T. Harries.

Prior to the start of the meeting the Council stood in silent tribute to former Councillor and Mayor Wally Gundry and also former Mayoress Thelma Wills who had both passed away since the last Council meeting.

34. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 26 September 2022 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

35. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest reported.

36. **Police Matters**

The Council was circulated with a report setting out the crime statistics for Dorchester during October.

37. **Presentations, Communications, Questions and Motions**

The Council received a presentation from Daniel Cadisch, Chief Officer, Citizens Advice (CA) on the work undertaken by CA over the past year and the challenges that were now being faced in respect of the cost of living crisis. Mr Cadisch responded to Members detailed questions. It was noted that CA was encouraging the Credit Union to go back to having face to face facilities rather than online only. The Council offered its support to this encouragement.

Members thanked Mr Cadisch and wished to thank all of the CA staff for the valuable work they had undertaken through the Covid pandemic and now the cost of living crisis.

The Mayor reported that she had presented the Freedom scroll to the Dorset Army Cadet Force and had been presented with a mounted bayonet which would be put on display in the Council Chamber.

The Mayor also reported that she had attended a Safe Families event in Poole, the High Sheriff's thanksgiving service and, along with the Town Clerk, had presented a scroll to the Prince of Wales School in respect of the work undertaken for the Ukraine crisis.

It was noted that the Ukraine Friday Café would be having a Christmas party on 8 January 2023 and a Christmas Dinner for the homeless was being arranged at the United Church on 19 December 2022, volunteers for either event would be welcomed.

It was reported that the Carers Hub would be inviting the Council to see the work it is undertaking in the old M&S building.

The Mayor informed the Council that a young Dorchester resident had obtained a silver and bronze medal at the first ever British Swimming Championships for people with Downs Syndrome. The Council agreed that this was a significant achievement and the young person should be presented with a certificate of congratulations from the Council.

The Town Clerk reported that the Community Play would be using the top floor of the North Square building for the next few months.

There were no Questions or Motions.

38. Planning and Environment Committee – 3 October 2022

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 October 2022 be adopted.

39. Planning and Environment Committee – 7 November 2022

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

In respect of Minute No. 19 F13 (14B South Street) it was agreed that the Council should write to Dorset Council expressing its deepest concerns regarding the removal of the staircase which prevents the option for affordable housing which was desperately needed in the town.

Resolved

(1) That, in respect of Minute No. 19 F13 (14B South Street), the Council write to Dorset Council expressing its deepest concerns regarding the removal of the staircase which prevents the option for affordable housing which is desperately needed in the town.

(2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 7 November 2022 be adopted.

40. **Management Committee – 14 November 2022**

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 14 November 2022 be adopted.

41. **Policy Committee – 21 November 2022**

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

Resolved

(1) That the assessed high level Strategic and Operational risks included in the Risk Register be approved and that the Risk Registers, as a whole, be approved.

(2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 21 November 2022 be adopted.

42. **Dorchester Heritage Joint Committee – 18 October 2022**

The minutes of the Joint Committee meeting were noted.

43. **Update from the Dorset Council**

Dorset Councillors updated the Council on the following matters:-

- That Dorset Council had recently received a Limited Audit Opinion in respect of its corporate Landlord Responsibilities.
- Councillor R. Biggs reported on his attendance at a recent online Southwest Trains conference which had noted a 30% reduction in commuter take up since the Covid Pandemic.
- Domestic Abuse Forum – 16 Days of Action, please take note of this important campaign.
- That the Social Care budget was under significant strain.
- Car Boot Panel had, in the past week, issued £23,250 of grants to worthy causes.
- It was noted that both Dorset Council and the Town Council were not responsible for the rents charged to shops.

Council rose at 8.21pm.

Mayor