

NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL FULL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 27 JULY 2018

Present: Cllrs V Potheary (Chairman), P Batstone, B Batty-Smith MBE, D Beer, P Brown, A Cattaway, A Chase, B Cooper, D Croney, V Fox, J Francis, M Gould, T Handford, S Jespersen, A Kerby, N Lacey-Clarke, C Langham, M Roake, D Skipwith, Jackie Stayt, John Stayt (Vice-Chair), D Walsh and P Williams MBE

Apologies: Cllrs G Carr-Jones, C Dowden, E Parker, S Pritchard, B Ridout, J Somper, J Tanner and J Westbrook

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Stuart Caundle (Assistant Chief Executive), Martin Hamilton (Strategic Director), Jason Vaughan (Strategic Director) and Sandra Deary (Committee Services Officer)

15. Code of Conduct

There were no declarations of interest.

16. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 May 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

18. Dorset Information Sharing Charter (DISC)

Cllr Brown introduced the report advising on the circumstances in which personal data held by the authority needed to be shared with other partners and agencies. He added that the scheme would ensure that the authority was fully compliant with legislation.

It was proposed by Cllr Brown and seconded by Cllr Jespersen

Decision

To delegate authority to the Head of Business Improvement to undertake all action in relation to securing arrangements, developing internal protocols and generally ensuring appropriate governance for the sharing of data with other organisations including for the avoidance of doubt:

- a) to determine the terms of any such arrangements and/or protocols;
and
- b) to secure appropriate training.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Head of Business Improvement to take all operational decisions in relation to the management of the DISC.

19. Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Walsh gave the background history on the production of the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan.

He congratulated the Chairman and members of the Neighbourhood Planning Group who had put in a lot of work to get the neighbourhood plan completed.

He thanked Planning Policy officers at NDDC for their support during the process.

The Chairman of the Neighbouring Planning Group addressed the Council. He thanked the community minded residents of Gillingham for their hard work in the production of the Plan.

He advised that approximately 200 meetings had taken place and thanked NDDC Planning Policy Officers for their support. He added that harmonious communication had taken place between the Town Council, the neighbourhood Planning Group, consultants and NDDC officers to ensure all parties were up to date on what was happening.

The Town Clerk, Mrs Dobie, thanked the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Planning Group for bringing the neighbourhood plan together. She thanked NDDC Planning Policy Officers who had always been professional and helpful.

Cllr Chase and Cllr Gould thanked the Neighbourhood Planning Group for all their hard work. They considered the Plan to be a great working document.

It was proposed by Cllr Potheary and seconded by Cllr Walsh

Decision

That the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031 be “made” part of the development plan for use in planning decisions in the Gillingham Neighbourhood Area.

20. Cabinet Updates

Members received and noted the contents of the Cabinet reports and updates from Cllr Carr-Jones and Cllr Piers Brown.

Cllr Brown asked Member to use the feedback option to report any issue with the new Website.

Cllr Walsh gave the following verbal update:

Corporate / Legal

LGR / vacancies

Work associated with Shaping Dorset Council is now having an impact on various aspects of the legal service particularly among more senior officers and this is likely to increase further over the next six months. This will give rise to workload challenges within the Unit which will be compounded by the fact that Unit has been unable to recruit to its current vacant regulatory post. In the short term the only option in relation to seeking to secure the on-going effective delivery of legal regulatory work will be to seek a locum. Even with reduced hours, this will inevitably cost more than funding an in-house member of staff; it is therefore likely this will give rise to a degree of overspend of the Legal Unit by the end of the year.

Land Charges

Turnarounds / resilience

It is very pleasing to report that turnaround times for the land charges service continues to remain within target times despite us now being within the normal land charges peak season which invariably coincides with increased demands for leave by staff. This is being achieved as a result of a convergence of a number of different elements including improved working practices, improving digitalisation of various key data and the on-going use of temporary staff. Unfortunately, the benefits to resilience expected through the introduction of a new single IT system have yet to be felt due to delays in that project being implemented. It is now unlikely that any demonstrable benefit will be seen much before the end of this current calendar year and possibly beyond. In the meanwhile, work associated with delivering the new system will be likely to increase workload pressures.

Looking to the future, work is already underway to consider what resource may be needed to ensure the resilience of the Land Charges Unit both on 1st April 2019 and beyond. At present, the unit is delivering acceptable performance with the assistance of temporary staff. Whilst the need for such staff will be impacted by the introduction of the new single IT system and the finalisation of the data preparation project, it is optimistic to think these measures will provide sufficient compensatory benefit to offset all the work currently being delivered by these people. The creation of the new unitary council is also highly unlikely to have a beneficial material impact on the resource needs for land charges in the short or even possibly the medium term.

Development Management update

The Major thing is the IT project – new system procured and in process of being built, it is likely to go live in the autumn this will mean all three councils will be on one system. Officer workshops are looking at what we need it to do. Some staff are already familiar with IDOX which helps. Need to use experience from North Dorset system, setting up templates etc. It will be live

in August/September at the very earliest, but important not to go too soon, it has to be working.

It will be built, run it and tested before going live. A major part of the improvement plan – exciting but challenging. Ensure that we move into the new council with good up to date system in place.

Strategic planning

At 3pm on Tuesday the new NPPF was published, it introduced the anticipated changes including the new standard methodology for housing numbers and the new 'delivery test'.

It is now extant policy so will be referred to in development management decisions.

Not surprisingly the NPPF was raised at the Dorset Strategic Planning Forum where there was evidence of confusion and uncertainty as to whether it supports Local Plans.

The LGA chairman Lord Porter has already commented, stating: "it is encouraging to see moves towards greater transparency in the planning system, and measures that try to resolve the challenges in negotiating the number of affordable homes through the viability process, however, the new proposals fail to give councils the powers they need to ensure homes with planning permission are built out quickly, with the necessary infrastructure, in their local communities.

'It is hugely disappointing that the government has not listened to our concerns about nationally set housing targets, and will introduce a delivery test that punishes communities for homes not built by private developers.

"Councils work hard with communities to get support for good quality housing development locally, and there is a risk these reforms will lead to locally agreed plans being bypassed by national targets"

- NPPF continues to propose requirement for Statements of Common Ground, prepared jointly. The Dorset Strategic Planning Forum will oversee preparation of the Statement of Common Ground for the Dorset area – it will be prepared jointly by staff of all the authorities and it is intended that the draft Statement will come to the SPF for agreement in September
- Decisions about local plan arrangements under the new council will be for the new authority to make, but it was noted that there was likely to be a deadline set for new plans, through the Consequential Orders that are due to be laid this summer.

Since there is confusion and concern with Local authorities as to the status of their Local Plans, I have been asked by the Dorset Shadow Council, as the Lead Member for Planning on the Executive Committee to take a report to Committee in September outlining the situation with Local Plans as we move into Unitary. It has been proposed that the two Unitaries will have adopted single plans by April 2024, it has therefore been questioned as to how we

continue with Plans being reviewed at present and those hopefully proceeding to examination next year whilst simultaneously writing 2 new single plans.

Neighbourhood Planning update

The following plans have been made:

Shillingstone
Bourton
Gillingham

Blandford formally withdrawn but progressing on a new one, hopefully submitting by the end of year. Carrying out informal consultation.

At examination are: Sturminster Newton
Fontmell Magna
Pimperne

Hazelbury Bryant - recently submitted
Milborne St Andrew - consulting on pre submission
Shaftesbury - progressing work on policies

Weekly List

The Weekly List

The Development Services Improvement Plan (DSIP) is a 3 year project that commenced in 2015 which included 4 main themes

- Process Review
- Single ICT system
- Channel Shift – (Town and Parish Councils)
- Staff Restructure

Much of this has been completed with the final items being the ICT system and restructure of building control and planning admin teams.

At the start of the DSIP we were experiencing severe delays in processing planning applications and large backlogs in both validation and planning officer caseloads. The Councils were under threat of not meeting government targets and being “black listed” and put under special measures by central government and losing local control over planning decisions.

The process review looked at all procedures in the planning application system and sought to streamline and converge processes as much as possible with the existing 3 separate IT systems. We particularly focussed on unnecessary and double handling of tasks and reduction in paper copies and use of digital information as much as possible.

The Channel shift work included all Parish and Town councils receiving electronic communications and responding through the web site viewing planning applications on-line and no paper copies being sent to them. This is

now functioning successfully. Consultees now also receive electronic communications view application on line and respond electronically.

With the increase in electronic communication and use of the web site the need for sending out a weekly list was considered to be unnecessary and an additional task for admin staff that took time as a separate, specific task. The process review looked at time taken for many tasks, including the weekly list, and made dramatic savings which resulted in improvements in our service to customers, meeting statutory targets and avoidance of special measures. The changes in the processes and procedures were implemented as part of the DSIP under the delegated powers of the Head of Planning. The weekly list was one of many changes made at this time that cumulatively resulted in these improvements.

Members were advised of the progress of DSIP at regular intervals and some were directly involved in the project. The change in not sending out a weekly list and reliance on the web site was discussed at portfolio holders/brief holder/chair meetings. The weekly list stopped being sent in January 2017. At this time notifications to ward members of the registration/validation of applications in their ward commenced as this is part of the automated notifications sent out from within the planning IT system and therefore not an additional admin task.

Most members have found this arrangement satisfactory and use the web planning application search pages to view and check applications and this can produce a list of application submitted within the last week with just a couple of clicks.

Members within Weymouth and Portland do not have the benefit of Parishes, only Portland Town Council, and some have expressed concerns that they wish to see more than just applications in their own ward and would wish to receive a weekly list. This would require additional admin time to do so when our teams are concentrating on keeping validation times on target, are undergoing increased work in implementing the new IT system and going through a staff restructure. As producing a weekly list from the web site is very straight forward and can be done at any time 24/7 this is not thought to be too onerous and part of the channel shift and digital priorities of DCP being promoted to all customers and stakeholders.

To set up notifications within the current IT system to all WPBC members in the Borough of all applications would require new templates and consultation lists to be created which would require additional time from planning and IT staff. This would add to the consultees viewed on line by customers and give an expectation of responses to these. Members would also be sent notifications of applications which not all members may wish to receive.

A new system of publishing applications to the web is about to be implemented for West and Weymouth called Public Access which is already used for North. This will enhance functionality for searching for applications and allow individual alerts to be set. This will allow members to select what applications they wish to be alerted of automatically via public access and

Members will be given further advice on this and assistance in using this system when it goes live.

The new IT system is planned to go live by the end of this year and a huge amount of work and time is needed to get this set up, tested and ready to use. We are concentrating on this and want to look forward to the future of the new IT system and the new Dorset Council in April 2019 rather than spend time on the 3 current systems. Things will be very different and with Weymouth Town Council in place different arrangements will be established as is the case now with other town and parish councils. The Town Council will be consulted on all applications in their area and will have the usual 21 day consultation period to reply and triggers in the Scheme of Delegation will operate as they do at present with other Town and Parish Councils. Until then for Weymouth these triggers need to be via Members representations.

Our focus is on getting Public Access and the new single IT system implemented and we want planning and IT staff time to be concentrated on this rather than spend time on the current system that will be closed.

Cllr Croney asked for clarity on if and when work on the Local Plan could continue. Cllr Walsh advised that he had been asked for clarity on the situation with our Local Plans, through the Dorset Shadow Authority as Lead member for Planning and he would be taking a report to the September meeting of the Executive Committee to clarify the status of all the individual Local Plans.

Cllr Roake gave the following verbal update:

Steam Fair

Planning for the Steam Fair is well advanced.

There has been arrangements for some additional contingency car parking on the Pimperne side of Swainson Road/Collingwood Corner.

This additional car parking is being arranged due to the level of advanced ticket sales, providing flexibility concerning caravan/camping areas within main site. This could be a contributing factor due to it being its 50th Anniversary.

The temporary speed limits along the A354 will be adjusted to take the additional car parking into account and parish views.

During the event the 30mph speed limit is likely to extend from Pimperne, i.e. a continuous 30mph limit through the village and past the event site to Turnpike Cottage.

GDSF has already spoken to Google Maps with regards to the Showground Postcode, so there should be no repeat of what happened last year.

This will also be highlighted on the GDSF Final Instructions and Event Signage, which will prompt visitors to turn off their Sat-Navs and follow the Event Signs.

Private Water Supplies

Local Authorities have responsibilities for ensuring that 'private water supplies' ('PWS') provide wholesome water and that supply infrastructures are maintained in a suitable condition to protect the quality of water.

These responsibilities include regular sampling and analysis for a wide range of potential biological and chemical contaminants, required to be carried out at least once every five years.

New Regulations come into force on 11th July enacting an EU Directive which introduce some significant changes to the PWS regime. The general theme of the new requirements is to protect public health by improving the quality of water delivered by private supplies

The proposal that a policy of full cost recovery is applied to the private water supply activities undertaken across the DCP area.

Dog Warden Service

Dog warden provision has now been brought back in house as part of the DCP service. We are making some financial savings and providing an equally good service to our residents.

Dorset Waste Partnership

The Vice Chairman approved for the last year under the current authority.

Enforcement Policy & Procedures at the last meeting in June were approved.

Adopt a civil penalty charge for litter thrown from a moving vehicle of £100: Reduced to £75 if paid within 14 days

Revise the fixed penalty notice for littering to £100: Reduced to £75 if paid within 7 days

Revise the discounted payment for failure to produce a waste carriers licence or failure to produce Duty of Care documentation to £180.

The Enforcement team now has 4 full time staff and the results over the last 6 months are showing the impact of this. Table one illustrates the number of enforcement actions taken across the range of offences covered:

Enforcement actions	April 17 – Sept 17	Oct 17 – March 18
Verbal warnings	0	3
Written warnings	68	86
FPN's	0	14
Prosecutions	0	3
Total enforcement actions	68	106

Dorset Waste Partnership has also refunded £74,074 to the council as a refund on the 2017-2018 budget outturn position. However, I would comment that there are increasing pressures on future years budget with fluctuations in

the value of recycle globally, some of this is due to the impact from the Chinese market as well as prices, household growth and increased fuel costs.

Cllr Beer asked if training could be given to operators of the DWP as bins were being left in a very untidy and inconvenient state once emptied and wheelchair users were left struggling to use pavements. Cllr Roake advised that he had noticed this and would speak to relevant officers.

In relation to the sale of Shaftesbury Cattle Market, Cllr Beer advised that the Town Council supported the sale to ensure benefits were received by going through proper planning processes. He added that any capital receipt received should be used for the benefit of North Dorset residents.

Cllr Roake advised that there was opposition to the sale of the Cattle Market by a number of local residents. He advised that residents had had every opportunity to raise their concerns. He added that any capital receipt and expenditure would be at the decision of the Shadow Executive.

Cllr Cooper felt that this was a lost opportunity to invest this capital receipt back into North Dorset. Cllr Roake advised that any capital receipt across Dorset would benefit the whole of Dorset. Cllr Jespersen advised that other Councils in the partnership had bigger assets, therefore if each Council kept any capital receipt this would not benefit the residents of North Dorset.

Cllr Jespersen gave the following verbal update:

ECONOMIC REGENERATION

Sturminster Newton Enterprise Hub

NDDC funded a Feasibility Study to examine this project, covering possible models, financial viability and options. Cabinet and Officers considered this Report and concluded, reluctantly, that NDDC was not able to finance the project. We are now working with the Project Steering Group to examine a more modest business proposal which could deliver work space in the centre of the town.

Economic Growth Fund

The Economy Board agreed to revise the terms of the Economic Growth Fund to include first growth stage businesses where a grant will achieve a step change for the business or for the local economy.

Economic Growth Fund Grants have been awarded to:

3D Clinic in Compton Abbas

Compass Video in Child Okeford

Botanical Candles Company Ltd in Shaftesbury

North Dorset Business Day 2018 will be held on Friday 16th November at the Exchange in Sturminster Newton.

Trailway

A parcel of land off Brinley Court in Sturminster Newton is to be offered for sale by auction. Were this land to be in public or community ownership it could have considerable benefits for the development of the Trailway, particularly helping to open up the link to Stalbridge. The Economy Board, at its meeting on 17th July, supported the proposal that NDDC, in partnership with DCC and other local community organisations should contribute to the cost of his land purchase.

The Trailway remains one of North Dorset's most important attractions for residents and visitors, and contributes to the local economy.
Tourism Workshop.

On 7th June NDDC ran a workshop to explore what support might be offered to the North Dorset tourism sector. The Workshop was hosted by Hall and Woodhouse at their Brewery facilities in Blandford. Hugh de longh and Trevor Hedges worked on the preparation work and on the day, and I acted as facilitator. A number of ideas emerged and we will pursue the quick wins at pace and longer term learning will be incorporated into the overall tourism programme and shared with other players. Altogether it was a very worthwhile piece of work.

Visit Dorset

Visits to the Visit Dorset website continue to grow, with June showing a 17% increase on 2017. The content on the site, the blog and social media is constantly refreshed and work is underway with Camp Bestial to promote Escape from the City weekends. The Visit Dorset Team successfully organised airtime on ITV, on This Morning and Loose Women, and promotion in The Times and The Dorset Magazine.

Car Parking Service

From 18 June we have contracted with a new provider, JustPark, for payment in car parks and on street parking. This will result in improved services for users, both with mobile app and coin payment. New payment machines and signage have been rolled out across Dorset Councils Partnership's car parks. The long awaited improvements to the Chantry Fields car park in Gillingham have been completed, providing steps from the car park to Le Neuberg Way. This car park can now more easily be accessed by users of the station.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At a Meeting of its Board on 19th April 2018 SturQuest resolved to close. For the previous 12 months SturQuest had funded itself from reserves. During this time a number of possible future models were explored but in the event no clear role emerged and no source of funding was found. It was decided, with the involvement of the Town Council, to dissolve the organisation before it ran out of reserves and became insolvent.

In relation to Sturquest, Cllr Fox expressed his sadness that this had now closed. He was disappointed that the management team were not offered a way forward. He advised that the Town Council were now in the process of trying to construct a community team in the town.

In relation to the Bell Street car park site, Cllr Beer asked if the Economic Development Team could raise awareness of the site as occupation of the site would improve the vitality of the town.

Cllr Kerby gave the following verbal update:

The North Dorset Locality Health Group (made up from local government, the voluntary sector and most importantly the NHS / Clinical Commissioning Group) goes from strength to strength and I'm pleased that the district council along with the local surgeries, is part-funding a locality health worker. Additionally, the health group has been provided with funding to support small scale health projects to support the prevention at scale agenda, such as paying for training of leisure centre staff so they make take GP referrals.

You may have also noticed the excellent Walking For Health Scheme, encouraging residents to get out and make the most of our beautiful countryside and reduce obesity and obesity related illnesses such as type two diabetes. I would appreciate it if you would attend the walks and spread the word, the press release is on the Dorset Councils Newspaper and the group is active of Facespace

If 'big pharma' could turn exercise and its affects into a pill, it would be the most potent medicine going. I'm proud that North Dorset is leading the way.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.10 am

Chairman

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