

## WEST DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15 DECEMBER 2016

**Present:** Cllrs A Alford (Chairman), I Gardner, M Penfold MBE, J Russell, A Thacker (Vice-Chairman) and T Yarker

**Apologies:** Cllrs P Barrowcliff

**Also present:** Cllr N Bundy, Cllr F Horsington, Cllr S Jones MBE, Cllr M Rennie, Cllr G Symonds, Cllr D Taylor and Cllr D Turner

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

Stuart C Dawson (Head of Revenues and Benefits), Graham Duggan (Head of Community Protection), Robert Firth (Corporate Manager Legal Services), Martin Hamilton (Strategic Director), Trevor Hedger (Senior Economic Regeneration Officer), Stephen Hill (Strategic Director), Mark Payne (Business Development Team Leader), Jason Vaughan (Strategic Director) and Trevor Warrick (Spatial Policy and Implementation Manager)

**46. Code of Conduct**

There were no declarations of interest.

**47. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2016 were signed and confirmed as a correct record.

**48. Executive Committee Forward Plan**

The committee received the Draft Forward Plan. It was noted that the report titled "Recommendations for the allocation of developer contributions for the enhancement of recreational and community facilities in Dorchester," would be considered by the Executive Committee in March and not February.

**49. West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland local Plan review: Consultation on Issues and Options**

Following a recommendation within the Planning Inspector's 2015 report, the Executive Committee had agreed to begin the local plan review process. Officers had therefore prepared a document that would be the subject of public consultation, setting out the key issues and the main options for the local plan review.

The current local plan identified a need for 775 additional new homes to be provided each year over the 20 year plan period from 2011 to 2031, equating to a total of 15,500 new homes. However, the current plan only made provision for 14,855 homes, leaving a shortfall of 645 homes. In addition, extending the plan period to 2036 would require provision to be made for a further 3,875 new homes, giving an overall requirement for the local plan to

provide an additional 4,520 new homes. The issues and options document would provide the consultees with the opportunity to comment on the suitability of sites.

Members of the committee thanked the officers for producing a very thorough consultation document and requested that greater emphasis be made in the Foreword to the document on the need for additional housing and the strong links between housing and the economy and the demographics of the area. It was also agreed that a general question on affordable housing need would be useful. Cllr Yarker also requested that Charminster be included in the consultation process in addition to Crossways.

In response to a question on sustainable development, officers agreed that a question could be added to the consultation as to whether the Local Plan should provide more information on the tests for sustainable development.

#### Recommendation to Council

That the West Dorset Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: Issues and Options document, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report (and amended to reflect the comments of West Dorset's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Weymouth & Portland's Policy Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report be agreed for the purposes of public consultation.

#### 50. **West Dorset Tourist Information Centres Service Review**

Cllr M Penfold introduced a report on the consultation results on the options for the relocation and future delivery of the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre service. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the report of the scrutiny working group, together with a petition, and had supported the proposal to relocate the TIC service into Dorchester Library in order to maintain the service. The business case for the review was set out in Appendix 2 to the report which included the findings of the Stakeholder Engagement Survey.

Cllr D Taylor addressed the committee, highlighting that over 1000 residents had signed the petition to keep the Dorchester TIC in the current location and that if moved the TIC should continue to provide an excellent service and be well staffed. He reminded the committee that the Dorchester TIC had won many awards and provided an exemplary service. Cllr S Jones shared the concerns about moving the TIC and felt that moving location away from the Shire Hall and museum would be a mistake. In response to a question it was confirmed that the TIC would continue to sell coach and theatre tickets but the sale of goods was unlikely to continue due to lack of space.

Cllr Thacker agreed that the TIC was important for the county town and felt that the relocation to the Library, which was next to a public car park may increase the footfall for the TIC. It was however very important to signpost the new TIC location.

Cllr M Rennie suggested that the situation should be reviewed after a year to consider whether the move to the library had worked and this proposal was supported by Cllr N Bundy and Cllr A Thacker. Cllr Bundy felt that the retail element of the TIC should remain in place as this provided additional income for the council. He supported the continuation of the service and asked that the review be kicked into the long grass for the next 2 years to keep the staff and all of their experience.

#### Decision

(a) That Dorchester Tourist Information Centre is relocated to Dorchester Library by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and continues to be funded and operated by WDDC; achieving an annual revenue budget saving of approximately £80,000;

(b) That discussions continue with Dorchester Town Council and Dorset County Museum, or others as appropriate, to determine future delivery of the service from 2020;

(c) That discussions continue with the Sherborne Community Arts Centre Trust (SCACT) and Lyme Regis Town Council with regard to the future delivery of the TIC service in Sherborne and Lyme Regis.

(d) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertake a review of the service after one year of operation.

#### 51. **2017/18 Budget**

J Vaughan, Strategic Director, had provided a member briefing on the 2017/18 budget prior to the meeting. It was noted that outstanding information on the new homes bonus and how council tax limits would work for town and parish councils was expected later in the day. Further information was also awaited on pensions.

#### 52. **Dorset Waste Partnership Draft Budget**

The committee received the Dorset Waste Partnership draft revenue estimates for 2017 – 18. Members welcomed the positive report which showed that significant in year savings has been achieved and had been built into the 2017 – 18 estimates.

#### Decision

That the Dorset Waste Partnership draft revenue estimates for 2017-18, including the council's contribution be approved in principle.

#### 53. **Minutes of Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee**

The minutes of the meeting of the Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee held on 12 September and 7 November 2016 were noted.

#### 54. **Local Council Tax Support Scheme**

The committee received a report that reviewed the conditions of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and proposed a revised scheme that would take effect from 1 April 2017.

#### Recommendation to Council

That the following changes be made to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme, effective from 1 April 2017, to align it to the Housing Benefit Scheme.

(i) That the Family Premium be removed for all new working age claimants where protection is not provided (i.e. those who receive Universal Credit, Income Support, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance).

(ii) That the maximum period for backdating be reduced to one month.

(iii) That the maximum period for which a person can be absent from Great Britain and still receive Council Tax Support be reduced to four weeks apart from where protection is provided, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

#### 55. **West Dorset Accelerating Home Building Programme**

Cllr T Yarker introduced a report on the proposed accelerating Home Building programme for the district council, highlighting that there was a proven link between house building and the economical health of an area. There was a need to deliver homes at a faster rate, to provide affordable homes, to unblock sites with planning permission and to bring forward sites that had not yet been identified. Funding would be required to move the programme forward and to enable the council to engage the right skills and commission the right resources. A member working group would be established to oversee the programme and the Scrutiny Committee would also be involved. In response to a question, S Hill, Strategic Director reported that the terms of reference of the member working group had not been prepared, but the draft proposals would be discussed with members for comment.

#### Decision

a) That the Executive establishes an Accelerating Home Building programme in West Dorset;

(b) That Executive allocates up to £300k from the corporate projects reserve to support the programme through to 31 March 2019 to appoint programme management and commission skills/resources;

(c) That Executive agrees to establishing a Member Working Group to lead on the Accelerating Home Building programme, and in turn for the Working Group to report progress to the Western Dorset Growth Strategy Member Board;

(d) That Executive refers the Accelerating Home Building programme to Scrutiny Committee including scrutinising the proposed Council actions arising from the Housing Finance Institute Business Ready Review.

#### 56. **Economic Growth Strategy**

Members received a report on the draft Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy. The strategy had the following vision, to be enabled or delivered by 2023:

20,000 new homes including affordable homes  
13,200 new full time equivalent jobs (plus new jobs at the Dorset Enterprise Zone)  
A minimum of 70 hectares of new employment land;  
An increase in the proportion of workforce achieving Level 4+ qualifications from 25% to 35%  
An additional £564 million of GVA from the Western Dorset Growth area.

Cllr T Yarker highlighted the linkage between planning, housing and economic strategy and suggested that the council might want to look at a vehicle to join up these areas to improve the vibrancy of the district. There was also a need to be proactive in communicating the strategy with local residents and the connection with the local plan and accelerating house building.

Decision

That the Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy be adopted as the basis for consultation with key stakeholders and the production of a detailed action plan.

**57. Lyme Regis Environmental Improvements Phase V, Strengthening and Renovation of the Cobb. Application for Funding for Lead in Work**

Funding and authorisation for officers was sought to carry out monitoring of structure movements and to develop engineering proposals for the strengthening and renovation of Lyme Regis Cobb.

Cllr G Symonds supported the proposal, the Cobb was a Grade 1 Listed Structure and it was important for the work to be done as soon as possible. Cllr Alford proposed an additional recommendation, 'To proceed with a-c with urgency to take the project forward and allocate funds as soon as possible.'

Decision

(a) That Council approves a budget of £200,000 over 3 years for preparatory work on the proposed scheme. Funding to be drawn from corporate projects reserves;

(b) That officers are authorised to progress the preparatory work including appointment of consultants and contractors;

(c) To return to committee to discuss funding options once the results of the preparatory works are known;

(d) To proceed with (a)-(c) above with urgency to take the project forward and allocate funds as soon as possible.

**58. West Bay Harbour Deep Water Berth, Quay Wall Strengthening, Construction Phase Funding**

Members received an update on proposals to strengthen and improve the deep water berth quay wall and quayside and to seek approval to apply for an European Maritime Fisheries Fund grant to enable the scope of the proposed works to be extended, to include improved facilities for commercial fishing.

Decision

- (a) That the current position in respect of the Scheme proposals and estimated costs be noted;
- (b) That extension of the scope of the proposed works to include further improvement to facilities for commercial fishermen, if the additional costs are covered by European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF);
- (c) That an application for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) be submitted to cover a proportion of the costs.

**59. Harbour Operations Annual Report 2016**

The committee received the annual harbour operations report for Bridport and Lyme Regis harbour together with the proposed fees and charges for 2017/18.

Cllr G Symonds reported that there had been an increase in theft of stored items such as kayaks and suggested that if the charges were being increased for storage then the overall security of the harbours should be reviewed. Cllr Turner reported that security issues would be looked at as part of the review of the service.

Decision

- (a) That the annual report 2016 be noted and endorsed;
- (b) That the harbour fees and charges for 2017/18 (Appendix A) be approved;
- (c) That the amendments to the Harbour Policy, Rules and Regulations (Appendix B) be approved;
- (d) That the reports of the council's Health, Safety and Welfare Officer, in his role as Designated Person for the Harbours (Appendix C(i) and C(ii) be noted and endorsed;
- (e) That Cllr Penfold, with Cllr Russell as reserve, be nominated to represent the district council on the FLAG board.

**60. One Year Extension of West Dorset Local Area Partnership and Voluntary Organisation Service Level and Grant Agreements**

Approval was sought to extend, for one year only, all service level agreements and grants to community and voluntary organisations that would expire in March 2017.

Decision

That the extension of respective service level and grant agreements for one year only from 1 April 2017 be approved with the following community and voluntary organisations:

- (a) The five West Dorset Local Area/Community Partnerships in Beaminster & Villages, Bridport, Dorchester, Lyme Regis and Sherborne;
- (b) Dorchester, Sherborne and District Citizens Advice Bureau, the Bridport and District Citizens Advice Bureau;
- (c) The three West Dorset Youth Advice Centres in Dorchester, Lyme Regis and Sherborne;
- (d) Dorset Community Action and,
- (e) Dorset Race Equality Council

#### 61. **New WDDC Constitution**

Following the governance referendum decision earlier in the year to cease the operation of executive arrangements, work had been undertaken to progress the creation of a new governance model. Following a number of member events a summary of the key principles that had been endorsed by members at the workshops had been drafted for member approval.

Members suggested a number of minor changes within the summary at Appendix 1:

Article 6 – (5) O&S members to have **equivalent** rights to attend Strategy Committee as other members

Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (3) Call in rule to provide scope for (a) Chairman of **Overview and Scrutiny**; (b) O&S; (c) 10 non Members of O&S (who are also not all from the same political party) to require the Chairman of **Overview and Scrutiny** to call in a decision.

Recommendation to Council

That the approaches so far being adopted in relation to rewriting the West Dorset Constitution be approved.

#### 62. **Planning Code of Conduct**

Following a review the of Planning Code of Conduct by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and amendments proposed by the Planning Portfolio Holder a revised protocol was set out for approval.

The committee was content with the revised wording subject to the following minor amendments to the text:

Paragraph 3.1 (c) to read: “invitations aimed solely at ...” Replace word “specifically” with “solely”

Paragraph 5.1 to read “All planning applications falling” Replace word “failing” with “falling”.

Recommendation to Council

That the revised Planning Code of Conduct be approved.

#### 63. **Joint Risk Management Strategy**

The committee received the proposed updated Joint Risk Management Strategy for the Dorset Councils Partnership.

Decision

That the updated Risk Management Strategy be approved.

64. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

65. **Exempt Business**

There were no exempt reports.

**Duration of meeting:** 11.00 am - 12.50 pm

**Chairman**

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