

# **WEST DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **COUNCIL MEETING – 26 FEBRUARY 2019**

### **PORTFOLIO HOLDER REPORT FOR THE PERIOD UP TO AND INCLUDING FEBRUARY 2019**

#### **1. Corporate: Councillor P Barrowcliff - Portfolio Holder's Report**

##### **Strategy Committee decisions within this Portfolio**

Quarter 3 Business Review Report

#### **2. Environmental Protection & Assets: Councillor J Russell - Portfolio Holder's Report**

##### **Strategy Committee Decisions within this Portfolio**

Leasing of the Grove in Bridport

#### **3. Planning: Councillor I Gardner - Portfolio Holder's Report**

##### **Strategy Committee Decisions within this Portfolio**

No decisions

Our DM (Development Management) staff have been working to ensure that planning applications will continue to be legally made and determined after April 1st and have been progressing the alignment of documentation and working practices. However, with different IT systems and working arrangements at the non DCP Councils full standardisation needs to await service transformation later in the year.

The number of Planning Applications remains steady and the validation backlog has reduced resulting in the number of applications being handled per officer increasing. It is satisfying to note that our Quarter 3 business report (WDDC's final report?) shows 100% of major planning applications determined in time and the non majors determinations over target. WDDC ends on a high. Thanks to all involved.

Vacancies remain high in Building Control due to the difficulty of recruitment (including agency staff) due to a national shortage of the required skills.

There are currently two outstanding Public Inquiries (Charminster and Cerne Abbas) and the former, due to be heard in March is needing considerable in house effort despite being dealt with externally - adding further to our costs. There are also a number of ongoing large scale enforcement actions which also involve considerable of staff effort and costs.

## **Housing Land Supply**

As reported at the last full Council the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland joint target was 4.88 years' supply at April 2018. The lack of five-year land supply is continuing to result in a significant number of speculative planning applications. The published results of the new Housing Delivery Test, which had been expected to have a bearing on the five-year figure (a 5% or 20% buffer), were still awaited at the time of writing this report.

We have been advised that the new council should continue to calculate the five-year land supply on the basis of individual local plan areas until a unitary council-wide local plan is adopted. However that approach be tested at Appeals.

## **Affordable Housing**

Our Quarter 3 report has 82 new affordable homes projected for West Dorset for the Year which is on target, 28 being completed in the last quarter.

## **4. Housing: Councillor T Yarker - Portfolio Holder's Report**

### **Strategy Committee Decisions within this Portfolio**

No decisions

## **5. Enabling: Councillor M Penfold - Portfolio Holder's Report**

### **Strategy Committee Decisions within this Portfolio**

Annual Report for Dorchester Sports Centre  
Grant request from St Osmunds Middle School  
Request for grant and loan from Cam Vale Parish Council  
Allocation of grant to the Bridport Museums Trust  
Allocation of grant to the Beaminster Town Council  
Support for town centre improvements in Dorchester  
Support for the development of a heritage strategy for Dorchester  
Grant funding of Beaminster Public Conveniences Project  
Leasing of the Grove in Bridport

The Strategy Committee of February 7<sup>th</sup> gave the following grants to various organisations and projects;

#### **St Osmunds School**

The committee awarded a one off grant to St Osmunds school to support the retention of community access to sports facilities following the ceasing of the St Osmunds Community Sports Centre Trust. The grant will compliment a grant of £5000 from Dorchester Town Council and help the school improve access controls and security measures in order that those clubs that have been using the centre in the evenings can continue to do so.

#### **Cam Vale Parish Council**

A one off grant of £78,800 has been awarded to Cam Vale Parish Council to help the project to build a new community hall in Longburton. The Parish Council has been

given a loan of £20.000 to assist with the project. The new hall will provide a modern facility with more flexible space for the surrounding community.

#### Bridport Museum Trust

The committee agreed to a grant of £25.000 to the Bridport Museum Trust to assist with the cost of urgent conservation works for its collection. The council also set aside £10.000 to enable the commissioning of a specialist building survey of the Museum, store and offices at the Coach House on Gundry Lane.

#### Beaminster Town Council

The council had requested a grant of £60.000 to support its project to build a skate park. This would improve the provision of recreation and play facilities for young people. The committee agreed to this request.

#### Dorchester Town Council

A one off grant of £90.000 has been awarded to Dorchester Town Council to support a project to enhance the townscape paving in the vicinity of the Town Pump in South Street. The aim of the project is to replicate the paving style recently installed at the southern end of South Street. The grant is conditional on the town council committing £100.000 of its own money to the project.

#### Dorchester Heritage Committee

A one off grant of £50.000 was agreed to the Dorchester Heritage Committee to support a project to develop a heritage -based tourism strategy for Dorchester. This grant will be match funded from the town council and help promote the town, s heritage attractions including the Dorset County Museum, Shire Hall and the Keep Military Museum.

#### Beaminster Town Council

A £70.000 grant was awarded to Beaminster Town Council to support the provision of a new public toilet in Beaminster. The plans are at an early stage.

The Annual Report of Dorchester Sports Centre was received

The committee noted the performance of Dorchester Sports Centre and its operator 1610 ltd. There had been an increase in membership .The committee were updated on the resolution of building defects outstanding. All defects have now been resolved. The proposal by 1610 ltd for changes to fees and charges (for implementation from 1/4/2019) was also agreed.

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I recently chaired a meeting of SCOPAC which brings neighbouring Local Authorities and organisations that are interested in managing the coastline together. SCOPAC also shares and develops research, best practice and resources within the region.

## **6. Equalities: Councillor S Jones - Portfolio Holder's Report**

### **Strategy Committee Decisions within this Portfolio**

No decisions

## **7. Community Safety & Access: Councillor A Thacker - Portfolio Holder's Report**

### **Strategy Committee Decisions within this Portfolio**

Review of Dog Control Orders

## **8. Sustainability – Councillor M Hall – Portfolio Holder's Report**

### **Strategy Committee Decisions within this Portfolio**

No decisions

WDDC now have specific recycling points (specifically branded bins) at all our main offices, these identify and encourage both Staff and Councillors to put their waste in the correct bins. Disposable coffee cups use is on the decrease with many more staff using reusable cups, this is due to the awareness we have raised on the subject. We have now started to recycle crisp packets separately. These are taken to a local school who send them to a specialist recycling centre and they receive money for the School. We are currently sending all our old batteries to Damers School who are running a similar initiative to recycle and raise money. All WDDC bottle tops go to MENCAP to raise money.

It is hoped that the new Dorset Council will continue with the work started in the Dorset Council Partnership on staff travel and sustainability in general. Work is underway to develop a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Dorset alongside partners such as Dorset Wildlife Trust, Natural England and local authorities. It is hoped later in the year to run a workshop to introduce the new strategy and get the views of all Stakeholders. Any specific questions relating to this are best forwarded to our Sustainability Officer, Oliver Rendle.

## **9. Vulnerable residents: Councillor S Hosford – Portfolio Holder's Report**

### **Strategy Committee Decisions within this Portfolio**

No decisions