

**WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND BOROUGH COUNCIL MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2016

Present: Cllrs J Cant (Chair), K Brookes (Vice-Chair), A Blackwood, F Drake, J Farquharson, C Huckle, C James, R Nowak, J Osborne and G Taylor

Apologies: Cllrs

Also present: Cllr M Leicester and Cllr K Wheller

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

Kate Critchel (Democratic Services Officer), Stuart Caundle (Assistant Chief Executive), Stuart C Dawson (Head of Revenues and Benefits), Graham Duggan (Head of Community Protection), Martin Hamilton (Strategic Director), Stephen Hill (Strategic Director), Tony Hurley (Leisure Commissioning Manager), Julie Strange (Head of Financial Services), Nick Thornley (Head of Economy, Leisure & Tourism) and Jason Vaughan (Strategic Director)

76. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

77. Code of Conduct

There were no declarations to report.

78. Public Participation

Mr Henitz addressed the committee regarding item 19, Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan – Weymouth Peninsula and expressed concerns regarding the lack of a feasibility study of the site, and how the discussions on the future of local government may impact any future development; he questioned whether the approach would ensure that the best interests of Weymouth residents were served and challenged the transparency of the councils decision making.

Mr Farn addressed the committee regarding concerns relating to the signs indicating the Rodwell Trail on Dennis Road, issues relating to Dorset Waste Partnership and the general lack of maintenance across the borough.

Mr West spoke to members regarding item 19 and advised that he was largely supportive of the proposals for the Peninsula. However he would like to see more community involvement as local residents were key stakeholders of the site. He was also concerned about the lack of reference to sustainability within the officers report.

Mr Underwood addressed the committee in respect of the sand that had blown on the esplanade and around the Black Dog Public House. He felt that the poor standard of maintenance demonstrated a poor reputation for the town of Weymouth and considered it important for the Borough Council to get the basics right rather than focusing on further development.

Mr Underwood also expressed concerns regarding the general disrepair of premises in the high street and felt that Weymouth could not sustain two main shopping high streets.

The Chairman thanked the public for their comments and advised that many of the matters raised had already been highlighted within the committees Action Plan which would be discussed later on within the agenda.

79. Questions by Councillors

K Wheller asked the committee about the Hotels Management Board and questioned how this had been established. In response, the Strategic Director advised that there was not a Hotels Management Board, but a group of hoteliers had met with officers and the Brief holder regarding a number of issues.

In response to questions, the Strategic Director advised that he would forward members a reminder of the role and powers of the newly established PSP Board.

In respect of the Weymouth Peninsula report, K Wheller expressed concerns regarding the economic sustainability of any future proposals and the long term future of the Pavilion and the harbour. She asked to meet with officers and the Brief holder to discuss her concerns. In response the Brief holder for Tourism and Culture confirmed that he would arrange a meeting as soon as was practical.

K Wheller also raised concerns regarding the decision to close the public conveniences and asked that they be reinstated until a suitable replacement venue had been found. She advised that it would be inappropriate to provide portable toilets.

In response, the committee was reminded that the decision to close the public convenience along the esplanade had now been made and measures were being put into place for a replacement, which would be appropriate and fit for purpose. In response to a question, the Strategic Director agreed to keep the Brief holder for Social Inclusion informed of arrangements.

In response to questions regarding the NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group – consultation, members were advised that the Strategic Director would discuss with the appropriate Brief holder the best way to share the consultation with members.

M Leicester asked if she could address the committee on the West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: consultation on issues and options when members discussed the item.

80. **Management Committee Action Plan**

The Management Committee received the Action Plan and Brief holders provided updates:-

Community Facilities – Cllr A Blackwood

The agreement for Weymouth Swimming Pool was on track and the review of the running track and adjacent land at the Marsh was ongoing.

Community Safety – Cllr F Drake

It was agreed to move the Melcombe Regis Board item which should only be referenced under the Housing brief within the action plan.

Corporate Affairs and Continuous Improvement – Cllr K Brookes

In respect of the establishment of a Town Council, members were advised that once a decision had been made of Unitary Authority status, this matter could be progressed.

The alignment of constitutions across the Dorset Council's Partnership was now complete.

Economic Development – Cllr J Farquharson

Members were advised that the Council was proposing to appoint a Town Centre Manager and further details would be brought to members attention shortly. However some members questioned the need for such appointment as this role should already be carried out by the Weymouth Bid.

Environment and Sustainability – Cllr R Nowak

It was agreed to merge the Fast Track Planning Project with Development Services Improvement Plan within the action plan.

Finance and Assets – Cllr J Cant

There was nothing new to add

Housing – Cllr G Taylor

Members were asked to note a Housing Q&A Briefing had been arranged for 31 January 2017.

G Taylor also updated members on progress of the Melcombe Regis Board. In response to questions regarding the speed of delivery, the committee were advised that an action plan for the board was now in place and many of the easy fixes had been implemented.

However the next stage was more challenging to achieve, with the joint working of a number of services. Members confirmed that they were content that she continued to act as the councils representative.

Social Inclusion – Cllr C James

Progress was being made and a further project regarding Refugees would be shortly added to the plan.

Tourism and Culture (including Harbour) – Cllr J Osborne

Nothing new to add.

Transport and Infrastructure – Cllr C Huckle

The new car parking policy report had been delayed. The new traffic management programme proposal would need to bear in mind any impact of future development on the Peninsula.

81. Budget 2017-2018

The Strategic Director (J Vaughan) advised the committee that there was no new information to report following the recently held Member Briefings. The Budget for 2017/18 would be considered by the Committee at its next meeting in February.

82. Harbour Medium Term Financial Plan Including the 2017/18 Budget

The committee considered the Harbour Revenues Budget for 2017/18 and the Medium Term Financial Plan. In presenting the report the brief holder advised members that staff numbers had been reduced by 3 FTE in the ferry Port due to the Condor Ferries departure and the fast ferries proposal not coming to fruition.

Members were further advised that a bid to the Local Enterprise Partnership had recently been submitted for rebuilding of the harbour walls. This reflected the flood risk that WPBC and the Environment Agency believed existed within Weymouth area.

In response to concerns regarding the surplus finance within the reserves, the Brief holder asked the committee to bear in mind that the impact of the reduction in staff had yet to be realised and with the proposal to transfer the responsibility of the land and buildings on the Peninsula to the Assets and Infrastructure Team, the reserves would be available for other repairs and maintenance if required.

It was proposed by J Osborne seconded by K Brookes

Decision

- (a) That the proposed 5 year medium term Financial Plan be approved and the 2017/18 harbour budget be built into the overall Council budget proposals.
- (b) That the use of Harbour Reserves be approved, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.
- (c) That the transfer of the management of land and buildings at the Peninsula as detailed in paragraph 5.4 of the report, to the Assets & Infrastructure Team on 1 April 2017 be approved, and that the associated changes to the Harbour Management Board terms of reference be recommended to Full Council for approval with the budget proposals in February 2017.

83. Dorset Waste Partnership Draft Revenue Estimates 2017 - 18

The Brief holder for Environment and Sustainability presented a report asking members to, in principle, approve the Dorset Waste Partnership's draft revenue estimates for 2017-18 including the council's contribution.

It was proposed R Nowak seconded by C Huckle

Decision

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

84. Minutes of Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee

Decision

That the minutes of 12 September and 7 November 2016 be received and noted.

85. Joint Risk Management Strategy

In presenting the proposed Joint Risk Management Strategy, the Head of Financial Services advised members that Joint Advisory Accounts and Audit Committee had considered the strategy document and it was content to propose its adoption.

It was proposed by J Cant seconded by K Brookes

Decision

That the updated Dorset Councils Partnership Joint Risk Management Strategy be approved.

86. Investment Decisions

The committee considered a report inviting members to agree an addition to the Scheme of Delegations to permit prompt decision making when an investment opportunity requires a decision prior to the next available Management Committee.

The majority of the committee supported the proposal but it was suggested that the Section 151 Officer and the relevant Brief holder should be involved in the consultation process. Any decision should also be reported back to the next available meeting of the Management Committee.

It was proposed by J Cant and seconded by K Brookes

Decision

- (a) That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of Council and the section 151 officer and, if available, the Brief holder and the Brief holder responsible for Finance and Assets; to make all decisions he/she considers necessary or expedient to relevant acquire land or property assets on behalf of the Borough Council; so long as there are funds available from a budget within the control of the Management Committee.
- (b) In the event that this power is exercised, the decision be reported back to the Management Committee at the next available meeting.

87. Western Dorset Economic Growth

The Brief holder of Economic Development outlined the report which asked the committee to agree a "high level" economic growth strategy for Western Dorset, prior to consideration of a more detailed action plan in the New Year.

The strategy focused on five action areas which included infrastructure, homes and employment sites, employment and skills, business and sectors and assets and policy.

Overall members welcomed the document; the reasons for the removal of the Western Route Relief Road from the plan were also accepted. Nevertheless the committee acknowledged that it was important to take into consideration any future traffic implications to Wyke Regis and Portland with any future regeneration or growth for the area.

It was proposed by J Farquharson and seconded by C Huckle

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.

88. Options for Council support for arts activities and events in Weymouth & Portland

The committee considered a report that set out options for future arts activities and events in the borough to enable members to allocate appropriate resources. The report detailed some of the options available to the council. Once preferences had been given, officers would work with local arts agencies to fully develop the projects that members had supported and full costings would be assessed.

In response to a question, the committee were advised that although Portland had not be specifically mentioned within the report, all the proposed options could take place anywhere within the borough of Weymouth and Portland.

Concern was expressed that the report was not far reaching enough as members sought to leave a lasting legacy after 2019. However the committee was advised that one of the proposals did consider a long-term public arts programme. Members were reminded that at this stage they were being asked to indicate a preference and give officers a steer as to how they wanted the programme to proceed.

It was proposed by R Nowak and seconded by A Blackwood that options 1 & 5 should initially be pursued. As the Brief holder for Social Inclusion, C James asked to be consulted in any communications relating to option 1 "supporting local community projects".

Decision

- (a) That options 1 & 5 as detailed in the report, be indicated as the Management Committee's preference for taking forward as arts projects;
- (b) That officers be instructed to develop fully costed proposals for the options and that these fully costed proposals, along with suggestions for match funding, be presented to the committee for consideration at the earliest opportunity to enable the appropriate allocation of resources from reserves.

89. West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: Consultation on Issues and Options

R Nowak Brief holder for Environment and Sustainability presented a report proposing to take forward the West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: Issues and options document for approval by Full Council and

for the purpose of public consultation. The Spatial Policy and Implementation Manger advised the committee that the Initial Issues and Options Consultation document had been shared with Policy Development Committee on 28 November 2016 and WDDC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 November 2016 and their comments were attached to the committee report at appendix 2.

M Leicester addressed the committee and expressed concern regarding the loss of open spaces if the options sites for Portland within the consultation were taken forward. She also highlighted that any further development on Portland would need to take into account the impact on traffic management. M Leicester also expressed concern regarding the lack of consultation with Dorset County Council and the minerals application for the mining of stone which had recently been submitted for land under Option Site P2: North of Southwell.

In respect of social housing and the design of dwellings, M Leicester emphasised the importance of the provision of accessible, adaptable and wheel chair user dwellings; she considered the provision of such dwellings should be a must. The Chairman thanks M Leicester for her detailed comments and asked that she pass them directly to the Spatial Policy and Implementation Manager for consideration.

In response to questions, members were advised that the issues and options document would be circulated to Full Council in January 2017, following which the document would be subject to an eight week public consultation period starting in February 2017.

It was proposed by R Nowak seconded by C James

Recommendation to Council

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

90. **Local Council Tax Support Scheme**

The Head of Revenue and Benefits presented a report reviewing the conditions of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme with proposals for a revised scheme to be effective from 1 April 2017.

In response to questions, members were advised that as a result of government making alterations to the Housing Benefit scheme, there was now a need to make the following housekeeping changes to the Council's LCTS scheme so that both schemes were more aligned. These changes would also reduce customer confusion.

Recommendation to Full Council

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

- (a) 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).
- (b) That the maximum period for backdating be reduced to one month.
- (c) 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.

CONTINUATION OF MEETING

In accordance with Rule 1, paragraph 16 of the council's procedure rules a vote was taken to continue the meeting beyond 2.5 hours, which was approved.

91. **Grant Agreement with Dorset Race Equality Council**

The Brief holder for Social Inclusion presented a report that sought approval for a grant agreement to Dorset Race Equality Council in line with the council's Discretionary Grants Loans and Subsidies Policy.

It was proposed by C James seconded by J Cant

Decision

- (a) That a grant of £2,000 for one year (2017-18) be approved, then subject to a further review;
- (b) That any further funding for 2017-18 be built into the 2017-18 budget process.

92. **Freedom of the Borough - Weymouth Sea Cadets**

Members were advised that a request had been received from Phil Dennis PO from the Weymouth Sea Cadets for the unit to be granted the Freedom of the Borough. Members noted that in 2017 the Weymouth Sea Cadets unit would have been established in the Borough for 75 years and they would like to mark the occasion with the granting of the Freedom of the Borough.

There was some concern expressed that there was not enough information available to members to make a considered decision, bearing in mind that this was the highest honour that the Council could grant such an organisation.

However other members were supportive of the proposal acknowledging its the length of service and its connections to the Royal Navy.

It was proposed by K Brookes and seconded by J Cant

Recommendation to Full Council

- (a) That the Freedom of the Borough be granted to the Weymouth Sea Cadets.
- (b) That up to £6,000 from the general reserves be used towards the cost of a Freedom of the Borough Parade and a Church Service, if (a) above is approved.

G Taylor asked for it to be recorded that she abstained from voting.

The Chairman proposed that the order of items be changed and that the Forward Plan and Urgent items be considered next.

93. **4 Month Forward Plan**

The committee received and noted the 4 month Forward Plan.

94. **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent items to report.

95. **Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan - Site update - Peninsula**

The committee considered a report on the investigations undertaken to date in determining the issues, options and financial viability for the progression of the leisure led Peninsula re-development. Members noted the concept scheme and indicative site layout as set out within the report.

The Strategic Director (M Hamilton) advised the committee that Cushman Wakefield had approached a full spectrum of leisure operators and interest in the site had been very positive.

In response to a question regarding the view and comments from the local community and in particular Weyforward, the Strategic Director advised that if they were forwarded to the council, they could be reflected upon.

In response to further questions, members were advised that the contaminants in the site were relatively localised near the former ferry area and those could be dealt with either by removal or capping. It was also noted the harbour walls condition had been assessed using the recent survey that was commissioned by the Council.

96. **Exempt Business**

It was proposed by J Cant seconded by K Brookes

Decision

That under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as detailed in paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12a to the Act.

The meeting adjourned for a short comfort break 12.50pm and returned at 1.00pm.

97. **Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan - Site update - Peninsula**

The committee considered and discussed the exempt appendix in respect of the Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan- site update - Peninsula.

It was proposed by J Cant and seconded by K Brookes

Decision

That the Management Committee

- (a) Note and accept the findings of the work undertaken by Cushman and Wakefield, set out in the report and the confidential appendix.
- (b) Agree that Cushman and Wakefield undertake and progress the outstanding investigations and issues noted in the report, utilising the current scheme budget allocation.
- (c) That a report be received by the committee in February 2017 detailing the economic impact of the proposed scheme on the Borough.
- (d) That a report be received in March 2017 on traffic management proposals linked to the scheme.
- (e) That a report be received in April 2017 addressing the issues identified in section 47 – Next Steps of the report, including scheme phasing and financing options.
- (f) Note that the progression of a “meanwhile uses” strategy for the existing peninsula buildings to bring buildings back into use has been successful with all available buildings having potential short term occupiers, with those lettings now being progressed.

Duration of meeting: 9.30 am - 1.50 pm

Chairman

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