

**WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND BOROUGH COUNCIL MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 15 AUGUST 2017

Present: Cllrs J Cant (Chair), R Kosior (Vice-Chair), F Drake, J Farquharson, A Reed, G Taylor and K Wheller

Apologies: Cllrs C Huckle, C James and R Nowak

Also present: Cllr A Blackwood, Cllr I Bruce, Cllr P Kimber and Cllr J Orrell

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

Kate Critchel (Democratic Services Officer), Sarah Cairns (Interim Head of Assets and Infrastructure), Stuart Caundle (Assistant Chief Executive), Martin Hamilton (Strategic Director), Tony Hurley (Leisure Commissioning Manager), Matt Prosser (Chief Executive), Julie Strange (Head of Financial Services), Nick Thornley (Head of Economy, Leisure & Tourism) and Jane Nicklen (Community Planning & Development Manager)

40. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Huckle, C James and R Nowak.

41. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the chairman, subject to "and above," being added to min 8 decision (b) after the words "all recipients of grants of £2000".

42. Code of Conduct

There were no declarations of interest to report.

43. Public Participation

Mr G Perry addressed the committee on the North Quay Report. He suggested that, if the current contractor was in doubt, this was an opportunity for the Council to reconsider its options and put forward a better plan for the site.

The Chairman reminded all present that the site had been sold to the highest bidder within the terms of the contract and that an exempt report would be considered by the committee at the end of the meeting.

Mr B Underwood addressed the committee on the British Toilet Association report and advised, in his opinion, the toilet facilities in Weymouth were totally inadequate and often left in a mess. He felt that the council should be

ashamed of letting them get into this position as the seafront was a prime income earner for the local economy. He also asked why other toilets in the town had not be included within the report and asked further detailed questions about cost implications and maintenance. Mr Underwood also stated his concerns about the poor and incorrect signage across the town.

The Strategic Director advised that the Toilet Association report had been fully independent of the Council and members were being asked to consider the next steps. He indicated that a full response would be forward to Mr Underwood in writing.

Honorary Alderman A Hutchings spoke to the committee regarding the British Toilet Association report and indicated that he supported the councils approach to improve the facilities within town. He also addressed members regarding the changes to the railway and train provision to the town. The change in provider and the reduction in services was of real concern and 1 train every hour would be inadequate provision.

The Chairman confirmed that the Council also had concerns and had made representations to the local MP for the area.

Mr M Burt objected to the North Quay report being considered in exempt business and challenged why this was the case. This was a community asset and therefore the community had a right to know about the decision making and this planning development.

The Chairman confirmed that the report was indeed commercially sensitive and would be considered within exempt business at this stage. The Assistant Chief Executive reminded all present that the report was not considering planning development matters, but with regard to the contract for the sale of land and would be considered by the committee under exempt business within the Local Government Act 1972, which referred to the disclosure of financial business affairs. Making this public information, at this stage, may make a satisfactory conclusion less likely to be achieved. As requested a written response would be forwarded to Mr Burt after the meeting.

Dr Mason addressed the committee regarding the report on the grant application for improvements to the Osprey Leisure Centre on Portland. He hoped that members would be able to support the proposal.

Mr Farn expressed concerns regarding a broken bench near the Western bridge Sub-way and requested swift action. He also requested that councils reserves be used to clean and tidy around the area. He also expressed concern about the loss of the Marsh track, which continued to be used by young people.

44. Questions by Councillors

Cllr I Bruce spoke regarding the British Toilet Association report. He stated that as there was an underspend on the public toilet budget, the council could afford to do more to maintain these facilities. He also stated that it was important to use the Bond Street capital funds for improvements and he fully supported the Briefholder on this matter.

Cllr Andy Blackwood addressed the committee regarding community project for a Homeless Bus Shelter in the Borough and challenged why this could not be sited on council land. The reasons stated in the council's letter to the charity appeared to be irrelevant and weak. He asked members to reconsider the decision that was made by group leaders.

In response, Cllr G Taylor advised that she had visited the scheme and although learnt a lot about the charity's approach, she was confident that the decision made not to site the bus on council land was the right one, for the reasons that had already been given. This did not stop the charity pursuing other land that was owned by Dorset County Council or the Church.

Cllr Kimber addressed the committee seeking members support for the proposed grant to the Osprey Sports Centre, who provided to facilities, not only to Portland but the surrounding area.

Cllr Orrell spoke to members on the report regarding North Quay. He expressed concerns about the difficulties and issues relating to this prominent site. He sought assurance that action would be taken quickly to resolve matters.

In response, the Chairman confirmed that all options would be considered.

Cllr Wheller addressed the committee regarding issues relating noise disturbance and drunkenness, in and around the town. She expressed concern that there was no Environmental Health Officer available at the weekends to deal with such matters when they occur.

The Head of Community Protection confirmed that there was an out of hours service and when a case was considered significant a manager should be attending such incidences.

45. Management Committee Action Plan

The committee considered the Action Plan and the following updates/changes were noted:-

- The Pan-Dorset CCTV proposals were progressing
- A report on the Licensing issues was due to be presented to a future meeting of the committee
- 3GS was operating well and a evaluation report was to be presented to a future meeting of the committee. Next month trade waste and fly poster issues were to be addressed.

- The town centre consultation was ongoing
- An LGR decision was still awaited. However the first informal meeting of the joint committee had been held.
- Work on the Western Dorset Growth was on target.
- A meeting regarding the MEMO project had been held with the project coordinators and local MP
- A meeting with DFRA had been arranged to discuss direct funding for flooding.
- The Head of Economy, Leisure and Tourism introduced Edward Warr who had been appointed as the new Town Centre Manager.

46. **Quarter 1 Business Review Report**

The committee considered a report setting out the Council's performance across all services. This was broken down into financial performance, key performance indicators and risks on a service by service basis.

The Chairman advised that the predicted year end outturn position on the revenue budget monitoring report was estimated to show a £61,331 favourable variance. This was a total variance of 0.8% against the 2017/18 budget requirement of £8,079,852.

In discussing the Business Review documents members made the following points:-

- The performance relating to the processing of new benefit claims had significantly improved. However, it was essential to continue to closely monitor developments to ensure the performance remained within target.
- In respect of the customer complaint process, members expressed concerns at the response targets were not being met and requested that this be urgently addressed.
- Members requested more detailed information regarding the cost implications of procuring a Data Protection Officer, but noted that the costs would be shared across the partnership.
- In respect of the Treasury Management Appendix, it was noted that these figures set out the position as at 30 June 2017 and the current position had significantly improved due to changes in investments.

Decision

- (a) That the predicted outturn for the 2017/18 revenue and capital budgets be noted.
- (b) That the KPI's for each service for the period and any actions being taken be noted.
- (c) That the high risks for each service area and any actions being taken be noted.

47. **Weymouth Seafront Public Toilet Improvements**

The Briefholder for Community Facilities advised that following a recent report by the British Toilets Association various improvements to the toilet provision along Weymouth seafront have been identified.

The report detailed a request for the allocation of reserves in order to improve these facilities. Although the report by British Toilets Association indicated that the locations and numbers of toilets were adequate, it also showed that investment was required to bring the facilities up to an acceptable level.

She highlighted that along side any improvement works, an educational media campaign, should be launched to discourage the public from using the toilets on the Esplanade for washing off sand from clothes and bodies. This seriously damaged the facilities and drains.

It was also suggested that an appropriate maintenance, cleaning budget and programme be put in place to maintain any new or refurbished future public conveniences.

Overall members supported the proposals, including introducing charging for some facilities, particularly if this funding was ring fenced for continued maintenance. The proposal to introduce a community toilet scheme was also welcomed as long as this was on a voluntary bases.

Responding to questions, the Strategic Director advised that it was unlikely that toilet attendants would be re-introduced, however no decision had been made. Beach attendants and the Town Centre Manager would be working on the ground to monitor issues or tackle misuse of the facilities.

In respect of recommendation (d), Cllr G Taylor proposed that the Briefholder for Social Inclusion also be added to the consultations. This was seconded by Cllr K Wheller and on being put to the vote the motion was approved.

It was proposed by Cllr K Wheller seconded by Cllr G Taylor

That the Management Committee agreed:-

- (a) To allocate £400,000 from reserves already set aside for one off projects to improve public toilet facilities along Weymouth Seafront
- (b) To support the introduction of charges in some of the seafront toilets
- (c) To delegate to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Finance and Assets, Community Facilities and Social Inclusion briefholders, authority to decide the exact location and provision of improved toilet provision in the central seafront area including the opportunity for private investment and to progress with such works.

- (d) To progress the feasibility of a Community Toilet Scheme whereby local private and commercial businesses join the scheme and allow members of the public to use toilets in their premises, and report back to Management Committee the outcome for a decision.

48. Asset Management Staff Resources

The committee considered a report of the Interim Head of Assets and Infrastructure advising members that the Council had embarked on major development projects alongside a programme of asset development and disposal. To date this had been managed within the existing Assets & Infrastructure team but this, alongside the core work of the team had resulted in slower progress than anticipated.

It was noted that this was a one off funding request for monies to be allocated from reserves to employ two professionally qualified surveyors to assist with priority project delivery over the next 18 months.

It was proposed by Cllr J Cant seconded Cllr R Kosior

Decision

That up to £150,000 be allocated from reserves already earmarked for once off projects, to employ two members of appropriately qualified staff on temporary contracts for a period of up to eighteen months.

49. Heritage Lottery Fund Bid - Radipole Park and Gardens

The Briefholder for Community Facilities presented a funding request from Greenspace & Bereavement Services, in conjunction with the Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens, to enhance Radipole Park and Gardens and help secure a £1million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Members were keen to support the project, including the proposal to introduce a heritage café and toilet facilities.

It was proposed by Cllr K Wheller seconded by Cllr A Reed

Decision

- (a) That the submission of a stage 1 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the repair and enhancement of Radipole Park Gardens be agreed. If successful, a further report would be presented to a future meeting of the Management Committee.
- (b) That the allocation of £30,000 be approve to be used as additional match funding for a Heritage Lottery 'Parks for People' bid to restore the physical and cultural heritage of Radipole Park and Gardens; to be funded from the reserves already set aside for once off projects.

50. Greenhill Gardens Gateway Project

The Community Facilities Briefholder set out a report seeking a grant of £6000 to assist with open space improvements at Greenhill Gardens.

Members were advised that the Friends of Greenhill Gardens was established in 2007 and supported the council by carrying out extensive fund raising events to invest in projects that improve the gardens, including the introduction of a bandstand to host a variety of events throughout the year.

Members supported the proposal of a grant that would enable the completion of an archway over the main Esplanade entrance into the Gardens. This was to be dedicated as the 'Queen Elizabeth II Celebration Arch' to honour England's longest reigning monarch.

It was proposed by Cllr K Wheller seconded by Cllr G Taylor

Decision

That Management Committee

- (a) awards a one-off grant of £6,000 to the Friends of Greenhill Gardens as a contribution to the cost to install a 'Queen Elizabeth II Celebration Arch' at the entrance of the Gardens, to be funded from the reserves already set aside for once off projects;
- b) gives delegated authority to the Strategic Director to agree the terms of a grant agreement with the Friends of Greenhill Gardens if the grant requested in (a) above is agreed.

51. Award of grant for improvements to the Osprey Leisure Centre on Portland

The committee considered a report on a grant offer to South Dorset Community Sports Trust to assist with facility improvements to the Osprey Leisure Centre on Portland. Members noted that the Centre was an important recreational facility for the residents of Portland and surrounding areas of the borough. Formerly a naval facility, the centre comprised a swimming pool, large sports hall, squash courts, fitness studios and various other areas that had the potential for community use.

Following discussions with Dorset Healthcare and the Dorset County Council Living & Learning Community Initiative, the Centre was considering how the underused parts of the sports centre could be adapted to host a range of health and wellbeing activities.

Members supported the proposals to subdivide the very large sports hall to accommodate more activities and the proposal to create a community "hub" as well as offer sporting facilities.

It was proposed by Cllr K Wheller seconded by Cllr G Taylor

That Management Committee:

- (a) awards a one-off grant of £65,000 to South Dorset Community Sports Trust Ltd (charity no. 1101711) to assist with facility improvements to the Osprey Leisure Centre at Castletown, Portland, as summarised in Appendix A to be funded from the reserves already set aside for one-off projects;
- (b) makes any grant to the South Dorset Community Sports Trust Ltd, as recommended in 2(a), conditional on the Trust submitting details for the improvements to the facilities, information as to how the improvements will help to increase the Centre's role as a community health and wellbeing facility, and details of any match funding secured from other sources;
- (c) gives delegated authority to the Strategic Director to agree, in consultation with the Briefholder, the terms of a grant agreement with the South Dorset Community Sports Trust Ltd if the grant requested in recommendation 2 (a) is agreed.

52. **Council Support to Community & Voluntary Groups in the Borough**

The Community Planning & Development Manager set out a report to agree the amount of council support to community and voluntary groups in the 2017/18 financial year and the system for allocating the grant scheme.

Members were advised that the opportunity existed to consider the creation of a new, short-term grants fund with awards made on the basis of the revised Grants, Loans and Subsidies Policy and within the framework of an agreed set of evidence-based local priorities. The scheme would be open to all Weymouth and Portland-based community and voluntary groups by formal application.

It was suggested that the scheme could be advertised through the local press, by officers and through existing community networks such as the Dorset Community Action mailing list. A celebration event could be arranged once grants had been decided.

The Chairman expressed concerns, as he wanted to ensure, that any grant should be distributed to groups who could make an appropriate and meaningful impact to the local community. He also asked that the Finance and Assets Working Group be kept informed of the decisions and grants made.

Members discussed the merits of limiting the grants to start-up groups or opening the process to existing and established organisations. The Community Planning & Development Manager indicated that grant decisions

would be informed by corporate, community priorities and by a range of evidence based on local need. The applications should be considered on their own merits using this process; the Financial Services Manager also reminded committee that any grant funding was for once off projects only.

Overall members welcomed the proposal and it was proposed by Cllr G Taylor seconded by Cllr J Cant.

Decision

- (a) That members approve the allocation of a community and voluntary grants fund of £50,000 for distribution in 2017-18, to be funded from reserves already allocated **in principle** for once off projects.
- (b) That the Corporate Manager, Planning (Community Policy & Development) be delegated to determine grants in line with the agreed corporate and community priorities and in consultation with appropriate ward members and Brief-holders.

53. **Review of Deckchair Pricing Policy**

The committee considered a report on the public consultation results regarding the policy of providing free deckchairs and half price windbreaks for residents of Weymouth and Portland aged 60 and over.

The Head of Economy, Leisure and Tourism advised members that the Policy Development Committee had considered the policy, which had not been reviewed for over 30 years, and agreed that a public consultation should be carried out.

The results of the consultation clearly demonstrated that the current scheme was highly regarded by residents and it was agreed that it should remain unchanged. Members noted that the policy would be subject to further review in 5 years.

It was proposed by Cllr R Kosior seconded by Cllr F Drake

Decision

- (a) That the results of the public consultation carried out on proposed changes to the current deckchair pricing policy be noted.
- (b) That the existing policy of providing free deckchairs and half price windbreaks for older Borough residents be continued.+

54. **Maximisation of External Grant income in the Borough of Weymouth & Portland**

The Community Planning and Development Manager set out a proposal to improve the Council's external funding practice that maximised the potential to bring in external funding to the Council and the Borough.

The Briefholder for Economic Development indicated that there were a range of grants that brought finance into the council for funding of the Borough and its local community. However there was no central point to assess the bids and address how Council could apply for some of this funding.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council, did indeed achieve a number of grants across its services, but more could be done to support officers and community organisations to maximise income generation within the borough.

Cllr G Taylor expressed concern regarding the proposed recommendation and suggested that service managers had an overview of strategic plans where external grants may be available, actively seek grant funding where appropriate and report to the relative brief holders and SLT; and that an overview of grants into the Borough continue to be reported to Scrutiny and Performance Committee.

However this suggestion was not supported. Cllr Taylor further proposed that Scrutiny and Performance Committee be asked to consider the role of Dorset Community Action within Weymouth. This was seconded by Cllr K Wheller. Upon being put to the vote the motion was LOST.

To address the concerns regarding monitoring progress, Cllr A Reed proposed that the funding forum report to the Briefholder of Corporate Affairs and Continuous Improvement on its progress. This was seconded by Cllr G Taylor and upon being put to the vote the motion was AGREED.

It was proposed by Cllr J Farquharson seconded by Cllr A Reed

Decision

- (a) That an officer and member funding forum be established. (This forum would advise on the co-ordination of grant applications by the Council and maximise external funding into the Borough)
- (b) That, once established, the funding forum reports to the Briefholder of Corporate Affairs and Continuous Improvement on its progress.

55. Application for Discretionary Rate Relief

The committee considered an application for Discretionary Rate Relief from Safewise of Radipole Lane, Weymouth. In discussing the application members considered the merits of the case in line with the guidelines for determining such applications.

It was proposed by Cllr J Cant seconded by Cllr R Kosior

Decision

That the application for Discretionary rate Relief be refused.

56. Constitution Updates

Members considered a report on updates to the Constitution to clarify the role and function of the Scrutiny and Performance Committee in relation to crime and disorder and health issues and provide minor updates to the existing Officer Scheme of Delegation.

It was proposed by Cllr A Reed seconded by Cllr R Kosior

Recommendation to Full Council

- (a) That the changes to the Constitution, the principles of which are identified in this report, be approved; and
- (b) That power be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to update the Constitution to reflect the identified principles.

57. Councillor Appointment to Outside Body

The committee considered a report to appoint a councillor to serve as a council representative on the LEADER Programme – Southern Local Action Group.

It was proposed by Cllr A Reed seconded by Cllr R Kosior

Decision

That Councillor P Kimber be appointed as the council representative on the LEADER Programme - Southern Local Action Group.

58. Weymouth Harbour Business Update

The Chair of the Harbour Management Board presented a report setting out the steps taken so far and the future plans to mitigate the loss of income from Condor Ferries in order to balance the harbour budget.

It was proposed by Cllr R Kosior seconded by Cllr J Cant

Decision

That the Weymouth Harbour Business Update as set out in appendix 1 be endorsed.

59. Minutes of Dorset Waste Partnership

Decision

The minutes of the Dorset Waste Partnership held on 23 March 2017 were received and noted.

60. 4 Month Forward Plan

Decision

The Four Month Forward Plan was received and noted.

61. Urgent Business

There were no urgent reports.

62. Exempt Business

It was proposed by Cllr K Wheller seconded by Cllr A Reed

Decision

That under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the business specified in the minutes below, because it is likely that there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing that information.

63. North Quay - Contractual Issues

The committee considered the issues surrounding the disposal of North Quay.

Decision

To instruct the Strategic Director in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the Briefholder, to carry out the agreed action as discussed at the meeting of Management Committee on 15 August 2017.

Duration of meeting: 9.30 am - 2.00 pm

Chairman

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