

## **DORSET COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2019**

**Present:** Cllrs Jon Andrews, Mike Barron, Tony Alford, Richard Biggs, Cherry Brooks, Dave Bolwell, Alex Brenton, Piers Brown, Kelvin Clayton, Robin Cook, Janet Dover, Jean Dunseith, Paul Harrison, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Stella Jones, Andrew Kerby, Rebecca Knox, Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Howard Legg, Robin Legg, Jon Orrell, Andrew Parry, Mary Penfold, Bill Pipe, Byron Quayle, Molly Rennie, Maria Roe, Jane Somper, Clare Sutton, David Taylor, David Tooke, Daryl Turner, Kate Wheller, Sarah Williams, John Worth, Mike Dyer, Ryan Hope, Rob Hughes, Tony Ferrari, Beryl Ezzard, Andrew Starr, Derek Beer, David Walsh, David Gray, Toni Coombs, Gill Taylor, Barry Goringe, Pete Barrow, Brian Heatley, Pauline Batstone (Chairman), Tim Cook, Nick Ireland, Andy Canning, Paul Kimber, David Morgan, Louie O'Leary, Ray Bryan, Val Potheary, Belinda Ridout, Mark Roberts, Julie Robinson, Spencer Flower, David Shortell, Susan Cocking, Gary Suttle, Roland Tarr, Simon Gibson, Bill Trite, Peter Wharf and Rod Adkins

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

Susan Dallison (Democratic Services), Andy Frost (Community Safety and Drug Action Manager), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer), James Potten (Communication and Engagement Officer), Matt Prosser (Chief Executive), John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place), Jennifer Lewis (Service Manager for Communications and Engagement) and Jacqui Andrews (Service Manager for Democratic and Electoral Services)

**44. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Shane Bartlett, Graham Carr-Jones, Simon Christopher, Les Fry, Matt Hall, Jill Haynes, Cathy Lugg, Laura Miller, Emma Parker and Mike Parkes.

**45. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2019 were confirmed and signed.

**46. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

**47. Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman paid tribute to Les Ames, former Councillor of Portland Town Council, Weymouth & Portland Borough Council and Dorset County Council, who sadly passed away on 4 November 2019 aged 100. His funeral would

take place on 26 November at 12.30pm. A minute's silence was held in his memory.

The Chairman congratulated Cllr Sarah Williams on being awarded the National Association of Local Councils "Councillor of the Year" Award 2019.

**48. Public Participation - Questions and Statements**

The public questions together with the responses from the Highways, Travel and Environment Portfolio Holder are set out in Appendix 1 to the minutes.

**49. Public participation - Petitions and Deputations**

No petitions or deputations were received at the meeting.

**50. Announcements and Reports from the Leader of Council and Cabinet Members**

The Leader reported that work to mitigate climate change continued to progress, with Cllr Ray Bryan leading the Climate Change Executive Advisory Panel and providing verbal updates at each Cabinet meeting. Sixty officers were involved in supporting the Panel and regular updates were available online. These would increase now that the various Task and Finish groups had been set-up and work gathered pace. The climate emergency declaration was being treated with the urgency and transparency it deserved and demonstrated a full commitment by the Council to play its part.

Key areas of focus included transport, waste and energy, buildings and assets, leadership and influence and the natural environment. The Friends of the Earth recently placed Dorset in its top 20 most climate-friendly areas in the country, with Wiltshire County Council being number 1. It would be important to maintain momentum in the development of the climate change strategy and action plan over the coming months.

The Leader had been invited to attend the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Council's Annual General Meeting as a guest speaker on Saturday 9 November. He placed great importance on establishing strong working relationships with parish and town councils in order to effectively work together to achieve a shared goal of meeting the needs of local residents. Since the creation of Dorset Council and the reduction in tiers of local government in Dorset, the need to explore how the councils could best work together in future to achieve that shared goal had been recognised. Four workshops had recently been held in Bridport, Blandford, Wareham and Horton attended by Dorset Council officers and colleagues from town and parish councils which had resulted in some key areas for joint action that were now being progressed.

The Leader also reported that he was in the process of meeting with neighbouring council leaders to discuss matters of common interest such as economic growth, Local Plans, travel and transport and waste and recycling facilities. So far, he had met with Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon, Hampshire and

South Somerset Councils. These meetings had been very constructive with all parties showing a real commitment to working closer together across council borders. He would meet the Leaders of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and New Forest District Council before the end of the year.

Asked whether the urban extension of Yeovil had been discussed during the Leader's meeting with South Somerset District Council, he confirmed that this topic had been discussed in the context of the approved Local Plan that was currently under review. Dates of future meetings would be shared in order that members could forward any comments to enrich his conversations with the leaders of other councils.

#### **51. Questions from Councillors**

Councillors asked questions of the Leader and relevant Portfolio Holders. These along with the responses are attached in Appendix 2 to the minutes.

#### **52. Community Safety Annual Report**

Cllr Andrew Kerby, Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) presented the report and recommendation in the absence of the Portfolio Holder, explaining that the 3 strategies (Community Safety Plan, Reducing Reoffending Strategy and Alcohol and Drugs Strategy) were required by legislation to be adopted by Full Council. He welcomed the opportunity to highlight this work and remind members of the Council's statutory responsibility to reduce crime as much as the Police Force and the continued involvement of the Place Scrutiny Committee in developing future plans.

Cllr Clare Sutton welcomed the crime trend information in appendix 2 of the report that included benchmarking against the rest of UK, however, she was disappointed that the statistical information had not been used fully in any of the strategies. The statistics highlighted a tenfold increase in incidents of crime in Melcombe Regis compared to the rest of Dorset. Whilst she appreciated the special circumstances including seasonal influx of visitors, she wished to be reassured that steps would be taken to narrow the gap in Melcombe Regis.

Cllr Andrew Kerby responded that the Melcombe Regis Board had been formed by a predecessor CSP Chairman who had previously written to Weymouth & Portland Borough Council to say that a multi-agency approach would be required to tackle some complex issues in that area in order to deliver the necessary outcomes. He sought to ensure that recommendations of the Melcombe Regis Board came through to the CSP. In relation to the statistical information, he advised that all of the documents were in the public domain and crime data was readily available by searching on the internet.

Cllr Jon Orrell asked whether existing policies were working and safe to continue, in particular with regard to the Alcohol and Drugs Strategy. He provided examples in the report, including the considerable increase in deaths by liver disease which could be reduced by increasing the minimum price of

alcohol. He suggested that the next review should investigate the available international evidence of what worked well.

Proposed by Cllr Andrew Kerby, seconded by Cllr Bill Pipe.

**Decision**

That the Community Safety Plan 2017-2020 (2019 refresh), Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2018-2021 (2019 refresh), including the amendment, and Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset 2016-2020 Alcohol and Drugs Strategy to Dorset Council for adoption as amended by the Supplement for Item 6, Appendix 4 – Amendment of Wording in the Reducing Reoffending Strategy (Page 4 – Dorset, Devon and Cornwall Community Rehabilitation Company) be approved.

Reason for Decision

To ensure Dorset Council met its duties as set out in relevant legislation.

*The meeting was adjourned for a short period.*

**53. Lyme Regis Harbour Revision Order**

Cllr R Bryan, Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment presented the report and recommendations.

Proposed by Cllr Ray Bryan, seconded by Cllr Daryl Turner.

**Decision:**

1. That an application be made to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for a Harbour Revision Order (HRO) in respect of Lyme Regis Harbour to consolidate and modernise the applicable current local legislation;
2. That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment to determine the wording of the HRO based on legal advice and undertake all procedures for the submission of the HRO to the MMO;
3. That a budget of £31,500.00 be allocated for this work to include legal advice, the application fee and public notices.

Reason for Decision

To secure approval for the submission of an HRO to modernise the local legislation for Lyme Regis Harbour.

**54. Calendar of Meetings**

Cllr S Flower, Leader - Governance, Performance and Communications, presented the report and recommendations.

Members highlighted that only 5 Council meetings had been scheduled in the next Municipal year, including the Annual meeting, and that this did not

adequately represent the Dorset electorate. A minimum of 6 meetings of Council was specified in the Constitution. Further comment was made regarding the lack of evening meetings that might benefit some working Councillors and members of the public.

The Leader explained that 6 Council meetings had been scheduled, including a reserve meeting. Members had been canvassed for their opinions on timing of meetings prior to the inception of the Dorset Council that had resulted in many variations. The views of Councillors would be taken into account in the governance review following 12 months of the Dorset Council.

Proposed by Cllr Spencer Flower, seconded by Cllr Peter Wharf.

### **Decision**

1. That the Calendar of Meetings for the period May 2020 to May 2021, as amended by Cabinet, be adopted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director – Legal and Democratic Services to make any necessary in-year changes, in consultation with the relevant Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, to ensure effective political management.
3. That a review of the Calendar of Meetings be carried out as part of the fundamental review of the Council's Constitution.

### Reason for Decisions

To ensure effective political management, comply with the Dorset Council Procedure Rules and to put into place appropriate arrangements for Council committee meetings.

## **55. Polling District Review**

Cllr S Flower, Leader - Governance, Performance and Communications, presented the report and recommendations. He assured members that the proper processes had been followed despite some locations that remained of concern.

Cllr Bill Trite stated that Swanage Town Council had not had the opportunity to comment on the rationalisation of its polling stations which it did not support. He raised the possibility of lack of capacity in the event that there were simultaneous 3 tier elections. He proposed an amendment "2a -That no changes will be made to existing polling arrangements in Swanage" which was seconded by Cllr Gary Suttle.

The Corporate Director for Legal & Democratic Services advised that the review had been based on guidance from the Electoral Commission that included the potential for 3 polls to be carried out simultaneously, therefore the assertion that the polling stations would be unable to cope was not supported by officers. He advised that there was evidence to demonstrate that Swanage Town Council had been consulted about reducing its polling stations during the two stage consultation process.

A vote was subsequently taken on the amendment which was agreed by the Council.

The debate proceeded on the substantive motion, including the amendment 2a. Members highlighted that due to high turnouts in Rodwell and Wyke Regis it was pleasing that this area would remain under review. However, there were other deprived areas in Weymouth where there was a reduction in bus service or car usage meaning that residents needed to travel long distances to reach a polling station. In response, the Leader advised that the polling stations would be kept under review.

Proposed by Cllr Spencer Flower, seconded by Cllr Ray Bryan.

### **Decision**

1. That having undertaken the statutory review, amendments are made to DRE1, DRE3, FEN2, FEN3, STA4 and STA5 polling districts as well as a revision of those polling districts in Gillingham GIL5, GIL6 and GIL7.
2. That subject to 2a, having undertaken the statutory review, the polling places and stations remain as listed in Appendix 1 apart from those where further investigation is required with regard to possible change of premises or location as noted in Category 2 of the report. This would be completed with regard to submissions received.
- 2a That no changes will be made to existing polling arrangements in Swanage.
3. That the Returning Officer reserves the right to change or alter polling stations at short notice.

### Reason for Decisions

To enable the Returning Officer to fulfil the statutory responsibility to complete the review, and ensure polling districts, polling places and polling stations used are accessible, practicable and appropriate.

#### **56. Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

#### **57. Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

**Duration of meeting:** 6.30 - 8.00 pm

**Chairman**

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