

DORSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15 APRIL 2021

Present: Cllrs Tony Alford, Jon Andrews, Mike Barron, Richard Biggs, Cherry Brooks, Dave Bolwell, Alex Brenton, Piers Brown, Graham Carr-Jones, Simon Christopher, Kelvin Clayton, Robin Cook, Janet Dover, Jean Dunseith, Matthew Hall, Paul Harrison, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Stella Jones, Andrew Kerby, Rebecca Knox, Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Howard Legg, Robin Legg, Jon Orrell, Emma Parker, Andrew Parry, Mary Penfold, Bill Pipe, Byron Quayle, Molly Rennie, Maria Roe, Jane Somper, Clare Sutton, David Tooke, Daryl Turner, Sarah Williams, John Worth, Jill Haynes, Mike Parkes (Vice-Chairman), Ryan Hope, Rob Hughes, Tony Ferrari, Beryl Ezzard, Andrew Starr, David Walsh, Cathy Lugg, David Gray, Toni Coombs, Gill Taylor, Barry Goringe, Pete Barrow, Brian Heatley, Ryan Holloway, Tim Cook, Nick Ireland, Andy Canning, Paul Kimber, Laura Miller, David Morgan, Louie O'Leary (left the meeting at 07:45), Ray Bryan, Shane Bartlett, Val Potheary (Chairman), Belinda Ridout, Mark Roberts, Julie Robinson, Spencer Flower, David Shortell, Susan Cocking, Gary Suttle, Roland Tarr, Simon Gibson, Bill Trite, Les Fry, Peter Wharf and Rod Adkins

Apologies: Cllrs David Taylor, Kate Wheller, Mike Dyer, Derek Beer and Pauline Batstone

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

Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Susan Dallison (Democratic Services Team Leader), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer) and Matt Prosser (Chief Executive)

63. Minute Silence to observe the passing of the Duke Of Edinburgh

The Chairman of Council paid tribute to the Duke of Edinburgh and a minutes silence was held in a mark of respect.

64. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2021 were confirmed and agreed as a correct record.

65. Declarations of Interest

Cllr O'Leary declared an interest the Old Fish Market, Custom House Quay, Weymouth as he knew the potential purchaser. He declared that he would not take part in the decision and would leave the meeting.

66. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced the sad death of former West Dorset District councillor Janet Page and invited Cllr Stella Jones to pay tribute to her.

67. Public Participation - Questions and Statements

Public questions, statements and the responses from the Leader of the Council and appropriate Portfolio Holders are set out in Appendix 1 attached to these minutes.

68. Public participation - petitions and deputations

There were no petitions or deputations.

69. Announcements and Reports from the Leader of Council and Cabinet Members

Council was advised that the Leader's Bulletin would be published following the Council meeting and the Leader highlighted the following points.

Tribute to the Duke of Edinburgh.

Cllr Spencer's meeting with the Minister of State for Regional Growth and Local Government.

Government lobbying for virtual meetings and the High Court Case on 21 April.

The un-locking of tourism in Dorset and the multi-agency arrangements in place.

SEND provision, acquisition of the St Mary's School and future use of the site. The Dorset Local Plan.

Cllr Ray Bryan made a statement regarding Weymouth Harbour and asked all councillors to attend an all member seminar on 22 April.

Question from Cllr Bill Trite

In his bulletin the Leader refers to the extent of changes that may be needed to the draft Dorset Local Plan following the recent consultation which ended on 15th March. I'm glad he raised the emerging Local Plan, because there were at least two proposals in there which were entirely inappropriate for Swanage, one of which provoked the distribution of anonymous leaflets in the Town. These leaflets led to many residents gaining a very misleading impression of the position of Cllr Gary Suttle and myself in relation to that particular proposal. While I recognise that the Leader is not here today to announce changes to the draft Local Plan, can Cllr Suttle and I be given an assurance that there will be action to ensure that full account is taken of consultation feedback from local residents in this matter, before the next iteration of the Local Plan is published for a further period of public consultation later this year?

Response from Cllr David Walsh.

Thank you Leader and thank you Cllr Trite for your question and for giving me the opportunity to provide clarity on this important point.. I publicly declared my disappointment in hearing of the distribution of the anonymous leaflets in Swanage, especially as they gave the false impression of the position of both Cllr Gary Suttle and yourself in relation to a particular proposal, the literature for which, I publicly stated was neither prepared nor endorsed by either of you.

On the second point, I am happy to assure Cllrs Suttle and Trite that there will be action to ensure that full account is taken of consultation feedback from local residents in this matter, before the next iteration of the Local Plan is published for a further period of public consultation later this year.

70. Questions from Councillors

Questions put by councillors to the Leader and relevant Portfolio Holders are attached to these minutes at Appendix 2, together with the responses.

71. Councillor Code of Conduct Arrangements

The Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee set out the recommendations from the Audit and Governance Committee.

Proposed: Cllr Matt Hall
Seconded: Cllr Clare Sutton

Decision:

1. To adopt the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct including those provisions of the Model Code relating to other registrable interests.
2. That Dorset's Town and Parish Councils be invited to consider adopting the LGA Model Code.
3. To adopt the proposed new arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints against Councillors.

Reason for Decision:

To support councillors in maintaining high standards of conduct and to ensure a proportionate approach to the assessment and hearing of complaints against councillors.

72. Notification of Urgent Decision

The Council's Chief Finance Officer presented a notification of an urgent executive decision he had taken in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Development & Change and the Chairman of the Place & Resources Scrutiny Committee in order to secure £2.7m of grant funding to improve digital connectivity.

Cllr Wharf announced that he was delighted with the grant and thanked all those who were involved in securing this finance.

73. Sale of Old Fish Market, Custom House Quay, Weymouth

The Chairman of the Harbours Committee set out the recommendations and background from the Harbours Committee.

Proposed: Cllr Mark Roberts
Seconded: Cllr Tony Ferrari

Cllr Jon Orrell the Ward Member was supportive of the recommendation. Cllr Paul Kimber sought assurance that the building would be safeguarded as a character building and the fabric of the building would remain unchanged. The Harbours Committee Chairman assured Cllr Kimber that the building had listed status and that future planning applications would have to meet and be agreed by the listed building status. The council would preserve the characteristics and features of the building.

Decision: That the sale of the freehold of the Old Fish Market, Custom House Quay, Weymouth be agreed on the terms as set out in the exempt report.

74. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business to discuss.

75. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 8.11 pm

Chairman

.....