

## **DORCHESTER MARKETS INFORMAL JOINT PANEL**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2024**

**Present:** Cllrs Laura Beddow, Simon Christopher, Janet Hewitt, Susie Hosford, Nick Ireland, Fiona Kent-Ledger, Molly Rennie, Kate Reid and Roland Tarr

**Apologies:** Cllrs Simon Gibson, Stella Jones and Mary Penfold

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

Kevin Evans (Senior Accountant (Place)), Graham Duggan (Head of Community & Public Protection), Joshua Kennedy (Democratic Services Officer), Hannah Massey (Lawyer - Regulatory), Steve Newman (Town Clerk), Christopher Peck (Principal Transport Planner) and Matthew Turnbull (Democratic and Electoral Services Apprentice)

**16. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Simon Gibson, Stella Jones, Mary Penfold.

**17. Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 27 September 2024 were confirmed and signed.

**18. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**19. Public Participation**

There were no public questions.

**20. Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**21. Fairfield Environmental Improvements Update**

The Principal Transport Planner delivered an update on the Fairfield Road works aided with a visual presentation. It was explained that phase 1 of the project was currently underway and photographs of the current progress was shown to the

panel. It was estimated that phase 1 of the project would be completed within the coming weeks.

The Principal Transport Planner outlined phase 2 of the project, which involved environmental improvements to the area to make it more aesthetically pleasing, this included tree planting, the construction of rain gardens and paving. Images of potential materials were shown to members, as well as examples of similar projects. It was explained that funding for phase 1 had been secured, however further funding for phase 2 would need to be secured, with contributions from both councils.

Members were in agreement that the completion of phase 2 of the project would provide a positive improvement to the area in terms of making it a more attractive space.

Proposed by Cllr Hewitt and seconded by Cllr Kent-Ledger.

Decision: That the panel request that officers explore potential funding options for the panel to contribute to the environmental improvement works.

## **22. Financial Outturn Projection 2023/24 & Proposed Budget 2024/25**

The Senior Accountant presented the budget figures to the panel. There was a minor overspend on the expenditure budget, due to higher than expected utilities costs and there was forecasted to be a deficit in incoming revenue from the Market Operator budget based on the latest figures received. Other sources of income were expected to come in on budget. The Senior Accountant also gave details on other budgetary figures including, the car boot fund and reserve fund.

Proposed by Cllr Kent-Ledger and seconded by Cllr Tarr.

Decision: That the Panel note the current projected outturn position for 2023/24 and approve the 2024/25 budget proposals.

## **23. Sunday Market Update**

The Dorchester Town Clerk presented an update on the Sunday Market proposal, noting that dates had been arranged for markets to take place on Sundays in 2024 and the location of the markets within Dorchester.

In response to questions from members the Town Clerk responded that he would look into the location of the markets given the panels opinion that they shouldn't be held in Brewery Square, as discussed at another meeting.

The panel noted the update.

## **24. Car Boot Fund Distribution**

The Dorchester Town Clerk delivered an update to the panel on the distribution of the car boot funds, following the meeting of the Car Boot Grant Panel. 14 organisations had been funded with £14,000 being allocated between them.

**25. Dorchester Market Operators Report**

The Market Operator presented their report to the panel and explained that the most recent trading period had not been easy and income was lower than expected, in part due to bad weather.

In response to a question from one member the Market Operator agreed to look into whether the covered barn area was being used as a storage area during the week and address the issue if so, as concerns were raised over safety issues.

**26. Future Operation of Fairfield Market**

The Head of Community and Public Protection presented the report on the future operation of Fairfield Market. It was explained that the current lease was coming to an end in March 2026 and a new market operator will be needed. The options available to the panel were to start a procurement process to seek a new operator or Dorchester Town Council had expressed an interest in operating the market. The report outlined the options available and the benefits of each option.

Proposed by Cllr Ireland and seconded by Cllr Hewitt.

Decision: That the panel request that officers propose a recommended route for the procurement or appointment of a new market operator to the next scheduled meeting of the Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel.

**27. Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

**Duration of meeting:** 2.00 - 3.33 pm

**Chairman**

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