

DORCHESTER MARKETS INFORMAL JOINT PANEL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30 JULY 2025

Present: Cllrs Laura Beddow, Dave Bolwell, Simon Christopher, Jill Haynes, Janet Hewitt, Sally Holland, Rob Hughes, Stella Jones, Fiona Kent-Ledger, Kate Reid, Molly Rennie, Roland Tarr and Sarah Williams

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 Louis Wicks (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice)

51. Election of Chair

Proposed by Cllr Haynes and seconded by Cllr Williams.

Decision: That Cllr Rennie be elected as Chair for the duration of the municipal year 2025/26.

52. Election of Vice-Chair

Proposed by Cllr Bolwell and seconded by Cllr Holland.

Decision: That Cllr Williams be elected as Vice-Chair for the duration of the municipal year 2025/26.

53. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

54. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 29 January were confirmed and signed.

55. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

56. Public Participation

There were no public questions.

57. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

58. **FUTURE OPERATION OF FAIRFIELD & CORNHILL MARKETS**

The Head of Community and Public Protection delivered a verbal update on the progress of the future operation of Fairfield and Cornhill markets. He noted that legal services at Dorset Council were drafting the agreement between Dorchester Town Council and Dorset Council and that the panel's sub-group had met to discuss the draft agreement. It was expected that the agreement would be ready for formal approval before April 2026.

It was explained that officers were also looking into amending the panel's terms of reference, to reduce the size of the panel, in the interest of good governance. It was hoped that these changes would be agreed by the end of the year.

The Head of Community and Public Protection addressed a point raised at the last panel meeting about the liability of the structures on the site of Fairfield Market and a survey had been carried out, which stated that they were all structurally sound and any necessary repairs would be carried out through Dorset Council's property services team.

The Dorchester Town Council Town Clerk informed panel members that a Markets Officer had been appointed and begin their work in September.

Several members of the panel expressed support for reducing the size of the panel, as they believed that this would allow the panel to have closer control of the markets going forward.

The following responses were provided to members of the panel from officers:

- Dorset Council would insure the site and buildings, however Dorchester Town Council would be required to have liability insurance for market days.
- The current restrictions on Dorchester Ward members sitting on the panel as Dorset Council members would likely remain in place to prevent conflicts of interest.
- The panel reports would go to the Licensing Committee at Dorset Council.
- Officers would release a statement to traders to keep them informed on the process.

59. **Fairfield Market Operator Report**

There was no update from the Fairfield market operator.

60. **Cornhill Market Operator Report**

There was no update from the Cornhill market operator.

61. Financial Outturn Report 2024/25

The Senior Accountant delivered a verbal update on the Financial Outturn report for 2024/25. He provided details of the actual outturn figures against the budgeted figures and listed the main areas of variance. He also provided details of the Sunday Car Boot fund and the repairs and maintenance reserve.

In response to a question from one member, it was explained that the Sunday Car Boot fund reserve was high due to there being a strict criteria for distribution of the funds. Officers stated that they would look into publicising the fund more widely, to try and ensure more of the fund was distributed.

The panel approved the income and expenditure statement for 2024/25.

62. Fairfield Road Works Update

The Principal Transport Planner delivered a verbal update on the Fairfield Road works. He noted that the design team were currently working on the project and that they were seeking specialist advice on the sustainable drainage system before moving forward. It was expected that the detailed design would be ready by the end of the summer, in order for the trees to be planted over winter.

Members raised concerns about lighting and signage in the car park, which the Principal Transport Planner stated would be looked into.

63. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 5.30 - 6.50 pm

Chairman

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