

Council Offices, Commercial Road, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 8NG

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**Minutes of meeting**

**MEETING:** Services Committee

**DATE & TIME**: Tuesday 28 May 2019 at 7.00pm

**PLACE:** Town Council Offices, Commercial Road, Weymouth, DT4 8NG

**Councillors**

**Present:**

Cllr David Northam (Chair)

Cllr Kevin Brookes (Vice Chair)

Cllr Alex Fuhrmann

Cllr Ryan Hope

Cllr Gill Taylor

Cllr Tia Roos

Cllr Kate Wheller

Cllr Ken Whatley

Cllr Graham Lambert

Cllr Jon Orrell

**Not present:**

Cllr Jan Bergman

Cllr Christine James

Cllr David Harris

Cllr Mark Tewksbury

**Officers**

Jane Biscombe (Town Clerk)

Matt Ryan (Deputy Town Clerk)

Tara Williams (Parks & Open Spaces Manager)

Kevin Good (Beach Manager)

Sophie Chapman (Comms and Admin Officer)

There was one member of the public present and one member of the press.

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| S0001 | **Welcome by the Chair**  Cllr Northam welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Weymouth Town Council Services Committee. He thanked the Officers for a comprehensive summary of activities and asked members to focus on the recommended priorities. |
| S0002 | **Apologies for Absence**  Apologies for absence were approved from Cllr Mark Tewksbury, Cllr David Harris and Cllr Christine James.  Cllr Fuhrmann is replacing Cllr Wheller on this Committee. |
| S0003 | **Declarations of Interest**  Cllr Hope declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 6 as a member of Weymouth and Portland Lions.  Cllr Brookes declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 6 as a member of Weymouth and Portland Lions. |
| S0004 | **Councillors Questions**  Eight questions had been received from Cllr Ken Whatley. These questions and the responses are detailed in the appendix to these minutes. Cllr Whately was content with the responses.  Cllr Whatley informed the meeting that the Promenade needed significant surface dressing work.  Members discussed a request to Dorset Council regarding parking income. Cllr Wheller is aware of other Town and Parish Councils with similar views. Cllr Taylor suggested speaking to Cllr Huckle about this as some work may have already been done. Cllr Northam agreed to speak to Cllr Harris regarding this matter.  Cllr Wheller requested that at veteran’s weekend the viewing stand has better speaker coverage as Veterans struggle to hear. Kevin Good agreed to bring the issue to the attention of the PA contractors with special attention to be given to coverage at the Grandstand. Levels will be monitored on the day to inform future provision.  Cllr Jon Orrell attended the meeting to present the emerging Tumbledown Farm project to Councillors. Councillors agreed that this would be a standing item on future agendas and the Town Clerk was requested to bring a full update to the next Services Committee meeting and to Full Council.  Cllr Brookes read out two questions from Cllr Gray. Cllr Gray asked why the Preston beach concession lease holder was not permitted to open all year round if they wanted to. Matt Ryan responded that the Environment Agency has objected to year-round trading in some beach areas due to the flood risk at certain times of the year. The Council would welcome the opportunity to investigate year-round trading and has previously enabled this where permissible, but the current Preston lease has been expanded to the full limits permitted by the Environment Agency.  Cllr Gray asked if the Brunswick beach huts were under lease. Matt Ryan informed the meeting that the beach huts were all under a lease in their current position for the next 11 years and that the Council receives an income from this. WTC is working with the lease holder who has produced a management plan. WTC and the lease holder are working with local businesses and Dorset Police on anti-social behaviour and the lease holder has demonstrated considerable out of hours responsiveness to issues. |
| S0005 | **Public Comments and Questions**  Members asked Officers to ensure that if a question from a member of the public could not be answered at a meeting, that a written reply was sent as soon as possible. This has not been an issue with this Council but has been with previous Councils and Councillors are keen to ensure that Weymouth Town Council remains responsive to the public.   1. Better signage is required on the Rodwell Trail regarding cycling. Bikes are speeding and it is dangerous. Tara Williams, Parks & Open Spaces Manager responded that signs on the Rodwell Trail were defaced in the past. Dorset Council not receptive to replacing signs or alternative options, it would also need to be monitored and enforced otherwise people would not pay any notice to them. The Friends of Sandsfoot Gardens & the Rodwell Trail have suggested white line segregation of cyclists and walkers but Dorset Council has declined. Tara Williams will speak to DC regarding this.   Cllr Graham Lambert suggested that painting markings on the path to indicate walking and cycling sides may be a solution. However, this can sometimes give a false sense of entitlement to a particular area and cause further issues. Cllr Kate Wheller: Expresses concerns that a cycling magazine has recently published an article saying that the Rodwell Trail is an ideal location for time trials. Cllr Wheller will inform officers of the publication so this can be corrected.   1. Drains in Weymouth – who is responsible for the gully carts? The resident has concerns as he has not seen any recently. Cllr Ken Whatley confirmed that gully carts were in the Park District recently and that Dorset Council are responsible for this. Cllr Fuhrmann briefly left the meeting for the above question. 2. Concerns were raised that badgers are currently being relocated from Curtis Field when this shouldn’t be permitted at this time of year. Tara Williams replied that WTC has contacted an ecologist, Danny Alder, who will prepare an options report with a view to excluding the badgers from Wyke Cemetery. Julian Brown Badger Consultancy, who are monitoring the badger setts at Curtis Field, are aware of the issue. 3. A member of the public expressed concern that they had not received a response about a question asked to the pervious council. The question concerned why the traffic lights near the Jubilee Clock tower had been moved. Matt Ryan responded that this was part of an Integrated Transport Plan which was funded by central government. Cllr Wheller confirmed that Dorset Council were looking at the current configuration. |
| S0006 | **Free Parking Days**  Matt Ryan updated the meeting that the two days originally allocated to Ironman may now be covered by Dorset Council which would give the Town Council two additional days to allocate.  Cllr Lambert stated he was against the provision of free parking as it encouraged car usage and congestion which had been a problem at previous events. Cllr Hope raised a point of clarity that the free parking days did not cover all car parks for general use but were for organisers and volunteers.  Cllr Taylor reminded Councillors that Ironman brings revenue into the area and asked if it could be a possible income stream for the Council. However, Cllr Wheller was concerned that if the Council was to starting charging for events, they may move out of area. Matt Ryan confirmed that ironman brings in approximately £4.8m into the area.  Resolved:  Proposer: Cllr Wheller  Seconder: Cllr Taylor  Councillors agreed by a majority with one abstention to:   1. allocate one of the free parking days to Motocross on 13 October 2. to receive a further report on free parking days at the next meeting |
| S0007 | **Services Updates and Current Priorities**  The Committee reviewed the officers report on a page by page basis. Cllr lambert asked about recycling bins on the beach. Matt Ryan responded to say there are three. Kevin Good informed the meeting that the risk of contamination at the beach is very high and people didn’t use previous bins in a way that aided recycling. This is constantly under review to see if the provision can be improved.  Cllr Hope asked what the plans were to repair The Marsh. Tara Williams confirmed that the “hip-hop” will cost £3,700 to replace if it can’t be repaired. A quote is in progress for the trampoline repair. There are also antisocial issues at the swimming pool and the town council is in discussion with officers at Dorset Council about introducing CCTV cameras covering both the swimming pool and play area, however, there will be a cost implication.  Tara Williams advised that section 106 funding for the skate park will be made available at the commencement of the second stage of the Curtis Field development and would enquire about a start date. Tara Williams will contact Betterment Properties to ask if the monies can be released early and Councillors will be kept informed.  Tara Williams confirmed that young people had been consulted before the work at The Marsh was carried out, but some groups were hard to engage with. Tara Williams and Cllr Fuhrmann will look at youth engagement strategies. Tara Williams will contact Community Safety at Dorset Council to see is support and advice is available. A press release will be sent out about vandalism asking people to report it when they see it.  Cllr Roos raised the issue of recent fires on land adjacent to The Front Weymouth Skatepark at Lodmoor. Occupants of tent encampments are using disposable barbecues that have caused fires. Tara Williams advised that the land is owned by Dorset Council and suggested that slabs could be laid for disposable barbecues as they are at The Nothe.  Cllr Lambert asked if the Council was looking at increasing allotment space. Tara Williams confirmed that there are allotments available across the area and that people are usually willing to travel. The waiting lists are due to people wanting a specific allotment on a specific site. Cllr Lambert asked that transport was minimised. There are some unofficial allotments available at Littlemoor at land on Louviers Road and these are available to use for free and schools could use them.  Cllr Lambert stated that a community farm at Tumbledown Farm would have a positive impact on local people’s health and wellbeing. Cllr Hope was supportive and wished to see realistic timescales in the project. Tara Williams confirmed that an officer meeting was planned to ensure all partners were committed to the project before work with Councillors on options began. Councillors requested that Tumbledown Farm was a standing item on future agendas.  Tara Williams will send Cllrs Hope and Fuhrmann a breakdown of the £185,000 currently spent on The Marsh improvements. The next phase of the Marsh masterplan will be the introduction of new signage.  Members of the public were urged to contact the Police if they see badger setts being disturbed.  Councillors will look at further asset transfers as part of the strategic planning work to be carried out later in the year.  Cllr Hope voiced concern that if funding for events were to disappear, the Council may not be in a position to hold as many large-scale events. Officers confirmed that smaller, community events could be supported with a reduced budget. 45 events are held each year in the Council’s parks and gardens and Rosie Osbourne, the Parks & Open Spaces Development Officer, is available to assist. It is for Councillors to decide as part of the annual budget setting, how to support events and festivals.  Cllr Roos asked what events were planned for D-day commemoration. There is a list on the Council’s website including events at The Nothe, Portland, Portsmouth and the Veteran’s weekend in July.  Officers were asked to invite the Weymouth BID to present to a future meeting.  Cllr Whatley asked for an update on the Melcombe Regis Board, officers will send an update to Cllr Whatley following a workshop later this month. |

The meeting ended at 9:05 pm.



Weymouth Town Council Services Committee

Item 4 – Councillor Questions. Questions from Cllr Ken Whatley

1. Toilet cleaning. Is it right Dorset Council has the contract? When was this decided?

During March 2019, the contract between Dorset Council Partnership and its contractor was terminated and the Service was brought in house. With only a short lead in time until the formation of the Town Council, officer capacity, complexities around TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations) etc., it was agreed that the Town Council would enter into contract with Dorset Council until the beginning of November 2019.

Weymouth & Portland Borough Council Councillors agreed this approach at their briefing on Tuesday 26th February 2019.

1. CSAS Officers - are they administered by Dorset or Weymouth? What is their role?

The CSAS scheme is run by Dorset Council however we work very closely with the CSAS officer, he is also on our radio network when practical. His role is to cover the aspects of the recent PSPO (not dogs) primarily surrounding Anti-Social Behaviour but also advising cyclists when on site.

1. Horses on the beach before 9.00 and after 6.00. Why not let dog owners the same times? I see many dogs at night. Is the Dog Warden still available?

The current Dog Related PSPO for Weymouth will be reviewed by Dorset Council in Autumn 2019 at which time WTC and residents will be asked to make comments. The restriction that relates to Horses is a byelaw stating no horses can be ridden from 1st April to 30th September between 9am and 7pm (not 6pm) on the beach.

There have been many discussions surrounding this – horses manure is organic and not meat based (such as dogs etc) and as such is deemed not to pose the same toxicara hazard. People unfortunately would use the beach at night and potentially not clean up as they do at Preston Beach as its “too dark” to find. Waste then gets washed up by the tide and can affect water quality which risks us losing Blue Flag status. DEFRA have previously advised that a 24hr dog ban assists in protecting bathing water quality during the bathing season. Many would say that horse shouldn’t be allowed on at all rather than going down the route of allowing dogs on at night. It’s a very polarising subject and will never result in a full consensus. Previous Committee resolutions into the previous PSPO actually increased the restrictions regarding dogs on the beach.

DC accommodate the dog warden service and have very heavy workloads although they do try and attend Weymouth Seafront whenever they can for random patrols. Beach Staff advise dog owners on a daily basis as to the restrictions and the areas in use during the summer.

1. Will there be an extension of the loudspeakers on the Promenade?

Hopefully yes. A price is being sourced to cost out the potential of extending the current provision however it should be noted that there is limited existing infrastructure North of the Jubilee Clock which would require additional expenditure to accommodate. Once we have details we will provide a further update.

1. What is the contract for the fair on the Pavilion forecourt?

There is no one single contract for fairgrounds taking place on the forecourt. Last year there were 5 fairgrounds in this area delivered by 3 different operators. Due to the Harbour Wall D works later this year we will only have 3 fairgrounds. The agreements that we have are for a specified period, detailing the times of operation. The operators are required to comply with a set of terms and conditions focussed around Health & Safety. It should be noted that the Pavilion forecourt is Dorset Council land.

1. What are the promenade deckchair profits?

In 2018 profit of £13,961 was made (including accounting for internal recharges to DCP of £9,973 which will not apply this year.)

1. Will the promenade be resurfaced?

DC, as the land owners, have no current plans to rebuild the prom until/unless a wider flood defence “asset” issue is evident. WTC will continue to undertake patching as and when to mitigate trip hazards. WTC has already requested a meeting with DC engineers to discuss ways to secure a programme of sustainable rebuild of sections over the next few years.

1. How can we as WTC Councillors raise a motion to Dorset Council regarding some car parks to be returned to Weymouth Town Council and also review parking permit schemes.

There is no mechanism to allow Parish and Town Councils to raise motions to DC. Members may wish to discuss writing a letter to the Leader or brief holders at DC, or those WTC Councillors who are also DC Councillors may wish to suggest a way forward.