



MINUTES

**Dorset Chamber of Commerce & Industry Council Meeting at 4.30pm
Thursday 16th November 2017, PKF Francis Clark, Towngate House, Poole BH15 2PW**

Present:

Chris Slocock (CS), (Chair), Ian Girling (IG), Nicola Newman (NN), Ian Cambrook (IC), James Robinson (JR), Jason Gault (JG), James Lattimer (JL), Paul Collins (PC), Simon West (SW), Steve Bendell (SB), Vicki Hailes (VH), (minutes)

ACTION

- Dorset Chamber of Commerce & Industry will be shown as (DCCI) throughout the Minutes.

1. **Welcome & Resignations**

(CS) Chair of Council welcomed everyone to the meeting with apologies received from Chris Palmer (CP), Helen Stacey (HS), Caron Khan (CK), James Stelfox (JS), and Board members Warren Munson (WM), Paul Tansey (PT) and Stephen Mills (SM).

(CS) updated on the recent Bank of England panel meeting, Tuesday 14th November and said how useful the meetings were and that these could be enhanced with further sector inclusion. (IG) said that this had been addressed with new members joining the group for the 2018 meetings

(CS) then invited Bill Cotton, Executive Director Environment and Economy, at Bournemouth Borough Council to deliver an overview on the economic development, plans and activities for Bournemouth.

2. **Bill Cotton, Executive Director for Environment & Economy at Bournemouth Borough Council** – Overview of economic development plans and activities for Bournemouth and update on local government re-organisation.

Bill began by explaining the three main areas of his role, Environment and Economy, Adult & Social Care, and Corporate Support. He invited the council to try and guess the investment allocated to each area and revealed that 75% of total funds is spent on Adults & Social Care. He explained that this area was demanding and particularly affected by an aging population.

He went on to explain that Government funding to local authorities had been significantly reduced with Bournemouth's grant having been slashed from £60,m and would come to a point when no funding would be available. He stated that Corporate Services account for 7% of expenditure and 18% on Economy and Environment. He explained that because there will be no future funding from Central Government Local Authorities, including Bournemouth, had

adopted an asset investment strategy to off-set this.

He updated on the two new unitary authorities for Dorset which replaced the 9 councils and which could be effectively described as Rural Dorset and Urban Dorset. He explained this afforded the opportunity to become more efficient and restart the basics which would provide an opportunity to modernise the infrastructure.

Bill then updated on some of the development projects in Bournemouth (which has seen its population grow by 10% due to migration and high birth rate). This includes a 45m investment in the Bournemouth International Growth programme which will improve connectivity in and around the Airport, provide new business premises and deliver 350 new homes with the provision of 10,000 new jobs.

He updated on the other various proposals that both Rural and Urban Dorset are looking to achieve and (JG) asked about the transport issues, including encouraging cycling. Bill said that the local authority would welcome working with the business community around the issue of sustainable transport solutions and it would be good if DCCI could run a think piece around this subject. (IG) agreed and said that DCCI would engage its members to discuss a sustainable traffic solution.

- Action (IG) Ian to explore the idea of a sustainable transport solutions conference. **(IG)**

Bill concluded his overview with an announcement on the 5G concept initiative with Bournemouth being the first local authority in the UK to trial a 5G fibre network. He explained this was being offered in a 13 month experiment lease and would provide 5G around Lansdown.

(IG) then thanked Bill for a very informative and interesting presentation and Bill reaffirmed that he was always pleased to meet with businesses and to continue working closely with DCCI.

3. **Minutes of the Ambassador Meeting held on 13th July 2017**

(CS) proposed the minutes, these were seconded by (PC) and agreed unanimously by the Council. The Minutes were signed as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

4. **Actions and Matters Arising from the Council meeting held on 13th July 2017**

(IG) updated on the three actions and matters arising and said with regards to an update on the Dorset Growth Corridor he would ask Matt Prosser to present at the next council meeting.

- Action (IG) to ask Matt Prosser to offer an update on the Dorset Growth Corridor **(IG)**

He also updated that he and James Robinson had met to discuss the Young Chamber and Young Enterprise working together and this had been agreed whenever the opportunity to do so arose.

The last action was an update on Ambassador nominations which (IG) said he would update on, as noted, in agenda item 7

(CS) then invited (IC) to present his Policy report.

5. **Dorset Chamber Policy Watch – November 2017**

(IC) presented his policy report November 2017 (*a copy of which is attached to and forms part of these Minutes*) and sent to Council prior to the meeting.

(IC) began his report with an update on Brexit noting that progress is being painfully slow. He

said that by Christmas it should be apparent if any progression is being made with trade talks due to start in December.

He updated on the Autumn Budget with Phillip Hammond due to present this to Parliament on 22nd November 2017. (IC) said that of special interest was the lobbying of the BCC urging the Government to halt the expected increase in business rates next year.

(IC) also updated on the Growth Deal programme with the launch of the Dorset Innovation Park at Winfrith in April with new business units expected to be completed in the Autumn. He also mentioned the Jurassica project which was now no longer a stand-alone project and had merged with MEMO to create a new attraction on the isle of Portland.

He spoke of the Apprenticeship levy and said that following the introduction of the scheme there had been a 60% drop in the number of apprenticeship starts. (NN) explained that this could be attributed to companies using the levy money to invest in the training of current staff. This was agreed as being no bad thing but wasn't what fund had been provided for and the Department of Education were playing this down. (IG) said that in speaking with businesses most referred to the levy as another tax and (JG) agreed saying that recruitment businesses had been hit particularly hard.

(IC) concluded his report with an update on the reshaping of councils in Dorset. He said that this week Sajid Javid, Secretary of State, confirmed that he was minded to support the plan to scrap Dorset's 9 council to create 2 unitary authorities. (IC) said that Christchurch, East Dorset and Purbeck remain opposed to the plan and that a further period of representation will take place. The government will make a final decision in January 18.

(CS) thanks (IC) for his report and said he was looking forward to this being published in the future. (IG) confirmed that plans were in place to produce a public facing policy report for DCCI members.

6. **Nomination of DCCI Ambassadors**

(IG) updated on the nominations for DCCI Council for the forthcoming AGM, 15th December 2017. He said that there were 7 candidates and 5 places available with the voting process, which was available on line, having been well received.

He also advised that Stephen Mills, Honorary Treasurer to the Board, will step down and stand for office of Junior Vice President. (IG) said that Steve had been Honorary Treasurer for many years and the BCC accreditation process had also suggested that it was good practice to refresh the length of time spent in governance roles from time to time. (IG) then announced that James Robinson, Ambassador, had agreed to stand for the role of Honorary Treasurer at the AGM.

(IG) then said that governance dictates that only four council meetings were required a year and asked the Ambassadors whether these should be reduced to four from six.. A discussion ensued and that it was agreed unanimously that the six council meetings a year be retained.

(IG) also reminded Ambassadors that Ben Arnold was no longer an Ambassador since his resignation from Savills and that he had been a stalwart of the Chamber. He said he would write to him to thank him for all his support over the past 10 years.

- Action (IG) to write to Ben Arnold to thank him for his longstanding support in the role of DCCI Ambassador **(IG)**

7. **Continuation of Chair of Council**

(CS) had offered, prior to the meeting to continue in the Chair of Council post. He then left the room to allow the Ambassadors to discuss this further. This was agreed unanimously by the Ambassadors, proposed by (IC) and seconded by (JG). (CS) remains as Chair of Council until 2020.

8. **Any Other Business**

(IG) said that there had been a date change to the Presidents lunch which was traditionally held in February. He said this would now be held at the Christmas lunch which follows the AGM, as the President's Christmas lunch. (SW) confirmed that in the past this had always been the case. (JL) said that he thought there was a gap in the summer events calendar for a good quality summer event and (IG) confirmed that in addition to the Presidents Christmas lunch, a Presidents lunch would also be held in June

There being no further businesses the meeting concluded at 6.20.

9. **Dates of next meetings:**

2018 Council Meetings all commence at 4.30pm – venues tbc

Thursday 18th Jan
 Thursday 15th March
 Thursday 10th May
 Thursday 19th July
 Thursday 13th Sep
 Thursday 22nd Nov

Board Meetings all commence at 4.30 pm at Chamber House

Thursday 15th Feb
 Thursday 19th April
 Thursday 28th June
 Thursday 30th Aug
 Thursday 25th Oct

