

# Dorchester Town Council

Council Offices, 19 North Square, Dorchester, Dorset. DT1 1JF

Telephone: (01305) 266861

For information about this agenda contact the Town Clerk, Steve Newman  
s.newman@dorchester-tc.gov.uk

You are summoned to a **Meeting** of the **Dorchester Town Council** to be held in the Council Chamber, the Municipal Buildings, High East Street, Dorchester, DT1 1HF on **Monday 26 September 2022 at 7.00pm**, to conduct the business set out in the Agenda below.

## AGENDA

1. **Apologies**

2. **Declarations of Interests**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to disclose appropriate pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests. A Member who declares a pecuniary interest must leave the room unless a dispensation has been granted. A Member who declares a non-pecuniary interest may take part in the meeting and vote.

3. **Minutes**

To confirm the Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 25 July 2022 (page 3).

4. **Police Update**

If in attendance, to receive a police update from Sergeant Matt Whetham.

5. **Presentations, Communications, Questions and Motions**

- a) To receive communications from the Mayor and the Town Clerk.
- b) To receive motions and questions received from Members no less than 5 days before the meeting.

6. **Minutes of Committees**

To receive and consider the Minutes of the following Committees:-

|   |                   |         |
|---|-------------------|---------|
| Planning & Environment Committee                                      | 1 August 2022     | Page 6  |
| Planning & Environment Committee                                      | 5 September 2022  | Page 11 |
| <i>Town Clerk update report on Minute No 25, Local Plan Questions</i> |                   | Page 17 |
| Management (Informal) Committee                                       | 12 September 2022 | Page 22 |

To note the Minutes of the following Joint body

Dorchester Heritage Joint Committee

26 July 2022

Page 27

7. **Communication Strategy**

Further to Council Minute No. 21 (2) to approve the revised Communication Strategy (enclosed at page 31).

8. **Update from Dorset Council Members**

To receive updates from Councillors S. Jones, M. Rennie, R. Biggs, A. Canning and L. Fry, Dorchester Ward Members of the Dorset Council.



Steve Newman

Town Clerk

20 September 2022

**At the conclusion of the Meeting members of the public will have the opportunity to address the Council or ask questions on matters of local concern.**

# Dorchester Town Council

## Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council

25 July 2022

Present: The Mayor (Councillor J. Hewitt) and Councillors, R. Biggs, S. Biles, A. Canning, T. Harries, F. Hogwood, S. Hosford, F. Kent-Ledger, S. Jones, D. Leaper, R. Potter, M. Rennie and R. Ricardo.

Apologies: Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, A. Chisholm, L. Fry, G. Jones, A. Lyall, R. Major and D. Taylor.

### 15. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 23 and 24 May 2022 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

### 16. Police Matters

Sergeant Matt Whetham reported on the crime statistics for Dorchester. He also updated Members on current police issues and priorities. He then responded to Members detailed questions.

### 17. Presentations, Communications, Questions and Motions

The Mayor reported that Trevor Bevins would no longer be able to report on the activities of the Council. Trevor had reported on the Council's activities for many years and the Council wished to formally record its thanks to Trevor.

#### **Resolved**

That the Council record its thanks to Trevor Bevins for his many years of reporting on the activities of the Town Council.

The Mayor congratulated Councillor R. Biggs on his 29 years' service as a Town Councillor and Councillor R. Potter on his 26 years' service as a Town Councillor. Both Councillors were presented with a small gift.

There were no Questions or Motions.

### 18. Planning and Environment Committee – 6 June 2022

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

#### **Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 6 June 2022 be adopted.

19. **Planning and Environment Committee – 4 July 2022**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 4 July 2022 be adopted.

20. **Management Committee – 11 July 2022**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 11 July 2022 be adopted.

21. **Policy Committee – 18 July 2022**

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

The Council considered the draft Communications Policy and noted the amendments which had been proposed by the Policy Committee. Members felt that further clarification was required in respect of 10 (6) Press Interview permissions.

**Resolved**

1. That approval be sought from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan for up to £700,000 over a maximum borrowing time of 30 years for the development of the Municipal Building. The annual loan repayments will come to around a maximum of £75,000 per annum. It is not intended to increase the Council Tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.
2. That the Communications Policy be amended and the final version be presented to the next meeting of the Council.
3. That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee meeting held on 18 July 2022 be adopted.

22. **Update from the Dorset Council**

Dorset Councillors updated the Council on the following matters:-

- The need for more foster carers and the associated support network so as to enable children moving to Dorset under the National Transfer Scheme to be looked after within the County.

- The Library Service was presently consulting on a new strategy for the Service which was planned to be adopted in the spring of 2023.
- Dorset Council was again operating the holiday activities and food programme over the summer.
- That affordable accommodation for workers was one of the key reasons vacancies in the NHS and elsewhere were not being filled. It was important to ensure the 33% affordable homes requirement was met in all new developments.
- It was reported that the Dorset Community Safety Partnership had undertaken some good work at Poundbury. The importance of reporting any incidents was stressed.
- Any problems identified in respect of the work to replace the fibre network around the town to be reported to Councillor A. Canning.

Council rose at 8.15pm.

Mayor

**Dorchester Town Council**  
**Minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee**

**1 August 2022**

Present: The Mayor (Councillor J. Hewitt) , and Councillors R Biggs, E.S. Jones, F. Kent- Ledger, D. Leaper, R. Major, R. Potter (Chairman), M.E. Rennie and R. Ricardo.

Apologies: Councillors T. Harries, S. Hosford and D. Taylor.

**15. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor E.S. Jones stated that as a member of Dorset Council's Area Planning Committee, she would keep an open mind on the planning applications and consider all information available at each stage of the decision process. She would take part in the debate but not vote on planning applications at this meeting.

**16. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 July were confirmed and approved to be signed by the Chairman.

**17. Local Plan Update**

Members noted the update issued from Dorset Council on the 26 July 2022.

Members thanked Dorset Council for the update and welcomed more time to get the plan right for Dorchester and hope the exemption for housing land supply from neighbouring councils will be forthcoming.=

**18. Master Plan Update**

The Chairman gave an update on the master plan, the next meeting to take place at 7pm on the 24 August.

It was agreed that the Chairman and Clerk would liaise with Jo Witherden to send out an update to members prior to the 24 August meeting.

**19. Planning Applications for Comment**

The Committee considered the planning applications referred to the Council for comment by Dorset Council (Appendix 1).

**20. Minute Update Report**

**1. Minute 9 – Planning and Environment Committee Held on 4 July 2022:  
Dorchester South Mid-Tier Accessibility Scheme – Consultation**

Members received an update from Dorset Council regarding Section 106 monies allocated to Dorchester South train station. The Committee noted and thanked Dorset Council for the update and hope the bid for DfT Access for All Funding is successful.

21. **Planning Issues to Note**

There were no planning issues to note.

**Dorchester Town Council**

**Planning & Environment Committee – 1 August 2022**

**Planning Applications for Comment**

**East Ward (Councillors T. Harries, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger and R. Major)**

**E1. P/HOU/2022/03937 8 Kings Road Dorchester DT1 1NQ**

Convert existing garage into annex for use of house providing additional accommodation for guests and family.

In principle - No objection.

Request annexe is tied to existing accommodation

**E2. P/FUL/2022/04328 12 Prince Of Wales Road Dorchester Dorset DT1 1PW**

Change of use from a Care Home to a single residential dwelling (use class C3). Remove rear extensions & amend rear single storey roof structure to flat roof throughout. Installation of 3no. roof windows to the east aspect main roof & create a new detached ancillary building within the rear grounds.

In principle - No objection.

Request for a tree to be planted in the front garden.

**E3. P/FUL/2022/04358 Garage Land off Ackerman Road Dorchester Dorset DT11 1NZ**

Erect 1 No. dwelling and create new vehicular and pedestrian access (demolish existing store).

No Objection – a welcome application to clear up an eyesore, especially the use of solar panels and other eco measures.

**North Ward (Councillor A. Canning and D. Taylor)**

**N1. P/FUL/2022/04354 7 & 9 Linden Avenue Dorchester DT1 1EJ**

Replace, raise & repair existing rear wall.

No Objection

**N2. P/FUL/2022/03964 13A High East Street Dorchester Dorset DT1 1HH**

Carry out external alterations to the existing building associated with the change of use of Flat A and Flat B to HMOs, including the installation of photovoltaic panels.

*(See Appendix 2).*

**West Ward (Councillors L. Fry, J. Hewitt and R. Ricardo)**

**W1. P/HOU/2022/04421 101 Damers Road Dorchester DT1 2LB**

Form a new vehicle access onto road and parking space to front of property.



Objection.

The Committee considered that the loss of a parking space withing a residents' parking permit scheme zone, that already has a very limited number of parking spaces would have a negative impact on the existing residents and other people wishing to park in this area, meaning the neighbouring residents' amenity would be adversely affected. This would be contrary to policy ENV16 of the adopted local plan.

The Committee also questioned if the built drive complies with regulation for the size required for two cars and requested a better indication of allowances made for rain water run-off. Concerns were raised regarding the positioning of the pavement tree and the hazard this could create and the position of the street furniture

It is regrettable this is a retrospective application resulting in the loss of a garden.

**South Ward (Councillors G. Jones, R. Potter and M. Rennie)**

**S1. P/MPO/2022/04220 Hancock House Brewery Square Weymouth Avenue Dorchester DT1 1WX**

Modification of S106 Agreement dated 9th November 2015 (as subsequently varied) and replacement of Affordable Housing Scheme 5 dated 15th March 2021 with Affordable Housing Scheme 6 - to enable the letting of the units within Hancock House to Essential Local Workers & their immediate families.

Objection.

The Committee objects to the modification of the S106 agreement as it will remove the opportunity to let these unites from the Dorset Council housing register, it is important that these units are kept perpetuity for social housing. The Committee objects to point 3 under question 7 '*Prime Place, or a subsidiary thereof, to be added as an Approved Provider*', the units should not be under the control of a private landlord but kept with an approved provider of social housing.

**Poundbury Ward (Councillors R. Biggs, S. Hosford and D. Leaper)**

**P1. P/HOU/2022/04506 3 Chaseborough Square Poundbury Dorset DT1 3FA**

Erect rear single storey extension. Erect garage extension and part conversion.

No Objection

For information

**FI1. P/CLP/2022/04514 3 Alexandra Road Dorchester Dorset DT1 2LZ**

Certificate of lawfulness to use property as a children's home with accommodation/facilities for staff.

*The above Certificate of Lawful Use Proposed has been received. You are being notified for information purposes only. (Dorset Council).*

The Committee requested that the clerk write to David Walsh at Dorset Council to request a discussion on Certificates of Lawfulness. The Committee felt the number of certificates being used was detrimental to the involvement of the elected representatives to address concerns and thus contrary to the democratic process.

**FI2. P/CLP/2022/00308 Flat 1 13A High East Street Dorchester DT1 1HH & P/CLP/2022/00309 Flat 2 13A High East Street Dorchester DT1 1HH**

Certificate of lawfulness for a change of use from welling house (Class C3) to houses in multiple occupation (Class C4).

# Dorchester Town Council

## Planning and Environment Committee

5 September 2022

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor J. Hewitt) and Councillors R. Biggs, T. Harries, S. Hosford, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, R. Major, M. Rennie and R. Ricardo (Vice-Chairman in the Chair).

**Apologies:** A. Canning, L. Fry, G. Jones, D. Leaper, R. Potter and D. Taylor.

In Attendance

Councillor F. Hogwood.

G. Vingoe – Poundbury resident (Minute No 24).

**22. Declaration of Interests**

Councillor S. Jones stated that as a member of Dorset Council's Area Planning Committee, she would keep an open mind on the planning applications and consider all information available at each stage of the decision process. Councillor Jones would take part in the debate but not vote on planning applications at this meeting.

**23. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 1 August 2022 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**24. Proposal for the Introduction of a 20mph Speed Limit at Poundbury**

The Committee welcomed Graham Vingoe to the meeting. Mr Vingoe then made a presentation to the Committee which highlighted local residents concerns regarding the lack of road safety at Poundbury. The Committee was requested to give consideration to supporting the introduction of a 20mph speed limit across the main residential areas of Poundbury and supporting such a proposal to Dorset Council. Mr Vingoe then responded to Members detailed questions.

The Committee felt that the case for a 20mph speed limit at Poundbury was compelling and that the Council's support should be given to the proposal.

In considering this matter Members were reminded that the Council had, some while ago, requested that Dorset Council introduce a 20mph speed limit along Lubbecke Way and associated roads. Now that the road had been fully opened Members agreed that the request should be pursued.

### **Recommended**

- (1) That Dorset Council be informed of this Council's support to the introduction of a 20mph speed limit across the main residential areas of Poundbury.
- (2) That Dorset Council be requested to consider further, now that the Lubbecke Way extension had been completed and opened, the proposal to implement a 20mph speed limit along Lubbecke Way and associated roads.

### **25. Local Plan Update**

The Committee had before it CPRE's press release which responded to Dorset Council's recent Local Plan update.

It was noted that the Government's Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had stated that Dorset Council had no agreement to changing the rules and timeframe for the Local Plan, only that Dorset Council had requested to be a pilot for a new national approach to Local Plans being introduced through revised national policy.

This clarification from DLUHC also appeared to throw doubt on whether the removal of the 'duty to cooperate' with neighbouring authorities had also actually been agreed.

Members felt strongly that a factual statement was required from Dorset Council on the above matters and on what had and had not actually been agreed in respect of the new Local Plan. The Committee felt that the best way to get a factual statement would be to ask a formal question at the next Full Dorset Council meeting in October.

### **Resolved**

That Council be requested to agree the questions to be asked of the Dorset Council, at its next meeting, in respect of what had and had not actually been agreed in respect of the new Local Plan.

### **26. Planning Applications for Comment**

The Committee considered the planning applications referred to the Council for comment by Dorset Council.

### **Resolved**

That the comments on the various planning applications, as set out in Appendix 1, be submitted to Dorset Council.

### **27. Minute Update**

It was noted that there were no Minutes that required an update.

**28. Planning Issues to Note**

There were no planning issues to note.

Chairman.....

## Appendix 1

### East Ward (Councillors T. Harries, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger and R. Major)

**E1. P/HOU/2022/04841 26 Casterbridge Road Dorchester DT1 2AQ**

Replace an attached Garage/Store with a new two storey side extension and single-storey rear extension. Mandeep 26/08/22

No objection

**E2. P/FUL/2022/04718 12 Gatcombe Close Dorchester Dorset DT1 2AW**

Change of use of dwelling to form mixed use as dwelling (C3) & childminding (D1).

No objection

**E3. P/VOC/2022/04730 22 Balmoral Crescent Dorchester DT1 2BW**

Erect two storey side extension (Variation of Condition No. 2 of Planning Permission No. P/HOU/2012/01755 to amend the approved plans to allow alternative materials).

No objection

**E4. P/HOU/2022/05168 10 St Georges Close Dorchester DT1 1PG**

Erect single storey extension.

No objection

**E5. P/VOC/2022/05173 2B and 2C Salisbury Street Dorchester DT1 1JU**

Demolish redundant former garage/workshop and erect two dwellings. Modify existing vehicular accesses.

(without compliance with condition 9 & with variation of conditions 1, 4 & 7 of planning permission WD/D/18/002487 - to amend approved plans).

No objection

### North Ward (Councillor A. Canning)

**N1. P/FUL/2022/04367 & 04368 (Listed Building Consent) 48 High West Street Dorchester Dorset DT1 1UT**

Change of use and conversion of building to 4 No. residential apartments.

No objection

**N2. P/LBC/2022/03587 39 Glyde Path Road Dorchester Dorset DT1 1XE**

Install replacement front and rear entrance doors and repair windows.

No objection

- N3. P/FUL/2022/04634 45-46 South Street Dorchester Dorset DT1 1DQ**  
Create a new front entrance. Install rear dormers.  
No objection
- N4. P/LBC/2022/04955 Second Floor Flat 4 High East Street Dorchester DT1 1HS (Listed Building Consent)**  
Replace lead gutter to the principal North aspect roof slope.  
No objection
- N5. P/LBC/2022/02877 39 South Street Dorchester Dorset DT1 1DF (Listed Building Consent)**  
Strip and re-cover roof slopes, and repair front dormer.  
Carry out re-pointing to front elevation. Re-point and repair stonework to rear elevation.  
No objection
- N6. P/HOU/2022/05339 9 Normandy Way Dorchester Dorset DT1 2PP**  
Replace existing rear conservatory with lean-to rear extension forming boot room and garden room.  
No objection
- West Ward (Councillors L. Fry, J. Hewitt and R. Ricardo)**
- W1. P/OUT/2022/04507 4 Maumbury Road Dorchester DT1 1QW**  
Change of use and extension to existing Light industrial buildings E(g) to create 10 managed workspaces to ground floor and 4 two bed serviced flat units to first floor. Partial demolition of rear buildings. (Outline application to determine access, appearance, layout and scale).  
No objection
- W2. P/HOU/2022/05085 84 Coburg Road Dorchester DT1 2HR**  
Erect Two-storey side extension, new flat roofed main entrance porch. Remodel the rear structures.  
No objection
- South Ward (Councillors G. Jones, R. Potter and M. Rennie)**
- S1. P/FUL/2022/04510 St Osmund's Church Of England Middle School Barnes Way Dorchester DT1 2DZ**  
Remove 8no. timber-framed single glazed high level window units and replace with powder-coated aluminium double-glazed units. Replace timber door with powder-coated door.  
No objection
- S2. P/FUL/2022/04457 Dorchester Town Council Pavilion And Recreation Ground Weymouth Avenue Dorchester DT1 2RZ**  
Installation of solar panels to the existing roof.

The Committee gave no consideration to this application as the Council owns the building.

**Poundbury Ward (Councillors R. Biggs, S. Hosford and D. Leaper)**

**P1. P/HOU/2022/04873 38 Holmead Walk Poundbury Dorchester DT1 3GE**

Erect Two Storey Rear Extension and Internal Alterations.

No objection

**The following for information matters were received by the Committee:-**

**FI1. P/PACD/2022/04548 Museum Store Colliton Street Dorchester**

Change of use from Commercial, Business and Service to 1no. dwellinghouse (Class C3).

*“You are being notified for information purposes. This application is not a planning application but a request for the Council to determine whether or not Prior Approval is required for the proposal.”* Dorset Council

**FI2. P/PALH/2022/04556 32 Mellstock Avenue Dorchester Dorset DT1 2BQ**

Erect rear an extension: To extend 5.30 metres beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling house: maximum height 2.90 metres : height to eaves 2.90 metres.

*“You are being notified for information purposes. This application is not a planning application but a request for the Council to determine whether or not Prior Approval is required for the proposal.”* Dorset Council

**FI3. P/NMA/2022/04765 5 Caernarvon Close Dorchester DT1 2EH**

Non material amendment to planning permission P/HOU/2021/05743 to erect single storey side and front extension with air conditioning unit over and two storey extension to reduce the length of the single storey extension and form a cropped hip.

**FI4. P/NMA/2022/04810 23 Alfred Road Dorchester Dorset DT1 2DW**

Non-material amendment to Planning Permission No. P/HOU/2022/00855 to replace existing window to extension with doors onto garden.



**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**FULL COUNCIL – 26 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**Planning and Environment Committee – 5 September 2022**

**Minute No 25 – Local Plan Update**

1. The following resolution was agreed at this meeting:-

*“That Council be requested to agree the questions to be asked of the Dorset Council, at its next meeting, in respect of what had and had not actually been agreed in respect of the new Local Plan.”*

2. The day after the meeting on 6 September 2022, a number of questions were asked on this very matter at the Dorset Council Cabinet meeting. The questions and the answer provided by the Portfolio Holder for Planning is attached.
3. In light of the Cabinet questions and answer it is:-

**Recommended**

That the answer provided by Dorset Council at the September meeting is noted with some dismay and the Planning and Environment Chairman and Vice-Chairman plus the Town Clerk be authorised to prepare questions and respond after the Dorset Council Cabinet meeting in October when it is hoped to have further information / clarification as indicated in the answer provided to the September Cabinet.

4. However, should Members wish to agree some questions now, the following are proposed:-
  - Have you received any further response from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) regarding your request for a new approach and timescale for the Local Plan?
  - When does Dorset Council expect to get further information regarding Poole Harbour nutrients issue and the concerns expressed by Wessex Water on this matter?

Steve Newman  
Town Clerk

## Questions from the Public to Cabinet for the meeting on 6 September 2022

### 1. Question from Richard Thomas on behalf of the Dorset Deserves Better campaign

On 26 July, Dorset Council (DC) announced that the Council would pilot a new national approach to local planning with a 2-year delay to its own Local Plan timetable, for adoption in 2026. This announcement was promptly contradicted by the Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) who confirmed that a request for planning rule changes had been requested by DC but that no such changes had been agreed.

Will Cllr Walsh please comment on when he expects to have a decision on the proposed rule changes for the Dorset Local Plan and confirm that the Council will continue to press the case for a change in the rules with the new Government?

### 2. Question from Richard Thomas on behalf of the Dorset Deserves Better campaign

Given the likelihood that developers are continuing and will continue to take advantage of the current situation for 'speculative development', what is his department doing or will do in the event DLUHC does not grant DC sufficient dispensation against housing land supply restrictions or an extension of the plan timetable?

### 3. Question from Ian Wolff

The Portfolio Holder for Planning has proposed that the existing dates for adopting a new Local Plan be extended out until 2026 as per the table below<sup>1</sup>.

| Stage                                     | Existing Milestones in adopted LDS | Proposed Milestones |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Further evidence and review               | -                                  | Through to Q2 2024  |
| Cabinet                                   | -                                  | Q2 2024             |
| Council                                   | -                                  | Q3 2024             |
| Publication (pre-submission consultation) | Q2 2022                            | Q4 2024             |
| Submission to Secretary of State          | Q4 2022                            | Q2 2025             |
| Examination                               | Q2 2023                            | Q3 2025             |
| Adoption                                  | Q4 2023                            | Q2 2026             |

<sup>1</sup> From - Appendix 3, Dorset Council Plan Priorities Update Local Plan 26 July 2022.

This appears to be based on the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) agreeing "for Dorset to be a pilot for a new national approach to local plans". What does the Portfolio Holder propose to do if the DLUHC does not agree with Dorset being a pilot scheme?

#### 4. Question from Ian Wolff

As per the table below<sup>1</sup>, only the old West Dorset & Weymouth and Portland 2015 Local Plan meets the five-year housing supply out to 2026. What does the Portfolio Holder for Planning propose to do to maintain West Dorset & Weymouth and Portland to meet the required level and bring the rest of Dorset up to the required housing delivery out to 2026, while the new Local Plan is being developed?

| Area of Dorset (based on predecessor Councils' boundaries) | Housing Delivery Test Result (2021 Measurement) |
|--|---|
| East Dorset <sup>2</sup>                                   | 94%   |
| North Dorset   | 69%   |
| Purbeck  | 76%   |
| West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland <sup>3</sup>            | 114%  |

<sup>1</sup> From - Appendix A - Dorset Council Housing Delivery Test Action Plan – FINAL – March 2022

<sup>2</sup> The HDT result for East Dorset has been measured jointly with Christchurch on the basis that there is currently a joint plan for the Christchurch and East Dorset area.

<sup>3</sup> The HDT results for West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland have been measured jointly on the basis that there is currently a joint plan for the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland area.

#### 5. Question from David Berry

Reference 1 : Printed Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting 27th July 2021

Reference 2 : Public Document Pack Cabinet Meeting 6th September 2022

Appendix 3 Dorset Council Plan Priorities Update: Local Plan

##### Background Information to Question 1

At reference 1 I asked two questions with the following responses:

"Question(s) from David Berry

Question 1

With the proposed nominal 6 month delay in adopting the Dorset Local Plan from Quarter 2 2023 (published in September 2020) to Quarter 4 2023 (proposed in July 2021) there is a serious risk that the Dorset Council will miss the Government December 2023 deadline for it being adopted. What are the results of the risk analysis and mitigation measures to produce the Local Plan to meet this deadline, including but not limited to, the effects of your proposed reduction of the submission and examination duration from 15 months to 12 months, the new National Planning Policy Framework issued on the 20th July 21 and the proposed Government Planning reforms?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning

The delay in the local plan programme is due mainly to the large number of responses received to the first consultation, but it is essential that all of these are properly considered before moving forward to the next stage. We had originally aimed to adopt the plan early in 2023, so this delay should not risk the December 2023 deadline. We do not yet know when the national planning reforms will come into effect but it is likely that there will be transitional arrangements allowing plans that are in progress to continue.

#### Question 2

Can you please provide to the public a more detailed breakdown of the indicative dates for each stage of the local plan development including how the public will be engaged for comments on the pre submission draft version of the Local Plan now scheduled for publication in May 2022.

#### Response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning

The stages of local plan preparation are set out in the Local Development Scheme. The publication draft plan will be brought to Cabinet and full Council for approval before it is published in May 2022, and a more precise date will be given at that time. At the publication stage, there will be an eight-week period during which people will be invited to comment on the plan and whether they consider it to be sound. All the responses received will be submitted to the inspector who will examine the plan."

At reference 2 there is a table with a proposed delay in the Local Plan adoption from Quarter 4 2023 to Quarter 2 2026, a delay of 2 years and 6 months. The same table included Publication (pre-submission consultation) (footnote 2) moving from Quarter 2 2022 to Quarter 4 2024. The footnote stated that "Milestones based upon no further round of pre-submission consultation. If we have to consult on significant changes, there is potential for the timetable to be extended."

#### Question

In the next issue of the Local Development Scheme Update a period should be included in the revised dates to have public consultation for pre-submission significant changes. In fact it is confusing that in July 2021 it was stated by the Portfolio Holder that the publication stage will be for public **comment** (i.e. not consultation) but in July 2022 the publication was a pre-submission **consultation** document. Please can the Portfolio Holder clarify the Council's view on the proposed significant changes to the Local Plan and the current plans (including timescales) for all future public consultation stages of the revised Local Plan including under what Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations they will be?

#### 6. Question from David Berry

Going forward what constructive ongoing interaction can local residents groups and organisations who have registered concerns and comments on the Draft Local Plan have direct with Dorset Council Officials during the

period of gathering further evidence and review until Quarter 2 of 2024, including access to completed studies and reports?

#### **7. Question from Mike Allen**

At the last Cabinet Cllr Walsh's statement on future housing developments in Dorset referred to "the longer-term growth needs of Dorset". He also said that "Dorset is planning ambitious growth".

Estimates of housing needs are based currently on 2014 figures. Back then the UK population was expected to grow rapidly for the foreseeable future. But falling fertility and rising numbers of deaths mean that much less growth is expected now according to the ONS and OBR. Indeed, the OBR has recently put forward a scenario in which the UK population would stabilise in the 2030s.

So, assuming these phrases are based on the Council's own research, what are the "longer term growth needs" in Dorset referred to in the Cabinet statement of 26th July and what is the Council's current justification for "planning ambitious growth"? Thank you.

#### **Response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning to questions 1-7 from members of the public**

I propose to answer questions 1 to 7 in a single response, as all of these questions are about the local plan and raise similar issues.

Cabinet will be considering a report on a revised local plan timetable, at our next meeting in October. This will include a full revised 'Local Development Scheme' or local plan programme, setting out the dates for all the milestones along the way to adoption and the opportunities for involvement.

We have not yet had any response from Government to our requests about the local plan, but have had to delay the programme in any event because of the time needed for additional evidence work, particularly relating to nutrients in Poole Harbour, following the recent letter from the Government's Chief Planner.

If we are not granted the dispensations we have asked for from Government, we will continue to work on the plan, on the new timetable. We are of course anticipating changes in the national planning system, as set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and will make changes to our plan in the light of those. They are expected to include changes to the current 'duty to cooperate' and to the methodology for working out housing requirements.

In the meantime, in areas where we have not met the requirements for the five-year housing land supply and/or housing delivery test, we will need to take this into account when considering planning applications. Any new pieces of evidence prepared for the local plan will be published online as soon as they are available.

**Dorchester Town Council**  
**Management (Informal) Committee**  
**12 September 2022**

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor J. Hewitt) and Councillors A. Canning, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger (Chairman), D. Leaper, A. Lyall, R. Major, M. Rennie and R. Ricardo.

**Apologies:** Councillors L. Fry, R. Potter and D. Taylor.

**The meeting opened with Members standing for a one minute silence in respect of the recent death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.**

**14. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 11 July 2022, adopted by Council on 25 July 2022, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**15. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

**16. Site Visits**

The Committee considered the notes of the Site Visits meeting held on 9 August 2022 (as set out in Appendix 1 to these Minutes). Members supported the Group's recommendation that some initial plans should be drawn up in respect of a possible small extension to the Garden's facilities building to be consideration by a future meeting of the Committee.

Members expressed their thanks to staff at the Weymouth Cemetery for their help and co-operation with the site visit.

**Recommended**

That the notes of the meeting of the Site Visits held on 9 August 2022 be agreed.

**17. Management Arrangements**

The Committee considered a report from the Outdoor Services Manager updating it on the work undertaken and the achievements made by the Outdoor Services Team since the last meeting of the Committee.

It was agreed that any further trees offered by the developer of the County Hospital should be accepted.

Members felt that it would be worthwhile having an article in the spring Newsletter about the Gardens having a borehole.

General concern was expressed regarding the future of the town's tree stock due to the number of serious tree diseases presently in circulation.

**Recommended**

That the Outdoor Services Team update be noted.

**18. Grant Feedback**

Members welcomed feedback from Dorchester Family Support who had received a grant from the Town Council.

Over 150 families had received help during the summer with over £19,000 spent on food. Sufficient funds were also available to support families at Christmas.

It was noted that there were other partners involved in the programme and Members felt that it would be good for those partners to be included in future feedback.

**19. Summer Events 2022 Feedback**

Members had before them a report by the Town Clerk on the 2022 summer events programme.

The Committee felt that the Council should publicise its support for events as much as possible. Members also wished to thank staff for organising and attending many events over the summer.

**Recommended**

That the report be welcomed.

**20. Salisbury Fields**

The Committee considered whether the Salisbury Fields metal picnic table should be removed or relocated. Some local residents had reported issues of anti-social behaviour around the area of the picnic table. Other local residents had requested additional picnic tables.

Members felt that a meeting should be held with Ward Councillors, local residents and the police. It was noted that a similar meeting was also to be arranged in respect of Mellstock Avenue play area and it might be that the meetings could be held on the same day.

**Recommended**

That the matter be considered further following a meeting with local residents and the police.

21. **Proposed Radio Base Station at Lubbecke Way**

The Committee considered correspondence from Clarke Telecom who were consulting on a proposal to install a radio base station on Council owned land at the river bank along Lubbecke Way.

Whilst accepting the benefits of a quality mobile network it was felt that the location proposed on a green river bank was not acceptable.

**Recommended**

That Clarke Telecom be informed that the Council does not agree to the proposed location on the river bank at Lubbecke Way but that if they wished to meet to discuss alternative options then that would be welcomed.

22. **Cemetery Matters**

(a) **Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes**

The report which detailed the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial for grave spaces and the number of interments and burials of ashes together with South Chapel usage at Dorchester Cemetery, since the last meeting of the Committee had been circulated with the agenda.

**Recommended**

That the report on the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes since the last meeting of the Committee be noted.

(b) **Headstones and Inscriptions**

The Committee received and noted applications for the design of headstones and inscriptions.

**Recommended**

That the action of the Town Clerk in approving designs numbered 5289 to 5297 be confirmed and the Register of Memorials be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

(c) **Fordington Cemetery**

The Committee considered correspondence in respect of the grass cutting regime at Fordington Cemetery. Members noted the concerns expressed and proposed that paths be cut, on request, so as to enable access to graves for regular visitors to the cemetery. It was



noted that the grass was only allowed to grown from April and was then cut towards the end of July.

**Recommended**

That paths be cut, on request, so as to enable access to individual graves for regular visitors to the cemetery.

Chairman.....

### Notes of a Site Visit held on 9 August 2022 at 9.30am.

Sites visited – Borough Gardens and Weymouth Crematorium Cemetery, Weymouth.

Attending: The Mayor (Councillor J. Hewitt) and Councillors S. Biles, F. Hogwood, G. Jones, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, D. Leaper, R. Major, R. Potter and M. Rennie.

Steve Newman, Town Clerk.

Carl Dallison, Outdoor Services Manager.

#### 1. Borough Gardens

The Group viewed the Borough Gardens House externally and in particular the Community Room. Members were advised of the Climate Emergency proposals for the House which included Air Source Heat Pumps and Solar. It was noted that the heat pumps would also be used to heat the greenhouses. **Those present were very supportive of the proposals.**

It was reported that the Garden's staff were continuing to use the community room due to the lack of suitable space at the facility building.

The Group then viewed the facility building and noted that the space afforded to the staff was significantly lacking. The Outdoor Services Manager reported that it might be possible to extend the building slightly without it becoming overbearing in the Garden's setting. The small extension would allow for sufficient space for staff and this would then enable the staff to move back to that building and allow the community room to be refurbished and available to hire once again.

**Members agreed that plans should be drawn up for consideration by the Management Committee.**

#### 2. Visit to Weymouth Crematorium and Cemetery, Quibo Lane, Weymouth

Members viewed the various different options for memorialisation's which were offered by the Cemetery. These included various plaque designs, kerb plaques, tree plaques, tablets, above ground columbarium's and more.

Whilst it was felt that the Council would not wish to offer all of the options on view it was felt that some consideration might be given to allowing plaques on the wall at Poundbury Cemetery in addition to the existing kerb plaques. Other options may be considered at a later date or if requests were received from residents.

Meeting closed 11.51pm.

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**  
**DORCHESTER JOINT HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

**26 JULY 2022**

At a Meeting of the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee held on 26 July 2022:

**PRESENT:**

|                                 |              |   |
|---------------------------------|--------------|---|
| Dorchester Town Council         | Councillors: | S. Biles<br>F. Hogwood<br>G. Jones (Chairman) |
|                                 | Officers:    | S. Newman<br>M. Manley<br>N. Hayes            |
| Dorset Council                  | Councillors: | R. Biggs<br>S. Jones                          |
| Dorchester Association          |              | M. Rice                                       |
| Thomas Hardy Society            |              | M. Chutter                                    |
| The Keep Military Museum        |              | F. Scott                                      |
| Dorset Museum                   |              | E. Selby                                      |
| Dorchester Local Nature Reserve |              | L. Poulson                                    |

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Chisholm and D. Taylor (Dorchester Town Council), Councillors A. Canning, L. Fry and R. Tarr (Dorset Council), I. Gosling (Dorchester Civic Society), M. Woodgate (Dorchester Heritage Magazine), J. Wallis (Blue Badge Tourist Guides) and R. Raine (National Trust).

2. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED**

That Councillor G. Jones be elected Chairman for the remainder of the 2022-23 Council Year.

The Chairman thanked the Committee and set out his vision for the work of the Committee for the coming year.

3. **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED**

That Councillor A. Chisholm be elected Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the 2022-23 Council Year.

4. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2022, a copy of which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

It was reported that there had still been no improvement to the John White plaque. The Town Clerk reported that he would make arrangements for the work to be undertaken.

5. **HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY**

(a) **Heritage Tourism Strategy – Progress and Presentation**

The Committee received a progress report from the Tourism Development Officer which updated it on the work undertaken against the agreed Tourism Strategy Action Plan. It was noted that:

- Strategic thinking was required on how to allocate funds.
- A birthday celebration for Thomas Hardy involved working with Visit Dorset to attract interest from other areas in Dorset.
- Henges and Hillforts was taking place.
- Dorset Museum suggested more advanced planning of future events, they were currently planning a series of Roman activities for next year.
- There was appetite for a Roman festival or May Day festival next year.

Members thanked the Tourism Development Officer for all the work being undertaken.

**RESOLVED**

That the progress update on the Heritage Tourism Action Plan be noted.

(b) **Tourism Partnership**

The Committee received the notes of the meeting of the Tourism Partnership held on 12 July 2022.

**RESOLVED**

That the notes of the well-attended meeting of the Dorchester Tourism Partnership held on 12 July 2022 be received.

6. **HILLFORTS AND HENGES**

E. Selby gave an update on an event being held between 21 to 31 July 2022. The lectures already hosted at Dorset Museum had been very well attended and had resulted in an increase in museum footfall. Feedback forms would be collated by M. Woodgate and reported back to Heritage Committee. Members wished to thank all of the event organisers.

**RESOLVED**

That the update be noted.

7. **MILL STREAM PATH – SECTION FROM LONDON ROAD TO MILL STREET**

M. Chutter updated the Committee on progress with the information boards; working alongside M. Woodgate and M. Gayton the boards would follow the life of the Galpin family, they would be located on the side of the building walls with a base colour of rustic brown. Draft boards will be presented at the next Committee meeting. It was noted that there were other important families in the town which should also be considered.

**RESOLVED**

That the update noted and the draft boards to be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.

8. **ROMAN MOSAIC PROJECT – THE WALKS**

Members received a progress update report from the Tourism Development Officer. An artist's brief has been drafted by Bournemouth University students who were then undertaking research and interviewing mosaic artists. They had created four blogs and eight TikToks.

The Tourism Development Officer reported that an update on the Cornhill / High West Street crossing artwork would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

**RESOLVED**

That the update be noted.

9. **HERITAGE OPEN DAY**

The Town Clerk reported on the proposals for this year's Heritage Open Day, running between 9 and 18 September 2022 with a theme of Amazing Innovations.

The Keep Military Museum and Shire Hall representatives expressed concern about their organisations not being included within the programming. The Chairman agreed that it was very important for the town's museums to feature prominently in the programme.

The Town Clerk reported that the application for a road closure for Sunday 18 September had been submitted to Dorset Council Highways – that date was also the date of Ironman so the road closure was not guaranteed to be received.

**RESOLVED**

That the update be noted.

10. **QUESTIONS**

No questions had been received.

11. **URGENT ITEMS**

No urgent items.

Chairman.....



# **Dorchester Town Council**

## **Communications Policy**

**26 September 2022 (third draft)**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This draft communications policy is intended for use by Dorchester Town Council Officers and Councillors to facilitate communication, particularly with the Media and Press. There are many platforms which the Town Council can use to communicate, publicly or privately, which can involve multiple and varied stakeholders, and which can be internal, external or both.

This draft policy sets out a code of practice for Council Officers and Councillors for their communications to keep information safe, ensure its veracity, avoidance of damage to the Council's reputation and be lawful. It is important to know which individuals are responsible for communication and to approach them for support when required, particularly to the Media. Inappropriate individual opinions being given as representative of the Officers or Councillors of the Town Council must be avoided.

Officers and Councillors should be briefed on an agreed policy as well as receive training when appropriate before engaging in any communication.

## **2. SCOPE**

The policy applies to all the following personnel:

- Town Council employees, including those working from home or from other locations
- Town Councillors
- Other workers (including casual and agency workers, seconded staff and contractors) who are authorised to use the Council's equipment and networks.

## **3. PLATFORMS**

- Zoom/ Teams/ Google virtual meetings
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.)
- email
- Letters to individuals or groups
- Town Council Newsletters/ press releases (printed publications)
- Town Council Website
- Interviews: Radio, TV, local or national newspapers

## **4. GENERAL POINTS**

Before engaging in any communication all Town Council Officers and Councillors should consider registering and sharing any request for information with an appropriate Officer and ensuring data protection procedures. It is optimal to have designated Officers or Councillors when communicating with the Press or other Media, with a hierarchy of who should say what and to whom, but all the points below should be considered when communicating through any platform:



- 1) **Appropriate communication should include:**
  - a) Accurate proof reading for spelling, grammar and syntax
  - b) Appropriate language, avoiding profanities or colloquial language. Communications to larger audiences should be kept formal.
  
- 2) **Malicious Communications Act 1988.** Communication should not be indecent, offensive or a threat, or include information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
  
- 3) **Remain calm** in situations that you may disagree with and consider your reply carefully. Consider exploring a request for information, or any response given, with an appropriate colleague or designated Officer before responding.
  
- 4) **Do not share** private or inappropriate information, text or images
  - a) Inappropriate information is defined as:
    - Pornography
    - Gambling
    - Promotion of discrimination of any kind
    - Promotion of racial or religious hatred
    - Involving threats or promoting violence
    - Promotion of illegal acts
    - Offensive language which relates to any protected characteristics under the Equalities act 2010, including race, sexuality, disability, gender, age, religion or belief
  
- 5) The **Defamation Act 2013** c.26.

This defines defamation as an action which causes ‘serious harm’ to the reputation of an individual or corporation which is likely to cause serious personal or financial loss. Libel is the written form of defamation and slander is the spoken equivalent. However, any such allegations are a serious issue. Town Council Officers and Councillors must make sure that any communications, spoken or written, could not be deemed as slander and are substantiated.
  
- 6) **Images**
  - a) Do not share images that are copyrighted unless you have sought permission, or they are open content or have creative common licences. Images on Google and other platforms for open content but this must be ensured.
  - b) If content has close ups of people, it must be ensured that individuals in the image have signed an appropriately worded consent form. If the image is of a child, it is important that a parent, or appropriate surrogate person has signed a consent form. Consent forms should be scanned onto a PC and saved in your files with data protection rules being observed. At larger events where it may not be possible to obtain consent there should be signage which make the public aware that photographs will be taken at the event and what they will be

used for. For ticketed events, the ticket could state under the terms and conditions of an event that photographs will be taken at the event and what platforms they will be used on.

- 7) **Accessibility.** Consider these points when creating content:
- a) Avoid or explain jargon, particularly acronyms or technical information
  - b) Keep paragraphs short and to the point
  - c) Make sure you use contrasting colours so text is readable
  - d) Font, sans serif fonts are more accessible these include Arial, Calibri, Century Gothic, Helvetica, Tahoma and Verdana. Calibri is the preferred font of DTC. Avoid complicated, overuse of varying fonts or underlining, mixtures of case and colours, particularly in the production of posters
  - e) Text aligned to the left is more readable than centred
  - f) Make sure that font is readable and clear
  - g) Make sure lines aren't too close together; 1.5 to 2 spacing is optimal
  - h) Content should not induce seizures, this means that it should not contain flashing images and if this can't be avoided make sure to warn users of flashing content and make sure it doesn't play automatically
  - i) Use <https://colororacle.org/> or <https://bit.ly/3pYmo0> to find out how someone who is colour blind will see your communications. Use muted background colours for those with light sensitivity or who are prone to migraine
  - j) Underline links; this makes them more recognisable to those who might have a visual impairment – translation of documents into braille is a specialist piece of work and will require a printer suitable to print braille. Documents requested in braille will be considered on request.
  - k) The Town Council website is available in different languages, specific documents requested in a different language will be translated on request.
  - l) Images with text should be avoided as they may not be readable with screen readers. Make sure to provide information in a text format elsewhere in the document.
  - m) As far as is possible documents posted electronically will be posted in such a way as to make them easily readable on different types of electronic device.
  - n) Official information should be proof read by an appropriate separate individual.

## 5. VIRTUAL MEETINGS.

Virtual meetings are a common experience following the Covid pandemic and it is important to make sure they are still treated as important forms of communication and are held with the same standards as face-to-face meetings.

- 1) **Show up on time.** If you are running late due to another meeting or you are having technical difficulties try to email or call the organiser/chair to let them know. Always give apologies if you are late.

- 2) **Technical difficulty.** If you face technical difficulty during the meeting, make sure to apologise, particularly in a smaller meeting. However, these incidents are often out of our control.
- 3) **Moderators.** It is good practice to delegate a moderator in virtual meetings, particularly if they are large. Moderators can help to field questions in the chat or spot those with virtual hands raised.
- 4) **Stay put.** Try not to move around or leave your screen during meetings. If you feel you must, you may turn off your camera so you do not cause distraction. However, speakers prefer to see their audience during a presentation and be aware they they wish to ask a question or need clarification on a point being made.
- 5) **Sharing your screen.** Make sure that you share the correct screen and documents when you are the presenter and avoid accidental showing of confidential or sensitive information
- 6) **Appropriate Communication.** See Section 4.1.
- 7) **Background.** If necessary blur or add your own background when on Zoom or similar platform, particularly if you don't know what others may be doing around you, or if you do not wish to share the background of your office or environment.
- 8) **Mute** yourself when you are not talking, to avoid microphone feedback and distracting noises. If you know that you are going to be doing a lot of talking in your meeting consider relocating to a quieter area of the office/ home. If this is not possible make colleagues, or those in your household, know that you will be in an online meeting.
- 9) **Accessibility.** Section 4.7. On zoom there is an option whereby you can add closed captions by clicking 'Live Transcript' and then click 'Enable Auto Transcript'. The participant can then click to 'Show Subtitles' or 'View Full Transcript'. This option is not only good for accessibility but also for taking notes during a meeting.

## **6. SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media is a popular platform to share and the Council uses a number of social media outlets.

- 1) Dorchester Town Council run pages:
  - Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/dorchestertowncouncil>
  - Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/DorchesterBoroughGardens>
  - Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverDorchesterDorset>
  - Twitter - <https://twitter.com/DiscoverDorch>

- Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/discoverdorchester/>
  - Tik Tok - <https://www.tiktok.com/@discoverdorchester>
- 2) Town Council Officers and Councillors must remember at all times that their online presence is seen to reflect the Town Council. This policy applies if, in their comments or posts, they are recognisable as Officers or Councillors. They should not:
- Present personal opinions as Town Council policy
  - Post any confidential / embargoed information
  - Present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment to the Council or bring it into disrepute
  - Post anything malicious, libellous or which could be deemed as harassment or bullying
  - Post anything that can be deemed as offensive or relates to any protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010, including race, sexuality, disability, gender, age, religion or belief
  - Conduct any online activity which violates laws, regulations or constitutes a criminal offence.
- 3) Town Council Officers and Councillors should follow guidance, listed in section 6.2. above, when using their own private social media, particularly when interacting with Town Council run pages.
- 4) Staff members who use the social media pages listed in section 6.1. while working on Town Council business should consider:
- a. Only sharing from reputable pages. Bear in mind that content can be edited even after shared by a page. Make sure that the page you shared a post from does not post anything that could be viewed as offensive, political or of a commercial nature.
  - b. Moderation. Officers may remove comments which could be deemed as being offensive, abusive or defamatory. However, if comments do not meet these criteria, then they should left on the page. The Council may also block users who act offensively on the Council's pages.
  - c. Not sharing private or inappropriate information, text or images (Section 4.4.).
  - d. Defamation (Section 4.5.).
  - e. By sharing images from reputable pages there is some reassurance that they have followed general image sharing guidance but policy guidelines should be followed

(Section 4.6.).

- f. Social media is one of the few places where it is acceptable to be more informal when talking to a wider audience. However, as Town Council Officers and Councillors communication platforms used should be appropriate and follow policy guidelines.
- g. Improvement of accessibility can be achieved by including alternative text, or a description with images, and can explain what an image is for those with visual impairments (Section 4.7). Videos can be used with closed captions. Consider how screen readers will read your text, for examples: Emojis can be read out but should not be overused or words can be capitalised on a hash tag (such as #AccessibleWeb rather than #accessibleweb; this is called CamelCase and means that screen readers can pick up individual words)

5) Email is an important form of communication that can quickly provide information to many recipients.

- 1) Emails should always introduce the writer of the email to the recipients, especially if they have not been emailed before. The reason for contact should be established and a subject should be highlighted as the reason for contact.
- 2) It is critical to check who the email is for with the correct address. Pressing 'reply all' must be considered and only be used if the reply is intended to go to everyone.
- 3) Appropriate communication by email (Section 4.1.).
- 4) Private, confidential or inappropriate information, text or images should not be shared (Section 4.4.)
- 5) To ensure accessibility long paragraphs are tricky to read and should be avoided, especially for those with dyslexia. Paragraphs, with short lines of sentences, are the easiest to read and bullet points may be helpful for this (Section 4.7)
- 6) If the email contains confidential information then the word CONFIDENTIAL should be used in the email subject line – the email should also be flagged as confidential via the Outlook 'tags' options.
- 7) Emails containing confidential information are to carry a confidentiality disclaimer stating that "any file attachments sent by the Council may contain confidential or legally privileged information and are only intended for the addressee. If you are not the intended recipient or the person responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, any onward transmission of the email is strictly prohibited. If you have received the email in error, you

should delete the message and any attachments immediately, including any backups and temporary files.”

## **7. LETTERS**

The Town Council uses letter writing as a form of communication between Officers, Councillors, organisations and businesses. They should follow the corporate letter format (an example is attached at the end of this document) and formal language should be used.

If conveying confidential information the letter should be marked ‘Confidential’.

## **8. PRINT PUBLISHING**

Print publications can come in many forms: newspapers, press release and print media. They are an important part of the Town Council’s communication. An example of a press release format is included later in this document (page 10).

- 1) Private or inappropriate information, text or images should not be shared (Section 4.4)
- 2) Defamation (Section 4.5.)
- 3) Images (Section 4.6.)
- 4) Accessibility (Section 4.7)
- 5) All information provided to in print media must have facts checked by a responsible, designated Officer or Councillor and must not include any confidential / embargoed information.
- 6) Press releases must be approved by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk

## **9. WEBSITE**

This is the main online face of the Town Council; it can also be used as a hub for information.

- 1) Communication must be appropriate (Section 4.1.)
- 2) Private or inappropriate information, text or images must not be shared (Section 4.4.)
- 3) Defamation (Section 4.5.)

- 4) Images (Section 4.6.)
- 5) Accessibility and functionality should be available from a keyboard, and include pages which have clear titles and appropriate subheadings.
- 6) No confidential / embargoed information should be posted on the website.

## **10. PRESS INTERVIEWS**

Interviews are an important method of providing a more personal side to a news story. Different media platforms may approach Officers or Councillors. The Town Council may approach these platforms to publicise their aims and objects and progress. If Officers or Councillors are being interviewed on behalf of the Town Council they should be briefed before the interview by the most appropriate members of staff in relation to the subject of the interview.

This guidance should be followed when being interviewed:

- 1) Ensure the correct and most up to date information is available. Take notes before the interview, particularly of the facts or figures that might be asked
- 2) The subject should be well researched so that answer questions can be answered more confidently
- 3) If the answer is unknown speculation should be avoided
- 4) Private or inappropriate information, text or images should not be shared (Section 4.4.)
- 5) Defamation (Section 4.5.)
- 6) No confidential / embargoed information should be shared when being interviewed.
- 7) Permissions. Only the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk are authorised to communicate with the press. Other Officers or Councillors may speak to the press if authorised to do so by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk.
- 8) It is accepted that Councillor's will be approached directly by the press, particularly during out of office hours, on matters which are of local concern / interest but which might not be within the remit of the Council. In these instances Councillors may respond sensitively but it should be made clear that any views expressed are not necessarily the agreed position of the Council.



# Dorchester Town Council

## News Release

**Issue Date:**

**Embargo Date + Time:** (if appropriate)

### **Headline – (sets out point of release)**

**Detailed Text –**

**Introduction:**

- Follow the 5W rule (who, what, where, why, when?) This may be the deciding factor in if a journalist continues to read the news release
- Who is the release written for, make sure to market it to those who are likely to be interested

**Main text:**

- Ensure dates, times and locations are clear, using bold fonts is appropriate
- Include, whenever possible, a quote from the appropriate Town Council Committee Chairman or Vice Chairman and the Mayor

**Notes:**

- Use subheadings
- Make sure to order information correctly with the key points at the beginning and the extra information towards the end
- Bullet points can be used to get points across quickly, particularly if it is a list of information
- Share facts and figures if appropriate

**Images:** attach any images with photo credits – use good quality photos. Provide description of image

**For further information:** contact details, including telephone, email and website where appropriate.

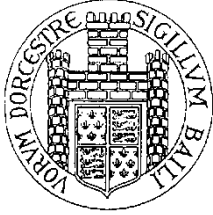
**Logos:** attach any logos

**Notes to Editors:** Add any background or anything else the press are likely to want to know.

**ENDS**

KEEP THE PRESS RELEASE TO UNDER TWO PAGES





# DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, 19 North Square, Dorchester, Dorset. DT1 1JF

Telephone: (01305) 266861

**Steve Newman, Town Clerk**

e-mail: [s.newman@dorchester-tc.gov.uk](mailto:s.newman@dorchester-tc.gov.uk)

DATE

ADDRESS

ADDRESS

ADDRESS

ADDRESS

Dear

**SUBJECT OF LETTER – use capitals and bold**

Letter content – use Calibri 12 point =- left hand margin no paragraph indent, do not justify.

Line space between paragraphs.

Yours sincerely or faithfully

Name

Job Title