



Dorchester Town Council

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9 July 2014

Agenda for the meeting of the **Policy Committee** which will be held in the **Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Dorchester** on **Tuesday 15 July 2014** at **7.00pm**.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

Public Speaking at the Meeting

The Chairman has discretion to allow members of the public to speak at the meeting. If you wish to speak please ask the Chairman before the meeting starts. We ask speakers to confine their comments to the matter in hand and to be as brief as is reasonably possible.

Member Code of Conduct: Declaration of Interests

Members are reminded that it is their responsibility to disclose pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests where appropriate.

A Member who declares a pecuniary interest must leave the room unless a suitable dispensation has been granted.

A Member who declares a non-pecuniary interest may take part in the meeting and vote.

Membership of the Committee

Councillors V. Allan, R. Biggs, A. Canning, T. Harries, G. Jones, T. Jones, D. Roberts, and The Mayor ex-officio.

1. Apologies

2. Minutes

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 May 2014 (adopted by Council on 20 May 2014).

3. Finance Report

To receive the report of the Financial Controller (attached).

4. Panels 2014-15

To appoint members to Panels for 2014-15.

5. Cover Arrangements for the Finance function

To consider the table presented by the Town Clerk

To note that a Risk & Resources Panel will be called to consider new draft Financial Regulations

6. Update from discussions with Dorset Police regarding front desk provision in Dorchester

To consider the report of the Town Clerk

7. Performance Management and Appraisal

To consider the report of the Town Clerk

8. District Council Service Review Programme

To consider the report of the Town Clerk

9. Dorchester Prison

To consider the report of the Town Clerk

10. Urgent Items

To consider any other items that the Chairman or Town Clerk decides are urgent.

11. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

To resolve "That in view of the fact that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the following matters the public and representatives of the press be excluded from this meeting during their discussion".

12. Municipal Buildings - Staffing

To consider the following recommendation of the Management Committee in relation to the report by the Deputy Town Clerk (enclosed).

That the arrangements proposed in the report be agreed and that Policy Committee be requested to agree the funding arrangements and the increase in establishment with immediate effect.

13. Letter from Dorset County Museum

To consider a letter received from Dorset County Museum (enclosed).

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Policy Committee – 15 July 2014

Financial Report at 30th June 2014

1. Summary of Current Position

- Revised Budget assumes £23,000 extra contribution to General Fund, after taking account of the following: -
 - Financial Services Contract changed to Financial Controller role - £38,000 taken from supplies, and £37,000 added to Salaries, net £1,000 saving
 - CCTV - £5,000 paid to Weymouth & Portland BC to effect an orderly wind-down of the service in Dorchester - £12,000 saving
 - Cemeteries - £10,000 increase in Income budget following fee increases
- Additional underspend of c. £22,000 expected during the year, due to staff not in post, staff increments not paid yet, and staff not taking up their pension options, offset by cost of 2 Apprentices
- Unlikely that Markets Income will achieve its budget – anticipating £5,000 loss
- Developing options to request additional budgets
 - Cemeteries Management System – likely to free up staff time as a result of investment
 - Municipal Buildings Staff (confidential report on tonight’s agenda) – increased cost in 2014-15 but long term anticipate reduction in staff
 - Dorchester Prison – (report on tonight’s agenda) – professional planning input to assist the Town Council to develop it’s ideas in relation to the Prison site
- Assuming all of the above plus minor savings on many other budgets overall position likely to be £40,000 extra in General Reserve at year end

2. Cash Position at 30 June 2014

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------------|
| • Lloyds Bank (2 accounts) | £963,000 | 0.30% interest |
| • National Savings & Investments | £102,000 | 0.75% interest |
| • Other (Unity & Petty Cash) | £1,000 | |

Total Cash	£1,066,000	
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- A further £500,000 will be transferred from the Lloyds Bank account to the NS&I account during July 2014.

3. Predicted Reserves & Balances levels at 31 March 2015

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| • General Reserve | £533,000 | (Budget £472,000) |
| • Depot Loan Reserve | £160,000 | (Budget £160,000) |
| • Specific Operational Reserves | £235,000 | (Budget £204,000) |
| Total Reserves | £928,000 | (Budget £836,000) |

- The Council agreed to transfer 3 years of Pensions catch up contributions to the Pension Fund. This has now been actioned and there will be a £34,000 payment in advance on the Council's accounts at the year end.

4. Debtors

Total debt at 30 June is £16,223, of which half relates to the grant from the Lawn Tennis Association, the debtor being only recently raised.

A list of six historic debts totalling £290 will be circulated. It is recommended that these are written off.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

MANAGEMENT REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2014					
BY SPEND TYPE	Revised Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under /Over £000	
Employees	664	166	146	-	20
Premises	148	65	53	-	12
Supplies & Transport	344	82	65	-	17
Capital Financing	89	44	43	-	1
To Specific Reserves	114	-	-	-	-
To General Reserve	23	-	-	-	-
Income	- 216	- 45	- 46	-	1
Net Budget	1,166	312	261	-	51
BY SERVICE	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under /Over £000	
Allotments	- 4	- 0	- 1	-	1
Parks & Open Spaces	158	37	33	-	4
Cemeteries	8	3	2	-	5
Corporate & Democratic Management	35	8	8	-	-
Cultural & Twinning	43	6	3	-	3
Municipal Buildings	91	32	28	-	4
Other Services	46	42	42	-	-
Office Team	344	88	73	-	15
Outdoor Services	422	96	77	-	19
To General Reserve	23	-	-	-	-
Net Budget	1,166	312	261	-	51

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**Policy Committee – 15 July 2014****Appointments to Panels**

	Arts	Community Activities	Outdoor Services	Property M&M	Risk and Resources
Management /Planning members	4	4	4	4	2 Chairs + 1
Policy members	1	1	1	1	Chair + 2
Preferences					
V. Allan	X (Current)	X			
R. Biggs (None)					(Current)
A. Canning			X (Current Mgm)		X
T. Harries		X	X (Current)		
G. Jones					X (Current)
T. Jones		X			Chairman of Policy
D. Roberts				X (Current)	

Notes:

It is proposed that Risk and Resources Panel is Chairman plus two Members from Policy Committee, Chairman plus one Member from Management Committee and Chairman of the Planning and Environment Committee

The Policy Committee has 7 places and 7 members. The following suggestion allows all members to serve on a Panel near the top of their preferred choice. Some members will also serve on Traffic Panel as appointed by Planning and Environment Committee.

Arts	V. Allan
Community Activities	T. Harries
Outdoor Services	A. Canning
Property	D. Roberts
Risk & Resources	T. Jones (as Chairman) G. Jones, & R. Biggs

The Committee is invited to nominate a Chairman of the Risk & Resources Panel

ARRANGEMENTS FOR DELIVERING THE COUNCIL’S FINANCIAL SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Service Element	Function	Lead Officer(s)	Back Up for Resilience purposes
Exchequer			
Creditors (Payments out)	Code and make all payments	1.5 Admin Officers	Financial Controller, Senior Admin Officer
Payroll	Info to DCC. Check info before payment	Financial Controller	Deputy Town Clerk, Town Clerk
Debtors (Bills sent out)	Raise invoices to be sent out	All Admin Officers	Financial Controller
Payments In	Code & bank cash	Financial Controller	1.5 Admin Officers
Bank reconciliation	Weekly Bank Reconciliations	Financial Controller	Senior Admin Officer
VAT Accounting	Reconcile & submit claim. Technical checks	Financial Controller	Town Clerk, DCC VAT Accountant
Cash Out Management			
Manage Bank Payments	Authorise BACs & cheque payments		Town Clerk or Deputy plus 1 member
Make Charge Card Payments	Payments from chargecards, within set limits		Town Clerk, Deputy, Compliance Manager
Petty Cash	Maintain Petty Cash Float	1.5 Admin Officers	Financial Controller, Senior Admin Officer
Accountancy			
Management Accounts	Monthly I&E reports v. Budget	Financial Controller	Town Clerk (RFO)
Management Reporting	Provide reports to Committee	Financial Controller	Town Clerk (RFO)
Final Accounts	Close accounts, produce reports	Financial Controller	Town Clerk (RFO)
Medium Term Financial Planning	Develop MTFS options for members	Town Clerk (RFO)	Deputy Town Clerk and Financial Controller

Service Element	Function	Lead Officer(s)	Back Up for Resilience purposes
Governance			
Procurement	Major contracts only		Deputy Town Clerk, Compliance Manager
Insurances	Make all arrangements	Deputy Town Clerk	Financial Controller
Risk Management	Ensure appropriate risk management in place	Deputy Town Clerk	Financial controller
Internal Control Systems	Set controls, liaise with auditors	Financial Controller	Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk
Financial System training	Identify needs and provide training	Financial Controller	Bought in if required
Asset Registers	Oversee all asset registers	Financial Controller	Deputy Town Clerk
Treasury Management	Develop Policy & manage decisions	Town Clerk (RFO)	Financial Controller
Systems Development	Develop improvements to office systems		Financial Controller, All Admin Officers
Service financial analysis	None	Financial Controller	Town Clerk (RFO)

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**Policy Committee – 15 July 2014****Discussions with Dorset Police about Front Desk provision**

1. The Town Council received a presentation from Dorset Police at its 26th November 2013 meeting, as a result of which it resolved:

That the Council notes with regret the proposals made by the Police and Crime Commissioner, but acknowledges the dilemma that Dorset Police is facing regarding the prioritisation of its resources. The Council supports any initiative to increase Dorset Police's visibility, including the use of community space provided by other public providers, and will work to encourage co-operation across the public sector in the use of public buildings. The Council wishes to play a role in promoting awareness among residents of how they can access Police services.

2. Informal discussions between Dorset Police, West Dorset DC officers and 3 Town Clerks (Bridport, Dorchester & Sherborne) have continued, with the Police co-ordinating activity between several Departments and developing practical solutions to some of the front desk requirements, before being able to confirm their intentions.
3. Good quality statistical information has now been developed which identifies that in 2013 there were c. 1,700 visits to the front counter at Dorchester Police Station in 2013, compared to 4,500 in 2009. The significant drop results from a mix of reduced user need, but also reduced opening hours, plus greater use of mobile technology and the 101 number. That trend is likely to continue.
4. Given that numbers have fallen to an average of 8 per weekday, peaking at c. 20 in a single day, it is anticipated that Dorset Police will develop final proposals to close front desk services in Dorchester, and other towns. It is probable that some enquiries will still involve a member of the public visiting a Police Station for a pre-booked appointment to meet a front line police officer.
5. It is possible that, in the event that Dorset Police decide not to provide a front desk operation in other towns, the Town Councils there will have detailed discussions about acting as a front desk for general police enquiries. While we remain involved in the discussions about how Dorchester Town Council might support the Police for general enquiries, the lead for Dorchester has thus far been taken by West Dorset DC. There is only likely to be a need for the Town Council to be involved in detailed discussions if West Dorset DC feel unable, due to reduced staffing numbers, to provide a front desk service on behalf of the Police.
6. As and when a timetable for consultation on the removal of front desk services, and the delivery of alternative arrangements, is provided I will continue to update the Committee.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Policy Committee – 15 July 2014

Performance Management and Appraisal

1. During mid 2013, recognising the change in management with the arrival of the new Town Clerk, arrangements were put in place to provide additional dialogue between members and the new Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk. These arrangements were terminated at the 19 November Policy Committee after it was agreed that the new management arrangements had bedded in.
2. The same meeting considered a performance report on tasks that were agreed should form the Corporate Plan for the remainder of the 2013-14 financial year, and the Town Clerk subsequently reported on these to the January and May Committees.
3. At the same time Council also put in place the following member/officer appraisal arrangements: -
 - a. Town Clerk to be appraised by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Policy Committee
 - b. Deputy Town Clerk to be appraised by the Chairmen of Policy and Management Committee
4. The appraisals were concluded in April. The primary focus was on review of performance in the previous year, and there was also a recognition that additional work was needed to set new tasks and milestones for 2014/15 focused on delivering the new Corporate Plan priorities and maintaining good governance.
5. Following the conclusion of the appraisal process a review was undertaken by all those involved, which agreed a format for the tasks to be set for 2014/15, the documentation to be used, and agreed the timings of the half year (October) and end of year (April) appraisal.
6. The process for the appraisal of all other staff employee by the Council was also reviewed and agreed, with similarly timed appraisals for office and town hall staff, with an annual process for outdoor staff.
7. **It is recommended that the current arrangements are noted, are reviewed shortly after the May 2015 elections, and then every four years.**

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**Policy Committee - 15 July 2014****West Dorset District Council Service Reviews and related issues**

1. Faced with potential significant reductions in the level of government grants, West Dorset District Council (WDDC) have commenced a programme of Service Reviews, with a view to reducing their spending in the long term. The review programme is to be carried out over a 3 year period.
2. Of 22 reviews affecting West Dorset four are likely to require the Town Council to express a view about its relationship to the service in question, being: -
 - Community Planning & Development – 2014/15
 - Support for Voluntary and Community Organisations – 2014/15
 - Tourist Information Centres – 2014/15
 - Public Toilets – 2015/16
3. The remaining reviews are a mix of services where change will still affect residents in Dorchester, but with little scope for the Town Council to play a delivery or any other role (e.g. Development Management, Environmental Health, Revenues and Benefits), and central support services (IT, HR, Financial Services, etc).
4. The Town Council has already been approached regarding two reviews, Community Planning and Development, and Support for West Dorset Community and Voluntary Organisations. Councillor James, as our representative on DACP, and the Town Clerk attended a meeting in June where WDDC officers explained the review processes relating to these services.
5. With regard to Community Planning and Development the most relevant information is: -
 - The review covers a budget of c. £110,000 of grant (£c. £80,000) and officer support (1 full time post, c. £30,000) for Local Area Partnerships (LAPs)
 - The Dorchester LAP is covered by the review. We currently supplement the District's budget with £3,500 from our revenue budget
 - The options are to significantly reduce or cease funding of the LAPs, and both options will materially affect the delivery of the service in its current form
 - The views of the Town Council on what the most important components of the service are, are sought – feedback is welcomed by September
 - Following feedback WDDC officers will develop options for their members to consider, with any change being implemented after April 2017

6. With regard to Support for WD Community and Voluntary Organisations the most relevant information is: -
- The review covers a budget which might be c. £500,000 – £750,000 (still being identified) of core and one-off grants for a wide range of cultural (Arts, Museums, Events), community (CAB's?) and Leisure organisations, plus non-domestic rate relief
 - The savings target appears to allow all sectors to continue to function, but with a noticeable reduction in funding. Some of the organisations likely to be affected also receive some form of support from the Town Council. Inevitably organisations already operating within constrained budgets will look elsewhere for funding
 - Of the four reviews affecting Dorchester this is perhaps the most important, as it affects the main funding supply of several community organisations that are integral to the life of the town
 - Again the views of the Town Council on what the most important components of the service are, are sought – feedback is welcomed by September. It is hoped that further information will be made available to assist us to make comments
 - Following feedback WDDC officers will develop options for their members to consider, with any change being implemented after April 2017
7. No approach has yet been made in relation to Tourist Information Centres or Public Toilets.
- 8. The Committee may wish to set some time aside to consider developing the Town Council's position with regard to all of these services.**
9. In addition to the above, although WDDC officers have decided not to consult Town and Parish Councils before reporting to its Executive Committee, it has been identified that the Executive Committee's long term plan includes an item "To recommend that from April 2015 Town and Parish Councils are recharged for the conduct of scheduled elections to fill vacancies in their electoral area". It is understood that this item has been called in for pre-scrutiny by WDDC's Efficiency Scrutiny.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Policy Committee - 15 July 2014

Development of Dorchester Prison Site

1. At its 2 June meeting the Planning & Environment Committee resolved: -
 - i) That the Town Council proposes to West Dorset District Council that it is involved in the production of a robust Development Framework for the development of the Dorchester Prison site.
 - ii) That the Town Council works with the Dorchester Civic Society, and other relevant bodies, to influence and make a positive contribution to a Development Framework for the development of the Dorchester Prison site.
2. Informal discussions with WDDC indicate that the demands of the Local Plan Inquiry are taking priority for the Strategic Planning Team, and the timing of any disposal and subsequent development of the Prison site do not fit with the timing of the Local Plan Inquiry. There also appears to have been a shift away from prescriptive supplementary planning documents of the type that might have been used historically for a site such as the Prison. Development of the Prison site following its disposal is therefore likely to be routed through the Development Management process.
3. The Prison is being marketed by the Ministry of Justice through their agent, Jones Lang Lascalles. There is little information available to support developers to come to a view regarding the site's development potential.
4. Realistically if the Town Council wishes to influence the development of the site, before it is disposed of at a price that might narrow a developers options, it quickly needs to identify what its aspirations are for the site, then seek to influence the planning authority (WDDC) and the current owner (Ministry of Justice) that its views should be taken account of.
5. To achieve this end a Development Brief type document needs to be prepared that identifies the Town Council's aspirations for the site, any constraints that need to be observed in developing the site, and the expectations that exist within current local plan and other guidance. While much background material has already been established by the Civic Society, neither they nor the Council have time resources to create a document of sufficient quality to engage WDDC or the MoJ's agent. A specialist advisor is needed.
6. The role of the advisor would be to: -
 - Review material already assembled by the Civic Society
 - Identify the implications of the current Local Plan and any other relevant documents for the site

- Develop a list of issues that the Town Council may wish to take a view on with regard to how the site is developed (this might include issues as diverse as Housing mix, archaeology, access, etc)
 - Facilitate a discussion by a relevant body of the Town Council to establish the Council's views on how the site might be developed
 - Create a final document that pulls the above together in a coherent and professional way
 - Assist the Town Council to make contact with WDDC and the MOJ's agents to open discussions on how the Town Council's views might be taken account of
7. It is recommended that an external advisor is engaged to create a Development Brief. Responding quickly may now be a consideration, so the Chairman of the Planning & Environment Committee and the Town Clerk have already held preliminary discussions with a local planning expert who has previously worked with the Council, and who could accept a commission. The Town Clerk will identify an appropriate budget to the Committee if it wishes to accept the recommendation.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk