

Dorchester Town Council

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16 September 2015

Agenda for the meeting of the **Policy Committee** which will be held in the **Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Dorchester** on **Tuesday 22 September 2015** 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

Mayor R. Potter and Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, R. Biggs, A. Chisholm, T. Harries, S. Hosford, G. Jones (Chairman) and T. Jones.

1. Apologies

2. Minutes

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 June 2015 (adopted by Council on 21 July 2015).

3. Finance Report at 31 August 2015

A

4. Reviewing the Corporate Plan

B

5. Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership

C

6. Refurbishing the Town Walks

D

- | | | |
|------------|--|----------|
| 7. | Review of Committee and Panel processes, and appointments to Outside Bodies | E |
| 8. | Investment to reduce Utility Expenditure | F |
| 9. | Consultation regarding the future of Local Area Partnerships | G |
| 10. | Borough Gardens Bowling Green site | H |
| 11. | Dorset County Members Divisional Grants Budget
To receive information regarding latest proposals for use of the budget | |
| 12. | 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”. | |
| 13. | Town Centre Bollards | I |
| 14. | Debt Write Off | |

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
Policy Committee – 22 September 2015
Finance Report at 31 August 2015

1. Summary of Current Position

- Revisions to 2015-16 Budget since it was set - £14,400 reduction (Appendix 2)
- Month 5 underspend v. profile is £32,000 (Appendix 1)
- Key reasons - Cemetery Income (£12k), Offices Supplies (£6k)
- Currently anticipating underspend of £40-60,000 at year end

2. Cash Position at 31 August 2015

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| • Lloyds Bank (2 accounts) | £317,000 | 0.40% interest |
| • National Savings & Investments | £900,000 | 0.75% interest, £1.0 M limit |
|
Total Cash |
£1,217,000 |
(At 31 May was £1,384,000) |

3. Reserves, Balances and other Non-Budget Expenditure

- £37,000 (recent spending inc Weymouth Ave Chapel roof repairs £10,000) spent from Earmarked Reserves to date
- No current plans for spending Service Growth Reserve which receives £80,000 this year
- General Reserve likely to be £740,000 at year end, £130,000 more than £613,000 identified in 2015/16 MTFs adopted in January 2015, around £540,000 more than required for routine purposes

4. Debtors

- Debts outstanding over 30 days at 31 August is £2,341 (31 May £2,382)
- A request to write off a debt will be made at the meeting

5. Payments List

- A list of payments made between 1 June – 31 August 2015 is enclosed as a separate document. Supporting vouchers are available in the offices for inspection during normal office hours
- **RECOMMENDED** that the Payments list be approved

6. Professional Advice

- Following a procurement exercise led by Sherborne Town Council we will have access to treasury advice from Arlingclose from 1 October 2015. The fee is affordable and recognises the limited demands that we will make on their resources
- The advice will enable proper consideration to be given to new investment opportunities, essential as our short term cash flow peaked at £1.8 Million in September
- Preliminary discussions held about retaining an independent VAT advisor who focuses on the local government sector

7. External Audit 2014/15

- BDO have confirmed that they have now completed the above audit, cost £2,000
- There were no matters which came to their attention which required the issuing of a separate additional Issues Arising report
- The notice of conclusion of audit has been displayed in the Council Offices in line with requirements
- A copy of the Annual Return is attached at Appendix 3
- **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the Annual Return for 2014/15 is approved and accepted
- 2015/16 Internal work commenced 14 September

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

MANAGEMENT REPORT TO 31 August 2015

By Spend Type	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Staff	592	247	246	-1
Capital Financing	63	17	17	0
Other Payments	533	257	241	-16
To Specific Reserves	213	213	213	0
Income	-203	-72	-87	-15
Net Budget	1,198	662	630	-32

By Service	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Allotments	-5	2	2	0
Parks & Open Spaces	152	86	83	-3
Cemeteries	15	27	14	-13
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	38	17	15	-2
Cultural & Twinning	53	25	19	-5
Municipal Buildings	102	63	56	-8
Other Services	118	105	105	-0
Office Team	328	149	139	-10
Outdoor Services	397	189	197	7
Net Budget	1,198	662	630	-32

Specific Reserves	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Cemeteries	25	25	10	-15
Municipal Buildings	25	25	24	-1
Play Equipment	10	10	2	-8
Vehicles & Equipment	12	12	0	-12
Christmas Lights Replace	5	5	0	-5
Maumbury Rings s106	15	15	1	-14
Net Budget	92	92	37	-55

KEY BUDGET VARIATIONS

Service	Reason for Budget Variation	Full Year Variation
Adjustments made to 2015/16 Budget		£
Employees		
Office Team	Staff not at top of Grade	- 10,500
	Apprentice (net of WDDC grant)	3,000
	Special Item: Office Phone System	4,000
Outdoor Services	Head gardener not appointed	- 10,700
	Pensions not claimed	- 2,800
	Apprentice	6,000
Municipal Buildings	Staff rota revised due to Sunday Church	- 7,000
Supplies & Transport		
Municipal Buildings	Utilities revised due to Sunday Church	- 1,400
Parks & Opens Spaces	Special Item: John's Pond	5,600
Cemeteries	Grass Cutting	- 2,000
Other Services	CCTV - no proposals rec'd for 2015/16	- 5,000
Other Services	Apprenticeship grants to 4 parthers	6,000
Income		
Parks & Opens Spaces	Bowls Club contribution	- 3,000
Municipal Buildings	Sunday Church hire removed	8,400
Other Services	Treasury Income - higher core cash	- 5,000
		- 14,400

Section 1 – Accounting statements 2014/15 for

Enter name of reporting body here:

DORCHESTER TOWN

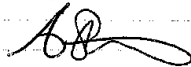
Council/Meeting

Readers should note that throughout this annual return references to a 'local council' or 'council' also relate to a parish meeting.

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2014 £	31 March 2015 £	
1 Balances brought forward	622 026	724 517	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2 (+) Annual precept	1110 439	1162 423	Total amount of precept received or receivable in the year. Excludes any grants received.
3 (+) Total other receipts	462 213	326 889	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept received (line 2). Include any grants received here.
4 (-) Staff costs	578 883	594 029	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	86 653	84 577	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the council's borrowings (if any).
6 (-) All other payments	804 625	518 748	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7 (=) Balances carried forward	724 517	1 016 255	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6)
8 Total cash and short term investments	749 985	1 003 197	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March - to agree with bank reconciliation.
9 Total fixed assets plus other long term investments and assets	6 604 866	6 628 251	The original Asset and Investment Register value of all fixed assets, plus other long term assets owned by the council as at 31 March
10 Total borrowings	586 755	532 000	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11 Disclosure note Trust funds (including charitable)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	The council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2015 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of the council and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer



Date 20/05/2015

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by the council on this date:

19/05/2015

and recorded as minute reference:

19/05/2015 MinR (2)

Signed by Chair of the meeting approving these accounting statements.



Date 03 06 2015

Section 2 – Annual governance statement 2014/15

We acknowledge as the members of:

DORCHESTER TOWN Council/Meeting

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2015, that:

	Agreed		Yes means that the council:
	Yes	No*	
1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		prepared its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law.
2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with proper practices in doing so.
4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		during the year has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the council's accounts.
5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.
6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of the council.
7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.
9 Trust funds (including charitable) – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA	has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

This annual governance statement is approved by the council and recorded as minute reference

dated 12/12
19/05/2015

Signed by:

Chair [Signature]
dated 03 06 2015

Signed by:

Clerk [Signature]
dated 20/05/2015

*Note: Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how the council will address the weaknesses identified.

Section 3 – External auditor certificate and report 2014/15 Certificate

We certify that we have completed our review of the annual return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Audit Commission Act 1998 as transitionally saved, for the year ended 31 March 2015 in respect of:

DORCHESTER TOWN

Council/Meeting

Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

The body is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The body prepares an annual return in accordance with proper practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2015; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are important to our audit responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to review the annual return in accordance with guidance issued by the Audit Commission (see note below). Our work does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

External auditor report

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the council:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

External auditor signature

External auditor name

BDO LLP Southampton
United Kingdom

Date

20/7/15

BDO LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales (with registered number OC305127).

Note: The Audit Commission issued guidance in its Standing Guidance, which is applicable to external auditors' work on 2014/15 accounts.

Section 4 – Annual internal audit report 2014/15 to

DORCHESTER TOWN

Council/Meeting

The council's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2015.

Internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the council's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the council.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose only one of the following		
	Yes	No	Not covered
A Appropriate accounting records have been kept properly throughout the year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
B The council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
C The council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
D The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
E Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
F Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
G Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
H Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
I Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
J Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
K Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

For any other risk areas identified by the council (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:

Name of person who carried out the internal audit ROSIE BARKIN-MILLER LLR(HONS) FCA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit  Date 24/04/2015

If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, internal audit must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**Policy Committee – 22 September 2015****Review of the Corporate Plan**

1. The last meeting of the Committee resolved to review the Corporate Plan, noting that the Council held over £500,000 in the General Reserve and had capacity to spend £80,000 on new service provision.
2. An informal briefing of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the committee has identified a timetable as follows: -
 - October - Informal Member Theme events
 - November - Update report to Policy Committee
 - January - Draft Corporate Plan for decision by Council, including Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2016/17
 - February/April – Public Consultation on the draft Corporate Plan
 - May – adoption of final Corporate Plan
3. The October informal Member theme events could cover
 - Economy & Heritage – Public Sector, Retail, Heritage Tourism inc Museums
 - Housing – Housing Market and Affordable Housing, possible sites, Local Plan
 - Traffic, Parking and Public Transport – DTEP, Car Parks, Park & Ride
 - Community Wellbeing and Culture – Health provision, Sports, Arts, Section 106 monies
 - Two 1 ¼ hour sessions on each of two Tuesday evenings running from 6.00 pm – 9.00pm
4. Each event, open to all members of Council, would use the existing Corporate Plan as a start point, recognise changes that have happened since March 2014 when it was first drafted and begin to highlight priorities for future development. The Town Clerk would seek to engage a suitable local professional to facilitate each session.
5. The Town Clerk would produce a draft report updating Policy Committee regarding possible key changes in November, to seek direction for the final draft to be presented in January as part of the budget setting process.
6. Appropriate consultation would then be carried out with partners, interested groups and the wider community, with any feedback informing a final plan to be adopted in May 2016.
7. Once adopted an update report would be produced twice a year identifying progress. An annual refresh of the document would take place during the life of the Council, which would not go through the above process unless Members wished to significantly change direction.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**Policy Committee – 22 September 2015****Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership**

1. The Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (DLEP) was formed around 5 years ago as a response to a Government initiative to replace regional government with a looser arrangement that brought local government and the business community together to focus on economic growth. DLEP covers the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole area.
2. Government subsequently decided to allocate significant sums of national funding through LEPs, who were required to produce a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) to identify where investment would help create economic growth. Between March 2014 and January 2015 DLEP were allocated £79.0 Million for priority projects, the significant majority of which was allocated to the Bournemouth and Poole conurbation.
3. Earlier this year there was discussion about how the western part of the county could benefit from any future release of government funding, which led to the development of the West Dorset Growth Corridor concept. In early summer, during discussions regarding parking and traffic in support of the DTEP project, it became clear that there were a number of Dorchester projects, existing and emerging, that fitted with the LEP's aims.
4. In readiness for any future release of Government funds and to refresh their project list the LEP called for Expressions of Interest to be submitted to them by 31 August. Working with advice from District Council colleagues the Town Clerk authored two bids based on milestones in our current Corporate Plan, the projects being: -
 - Heritage Tourism in Dorchester (total project £200,000, DLEP expression £100,000) – a project to build a collective vision for Heritage tourism in the town and then promote it, to carry out a programme of minor improvements to informal heritage sites and work with education providers to provide a supply of workers to the heritage tourism sector
 - Affordable Housing in Dorchester (total project £10M, DLEP expression £1M, net cost of project £1M) – a project to release public sector land in the town for affordable housing projects targeted at meeting the ongoing, long term needs of young workers
5. The Town Clerk has also worked with Dorset County Council who are leading a project focused on DTEP, Traffic and Parking which will be discussed at a future DTEP Steering Group meeting.
6. The Committee will be kept informed of any developments and the Corporate Plan review will consider how the Town Council might play a role in supporting the delivery of any successful funding allocations.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
Policy Committee – 22 September 2015
Refurbishing the Town Walks

1. The Committee received a report on 23 June outlining progress on the project, resolving as follows: -

That, subject to obtaining a memorandum of understanding with Dorset County Council covering the whole scheme, the Town Council adopt a strategy to refurbish and transfer responsibility for the Town Walks as follows:

- *Undertake phase 1 works (Hardy's Statue to Trinity Street plus the access point at Northernhay) at a cost of c. £150,000, to be funded by a contribution of £45,000 from Dorset County Council, the balance to be met from the Town Walks Reserve, including the transfer of the footpath to the Highway Authority*
 - *Once Phase 1 is completed, consider options for funding further stretches of the Walks in South Walks Road, followed by Colliton Park and ultimately East Walks*
2. A draft Memorandum of Understanding has been forwarded to Dorset County Council and their response is awaited.
 3. During discussions in June the Town Clerk agreed to obtain the cost of resurfacing the Walks in a different colour. These are attached at Appendix 1 along with the issues that would arise were an alternative colour to be chosen. This option will not be pursued unless an instruction is received to the contrary.
 4. Dorset County Council have included the refurbishment of the latter phases of the Walks in an Expression of Interest for funding from the Dorset LEP.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

Resurfacing the Walks in a different colour

1. The cost of resurfacing and then transferring Phase 1 of the Walks (Hardy's Statue to Trinity Street) is **£144,000**, comprising construction works of £91,000, Miscellaneous and Adoption costs of £28,000, and an Optimism Bias of £25,000.
2. Dorset County Council have identified two options to produce an alternative colour finish as follows: -
 - Pre-coloured Tarmac (red) increasing the known overall cost to **£158,000**
 - Adding a painted colour to the surface after laying the tarmac, increasing the known overall cost to **£178,000**
3. The chief benefit would be to differentiate The Walks from their surrounding and recognise their special status
4. In providing these quotations Dorset County Council have identified the following reasons why providing an alternative colour should not be considered, as follows: -
 - The cost of installation is higher, and would need to be met solely by Dorchester Town Council
 - A non-standard finish is likely to incur additional commuted sums for future maintenance (an uplift has not been included in the costing above)
 - Any reinstatements following repairs or Statutory Undertaker's work are likely to be in black tarmac as coloured material is not available in small quantities
 - It is questionable whether any alternative colouring would meet English Heritage approval – the Walks are a scheduled ancient monument and where it can be argued that resurfacing in black tarmac is not a major departure from the current character, the introduction of a new colour would affect the character of the Walks
5. The Town Council team have identified some additional concerns: -
 - Staining from tree material is likely to be far more visible on a lighter surface than on a dark surface
 - The clear differentiation between the colour of the Walks and connecting paths and surfaces may be incongruous
 - During the phasing period, which could be as long as a decade there will be two very different finishes for the Walks
 - The paths are likely to discolour over time, so matching repairs will become increasingly difficult

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**Policy Committee – 22 September 2015****Review of Committee Arrangements**

1. At Council in July it was agreed that a short review of current meeting arrangements should take place in time for the next Council meeting on 29 September. The components of the review are:
 - A preliminary discussion at Council on 21 July
 - A short questionnaire to all members
 - A discussion paper produced by two Chairmen regarding the allocation of work between Planning & Environment and Policy
 - The opportunity for each Committee to review the evidence gathered and comment to Council
 - Any revisions to existing arrangements agreed at Council on 29 September

Committee Processes

2. 13 questionnaires have been returned at 31 August, with feedback regarding Committee meetings summarised in Appendix 1. In summary Members are generally satisfied with the Committee process, with a few suggestions for improvements.
3. The Chairmen of Planning & Environment and Policy met with the Town Clerk in August to discuss how their Committees operate and how they relate to the Corporate Plan. Some suggestions for change are included in Appendix 2.

Panel Processes

4. The Questionnaire responses produced no clear view on changes to the Panel process and are not easy to summarise. To facilitate discussion some suggestions, based on the comments made supplemented by officer contributions, are included at Appendix 3. Members may wish to provide feedback on the suggestions relating to this Committee's Panels.
5. The Committee's feedback in relation to this Committee and the Panels it oversees is sought.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK ON COMMITTEES

Question	Yes	No	Comments
<p>With regard to meetings of Full Council</p> <p>Do you wish to receive a guest speaker at each meeting of Council?</p> <p>Do you support moving public Question time to the beginning and incorporate it into the meeting</p>	6 11	7 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided speakers are saying something new • Happy with guest speakers, but not every meeting • Make more use of Special Meetings • Needs to be time limited • Don't integrate into meeting • Public would leave after questions • Suggest regular update by WDDC/DCC Members
<p>With regard to Policy Committee</p> <p>Do you feel its overall remit is clear?</p> <p>Does it look at the right issues/operate at the right level?</p> <p>Does it have the right number of Members?</p>	8 7 7	2 2 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inc. responsibility for Buildings, Arts, Grants, Civic and Twinning, Cemeteries • Not enough Members understand its remit • Needs greater strategic planning focus and capacity • Current remit too narrow – greater focus on strategic aims, partnership working and influencing
<p>With regard to Management Committee</p> <p>Do you feel its overall remit is clear?</p> <p>Does it look at the right issues/operate at the right level?</p> <p>Does it have the right number of Members?</p>	7 8 7	1 0 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should focus on Outdoor services, transferring some services to Policy (see above) • Too focused on detailed management rather than overview of service • Would be more effective with fewer members
<p>With regard to Planning & Environment Committee</p> <p>Do you feel its overall remit is clear?</p> <p>Does it look at the right issues/operate at the right level?</p> <p>Does it have the right number of Members?</p>	10 11 9	2 1 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus only on Dev. Control every other month, or separate out other issues • Too many Members, need training, WDDC take the decisions

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many Members, fix number • Too much of a catchall for anything not traditionally provided by DTC • Remit too wide
Domestics at Council and Committees Are you happy with the frequency of meetings? Are you happy with the 7.00pm start? Are you happy with the venue? Are you happy with the layout of the papers? What is your preferred meeting length?	 13 11 13 13 1 6 4	 0 1 0 0 1 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Management in alternate months • 7.30pm start • Should not feel obliged to always meet in Council Chamber • Meetings should take as long or short as needed

REVIEW OF PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEES

As agreed at Council in July, Councillors Gareth Jones (Chairman of Policy Committee) and Susie Hosford (Chairman of Planning & Environment Committee) met with the Town Clerk as part of the review of Committee arrangements to be considered by Council at its meeting on 29 September.

The general issues we considered were

- The workload of the P&E Committees, and particularly the tension between the need to give proper attention to the high volume of Development Control applications and wider issues affecting the town and its environment, e.g. DTEP, parking charges, community planning
- The mechanism needed to deliver newer aspects of the Corporate Plan, e.g. influencing other tiers with regard to Parking and Traffic, Affordable Housing etc
- The need to be more proactive in our contact with other agencies rather than reactive

The two Chairmen agreed to propose to Council that the Terms of Reference of the two Committees should be clarified to enable P&E (to be renamed “Planning”) to focus on

- Responding to West Dorset DC and Dorset CC on planning applications
- Making observations to Dorset CC advocating and in response to proposal related specifically to Traffic Regulation Orders
- Making observations to consultations from West Dorset DC and Dorset CC regarding high level plans (Local Development Plan, Waste Plan, etc)

With Policy Committee focusing on

- Managing the Council’s role to influence partners, in line with the Corporate Plan and partnership working with organisations focusing on strategic delivery inc DCC and WDDC, Local Area Partnership
- Financial Control
- Strategic use of the Council’s Assets (deciding how each asset should be used), and management issues relating to the Council’s workforce

When a new major site emerges, e.g. Dorchester Prison, Charles Street a discussion should take place between the two Committee Chairmen to establish which Committee is most relevant in developing the Council’s views on the site.

Revisions to the Panel Process

The questionnaire identified a number of benefits and disbenefits of the current Panel process

Pros

- Ability to focus in depth, including more time, on a specific subject
- Small Group working is rewarding for members and officers – interest, ownership
- Flexible, informal - Allows site visits
- Good way of involving new Councillors in an informal environment
- Opportunity for Task & Finish
- Can discuss and decide things between Committees (technically this is incorrect)
- Allows for Member's Specialist knowledge to be used
- (Not mentioned in the questionnaire responses) – Allows for partners to meet with Town Council informally
- Catalyst – could be a starting point for an idea

Cons

- Too infrequent – often difficult to organise a meeting
- Non-members can feel left out
- Risk that they become “My Panel” – territorial
- Can be overlong and doesn't prevent further discussion at Committee – many items could go straight to Committee
- Lack of meetings = work pushed up to main Committees
- Don't cover some of the newer issues arising from the Corporate Plan

An alternative approach that delivers the benefits and reduces the disbenefits might be

Committee	Panel	2014/15 workload	Alternative Approach
Planning & Environment	Traffic	Did not meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider as part of review of workload of P&E Cttee • Ensure does not duplicate role of DTEP Steering Gp
Policy	Risk & Resources	1 meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Register 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One report direct to Policy each November
Management	Arts	2 meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorchester Arts • Maumbury Rings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twice yearly activity report to Management covering events and work with DA
Management	Community Activities	3 meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW1 • Grants • Twinning • Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater role for Outside Bodies reps • Task & Finish Groups • Named Community Activities Councillor • Greater role for Mayor & Deputy • Grant window and report to Management • Greater discretion for officers to make assets available

Management	Property Management & Maint.	1 meeting • Site visits	• Bi-annual site visit of all sites on fixed days, open to all Cttee members, led by Chair/Vice Chair. Report finding to Cttee
Management	Outdoor Services	Did not meet	• Integrate into site visits rota. All sites visited once over life of Council
-	Task & Finishes	1 subject, 2 mtgs • Dorch Arts move	• Greater use of Task & Finish, particularly by Policy to develop Corp Plan ideas

Advantages of the outlined approach

- More efficient use of officer time, less bureaucratic
- Fixed daytime dates for site visits give clarity
- Legitimises use of Task & Finish Groups for Corporate Plan projects

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Policy Committee – 22 September 2015

Investment to reduce Utility Expenditure

1. The June Policy Committee received a report regarding budgeted expenditure of £65,000 each year on supplies of Electricity, Gas, Phone, Water, and Sewerage services to c. 20 sites across the town.
2. The Town Clerk indicated that he was evaluating options to invest in infrastructure that would reduce both financial and environmental costs of running facilities. Since June a number of meetings have been held to consider potential investments to reduce costs, including: -
 - Water charges in the Borough Gardens – a proposal to install a borehole at a cost of c. £15,000 is being evaluated, which could reduce water and sewerage costs by as much as £10,000 a year. There will also be consideration of how an irrigation system might reduce watering time spent by grounds staff.
 - A range of minor interventions to gas and electric systems at the Municipal Buildings, costing c. £5,000 with the aim of reducing the budget by £1,000 - £2,000 a year
 - The decommissioning of the office, staff work room and toilets at Weymouth Avenue Cemetery and a revised heating system for the Chapel on site – costs of £5,000 could result in a budget reduction of £1,500 a year
 - A review of our alarm arrangements focused on reducing costs by c. £2,000 a year, with minimal up-front costs
 - A supplier has been identified to supply the new phone system discussed at the last meeting, for which a budget of £4,000 was reserved
3. Investigations continue and further meetings will identify more options as well as develop those identified above. Rather than report on them seeking funding for individual projects it is proposed that an Energy and Operational Efficiency Reserve is created and that a programme of works is implemented with a focus on making infrastructure interventions and changes in operational practice to reduce overall utility consumption. The Reserve would aim to make changes with an average payback of four years.
4. The Committee may wish to receive half yearly reports identifying usage and consequent budget reductions to enable progress to be monitored. This would also enable reductions in overall energy and other consumption data to be monitored.
5. It is **RECOMMENDED** that £40,000 is set aside as an Energy and Operational Efficiency Reserve.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Policy Committee – 22 September 2015

Consultation regarding future of Local Area Partnerships

1. A system of Community Planning has been in place since 2001, introduced as a response to the Local Government Act 2000 which introduced the need for community strategies to promote economic social and community well-being.
2. West Dorset DC set up the West Dorset Community Partnership, plus Local Area Partnerships centred on the main population centres, including the Dorchester Local Area Partnership to which it committed c. £17,500 pa funding.
3. The requirements of the legislation were subsequently watered down, and West Dorset have now reached the stage where it is reviewing whether funding at current levels can be justified, or afforded.
4. The Dorchester Local Area Partnership has operated as part forum/part facilitator, bringing together a wide number of groups from the Dorchester local area to discuss issues, as well as supporting the development of a wider variety of community initiatives and helping them to become established. There are Local Area Partnerships based on the other market towns in the district.
5. As part of a Service Review (final report available at <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/article/988/Executive-Committee>) the District Council has considered a number of options for future service delivery that reduce but continue to provide some funding to local area partnership. They now want our views are on the following
 - Funding - WDDC would continue to provide EITHER
 - 50% of current funding levels (£8,750 to Dorchester but much less to some partners), sufficient in Dorchester to meet 7 hours per week of a co-ordinator OR
 - £6,000 a year each to 5 partnerships, sufficient to meet 5 hours per week of a co-ordinator
 - Informally WDDC are inviting Dorchester TC to, as a minimum, maintain our contribution of £3,500 (additional 3 hours pw), and to consider whether it can be increased to provide additional co-ordinator capacity
 - WDDC are looking to develop a model where Local Partnerships become self-funding by raising funds for partnership projects, from which they will receive a management charge
 - WDDC will provide 2 part time Community Development Facilitators, shared with WPBC, to support local co-ordinators, and will promote co-operation between the local area partnerships
 - WDDC also wish to explore whether the best delivery model is through volunteer Town Councils or through an existing local body, e.g. Dorset Community Action

6. In shaping our response to the proposal the following issues need to be considered:

- WDDC's definition of the local area extends much further than any definition we would recognise, due to a historic need to include all parishes in one of the areas of the district
- The Dorchester local area is not strongly supported by Parish Councils and only DTC makes a financial contribution to support it
- There is currently little contact between DTC and surrounding parishes (Charminster, Stinsford, etc) and between DTC and larger parishes in our hinterland (Puddletown, Crossways, Cerne Abbas etc)
- From an economic perspective the greater need is for closer links with Weymouth and Chickerell, neither of which are in the existing "Local Area" boundary
- A reduction in funding from £17,500 to £8,750 or £6,000 pa necessitates the ending of one arrangement and the creation of a new arrangement. The change is too great to try to carry on with the old arrangement
- Our Corporate Plan recognises the need to develop our role as a facilitator of co-operation between organisations in our own community, and also to take account of the needs of parishes whose residents recognise Dorchester as their local town
- The LAP has brought benefits, some tangible (see Appendix), others less easy to evaluate

7. Possible responses are:-

- DTC believes that WDDC should provide £x,000 of funding because...
- DTC wants to be part of a revamped local area partnership and is willing to commit £x,000 to that partnership AND DTC wants to act as host/wishes the partnership to be hosted by another body, OR
- DTC does not want to fund or be directly involved in a local area partnership and will develop its own arrangements for encouraging working with key partners within the town

8. West Dorset DC are seeking responses to their preferred option by 16 November. The Committee's instruction is sought.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

Ten outcomes of the Dorchester Local Area Partnership's work

- Dorchester Speak Easy – English language classes (started following a hate crime incident in the town)
- Initiation of the One World Festival – now annual
- Friends of the West Station (sub group) – making a real difference to the appearance of the station
- Dorchester West Station access project – raised £26,500 towards the project
- Community lunches – a networking opportunity for organisations
- Dorchester Try This... a partnership skills share event (coming up for its third year)
- Access audits undertaken by the Access for All Group – input into centres such as the Shire Hall and Hardy's Visitor Centre
- Input into DCC's drop kerb programme – Access for All Group
- Investigation of a possible lengthsman scheme for the surrounding parishes – limited interest so not taken forward
- Progressing a cycleway between Dorchester and Broadmayne

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Policy Committee – 22 September 2015

Borough Gardens Bowling Green site

Introduction

1. The future use of the site of the Bowling Green in the Borough Gardens has been unresolved since the Club disbanded 6 years ago. A number of temporary arrangements have been applied in the intervening period, but there has never been a single obvious solution.
2. Management Committee considered a report by the Deputy Town Clerk at its 15 September meeting (Appendix 1), which reported on public consultation carried out during Love Parks Day. The results were inconclusive. The Committee resolved as follows:

“That Policy Committee be requested to identify a suitable budget to carry out preliminary design works for a project that could incorporate relocated tennis courts, a seating or picnic area, the existing grass free lawn, crazy golf and a quiet space in the Borough Gardens and a climbing boulder in the Gardens or at another location in the town.”

Tennis Courts

3. There are two tennis courts in the Borough Gardens, open all year round, and two more courts adjacent to Trinity St car park, open for around 8 months. The Borough Gardens courts are in good condition but will need some maintenance within two years. The Trinity St courts are in good condition but are used infrequently in the winter due to leaf fall and tree resin on the surface.
4. The Council’s new Tennis Fob scheme, in place since June 2014, now has around 170 fob holders compared to the previous 45 season ticket holders and casual play arrangement. Income levels are broadly in line with previous years and there has been a shift in the administrative burden from the Gardens to Office staff. Most importantly the Council now has good quality data (attached) to base future tennis court provision on.
5. Interpreting the data simply it suggests that courts are in use around 25% of daylight hours. During the first year in the summer months there were 112 occasions when 3 courts were in use and 45 when all four courts were in use. There were 80 occasions when both Gardens courts were in use during the winter months. If anything the data is likely to overstate usage due to fobholders sharing the same court.
6. The data suggests that the optimum number of courts for current levels of usage is three, available all year round. The current user base would need to increase significantly before a fourth court is justified and the Town Clerk is in discussions with St Osmunds CSC about the potential for extending the fob system to include their 3 outdoor floodlit courts.

Garden Space

7. The Borough Gardens are of sufficient size to accommodate all current uses, although in good weather several larger events over the last two years (Cinema night, Cider festival, Love Parks, WARM, One World) are testing capacity.

8. A key issue for the Bowling Green space is its separation from the rest of the Gardens by the fencing surrounding the tennis courts. The fencing also impinges on the setting of the Gardens clock and limits views down the length of the gardens.
9. As a result of being isolated large numbers of young people congregate on the Green in the early summer months. Most of the time this is not an issue, but in recent years there have been several instances of anti-social behaviour, which is unpleasant for other Gardens users and for staff. Banning orders have been issued in each of the last two years.
10. The isolation extends to Borough Gardens House, which sits in one corner with a high hedge acting as a barrier between it and the adjacent nursery and the Bowling Green. Usage levels reflect this isolation.

Options

11. Previous discussions have revolved around three broad themes: -
 - Do nothing – the unsustainable holding position. Low cost but leaves the long term future unresolved, with attendant anti-social behaviour problems
 - More garden space – the space remains isolated. Increased maintenance costs with no guarantee that anti-social problems will be resolved
 - New facilities provision – ideas have included a putting green and crazy golf – this provide a new service, but likely to run at a deficit, the space remains separate
12. A recent informal member/officer discussion focused on putting two tennis courts on the Bowling Green on the West Walks side, removing the one nearest the Gardens clock, and decommissioning the two Trinity St courts (a plan is attached). This provides the following benefits and disbenefits
 - It removes half of the barrier between the Bowling Green and the Gardens
 - In turn this open up sightlines to and from Borough Gardens House and could allow for a new gateway from Bowling Alley Walk
 - Three tennis courts are available all year round with two tennis courts accessible outside park opening hours directly from a gate to the Walks, allowing twilight play
 - The Clock will be placed into better surroundings, with the opportunity of new garden space on the removed court
 - The Trinity St courts land could be reused to support the Council's corporate objectives in relation to Affordable Housing or Parking
 - There is however a cost, estimated at £150,000, to introduce courts and remodel the Gardens. This would not attract s106 monies as there is no overall gain in provision, but the Trinity St courts site would have a realisable financial value that is likely to offset much of the cost. Grants may also be available
13. Preliminary discussions with DCC's Landscape Team have indicated they are interested in providing a design and management service for the project. It is **RECOMMENDED** that £5,000 is allocated from the General Reserve to undertake preliminary designs and costing options for a scheme based on the idea outlined in para 12.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 15 SEPTEMBER 2015

BOROUGH GARDENS BOWLING GREEN – OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

1. At the last meeting of the Committee it was agreed that a consultation be undertaken at the annual Love Parks event on options, previously identified by Members, for the future use of the bowling green in the Borough Gardens.
2. Some 101 responses were received. Many thanks to Councillors Molly Rennie, Stella Jones and Janet Hewitt who all spent a considerable amount of time helping with the consultation on the day.
3. The outcome of the consultation is as follows:-

Proposal	Preference	%
Continue with the grass free lawn / wildflower area	26	13
Seating / picnic area	37	19
Sculpture display area	7	3.5
Crazy golf course	31	15.5
Bee hives enclosure	9	4.5
Climbing boulder	25	12.5
Tea shop / kiosk	8	4
Relocate the gardens tennis court(s) to the bowling green and open up the main gardens area	31	15.5
Quiet space for older community, with scented plants, a variety of textured foliage etc, together with wheelchair friendly paths	25	12.5

4. The consultation produced no clear preference with what to do with the area. However a number of the preferred options naturally link together into one scheme – grass free lawn, seating / picnic area, tennis courts and a quiet space – these options together account for 60% of the responses.
5. Additionally, at the last Democracy Day event, the young people themselves identified their top priority as a free access climbing facility in the town – if this facility could be incorporated into an overall scheme for the Gardens then 72.5% of the preferred options would be accommodated and would also show the young people that their voices are heard.
6. If Members support a scheme based on paragraphs 4 and 5 above, Policy Committee will be asked to identify some initial funding so as to enable a detailed scheme with costings etc to be drawn up. Preliminary discussions have been held with Dorset County Council Landscape Team who are keen to work with the Council in progressing this project.

Steve Newman
Deputy Town Clerk