Dorchester Town Council

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30 July 2026

Agenda for the meeting of the **Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel**, which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, HIGH EAST STREET, DORCHESTER on WEDNESDAY 5th AUGUST 2026 at 5.30pm**.

Charmaine Denny
Town Clerk

Public Attendance and Speaking at the Meeting

The Chair has discretion to allow members of the public to speak at the meeting. If you wish to speak please **contact the Clerk by 9.00am on the morning of the meeting**. We ask speakers to confine their comments to the matter in hand and to be as brief as possible.

Member Code of Conduct: Declaration of Interests

Members are reminded that it is their responsibility to disclose interests where appropriate. A Member who declares any interest must leave the room. A Member who declares a registerable interest as a Council nominee to a partner organisation may first address the meeting as a member of the public.

Membership of the Committee (Quorum 3)

Councillors P. Dickenson (DC), S. Jones (DTC), K. Reid (DTC), M. Rennie (DTC), R. Tarr (DC), S. Williams (DC).

Agenda

1. Apologies

2. Declaration of Interests

To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or personal interest as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their decision councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration. If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

5. Minutes – Page 3

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the panel held on 3rd June 2026 (enclosed).

6. Markets Operation Update – Page 6

To consider a report by the Markets Officer (enclosed).

7. Markets Future Vision – Page 8

To consider a report by the Markets Officer (enclosed).

8. Financial Outturn Report 2025/26 – Page 9

To consider a report by Dorset Council's Senior Accountant on the annual budget and the annual outturn for 2025/26 (Report enclosed. Accounts attached).

9. 2026-27 - Financial Update – Page 12

To consider a report by the Financial Officer (enclosed).

Dorchester Town Council

Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel

3 June 2026

Present: Councillors P. Dickenson, S. Jones, K. Reid, M. Rennie, R. Tarr and S. Williams.

Apologies: There were no apologies.

1. **Election of Chair 2026-7**

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved

That Councillor M. Rennie be elected Chair for the remainder of the 2026-27 Council Year.

2. **Election of Vice-Chair 2026-7**

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved

That Councillor K. Reid be elected Vice Chair for the remainder of the 2026-27 Council Year.

3. **Declaration of Interests**

No declarations of interest were declared.

4. **Markets Operation - Update**

The Panel considered a report by the Markets Officer which updated it on the work undertaken to date to ensure a successful handover of the Fairfield market operation to the Town Council from the previous contractor. It also updated Members on the activity of the Cornhill Market which was also now operated by the Town Council.

Members were informed that the Town Council had appointed a new Markets and Communications Officer who would be helping with promotion of the market and all other aspects of running a market, so he would be in a position to continue with that work once the temporary Markets Officer position ended in a couple of years.

In regard to promotion the Panel felt that it was important not to forget traditional print advertising in local newspapers, local magazines, posters etc.

It was reported that the possibility of a new Monday market was being investigated to operate in Cornhill and further down South Street in front of the vacant shops and banks.

Resolved

That the Markets operation – Update report be noted.

5 **Markets – A Future Vision**

Members considered a report by the Markets Officer which put forward a number of options in regard to developing the Markets offer at Fairfield. The document was a first draft and would evolve as different interested parties submitted their views and ideas.

The report set out thoughts and ideas for discussion in respect of Fairfield, the indoor market, North Linney's, South Linney's, Fairfield lock ups, car park area, site maintenance and improvements to buildings.

The Panel considered the options for the indoor market and felt that it should remain and that some urgent attention be given to it to make it watertight and to significantly improve its appearance. Members were circulated with a drawing showing what the building could look like if the proposed works to re-clad the building, improve signage and repair the roof were agreed. The total cost of the improvements was £70,000 proposed to be funded jointly by the Panel and Town Council. Dorset Council to fund the works to the North Linney's.

Members felt that if work was proposed for the roof then the installation of solar panels should be considered.

It was reported that a pre planning application was to be submitted shortly in respect of the proposal, previously agreed by the Panel, to remove a part of the North Linney's due to their unsafe condition.

In regard to minor site maintenance works it was proposed that the Town Council and Dorset Council establish an agreement to allow minor maintenance works to be arranged by the Town Council, using local traders whenever possible, and then reclaimed from Dorset Council as freehold owner. All works to be previously agreed by Dorset Council. This would allow for works to be carried out swiftly.

Members felt that the Bullring would be a good location for displaying information about the heritage of the market, tourism information and should be young people friendly

The Fairfield Road water garden project was due to commence in the autumn and Members requested that Chris Peck, Dorset Council, be invited to the next meeting to give the Panel an update on progress.

Resolved

(1) That the works proposed to improve the indoor market building, at a cost of £70,000, be approved, funded jointly by the Panel and Dorchester Town Council.

(2) That the possibility of having solar panels on the indoor market roof be investigated.

(3) That discussions take place between officers of Dorset Council and the Town Council with a view to establishing a protocol for minor site maintenance.

(4) That Chris Peck, Dorset Council, be invited to the next meeting to give the Panel an update on progress in respect of the Fairfield Road water garden project.

6. **2026-27 Financial Update**

The Panel had before it a report from the Responsible Financial Officer which gave an update on the financial position of the Markets Panel.

It was noted that the 2025-26 outturn report was not yet available.

<u>**Resolved**</u>

That the Financial Update be noted.

Chair……………………………………………………………………….

Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel

5th August 2026

Report of the Markets Officer

1. Fairfield Indoor Market Improvements

1.1 Following the previous approval of £35,000 finance from the Joints Markets Panel at Dorchester Town Councils Policy Committee held on 20th July 2026 they also agreed a contribution of £35,000 towards the Fairfield indoor market improvements.

1.2 The Markets Officer has held meetings with Dorset Council officers to explore the best way forward to carry out the improvement works to the main indoor market building. This is ongoing and it is hoped that an agreement will be in place to start works in the Autmn.

1.3 These works initially will concentrate on the cladding to the indoor market and repairs to the roof to make the building fit for purpose.

1.4 The agreement will enable Dorchester Town Council to become the principal contractor for the works, project managed by the Markets Officer

1.5 Other works discussed were replacing the large rows of fluorescent lighting with 6-8 LED floodlights internally, the replacement of 2 extractor fans on each gable of the building and replacing a timer control for the covered building

1.6 The Markets Officer has met with Low Carbon Dorset on site to assess an application for Solar Panels to the roof. The meeting went well and it is proposed to move forward with this scheme and appoint an energy professional to complete and submit the application.

1.6 Pre planning advice has been sought and received from Dorset Council on the proposed removal of the North Linney's. Following the advice received it is felt that plans to give an overall holistic view of how the site isto be in the future would be beneficial.

1.7 The Markets Officer has also met with Parking Services at Dorset Council and have considered actions that will enable all parties to operate the site more efficiently going forward

2. Car Boot

2.1 The Car Boot continues to be well attended, with no immediate changes are being considered.

3. Cornhill

3.1 Cornhill bookings remain low. A Monday Market has been launched and has seen a small increase in the number of traders attending. Officers will continue to promote this going forward.

Recommendations

It is recommended that: -

- Officers continue to work with Dorset Council and appoint a contractor for the improvement works for Fairfield Indoor Market
- An energy professional is appointed to complete and submit an application to Low Carbon Dorset for the procurement, installation and Commissioning of a Solar System for the indoor market at a cost of up to £4,000. To also include an assessment for further car charging points in the future as well as LED lighting for the whole site.

Daryl Chambers

Markets Officer

Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel

5th August 2026

Dorchester Markets a Vision for the Future

1. Background

1.1 At the Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel meeting that was held in June 2026 members considered a report by the Markets Officer which put forward a number of options in regard to developing the Markets offer at Fairfield. It was detailed that the document was a first draft and would evolve as different interested parties submitted their views and ideas.

1.2 Since the last meeting of the panel, officers have received feedback from Dorset Council regarding the pre planning advice that was sought for the potential removal of the North Linneys. This advice has led to officers believing that it would be best to create a masterplan document for the site

2. Masterplan Document

2.1 A masterplan would provide the Council, Markets Panel and all partners a clear, long term shared direction for the site

2.2 The masterplan should include a vision for the whole site; including:

- Indoor market
- North Linney's
- South Linney's
- Toilet building lock ups
- Car Park Area

2.3 In addition the masterplan would detail stages and priorities of delivery e.g. which projects should be delivered first

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Panel agree for a contractor be procured to produce a masterplan document for the markets site and for the costs of this be paid for from the market's panels budget

Daryl Chambers

Markets Officer

Dorchester Markets Joint Informal Panel
5 August 2026
Financial Outturn Report 2025/26

For Decision

Cabinet Member and Portfolio: Cllr G Taylor, Public Health, Environmental Health, Housing, Community Safety and Regulatory Service

Director: Sam Crowe,Executive Director Housing, Communities and Prevention

Report Author: Steve Gorson
Job Title: Senior Accountant
Tel: 01305 221571
Email: steve.gorson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

Markets in Dorchester have operated since Anglo Saxon times and are prescriptive. Under an agreement dated 1984 the markets are managed by Dorset Council for the benefit of Dorset Council and Dorchester Town Council with operational oversight carried out by the Dorchester Markets Joint Informal Panel. The Markets income and expenditure is held within the accounts of Dorset Council. The Panel receives a report on the annual budget and the annual outturn.

Recommendation:

That Members of the panel approve the income and expenditure statement for 2025/26 (attached).

Reason for Recommendation:

To enable Members of the panel to consider and approve the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2026.

1. **Budget 2025/26**

1.1 The Panel agreed a budget for 2025/26 at a meeting on the 29th January 2025. The expenditure budget was set at £47,386, with the gross income budget set at £169,788, leaving a budgeted surplus for distribution of £122,402.

2. **Outturn 2025/26**

2.1 Actual expenditure incurred during 2025/26 totalled £63,686 against a budget of £47,386, resulting in an overspend of £16,300. This is primarily due to increased costs water costs due to a water leak and additional costs related to the Public

Toilets at the Market site. There is a small saving on the Electricity budget that helps to partially offset the Water overspends.

2.2 Included in the £47,386 total expenditure budget was a line for Repairs & Maintenance (R&M) with a budget of £19,600. This budget line had a nil variance in 2025/26. Actual R&M expenditure incurred during the year was only £5,172, with the balance of £14,428 being transferred into the Market Maintenance Earmarked Reserve. This treatment is consistent with prior financial years.

2.3 The total income accounted for during 2025/26 was £122,670 against a budget of £169,788, leaving an income deficit of £47,118. The main underlying reason for this shortfall is the lower than budgeted returns from the main Market Operator contract (Ensors).

2.4 Income generated from the Market Operator contract with Ensors totalled £31,372. This was an overall decrease from the total generated in 2024/25 of £45,194 – This is just over 30% lower than the previous year. Car boot income was slightly higher than the previous year. Market income generated was lower than the previous year combined with higher running costs resulting in the lower surplus.

2.5 In addition, the income generated was still significantly below what was budgeted for. The operation of the Market returned the panel £12,482 against a budget of £54,243, while the Car Boot returned the panel £18,891 against a budget of £23,732.

2.6 Income from the Cornhill site, aswell as the Café and Corn Market, was received as per the budgeted income levels.

2.7 Other income budget lines were either on budget or had minor variances.

2.8 The final net surplus for distribution in 2025/26 was £59,374, against a net budget of £122,402, a shortfall of £63,029. The distribution of this is as follows….

- £17,002 to the Sunday Car Boot Reserve (against a budget of £21,359).
- £27,542 to Dorset Council (against a budget of £65,678).
- £14,830 to Dorchester Town Council (against a budget of £35,365).

3. Current Reserves Summary

3.1 The balance carried forward on the Market Maintenance Earmarked Reserve, as at 31/03/2026, is £108,112. This is comprised of an opening balance of £93,684, plus the unspent R&M 2025/26 budget of £14,428. There were no drawdowns made on this reserve during 2024/25.

3.2 The balance carried forward on the Sunday Car Boot Earmarked Reserve, as at 31/03/2026, is £19,924. This is comprised of an opening balance of £14,668, plus the 2025/26 top up of £17,002 from the Sunday Car Boot proceeds. There was an in year draw down on the reserve of £11,746 to fund the Community Grants awards.

4 Financial Implications

As detailed in the report.

5 Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications

No impact.

6 Well-being and Health Implications

None.

7 Other Implications

None.

8 Risk Assessment

8.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: MEDIUM as the Market Operator income is variable.
Residual Risk: MEDIUM as there could be a further loss of income.

9 Equalities Impact Assessment

None.

10 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Financial Outturn 2025/26

11 Background Papers

None.

Dorchester Market Joint Panel
5th August 2026
Finance Update 2026/2027 to the end of July 2026

Overview

Trading for the Wednesday Market, Car Boot Sale, and Cornhill Market in April – July shows a mixed financial position with the Wednesday Market and the Car Boot Sale bringing in profit and the Cornhill Market being under budget. The total net profit is **£18,744.**

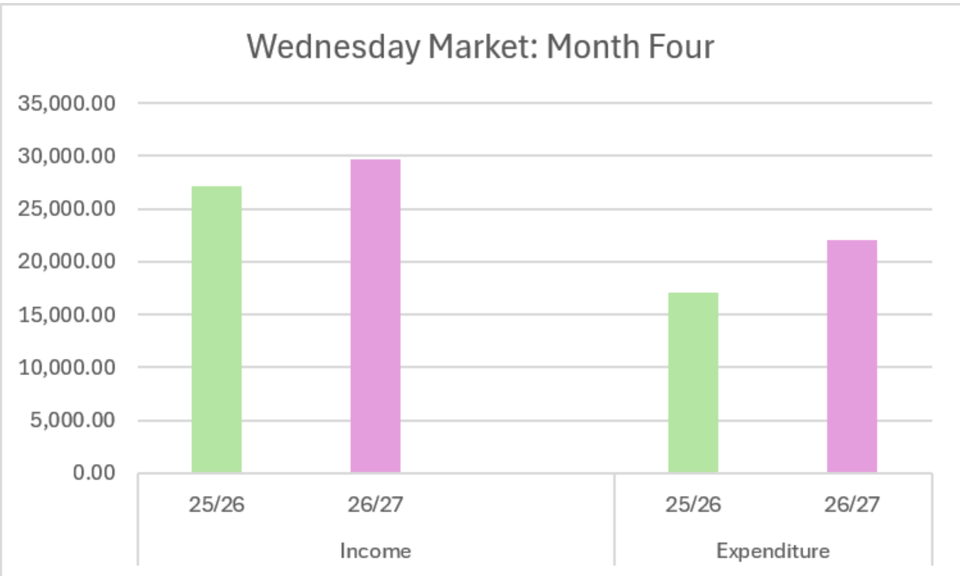
Wednesday Market

	2025/2026 Total	**2026/2027 To Date**	**April 2026**	**May 2026**	**June 2026**	**July 2026**
Income	£69,249	£29,713	£8,066	£7,725	£5,774	£8,148
Expenditure	£53,647	£22,102	£14,724	£2,036	£2,710	£2,632
Less Ensors 20%	£7,843	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Net Profit	**£7,759**	**£7,611**	**-£6,658**	**£5,689**	**£3,064**	**£5,516**

Notes:

- April 2026 Expenditure includes full year business rates £9,898
- Cash income from 29th July is not included.
- SUMUP income and fees from 29th July is not included.
- Labour costs of approx. £720 to be invoiced for July 2026.

Figure 1: Wednesday Market Year on Year Income & Expenditure



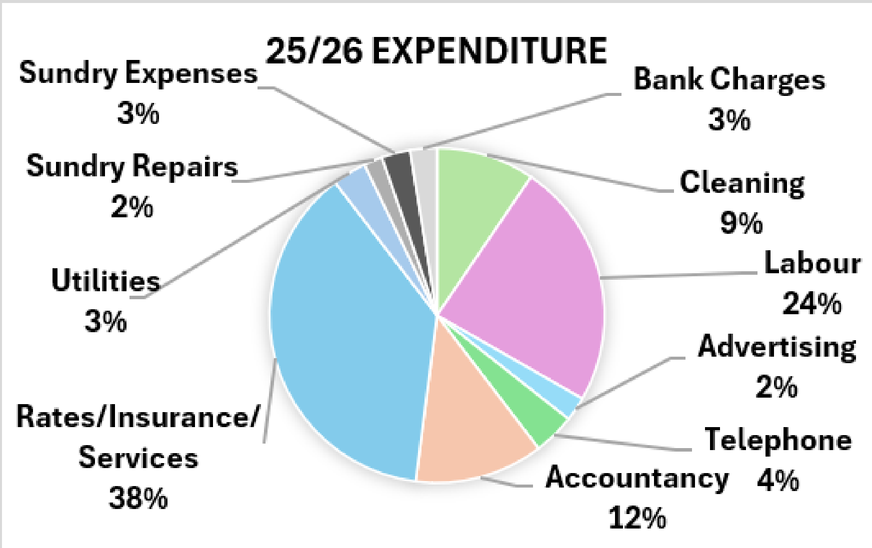
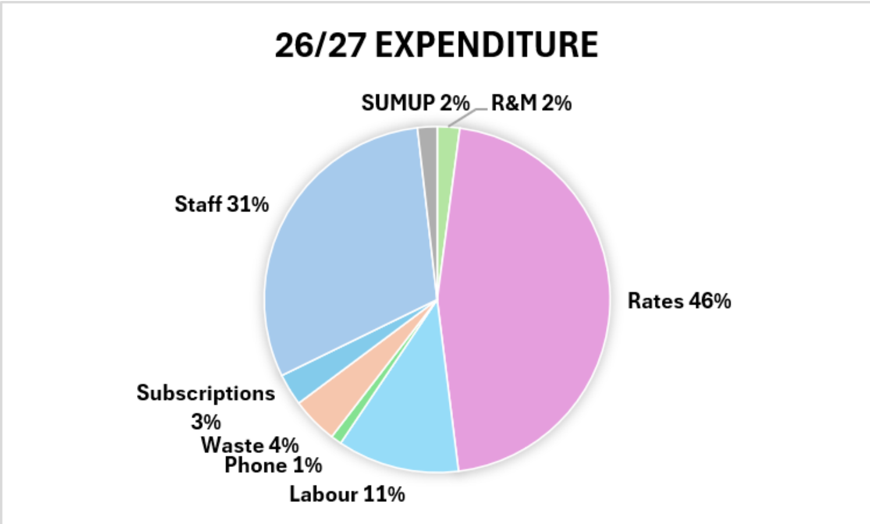


Figure 2: 25/26 Total Expenditure Breakdown

Figure 3: 26/27 Total Expenditure Breakdown

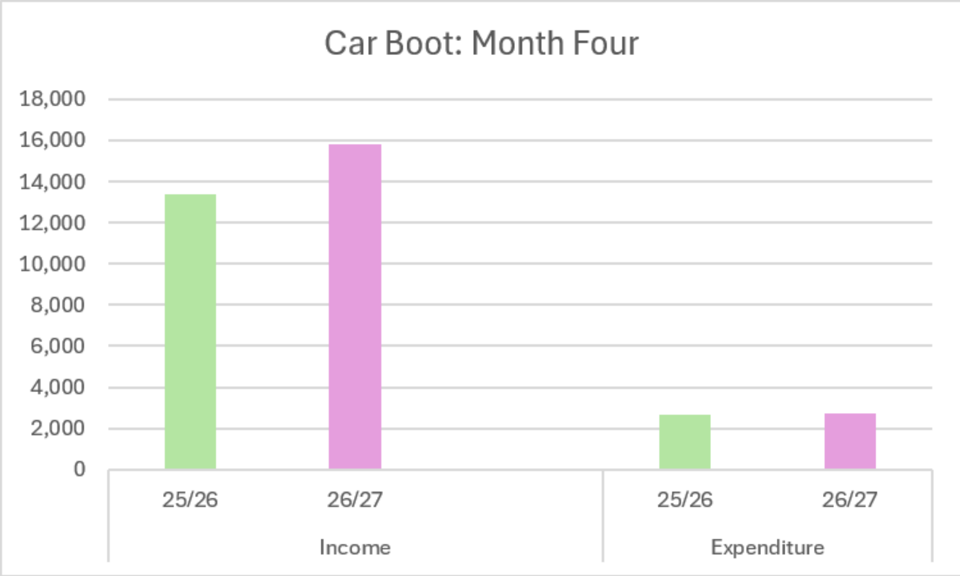


Summary: The Wednesday Market is currently reporting a net profit of **£7,611**.

Sunday Car Boot Sale

	2025/2026 Total	**2026/2027 To Date**	**April 2026**	**May 2026**	**June 2026**	**July 2026**
Income	£32,926	£15,808	£3,468	£5,733	£3,239	£3,368
Expenditure	£9,313	£2,741	£723	£786	£871	£361
Net Profit	**£23,613**	**£13,067**	**£2,745**	**£4,947**	**£2,368**	**£3,007**

Figure 4: Car Boot Year on Year Income & Expenditure



Notes:

- Labour costs of approx. £540 to be invoiced for July 2026.

Summary: The Sunday Car Boot Sale continues to generate a surplus with a net profit of **£13,067**.

Cornhill Market

	26/27 Budget	Month Four Profile	Actual	Variance	April	May	June	July
Income	£12,987	£4,329	£2,395	-£1,934	£860	£665	£460	£410

Notes:

- Income from July 28th – July 31st is not included.

Summary: Cornhill Market income is below budget by **£1,934.** There are no comparative figures from 2025/2026 currently available.

Reserves

The R&M Reserve has a balance of £108,112 as of July 28th, 2026.

The Car Boot Reserve has a balance of £19,924 as of July 28th, 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That members of the Dorchester Markets Joint Panel note the current financial position as at the end of July 2026, and approve continued monitoring of the following:

1. **Wednesday Market –** The market sees a net profit of £7,611. Members are asked to note that late July income (29th), fees (29th), and pending July labour costs (£720) are yet to be reflected.
2. **Sunday Car Boot Sale –** The market remains in surplus with £13,067. Members are asked to note that pending July labour costs (£540) are yet to be reflected.

3. **Cornhill Market –** Income to the end of July (£2,395) is £1,934 below the budgeted month-four profile (£4,329). Members are asked to note that late July income (28^{th} – 31^{st}) is yet to be reflected and agree that performance be reviewed at the next panel meeting.

Keira Lake
Finance Assistant
Dorchester Town Council