



Dorchester Town Council

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

Telephone: (01305) 266861

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

7 May 2025

Agenda for the meeting of the **Policy Committee**, which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at **THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, HIGH EAST STREET, DORCHESTER** on **MONDAY 12 MAY 2025** at **7.00pm**.

Steve Newman
Town Clerk

Public Attendance and 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 **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

Councillors R. Biggs (Vice-Chair), S. Biles (Chair), J. Germodo, G. Jones, V. Lloyd-Jones, K. Reid, R. Ricardo, D. Taylor and The Mayor ex-officio.

Agenda

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declaration of Interests**
- 3. Minutes**

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 March 2025 (adopted by Council on 31 March 2025). A copy of the Minutes can be found at dorchester-tc.gov.uk/Committees/Policy+Committee/Minutes

- 4. Financial Update – Page 3**

To consider a report by the Responsible Finance Officer (enclosed).

5. Community Implementation Plan Update – Page 15

To consider an update report (enclosed) and presentation from the Community Development Officer.

6. Staff Handbook – Page 16

To consider a report by the Assistant Town Clerk (enclosed).

7. Clock Tower – Page 17

To consider a report by the Town Clerk (enclosed).

8. 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”.

9. Temporary Appointment – Page 19

To consider a report by the Town Clerk (enclosed).

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE – 12 MAY 2025
FINANCIAL UPDATE

1. Financial Year End Position 2024-25

- Revenue out-turn (Appendix 1), £57,067 under budget:
 - £51k up on Treasury Income
 - £19k under on Office staff due to staff not at top of scale
 - £11k over on Dorchester Ballet Club expenses
 - £10k over Parks Electricity, due to rising costs and heating BG greenhouses
 - £18k under on Cemetery income
 - £4k over due to Bowls Club charge waived for 24/25
 - £9k under on Parks R&M
 - £9k under on outdoor salaries due to vacancies
 - All other under and overspends net £5k under

In line with 24/25 budget, £57K underspend transferred to Climate Emergency Reserve.

- **Earmarked Reserves at 31/03/25:** balance £1,605,063 (appendix one).
- **Annual Review of Fixed Asset Register**
 Total of fixed asset register as at 31 March 2025 £7,708,164 (Accounting Statements box 9, appendix six). Full fixed asset register at appendix two.

Members are asked to review the fixed asset register at the 31 March 2025.

• **Cash Position**

Account	Balance as at 31/03/25	Balance as at 28/02/25	Movement	Interest
Lloyds	162,653	109,297	53,356	0%
NS&i	6,859	6,859	0	1.00%
CCLA Deposit	1,525,000	1,775,000	-250,000	5.15%
	1,694,512	1,891,156	-196,644	

- Debtors over 30 days at 30/04/25 = £0, 0 Debtors (28 February £585, 2 Debtors)
- Payments list 1 March to 30 April 2025 on website. Supporting vouchers available from RFO
 - **RECOMMENDED** that the payments list, totalling £655,378.07 is approved.

2. Internal Audit 2024-25

- Final internal audit report plus Officer comments at appendix three.
RECOMMENDED that the internal audit report and officer response is noted.
- It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Annual Internal Report as required by the AGAR at appendix four is noted.

- Section 1 of the AGAR, the Annual Governance Statement is attached at appendix five.
- Section 2 of the AGAR, the Accounting Statement 2024-25 is attached at appendix six.
- **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that, noting the Clerk and RFO have signed the documents:
 - The Council consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement
 - The Council consider and approve the Accounting Statement for 2024-25; prior to submission to BDO Limited for external audit.

3. 2025-26 Audit:

- In November 2023 the Council reappointed Darkin Miller Ltd as the Council's Internal Auditor for a period of three years.

A requirement of the external auditor is affirmation of the independence of the internal auditor, as per the JPAG Practitioners' Guide 4.11:

There is no requirement to rotate auditors, but the independence of the appointed person or firm should be reviewed every year with regard to, personal independence, financial independence, and professional independence.

- BDO will continue as external auditor, confirmation required that the council has no conflicts of interest with BDO.

Nigel Hayes

Responsible Financial Officer

MANAGEMENT REPORT AT 31 MARCH 2025

By Spend Type	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	Under/Over £000
Staff	991	991	955	-36
Capital Financing/Debt	16	16	16	0
Other Payments	577	577	585	8
To Specific Reserves	341	341	341	0
Income	-199	-199	-228	-29
Net Budget	1,726	1,726	1,669	-57

By Service	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	Under/Over £000
Allotments	-11	-11	-13	-2
Parks & Open Spaces	173	173	187	14
Cemeteries	-28	-28	-12	16
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	63	63	61	-2
Cultural & Twinning	64	64	62	-2
Municipal Buildings	375	375	368	-6
Other Services	9	9	-37	-47
Office Team	519	519	496	-23
Outdoor Services	562	562	556	-5
Net Budget	1,726	1,726	1,669	-57

Earmarked Reserves	Balance 1 Apr 24	Contribution	Reserve Transfers	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31/03/25
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Municipal Buildings	49,653.22	12,500.00			5,158.95	56,994.27
Front of House	238,166.57	15,000.00	40,000.00	338,094.67	599,618.43	31,642.81
Vehicles & Equipment Replacement	97,007.22	20,000.00			3,534.00	113,473.22
Parks Premises	12,788.92	9,000.00			11,734.99	10,053.93
Cemeteries	87,325.77	6,100.00			56,494.52	36,931.25
Play Equipment Replacement	18,714.65	11,000.00				29,714.65
Great Field Reserve	0.00	11,000.00				11,000.00
Climate Emergency Reserve	25,608.73	0.00		13,789.60	8,449.63	30,948.70
Public Realm	435,310.47	5,000.00				440,310.47
Christmas Lights	4,420.45	0.00				4,420.45
Arts & Cultural Reserve	42,933.00	0.00			38,061.15	4,871.85
Apprenticeship Reserve	16,565.43	0.00				16,565.43
Planning Advice Reserve	18,498.62	0.00				18,498.62
Trees Reserve	8,597.80	20,000.00			14,934.50	13,663.30
Tennis Courts Refurb	7,000.00	3,800.00				10,800.00
Tourism Reserve	5,599.09	1,900.00		32,167.90	5,691.56	33,975.43
19 North Square	11,000.00	0.00				11,000.00
DTC Website & IT	10,000.00	0.00			8,770.00	1,230.00
Corporate Projects Reserve	385,164.59	337,314.09	-40,000.00	32,479.71		714,958.39
Graves in Perpetuity	14,029.00	0.00			18.33	14,010.67
Total	1,488,383.53	452,614.09	0.00	416,531.88	752,466.06	1,605,063.44

APPENDIX TWO

Dorchester Town Council Fixed Asset Register

Asset	01/04/24		31/03/25	
	Value £	Acquired	Disposed	Value £
Council Offices, 19 North Square	265,000			265,000
Municipal Buildings	1,714,980			1,714,980
Car Park adj Municipal Buildings	300,000			300,000
Corn Exchange Lighting & Sound	142,163			142,163
Corn Exchange Raked Seating	55,950			55,950
Louds Mill Depot land	150,000			150,000
Louds Mill Depot Car Park & Land	377,887			377,887
Borough Gardens & House	1,601,296			1,601,296
Borough Gardens ASHP	68,543			68,543
Borough Gardens Solar PV	11,009			11,009
Weymouth Avenue Cricket Pavilion	469,000			469,000
WA Pavilion Solar Panels & EV Points	19,490			19,490
Maumbury Rings inc Utility Hut	50,000			50,000
Skatepark	209,266			209,266
Sawmills	1			1
Solar Panels on Louds Mill Depot	21,011			21,011
Depot EV Charging Point		3,534		3,534
WAP Ground Source Heating	42,920			42,920
WAP Borehole	4,255			4,255
WAP Lighting	1,680			1,680
WAP Insulation	1,259			1,259
19 North Square Heat Pumps		33,724		33,724
Stretched Fabric System Corn Exchange	9,156			9,156

Christmas Lights		11,557	11,557	26/08/2015
Christmas Lights		16,820	16,820	04/11/2021
Municipal Buildings Solar PV		35,150	35,150	31/08/2022
Municipal Buildings AV Equipment		29,878	29,878	30/11/2007
Municipal Buildings Biomass Boiler		115,827	115,827	31/08/2022
MB Electrical Switch Gear		20,903	20,903	31/08/2022
MB Destrat Fans		9,054	9,054	31/08/2022
Municipal Buildings MVHRS		20,903	20,903	31/08/2022
Stannah Corn Exchange Lift		27,323	27,323	20/10/2021
Mitsubishi L200	DN05 WWU	6,495	6,495	27/03/2008
Ford Transit Tipper	YF63 VYC	13,885	13,885	15/09/2016
Mazda Pickup	WL51 JWV	6,550	6,550	14/02/2005
Rekord Rapid Universo		14,509	14,509	12/04/2010
Iseki TXG29 Tractor	HF59 CWM	8,050	8,050	11/11/2009
Jacobsen 185 Triple Mower	YH51 CDJ	13,100	13,100	21/07/2008
Goupil G3L	BJ63 AUF	13,500	13,500	15/02/2019
Tiger 25D Shredder		16,740	16,740	01/04/2017
Trailer		4,950	4,950	11/04/2019
Ransome Gang Mower		17,500	17,500	13/03/2007
Goupil G3	HF61 AYN	13,500	13,500	- 23/07/2019
Husqvarna P520DX Out Front Mower	HF23 CEU	22,000	22,000	10/07/2023
Ford Transit Tipper	NU12 TWK	13,500	13,500	18/04/2007
Kubota Digger		26,750	26,750	- 17/12/2001
Kubota Tractor B303BHD	HF13 DXE	15,000	15,000	01/04/2013
Case farmall 75C 4wd Tractor	HF15 AAJ	48,800	48,800	20/03/2015

Takeuchi TB216 Canopy Excavator	216018846	18,450	18,450	12/08/2021
ATE Towmate 2700kg Plant Trailer	27414095	3,085	3,085	10/11/2021
Nexus		9,780	9,780	20/07/2011
Outside Gym		10,592	10,592	20/04/2010
Cable Rider		7,261	7,261	16/09/2010
Swing		7,161	7,161	03/09/2010
Rock		6,695	6,695	11/07/1996
Holmead Walk		16,585	16,585	31/03/2003
Midi Venturer		5,628	5,628	23/05/2002
Special Matrix		40,180	40,180	23/05/2002
Youth Shelter		21,370	21,370	28/05/2009
Active 4000		6,097	6,097	22/03/2001
Trio Venturer		6,817	6,817	22/03/2001
Borough Gardens Play Area		15,609	15,609	31/03/2008
Hanging Frame		11,235	11,235	30/03/2010
Forbidden City		13,294	13,294	12/08/2009
Electro-techno		27,901	27,901	12/08/2009
Sandringham Fitness Module		13,394	13,394	09/04/2009
Sandringham Play Equipment		7,697	7,697	25/09/2008
Borough Gardens Table Tennis		2,675	2,675	01/04/2013
Great Field Play Equipment		24,054	24,054	01/04/2013
New BG Tennis Courts		181,825	181,825	08/01/2019
Salisbury Fields Trail		7,549	7,549	30/07/2020
Holmead Walk Play Equipment		16,928	16,928	19/01/2021
Thomas Hardy statue		120,000	120,000	02/09/1931
Elizabeth Frink Statues			1	01/01/1986

Town Pump	5,000	5,000	01/01/1900
Children Statue Poundbury Cemetery	9,088	9,088	27/07/2000
Civic Regalia	65,000	65,000	01/01/1900
Water Feature	14,000	14,000	09/01/2003
Town Walks	1	1	05/12/1983
Wayfinding Signage	81,487	81,487	09/10/2019
Water colour by Nash	1,200	1,200	01/04/1974
Fordington Cemetery	1,371	1,371	01/01/1900
Weymouth Avenue Cemetery	1	1	01/01/1900
Poundbury Cemetery	433,724	433,724	26/11/2001
Poundbury Cemetery Wall	169,643	169,643	09/01/2019
Poundbury Crescent Play Area	20,200	20,200	06/02/1986
Maud Road Play Area	1	1	01/08/1998
Maiden Castle Road Play Area	1	1	01/01/1990
Kings Park Play Area	1	1	03/02/1988
Syward Close Play Area	1	1	24/07/1968
Elizabeth Plae Play Area	1	1	29/09/1984
Kensington Walk Play Area	1	1	11/03/1993
Mellstock Avenue Play Area	2	2	16/07/1992
		-	
Great Field Play Area	1	1	30/04/2022
Great Field, Poundbury	1	1	29/04/2022
		-	
		-	
WA Recreation Ground	12,500	12,500	24/03/2001
Sandringham Sports Pitches	65,000	65,000	01/01/1987
Sandringham Bowls Green	50,000	50,000	05/02/1990

Sandringham Rifle Club	1,000			1,000	05/02/1990
Sandringham Car Park	50,000			50,000	04/12/1987
Sandringham Mini Pitches	60,500			60,500	29/01/1999
Hawthorn Road Allotment	1			1	06/02/1896
Louds Mill Allotment	2,100			2,100	02/12/1903
Frome Terrace Allotment	1			1	06/09/1966
Herringston Road Allotment	1			1	25/03/2008
Alington Road Allotment	1			1	25/03/2008
St Georges Road Allotment	1			1	25/03/2008
Frome Terrace Green	1			1	12/06/1925
Fordington Green inc stone edging	10,122			10,122	22/09/1963
Kings Road Corner	25			25	27/05/1976
John's Pond	1			1	30/08/1990
Salisbury Fields	1			1	02/03/1893
Kings Road Playing Field	1			1	25/03/2001
Gabriel Green	1			1	29/01/1999
Lubbecke Way River Bank	1			1	18/05/1999
Riverside Nature Reserve	1			1	06/09/1966
Fee Farm Rent	200	-		200	01/01/1900
Long Term Investment				-	
				-	
Total	7,711,155	37,259	40,250	7,708,164	
					7,708,164

Darkin Miller Chartered Accountants
2024/25 INTERNAL AUDIT OF DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL - FINAL REPORT VISIT 3 OF 3: 3rd APRIL 2025
Appendix 1 – Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendation number	Detail	Pr	Management Response	Resp Off	Due Date
3.3 – Amend minutes where necessary and all Council/committee minutes are on the website, with signed copies on file	<p>I reviewed the minutes to confirm that there was no unusual financial activity. I noted no such activity, but did note that:</p> <p><u>Mayoral Selection Committee</u></p> <p>The minutes for the meetings in 18/03/24, 30/09/24 and 24/03/25 are not on the Council website. I recommended at visit 1 that the minutes for March 2024 be added.</p> <p><u>Planning & Environment</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 07/01/25 were not on the minutes file.</p> <p><u>Council</u></p> <p>Minute 53 of the meeting of 27/01/25 approved the early January 2025 Planning & Environment Committee minutes, but noted the date as 08/01/25 when the meeting was held on 07/01/25.</p> <p>I recommend that the errors are amended, that all signed minutes are filed promptly and that all Committee and Council minutes are published on the Council's website. This will ensure a complete record of approved Council business and decisions is held.</p>	L	Agreed	NH	Apr-25
10.1 – Adjusted errors	<p>The following errors were adjusted in the draft AGAR:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The draft staff costs for 24/25 included £9.3k of travel, subscription and training costs. These were moved to other payments. 2. The draft insurance prepayment was £255 too high. This was reduced leading to an equivalent reduction in other costs and debtors. 3. A number of minor amendments were made to the fixed asset register. This did not affect the total shown at the balance sheet date. 	Inf	Noted	NH	Apr-25
10.2 – Unadjusted errors	<p>The following items were not adjusted in the draft AGAR:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCLA dividend payments are accounted for in the period received, so the income for the year includes the March 2024 balance (received April 2024) but not the March 2025 balance (received April 2025). As such income has always been accounted for in this way, each financial year contains 12 receipts and the difference year on year is not material to adjust." 	Inf	Noted		Apr-25

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Dorchester Town Council

<https://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk/>

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority'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 this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
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, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

22/10/2024 13/01/2025 03/04/2025
07/11/2024 14/01/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Mrs R Darkin-Miller LLB(Hons) BFP FCA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

03/04/2025

***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, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).**

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

Dorchester Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for 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 2025, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
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 this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
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.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>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 this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
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 this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE DOCUMENT PAGE ADDRESS <https://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk/>

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

Dorchester Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,436,574	1,665,698	<i>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.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,668,507	1,726,115	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	283,560	715,365	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	835,917	902,847	<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	16,752	16,104	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	870,275	1,426,096	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	1,665,698	1,762,131	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>

8. Total value of cash and short term investments	1,704,298	1,694,512	<i>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.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	7,711,155	7,708,164	<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings	56,000	42,000	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	<i>The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 12 May 2025

Community Implementation Plan 2023-2028 update

1. Background

Following a review, the Community Implementation Plan (CIP) was updated in 2023 to cover the period 2023-2028.

The plan replaced the previous Dorchester Directory of Aims & Aspirations created in 2017.

The aims of the CIP are to provide a framework for the council's own community development activities through identifying the needs and aspirations of the local community, and partners across the town to work with to realise those aims.

2. Achievements

A presentation of achievements measured against the current Community Implementation Plan will be presented to Committee by Emma Scott, the Council's Community Development Officer. These will reflect the range of activities being undertaken through her community development role as well as plans for future projects.

The full Community Implementation Plan was sent to Members separately.

The Committee will be asked to note the progress made in implementing the CIP and will be invited to feedback any new priorities it is aware of in the town.

Emma Scott
Community Development Officer

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE 12TH MAY 2025

REVIEW OF STAFF HANDBOOK

1. The Town Council has developed over many years a suite of policies and procedures that relate to its employment of staff and enable it to meet its obligations under employment and equality legislation. All existing policies and procedures are currently available on the council's website.
2. Following a 'light touch' review of all the policies in 2020, officers have sought the advice of the council's external legal advisors, WorkNest, and undertaken a thorough review of all existing policies and created new policies in order to address recent legislation.
3. As a result, the new suite of policies have been brought together to form a single staff handbook – which will be an easier way for existing and prospective staff to understand the council's approach to the employment of staff. This draft handbook has been circulated to Members separately.
4. The new policies that have been drafted by WorkNest for the council include:
 - Carer's Leave policy
 - Flexible Working policy
 - Paternity policy
 - Personal Relationships at Work policy
 - Social Media policy
 - Wellbeing Statement
 - Working from Home policy.
5. Of the existing policies, the policy on Harassment and Bullying has been significantly updated to take account of the new Duty to Prevent Sexual Harassment arising from the *Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023* which came into effect in October 2024. WorkNest has provided the council with guidance on how to address this new duty which introduces a new positive obligation on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment where the unwanted conduct is of a sexual nature.
6. If adopted, the Staff Handbook will be reviewed on an annual basis with input from WorkNest.
7. **Recommendation:** It is recommended that the committee agree the Staff Handbook as the basis for the council employment of staff.

Tony Hurley
Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate)

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 12 MAY 2025

CORN EXCHANGE CLOCK TOWER

1. As Members know, the Corn Exchange bells were taken out of action following an inspection of the beam to which they were attached. That inspection highlighted some strengthening works were required and these works have been scheduled for the start of the summer.
2. That original inspection highlighted some possible water ingress issues higher up the clock tower above the bells. Godsell Arnold Partnership (GAP) were then appointed to undertake a full structural inspection of the whole of the clock tower. This report has now been received.
3. Generally, the tower roof timber structure is in very good condition considering its age, however there are some areas of concern, in particular the bell chamber floor and various corroded straps and metal work. The report also indicated ongoing water ingress along the south façade of the tower.
4. It is necessary to ascertain the cause of this water ingress with a drone survey. This survey will determine if scaffolding is needed to carry out any repairs. If this is required it would be sensible to take the opportunity to undertake various external stone repairs and repointing to the tower as there has been, over the past couple of years, some instances of failure resulting in small pieces of falling masonry.
5. The next step would be to arrange for the dismantling and removing the clock so as to allow good access to carry out the repairs to the bell chamber platform, iron work etc. The access to the bells could also be improved.
6. Ideally, we would delay repairing the bells/fixing until after the clock mechanism has been dismantled allowing better access. However, that contractors lead in time for those works is over 6 months so any further delay could result in a year plus without the bells.
7. The only concern with this approach is the current condition of the bell chamber platform, therefore it is proposed to issue the GAP report to the contractor so as to allow them to determine if there is any risk relating to their work.
8. At this stage it is difficult to put a figure against the cost of the works until it is established whether there is a need for scaffolding.
9. The drone survey will confirm the extent of the work required. It is proposed that this survey be carried out as soon as possible with the aim of seeking tenders for the work required during June with a view to commencing work by the end of September subject to the availability of the Town Hall.

10. The Committee is recommended to:-

- (a) Agree that a drone survey be carried out as soon as possible.
- (b) That Crickmay Stark Architects be appointed to draw up and issue tenders for the work identified by the survey with the outcome being presented to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.

Steve Newman
Town Clerk