

# **Dorchester Town Council**

## **Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council held in the Council Chamber**

**26 January 2026**

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor A. Canning) and Councillors R. Biggs, S. Biles, L. Fry, W. Gibbons, J. Hewitt, G. Jones, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, D. Leaper, R. Potter, K. Reid, M. Rennie and R. Ricardo.

**Apologies:** Councillors P. Farmer, J. Germodo, F. Hogwood, V. Lloyd-Jones, R. Major and D. Taylor.

### **45. David Barrett**

The Mayor reported that former Mayor and Councillor David Barrett had recently died. David had previously served on the Council for sixteen years and was Mayor in 2007-8. Members stood in silence to his memory.

### **46. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **47. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24 November 2025, were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

### **48. Police Matters**

Sergeant Ian Schofield was unable to attend the meeting.

### **49. Presentations, Communications and Motions**

The Council received a presentation from the Dorchester Youth Council which updated Members on its past activities and plans for the future. Representatives from the Youth Council responded to Councillors detailed questions.

The Council recorded its thanks to all of those involved with the Youth Council for the good work undertaken.

The Mayor reminded Members that the Holocaust Memorial Event was taking place in the Corn Exchange on 27 January 2026.

No motions had been submitted.

50. **Planning and Environment Committee – 1 December 2025**

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

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 1 December 2025 be adopted.

51. **Planning and Environment Committee – 7 January 2026**

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

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 7 January 2026 be adopted.

52. **Management Committee – 12 January 2026**

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

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 12 January 2026 be adopted.

53. **Policy Committee – 19 January 2026**

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

**Resolved**

(1) That the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget 2026-27, as set out in the Appendices 1 to 4 of the Policy Committee Minutes, be adopted, to include: -

- A Council Tax Band D charge of £218.83, an increase of £4.29 (2%)
- A precept of £1,913,842, an increase of 4.9%

(2) That the Calendar of Meetings 2026-27, as set out in Appendix 5 to these Minutes, be agreed.

(3) That the informal Annual Town Meeting be held between 11.00am and 1.00pm on Friday 8 May 2026.

(4) That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 19 January 2026 be adopted.

54. **Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee – 14 October 2025**

The minutes of the meeting of the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee be noted.

55. **Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel – 13 November 2025**

The minutes of the meeting of the Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel be noted.

56. **Update from the Dorset Council**

Dorset Councillors updated the Council on the following matters:-

- Councillor R. Biggs reported on the Homewise campaign which gave free personalised home energy advice.
- Dorset Council had made a financial contribution towards the Morwind 'Channel Gateway' feasibility study. The Gateway project was a £500 million clean energy port facility adjacent to Portland Port.
- It was reported that Maiden Newton and Charmouth Fire Stations were to close.
- Dorset Highways were working with businesses on Damers Road to reduce disruption whilst the highways works were being undertaken.
- The Great Field Park Run was going from strength to strength.
- Caroline Goode was to leave 1610 Sports Centre
- Dorset History Centre was starting a weekly family history surgery on Friday mornings.
- Dorset Council is supporting a national campaign to get increased education funding and reforms to SEND provision.
- The Mayor reported on his past and upcoming visits to Dorchester schools.

Council rose at 7.46pm.

Mayor