

Dorchester Town Council

Management Committee

12th January 2026

Present: Councillors A. Canning, L. Fry, W. Gibbons, F. Hogwood, F. Kent-Ledger, D. Leaper (Chair), R. Potter, M. Rennie and S. Jones.

Apologies: Councillors P. Farmer, J. Hewitt and R. Major.

In attendance:

Councillors R. Biggs, S. Biles and J. Germodo.

Officers: Tony Hurley (Assistant Town Clerk – Corporate), Carl Dallison (Assistant Town Clerk – Outdoor Services) and Nigel Hayes (Responsible Financial Officer).

32. Declaration of Interests

Councillors L. Fry declared an interest in respect of Minute No. 38(a), Reconnection Dorset.

33. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 10th November 2025, adopted by Council on 24th November 2025, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

34. Revenue Budget 2026-27

The committee received a report from the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) setting out the proposed revenue budget along with proposed fees and charges for 2026-27. Cllr Fry asked if any increase in business rates could be accommodated in the budget and the RFO confirmed that this was the case.

Cllr Jones asked if the cost of rebuilding the Fordington Cemetery wall could be claimed on the council's insurance and the RFO stated that the wall was only insured up to £40,000 (a figure set by the insurers) with the rest to be met by the council's cemeteries reserve. The Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services) stated that the cost of rebuilding work would be determined by the outcome of negotiations with the Mill Street Housing Society with regard to the use of their land.

Cllr Fry queried whether the grants budget should be increased and asked that this be kept under review in the future. Cllr Rennie reminded the committee that the council would soon be taking over the administration of the Car Boot Grant Fund and could promote it to increase uptake.

Resolved:

- a) That the budget as set out at Appendix 1 is agreed for submission to Policy Committee for inclusion within the Council's overall budget for 2026-27.
- b) That fees and charges as set out in Appendix 2 are agreed.

35. Outdoor Services – Update Report – Late Winter

The committee received the update report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services). It was reported that the Japanese Maples donated by local residents and the Friends of Borough Gardens would be planted soon. The Chair offered to write to the donors to thank them for their generosity. Members also enquired as to whether council sites had suffered from the recent increase in graffiti in the town – it was confirmed that no problems had been reported. With regard to graffiti on the Walks and elsewhere, members asked that officers bring back a report to the committee on the issue and whether the town council could help address the matter.

Resolved:

That the Outdoor Services update report be noted.

36. Borough Gardens Carpet Bed Design Options 2026

The committee received the report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services) and discussed the options of a design linked either to the UK National Year of Reading or the Bayeux tapestry and the town's links with Bayeux.

Resolved:

That the committee delegate the final decision on the design to the Town Clerk following consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Management Committee.

37. Review of 2025 events programme and proposals for events in 2026.

The committee received the report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate) setting out both a review of events held on council land during 2025 and proposals for events for 2026. Cllr Rennie asked if the council charged Dorchester Arts for use of Maumbury Rings and it was confirmed that this was not the case. Cllr Gibbons suggested that the town council has a stand at the Dorset Food & Art Festival on The Great Field.

Resolved:

That the Committee notes the review of the 2025 events programme and agrees the proposals for events and festivals in 2026.

38. **Grant Applications**

The Committee considered various requests for financial assistance and it was

Resolved:

- (a) That no grant be awarded to Reconnection Dorchester CIC towards the cost of a promotional video.
- (b) That no grant be awarded to the Final Journey Project towards the cost of workshop expenses and marketing.
- (c) That a grant of £250 be awarded to the Dorchester Death Café project towards the cost of venue hire.

In respect of the Reconnection Dorset project for a community hub, members expressed their enthusiasm for the concept and its aims.

39. **Minutes of Dorchester Arts board meeting on 20th November 2025**

The minutes of the Dorchester Arts board meeting were considered by members. Members suggested that the council's ownership and support for the Municipal Buildings be better recognised via internal signage. Cllr Kent-Ledger reported that this matter has been discussed at the Municipal Buildings Monitoring Group.

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.

40. **Cemetery Matters.**

(a) Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes

The report which detailed the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial for grave spaces and the number of interments and burials of ashes since the last meeting of the Committee had been circulated with the agenda.

Resolved:

That the report on the Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes since the last meeting of the Committee be noted.

(b) Headstones and Inscriptions

The Committee received and noted applications for the design of headstones and inscriptions.

Resolved:

That the actions of the Town Clerk in approving designs numbered 5517 to 5521 be confirmed and the Register of Memorials be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Chair.....

APPENDIX 1

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26 6 Months	2026/27
	Actual £	Budget £	£	Budget £
PARKS & OPEN SPACES				
Electricity	21,228	15,000	8,840	18,000
Water	8,186	7,000	5,760	7,500
Rent	3,873	3,900	1,939	3,900
Rates	20,671	20,671	20,671	29,843
Premises Repairs & Maintenance	24,490	20,604	10,067	21,016
Other Repairs & Maintenance	46,823	56,508	28,006	57,638
Great Field Maintenance	29,111	30,600	12,405	30,000
Highway Trees Partnership	5,100	5,202	0	5,202
Legal Bills	1,950		575	
Walks Cleaning Contract	6,501	6,501	6,563	6,600
The Great Field Toilets	3,407	3,400	3,532	3,500
Office Team	53,697	60,117	29,746	65,272
Outdoor Services Team	490,457	568,172	279,247	577,140
To DTC Tree Works Reserve	20,000	20,000	20,000	6,000
To Reserves: Play Equipment	11,000	1,000	1,000	30,000
To Reserves: Great Field	2,000	2,500	2,500	2,500
To Reserves: Parks Premises	9,000	19,000	19,000	12,000
Total Expenditure	757,494	840,175	449,850	876,112
Tennis	-5,567	-6,500	-8,042	-8,000
Football	-970	-1,000	0	-1,000
Bowling Alley Walk Wayleave	-657	-657	-657	-657
Borough Gardens Flat Rental	-6,360	-6,360	-3,180	-6,360
Borough Gardens House Hire	-469	-4,500	-1,443	-5,000
Borough Gardens Kiosk	-1,725	-1,750	-2,531	-2,000
Louds Mill Depot Feed in Tariff	-1,405	-1,353	-974	-1,380
Pavilion RHI Payments	-1,030	-1,300	0	-1,300
Bowls Club Land & Water	-2,442	-5,500	-4,166	-5,500
Recharges & Sundry	-5,383	-3,865	-6,158	-3,865
Total Income	-26,009	-32,785	-27,152	-35,062
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	731,485	807,390	422,698	841,050
ALLOTMENTS				
Water	1,861	3,060	1,382	3,060
Rent	1,119	1,119	1,119	1,119
Repairs, Maintenance & Pests	49	300	162	300
Subscriptions	55	55	70	70
Office Team	12,357	16,307	8,069	18,112
Outdoor Services Team	20,030	22,636	11,125	23,672
Total Expenditure	35,470	43,477	21,926	46,333
Rents, Water & Wayleaves	-15,593	-15,000	-1,786	-15,000
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	19,877	28,477	20,140	31,333

Appendix 1 (contd.)	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27
	Actual £	Budget £	6 Months £	Budget £
MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS				
Salaries	22,287	25,000	12,390	25,607
Overtime		0	0	0
National Insurance	765	2,250	1,108	2,341
Pensions	4,909	5,500	2,726	5,377
Dorchester Arts Grant ex Staff	42,922	43,780	44,227	45,996
Training Courses	400	200	0	200
Repairs & Maintenance	16,497	16,000	11,537	16,000
Rates	9,600	0	0	0
Telephone		0	0	0
Office Team	16,774	19,252	9,526	20,256
Outdoor Services Team	7,789	7,945	3,905	8,466
To Reserves: Repay Corporate Projects	260,000	5,082	5,082	75,000
To Reserves: FOH Works		239,000	239,000	
To Reserves: Municipal Buildings	12,500	20,000	20,000	80,000
Total Expenditure	394,444	384,008	349,500	279,244
OFGEM RHI	-1,439	-1,500	-181	-1,500
Total Income	-1,439	-1,500	-181	-1,500
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	393,005	382,508	349,319	277,744
CEMETERIES				
Electricity	580	800	326	800
Water, Service Charges & Cesspit	1,115	650	1,179	1,203
Rates	8,134	8,134	8,134	8,541
General Maintenance	5,541	3,800	2,536	3,800
Cemetery Grass Cutting	18,408	22,471	9,907	24,116
Office Team	43,672	50,477	24,976	52,296
Outdoor Services Team	38,113	41,567	20,430	43,872
To Reserves: Cemeteries	6,100	10,000	10,289	95,000
Total Expenditure	121,662	137,899	77,775	229,627
Burial Fees & Chapel	-25,958	-35,000	-12,606	-33,000
ERBs, Memorials & Inscriptions	-25,846	-35,000	-16,666	-33,000
Total Income	-51,804	-70,000	-29,272	-66,000
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	69,859	67,899	48,504	163,627

Appendix 1 (contd.)	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27
	Actual £	Budget £	6 Months £	Budget £
CULTURAL & TWINNING				
In House Events	12,327	12,750	7,215	13,005
Christmas Lights	5,448	8,000	158	9,000
To Christmas Lights Reserve				9,000
Partner Events & Sponsorship	8,388	10,200	16,203	6,404
Kite Festival				4,000
Heritage Events	8,500	8,500	8,000	8,500
Grants	10,001	10,000	4,325	10,000
Special Items		0	0	0
People Need Nature Annual Grant		4,000	4,000	4,000
Support for Dorchester Arts Grant	7,547	7,698	7,698	8,006
Support for Dorchester Arts Staff	9,000	9,000	8,624	9,000
Twinning	299	700	762	800
Offices Team	15,732	18,181	8,996	21,300
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	77,242	89,029	65,981	103,015
OUTDOOR SERVICES TEAM				
Salaries	349,748	407,868	178,853	409,830
Overtime	14,005	9,000	12,852	14,000
National Insurance	29,835	49,780	21,919	51,574
Pensions	68,800	89,731	37,366	86,064
Agency Staff	9,272		0	
Training & Subsistence	2,377	2,000	3,365	2,500
Subscriptions	375	400	0	400
Vehicle/Mower Costs and Repairs	18,675	14,253	12,371	14,539
Tools, Equip, Signs, Servicing	6,900	14,045	7,536	14,326
Health & Safety & Protective Clothing	4,419	2,550	1,112	2,601
Fuel	7,812	9,364	3,965	9,551
Cleaning/Bin Liners/Dog Bags	8,179	8,308	3,697	8,724
Waste Services	14,646	10,000	9,104	16,000
Telephones	1,345	1,020	566	1,040
Advertising				0
To Reserves: Vehicles & Equipment	20,000	22,000	22,000	22,000
Total recharged to Services	556,389	640,320	314,707	653,150
Recharged to				
Parks and Open Spaces	490,457	568,172	279,247	577,140
Allotments	20,030	22,636	11,125	23,672
Cemeteries	38,113	41,567	20,430	43,872
Municipal Buildings	7,789	7,945	3,905	8,466
Recharged to Services	556,389	640,320	314,707	653,150

APPENDIX 2 – FEES & CHARGES

CEMETERIES FEES:

		1 Apr 25	1 Apr 26
Interments			
a) An infant under 2 years or stillborn		Nil	Nil
b) A person aged 2 years or older		£750	£760
c) A casket of ashes		£210	£220
Scattering of ashes			
a) In a previously used plot or in the Poundbury Pavilion chamber		£68	£70
b) In the Garden of Remembrance		£35	£38
Exclusive rights of burial in earthen graves			
For an exclusive right for 50 years, including Memorial Rights in an earthen grave:			
a) Full Sized Plot		£1025	£1035
End of term Renewal for 25 years		£855	£875
b) Ashes plots and infant under 2 years		£675	£680
End of term Renewal for 25 years		£530	£540

Additional Interment, Scattering and Exclusive Rights fees will be charged for:

- Non-residents – fee doubled. Residence is defined as living in Dorchester or Winterborne Herringston, within previous 10 years or previously resident for at least 25 years.
- Non-standard grave sizes – additional fee to be agreed with the Funeral Director

Monuments, gravestones, tablets and monumental inscriptions

Right to erect or place a headstone, footstone, tablet, flat stone, plaque, or monument in any other form at any site not subject to Exclusive Right of Burial	£240	£250
Additional inscription on a gravestone or other memorial (for each deceased)	£120	£130

BOROUGH GARDENS COMMUNITY ROOM HIRE FEES:

Current Fees:

2025/2026	Per Session*	Hourly Rate	Hourly from 5pm
Voluntary & Community Orgs	£61.00	£29.00	£41.00
Non-Commercial or Private	£71.00	£31.00	£46.00
Commercial	£97.00	£41.00	£66.00

Proposed Fees:

2026/2027	Per Session*	Hourly Rate
Voluntary & Community Orgs	£61.00	£15.25
Non-Commercial or Private	£73.00	£18.25
Commercial	£97.00	£24.25

* Session times are: 8.00-13.00, 13.00-17.00 and 17.00-23.00.

TENNIS FEES:

Annual Membership: £50

Discount on annual membership for Dorchester (DT1) residents: -£15

Coaching Fees: As agreed at Management Committee in March 2025:

- Annual membership fee – coaches will pay an annual membership fee of £35 p.a.
- Coaches will pay the council a fee of £6.00 per hour for any coaching sessions.
- A maximum of ten 2-hour bookings for coaching in any 7-day period.
- Anyone being coached by the coach must have annual membership.

FEES FOR HIRE OF COUNCIL LAND:

Fee Category	Fees 2026-27*
Commercial rate: for hire of land by commercial organisations for a commercial purpose.	£500 per day plus VAT
Concessionary rate: for hire of land by a charity/commercial organisational for an event aimed at family / children or other community benefit (as judged by the Town Clerk).	£250 per day plus VAT
Community rate: for hire of council land by social enterprise, charity, or community group for a free-to-enter community event.	No fee

* Town Clerk to be authorised to offer discounts on the hire fees for repeat/regular bookings and to attract new events.