



Dorchester Town Council

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You are summoned to a meeting of **Dorchester Town Council** to be held in the Council Chamber, the Municipal Buildings, High East Street, Dorchester, DT1 1HF on **Monday 28 September 2026 at 7.00pm**, to conduct the business set out in the Agenda below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Denny'.

Charmaine Denny
Town Clerk
23 September 2026

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.

AGENDA

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interests

Members are reminded of their responsibility to disclose registerable interests where appropriate. A Member who declares a registerable interest must leave the room unless a dispensation has been granted. 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.

3. Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 27 July 2026 (page 3).

4. Public Participation

5. Police Update

To receive an update from Dorchester's Neighbourhood Police Sergeant.

6. Presentations, Communications and Motions

- (a) To receive communications from the Mayor and Town Clerk.
- (b) To receive motions received from Members no less than 5 days before the meeting.

7. Minutes of Committees

To receive and consider the Minutes of the following Committees:-

Planning & Environment Committee	3 rd August 2026	Page 6
Planning & Environment Committee	7 th September 2026	Page 18
Management Committee	13 th September 2026	Page 23
Policy Committee	21 st September 2026	Page 27

To note the Minutes of the following Joint Bodies

Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Committee	5 th August 2026	Page 32
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8. Update from Dorset Council Members

To receive updates from Councillors A. Canning, R. Major, L. Fry, S. Jones and R. Biggs
Dorchester Ward Members of the Dorset Council.

Dorchester Town Council

Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council held in the Council Chamber

27th July 2026

Present: Councillors: R. Biggs, S. Biles, A. Canning, P. Farmer, W. Gibbons, F. Hogwood, G. Jones, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, D. Leaper, V. Lloyd-Jones, R. Major, R. Potter, K. Reid, M. Rennie and R. Ricardo., and D. Taylor.

Officers: Charmaine Denny – Town Clerk
Carl Dallison – Assistant Town Clerk

Apologies: The Mayor (Councillor L. Fry) and Councillor J. Hewitt

Absent: Councillor J. Germodo

17. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest reported.

The Town Clerk reminded Members of the need to review their declarations of interest so as to ensure that they were up to date.

18. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Annual Town meeting held on 18th and 19th May, were confirmed and signed by the Deputy Mayor as a correct record.

19. Police Matters

There was no representative from the Police at the meeting.

20. Presentations, Communications and Motions

The Deputy Mayor thanked the outgoing clerk Steve Newman for all his service and welcomed the incoming clerk Charmaine Denny to her first Full Council meeting.

No motions had been submitted.

21. Planning and Environment Committee – 1st June 2026

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting be adopted. Thanks was given to those members that had actively been involved in the 20mph consultation.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 1 June 2026 be adopted.

22. **Planning and Environment Committee – 6 July 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 6 July 2026 be adopted.

23. **Management Committee – 13 July 2026**

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

Resolved

(1) That the Council appoint the following five Councillors to the Council Grant Scheme Review working Group D. Leaper, F. Kent-Ledger, M.Rennie, R. Major and W. Gibbons.

(2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 13 July 2026 be adopted.

24. **Policy Committee – 20 July 2026**

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

Resolved

(1) That the Council appoints the following five Councillors to the Climate Emergency Task and Finish Group F. Hogwood, R. Major, G. Jones, R. Potter and F. Kent – Ledger.

(2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 11 May 2026 be adopted.

25. **Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Committee**

The minutes of the meeting of the Dorchester Markets Informal Committee be noted.

26. **Update from Dorset Council Members**

Dorset Councillors updated the Council on the following matters:-

- Councillor A. Canning reported that there would be details of the Local Plan being disseminated imminently
- Councillor R. Major announced that the Dorset Councils right of way network consultation is now live
- Councillor S. Jones detailed that the Car Park listening meetings are commencing shortly regarding car parking charging across the County. A report will go to Cabinet in October, and a full consultation will follow, and hopefully changes will come into affect from April 2027
- It was detailed by Councillor S. Jones that a paper regarding the provision of Special Educational Needs was going to Cabinet.
- Councillor R. Biggs detailed that car park machines can be updated to dynamic pricing; this may be an option within the parking review process
- A 'good' rating has been maintained by the Adult Social Care service
- Dorset Council are looking at numerous affordable homes sites across the county
- There has been extensive road resurfacing works taking place over the town in recent weeks

27. **Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act 1960)**

Resolved

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

28. **Fordington Cemetery wall repairs: Award of Contract**

Resolved

That the Council will appoint the successful tenderer for the amount agreed as per the confidential report

Council rose at 7:37pm

Mayor

Public Question Time

No questions were asked.

Dorchester Town Council
Minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee
3 August 2026

Present: Cllrs. R. Biggs, S. Biles, A. Canning, P. Farmer, F. Kent-Ledger, D. Leaper, R. Potter, K. Reid, M. Rennie, R. Ricardo (Chair) and D. Taylor.

Apologies: Councillors L. Fry (the Mayor ex-officio & Vice Chair), J. Hewitt and S. Jones.

Also in attendance: Cllrs. W. Gibbons, F. Hogwood and Ollie Fountain (Bidwells), Steve Jolly (Marengo), Gavin Murray (Brooks Murray) and members of the public (regarding agenda item 3).

15. Declarations of Interest

Councillor R. Potter declared an interest as Chair of the Dorchester Transport Action Group and advised that he would take no part in the debate or determination of the transport proposals.

16. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 July 2026 and ratified at Full Council on 27 July 2026 were signed by the chair.

17. Planning Application P/OUT/2026/03215 Land west of A35 and east of Slyers Lane North of Dorchester

The Committee received a presentation from Ollie Fountain of Bidwells and Steve Jolly of Marengo on planning application P/OUT/2026/03215.

The Committee raised concerns about the following issues:

- Unsustainable stand-alone development
- Lack of certainty on infrastructure delivery
- Inadequate active travel provision
- Highway safety and traffic impacts
- Water, drainage and hydrology concerns
- Biodiversity and ecological impacts
- Impact on heritage and archaeology

The Committee considered the application as set out in appendix 1. Councillors R. Biggs and D. Leaper abstained from voting on the application.

18. Proposed Parking and Waiting Restrictions – Lubbecke Way

The Committee considered amendments to existing parking restrictions on Lubbecke Way to improve road safety, visibility, access to key facilities, and enforceability of parking controls. The Committee supported the proposed changes and requested that the Clerk to the Committee inform Dorset Council of its support.

Resolved

That the Clerk to the Committee contact Dorset Council to confirm the Committee's support for the proposed amendments to the existing parking restrictions on Lubbecke Way.

19. 20MPH Task and Finish Group

The Committee received a verbal update from the chair of the 20mph task and finish group. The Committee was informed that over 2,500 responses had been received to date to the Council's proposed 20mph scheme consultation. The consultation would remain open until 7 September 2026, with opportunities for face to face engagement available alongside the online survey.

20. Planning Applications for Comment

The Committee considered the planning applications referred by Dorset Council to the Council for comment.

Resolved

That the comments on the various planning applications, as set out in Appendix 1, be submitted to Dorset Council.

21. Minute Update Report

There were no minute updates to report.

22. Planning Issues to Note

There were no planning issues to report.

Dorchester Town Council
Planning & Environment Committee – 3 August 2026
Planning Applications for Comment

East Ward (Councillors P. Farmer, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger and R. Major)

No applications received.

North Ward (Councillors S. Biles, A. Canning, V. Lloyd-Jones and D. Taylor)

N1. P/VOC/2026/03565 38 South Street & 5A Trinity Street Dorchester

Formation of two residential flats (Use Class C3) across the first, second and third floors. Replace ground floor retail frontage facing South Street. Replace roof structure & erect dormer window. Replace all windows. Replace roof to rear single storey extension. (with variation of condition 2 of planning permission P/FUL/2025/07231 to add a rooflight).

No objection.

N2. P/VOL/2026/03634 38 South Street & 5A Trinity Street Dorchester

Rebuild the party wall between Nos. 38 and 39 South Street. Replace the ground-floor retail frontage and carry out internal alterations to create two residential flats across the upper floors. Install a new timber roof with natural slate finish and a dormer window. Replace all timber sash windows with slimline double-glazed units. Remove the external timber toilet at first-floor level and renew the rear extension roof with a flat roof. External works to include paint removal from front brickwork, stonework repairs, and replacement of rear cement render with lime render. (with variation of condition 2 of listed building consent P/LBC/2025/07232 to add a rooflight).

No objection.

N3. P/LBC/2026/03915 1 Glyde Path Road Dorchester DT1 1XB

Re-rendering of the South gable and additional lead flashings and weatherings to the chimney stack.

No objection.

West Ward (Councillors L. Fry, J. Germodo, J. Hewitt and R. Ricardo)

W1. P/VOC/2026/03918 Dorset County Hospital Williams Avenue Dorchester DT1 2JY

New Hospitals Project including a new Emergency Department, a new 24 bed Critical Care Department and replacement helipad at roof level (with variation of condition 1 of planning permission P/RES/2023/03565 to amend reference to plans, sections and elevations to reflect the latest design intent).

No objection.

South Ward (Councillors R. Potter and M. Rennie)

S1. P/HOU/2026/03703 18 Kingsbere Crescent Dorchester DT1 2DY

Replace flat roof over porch/garage with new lean-to roof. Erect a rear lean-to extension.

No objection.

Poundbury Ward (Councillors R. Biggs, F. Hogwood and D. Leaper)

No applications received.

In Addition

P/OUT/2026/03215 Land west of A35 and east of Slyers Lane North of Dorchester

Erection of buildings including up to 500no. dwellings, residential institutions; mixed-use neighbourhood centre including flexible employment, retail, leisure and community uses; associated infrastructure including new roads, drainage, footpaths and formal and informal open spaces, landscaping and public realm, cycle and vehicular parking and servicing, utilities and other associated works (Outline application to determine access only).

Prepared by Jo Witherden BSc(Hons) DipTP DipUD MRTPI, August 2026 on behalf of Dorchester Town Council

THE DEVELOPMENT

The application is in outline but includes details of the proposed access arrangements and land use and building heights parameter plans which potentially could be conditioned at this stage, in addition to several other “indicative” parameter plans and illustrative masterplan. It proposes the creation of a new neighbourhood, which would contain a single centre that the application form suggests would include 1,065 sqm gross internal floorspace within use classes E, F1, F2, C1-3, sui generis, in addition to residential uses. The supporting documentation is unfortunately inconsistent in terms of the potential breakdown of this floorspace. The proposals state that 175 (35%) of the dwellings would fall within the definition of affordable homes.

The site extends to just over 24.5ha of agricultural land. The parameter plans, if accepted, would limit the buildings to an area of about 8.2ha (1.1ha for the neighbourhood centre and 7.1ha for the additional residential areas), on land to the north side of Cokers Frome Road.

The neighbourhood area would be accessed off the B3143 Slyers Lane, with an additional ‘emergency only’ access provided from the eastern section of Cokers Frome Road. The access arrangements also include the diversion of the lower end of the B3143 Slyers Lane to meet the B3150 Stinsford Road further to the east. The detailed access plans are not provided separately but are assumed to be those be found in EIA Appendix 18.1 (the Transport Assessment), and specifically: 24554-MA-XX-XX-DR-C-200 – Site Access Drawing and Slyers Lane / London Road Junction Improvement. However the plans specify “DO NOT SCALE OFF THIS DRAWING” and do not indicate any extent to which these relate to the surrounding topography in terms of any required level changes, and as such it is unclear whether these are of sufficient detail to be relied upon at this stage.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION

Members of the Planning and Environment Committee of Dorchester Town Council met to consider the Town Council's response to the planning application at their meeting on Monday, 3 August

2026. Representatives from the applicants attended the meeting to present the scheme to the Council, and sought to answer questions.

The Town Council resolved to **OBJECT** to the application on the following grounds, which are detailed further in this report.

Isolated nature of the new housing, and related health and well-being issues particular for more vulnerable residents, given the need to consider this as a stand-alone application and lack agreement on any wider masterplan for the North Dorchester area.

Lack of certainty regarding phasing and delivery of infrastructure.

Lack of suitable active travel options beyond the site, such as to / from the local schools, and other community facilities in the town and also in Stinsford, as well as allowing for the potential for facilities within the development to attract visitors (such as to the outdoor sports ground and facilities within the Neighbourhood Centre, and visitors to the care home).

Traffic impacts on the highway network insufficiently addressed, including consideration of peak traffic flows from local events / shows, implications for other road users such as cyclists and equestrians.

Impact on the water system / local hydrology, and lack of detailed assessment despite previously raised concerns on water supply and sewerage infrastructure in relation to the North Dorchester proposals

Impact on biodiversity / ecology – in particular with regard to wildlife dependent on the river / flood plain and importance of the Frome as a chalk stream.

Impact on heritage and archaeology – including the lack of adequate archaeological assessment.

The Town Council was also disappointed to understand that, despite the applicant's wish to deliver houses quickly, and the rounds of pre-application discussions undertaken, various elements of the scheme were yet to be resolved, and as such they were being invited to comment on what was presented as an evolving scheme. This included statements made by the applicants' representatives that they were in the process of looking at the provision of a pedestrian crossing of Stinsford roundabout, and that they were in the process of completing a ground-based assessment to inform trial trenching locations for the archaeological assessment, yet supposedly an application for the wider masterplan (which presumably would also be in outline) should be expected 'in the coming months'.

STAND-ALONE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The applicant has made clear that, although they are looking to pursue the wider North Dorchester proposals, that "the scheme is being promoted as a stand-alone development". This means that there is no certainty that the scheme will form part of the wider North Dorchester proposals, or how it might relate to such a community if and when a decision on this is made. The pre-application advice provided by Dorset Council on has been consistent in raising strong concerns about this, in particular:

the limited facilities and infrastructure (active travel) that such a stand-alone community would bring, to connect to existing facilities found within Dorchester

the isolation for people living within what would be a primarily residential development, at some distance from adequate levels of facilities and services, where future residents would be dependent on driving everywhere to meet their day to day needs

the lack of certainty regarding possible benefits of forming part of a wider holistic scheme with the infrastructure and facilities necessary to achieve a genuinely sustainable form of development in this location.

The Town Council fully supports these concerns. Added to this is the lack of certainty regarding the composition of the neighbourhood centre, and the phasing of the delivery of the facilities and infrastructure that are proposed to be delivered.

In terms of the neighbourhood centre, the application form gives a figure of 1,065 sqm gross internal floorspace within use classes E, F1, F2, C1-3, sui generis. There is inconsistency in terms of what this may provide – whether this includes a nursery or health centre or both, and whether or not there would be a community hall, and how these are all provided within the suggested floorspace¹. At the Town Council meeting the applicant's representative referred to there being 500sqm shops (possibly 5 units), a nursery school, and pub. No evidence is provided that any operators have expressed an interest in the scheme. Even on small matters there are inconsistencies – for example, in terms of public open space, the EIA report on water resources states that allotments would not be provided (noting that these should typically be sited outside of SPZ zones), yet allotments are shown on the indicative masterplan and referenced in the design and access statement, and were referred to by the applicant's representative at the Town Council meeting, and clearly would be needed for an isolated development of this scale.

In relation to education, whilst there is capacity in the wider catchment, there does not appear to have been any consideration of extant permissions such as development of the final phases at Poundbury, and proposed growth at Charminster, and whether (as highlighted in the Council's own pre-application response) there is a risk that associated contributions might have to be utilised elsewhere whilst the wider scheme is pending determination / implementation, resulting in imbalance within the wider scheme should it come forward in due course. The applicant's planning statement suggests that the development would contribute towards improvements at existing schools within the catchment, and that this would be discussed with Dorset Council during the application determination period and secured through an appropriate mechanism e.g., Section 106. Yet it is important that the wider public are given an opportunity to comment on any such agreement.

In terms of phasing, the application suggests that only the primary access will be operational, the woodland buffer, SuDS network and (some) green corridors will be established before the first homes are occupied. No trigger point is provided for the delivery of the neighbourhood centre. The active travel connections (limited as they may be) are proposed to be delivered in phases as the homes are built, with no consideration of wider off-site connections required.

The lack of sufficient local facilities and employment opportunities, provided in a timely manner, will have a significant and detrimental impact on those residents that do not have access to a car. This will include many of those who may be placed on the affordable rented housing, as well as the elderly residents including those in the care home provision. This isolation cannot be overcome simply through the provision of a bus service, which itself is not guaranteed to be sustained, or by the expectation that mothers with prams or elderly residents who are less able can cycle into the town.

The relevant National Planning Policy for decision-making is HC3. This expects proposals for this scale of housing to be informed by an understanding of the need for any associated improvements to community facilities and public service infrastructure, and for the development to provide for new or improved community facilities and public service infrastructure which are necessary for the development to be acceptable in planning terms. The application neither provides adequate analysis and evidence on these points, nor accommodates the necessary infrastructure to ensure that the development contains a sustainable mix of uses or access to existing facilities.

¹ The planning statement specifies that this has the potential for: convenience retail, community space, a nursery or health hub, a public house and flexible commercial floorspace. It goes on to note that the nursery would be a key benefit, and that a financial contribution would provide access to healthcare. The EIA refers to a mix comprising approximately 500sqm of small unit shops, approximately 375sqm for a public house and a 56-place nursery (but no healthcare or community venue). The Transport Assessment refers to 500sqm of local facilities (e.g. convenience store, hairdresser/café/ gym), 375sqm public house, 200sqm Nursery / Health use and a Community Hall (functions / meetings / exercises classes etc) – clearly exceeding the 1,065sqm.

ACTIVE TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Very little consideration appears to have been given to active travel beyond the site boundary. No audits are provided that examine the full route length that would be followed by residents travelling to the various facilities in the wider area.

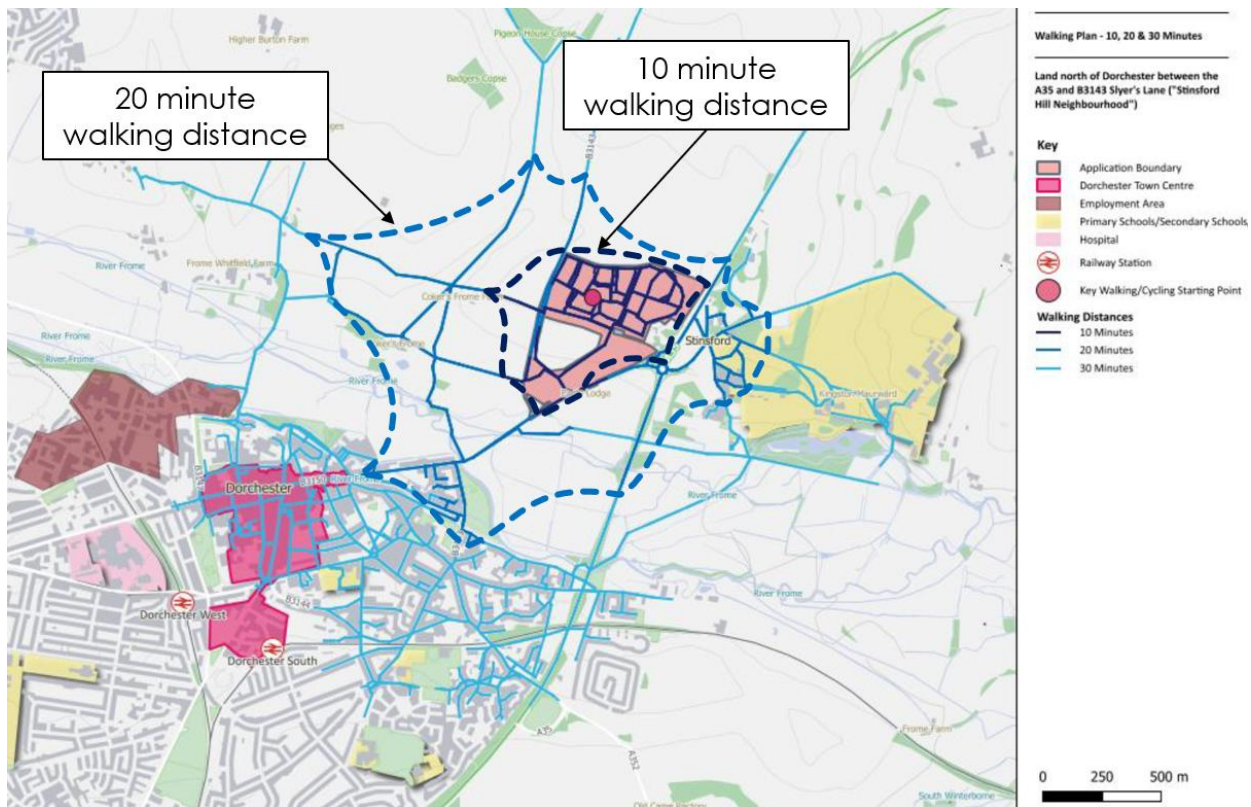
On the basis that this neighbourhood will be reliant on Dorchester and Stinsford for many of its facilities and employment opportunities, it is absolutely critical that active travel opportunities are provided to cover key journeys. In this location, such trips would include travel to Dorchester Town Centre, the existing schools in the town, and also the facilities at Stinsford / Kingston Maurward College.

This also applies to employment opportunities. In terms of employment, the applicant calculates that 500 dwellings would be likely to accommodate about 560 people aged 19-64 (which is the principal working age cohort). Whilst not all of these would be in employment, it would be reasonable to assume that at least 75% (420 people) would be working². Yet, following the construction phase, the applicant suggests that the development would only provide for 118 full-time equivalent jobs (50 within the Neighbourhood centre and 68 'Working from home') – meaning that about 300 residents would need to look for work outside of the neighbourhood. Whilst work opportunities are likely to be concentrated in Dorchester and Kingston Maurward, for completeness, consideration should also be given to active travel options connecting north to the employment area at Piddlehinton Enterprise Park.

It is generally accepted that a “walkable” distance for everyday facilities is around 800m (a 10-minute walk), with shorter distances for bus stops (400m). This is reflected in paragraph 63 of the National Design Guide and published advice from Active Travel England, as well as Manual for Streets. 800m or 10 minutes' walk time (which may reduce the overall distance depending on topography, route availability and quality or physical barriers) also features in the most recent NPPF glossary definition of “reasonable walking distance”.

Yet the 10- and 20-minute walking isochrones (based on the applicant's maps) show the reality of the isolation of this proposed neighbourhood.

² Based on the UK employment rate (aged 16 to 64 years) published in July 2026 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/employmentintheuk/july2026> - and likelihood that the exclusion of those aged 16 – 18 would increase the employment rate given that many of these would remain in full-time education.



The 10 minute walk barely reaches beyond the site boundaries, highlighting the reliance on facilities within the development itself. Even the 20 minute walk only reaches the edge of the town, and does not extend to the town centre, the train stations, major employment areas such as the hospital site, or the local schools. Anyone willing to walk the considerable distance into town may also be deterred given a significant proportion of this walk would be along the side of the B3143 and B3150 London Road, not overlooked by properties and unlikely to feel safe for more vulnerable residents including women and children.

No consideration is given to the safe crossing of the junction of Grey's Bridge (where there is no provision for pedestrian or cyclist crossing at the signal-controlled junction), or the routes as they continue through the town. The same applies for cycle journeys, which given the distance would be the more viable option for those with adequate fitness levels, yet Dorchester lacks safe dedicated cycle routes. The Council may not be obliged to provide dedicated bus transport to the schools, but very few parents are likely to support their children walking and cycling these distances with the lack of safe, dedicated paths provided. This appears to be acknowledged in the applicant's own transport assessment, which does not anticipate any journeys to school on foot, and only 6 out of 323 journeys by cycle. How will the scheme ensure residents can freely, safely and easily access the town facilities, particularly children, residents in affordable housing on limited incomes, and those with limited mobility, and that this does not become a car-led development?

It is also possible that the active travel routes into Dorchester will be flooded for part of the year, and increasingly so with climate change. Access considerations should include the voluntary and free movement of people - the whole route into Dorchester (for active travel) should be considered in terms of flood risk.

No consideration is given to routes connecting south-west to Stinsford and the facilities at Kingston Maurward College (and also the bus stop on the A35). The shorter route from the site would use the eastern section of Cokers Frome Road, but there is no crossing provision proposed at this point, and no lighting or footways along the lane. Such journeys would require pedestrians and cyclists to cross the busy Stinsford roundabout. Stinsford roundabout is already extremely busy during peak periods, and the ability for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate this junction has not been adequately addressed in the application.

It is also possible that facilities within the development may attract visitors from outside of the neighbourhood (such as to the outdoor sports ground and facilities within the Neighbourhood Centre, and visitors to the care home).

Whilst the applicant states a bus service is “being considered” (suggesting possible either half hourly or hourly service Monday to Saturday, from 7am – 7pm), there is no evidence to suggest that a route would be viable, despite this being raised in Dorset Council Highways’ pre-application responses. Nor would this necessarily extend late enough into the evenings or on weekends to provide reasonable access to leisure opportunities outside of normal working hours, or (for example) visitors to the care home facility. Similarly, the potential to include a bus stop on B3150 close to the realigned junction is referenced as an option to provide access to CR8 (Blandford to Weymouth via Dorchester) and CR9 (Blandford to Dorchester via Bere Regis) services, but this is not indicated on the submitted plans.

The relevant National Planning Policies for decision-making are TR2 and DP3. TR2 states that development proposals which could generate a significant amount of movement should be in locations that are sustainable, or which can be made so, taking into account planned or proposed improvements. DP3 requires developments to provide good connections to the wider settlement (or those nearby), and prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. Neither of these requirements are met by this development.

HIGHWAYS SAFETY AND CONGESTION

The transport assessment estimates that the development would generate an increase of about 165 vehicles per hour peak time, although this may well be higher if the anticipated use of active travel is not realized given the proposed levels and inadequacies of provision. Cumulatively impacts have not been properly assessed despite further growth being planned or pending decision in the wider Dorchester catchment.

Whilst the assessment considers that the impact of the development traffic on the Stinsford Roundabout is not material (as they estimate that this would only add one additional queueing vehicle on any arm), this does not negate the fact that the roundabout is shown to be approaching capacity. The lived experience of many residents is queues during peak periods back up along the B3150 Stinsford Road as far as and sometimes beyond the existing junction with the B3143 Slyers Lane, particularly when local events are planned, which in recent years seems to be becoming more regular. The Town Council notes that National Highways have already stated that insufficient information has been provided to fully understand the potential traffic impact of the development on the A35 trunk road.

The provision of a signalized junction has the potential to further complicate the queuing in such scenarios. It is unclear whether the modelling takes sufficient account of the potential back-up situations where the queues then interfere with the function of either Stinsford roundabout or Grey’s Bridge. The modelling appears to be suggesting potential queues of 12 vehicles heading into Dorchester in the morning, and 9 vehicles backing up to Grey’s Bridge in the evening. The presence of visibly long queues causes traffic to divert onto other roads within Dorchester and use the ‘back roads’ in the wider area. Driver frustration is increased adding to the potential for accidents.

The Town Council also shares Dorset Council’s pre-application concerns, that it is yet unclear how or in what form future mitigation for the North Dorchester Garden Community proposals will be implemented. It is concerning that the wider masterplanning process is being fragmented, with no clarity on how this is being coordinated given the North Dorchester Consortium’s proposals’ variance with the Council’s own draft masterplan (which extends beyond the land within the Consortium’s control) and lack of publication of landowner and developer responses to the 2025 Local Plan consultation. It is conceivable that the arrangements proposed at this stage will have to be reconfigured, and even that the highway connection that will be required to the A35 would be best routed through part of the site. There is also no clarity how or when this site would be connected via active travel to the other neighbourhoods to the north and further west.

Very little consideration, if any, appears to have been given to the impact of development on more vulnerable road users (such as cyclists and equestrians) in relation to traffic along Cokers Frome Road (to the west) and Slyers Lane (heading north). Whilst the level of traffic generated by this proposal may be considered relatively low in highways terms (peak hour increases estimated at ~16 vehicles and ~109 vehicles respectively), these roads are rural in nature and have limited width and forward visibility.

The relevant National Planning Policy for decision-making is TR6. This requires transport assessments to assess movement patterns and potential impacts, taking into account impacts at relevant times of the day, potential cumulative impacts, as well as multimodal trip generation, yet the assessment is limited in its scope and extent. It also requires development proposals to be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety. Given the above concerns, it is contended that, had the assessment been sufficiently thorough, it would have indicated that severe adverse impacts are likely and that significant highway safety concerns were not mitigated.

WATER SYSTEM / LOCAL HYDROLOGY AND ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS

Wessex Water's response to the North Dorchester proposals (2025 consultation)³ made clear that: they continue to have concerns regarding the North of Dorchester development and the impact on the water recharge and water quality at the Eagle Lodge Source. it is crucial that groundwater sources are protected from contamination and reduced recharge so that drinking water supplies can be preserved.

The Environment Agency's response to that consultation⁴ also highlighted the need for further evidence in the form of a Water Cycle Study (WCS), which was required "to evaluate the impact of growth on the water environment, across the plan area and beyond, and provide the evidence needed to support the development proposed."

The Town Council notes that the applicant anticipates that all new development will be located in Flood Zone 1, with the exception of the proposed active travel mitigation and a new site access in London Road and Slyers Lane. The Environment Agency has already raised concerns regarding the adequacy of the Flood Risk Assessment. The Town Council agrees with the points raised, but would also add that the means of access to the development should include the whole route into Dorchester. Furthermore, the submitted sequential test (dated November 2025 and found in Appendix C of Appendix 20 of the EIA) does not consider comparable sites that could accommodate this scale of development, as it is based on the whole of the North Dorchester draft masterplan scheme, and is therefore flawed in its conclusions. It is also questionable whether it should be limited to the former West Dorset and Weymouth area if the proposals are purported to meeting Dorset Council's strategic housing needs.

The Environment Agency is also objecting because the risks to groundwater from the proposed development have not been demonstrated to be acceptable. The Town Council agrees with their concerns and has a number of points to make in this regard. A drainage strategy is provided, and this anticipates that all developed parts of the site would be restricted to greenfield run off rates and designed to be protective of the groundwater environment. The information provided is unclear (despite the levels of pre-application engagement) in terms of the use of rainwater (with Dorset Council encouraging rainwater harvesting to be plumbed into new dwellings so that it can

³ <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/7122503/Wessex%20Water.pdf/5d5dfe5c-e593-be6c-a7ac-30b0488837d>

⁴ <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/7122503/Environment%20Agency.pdf/159a19f9-32d6-ea6f-f650-2aa88d6bb0c2>

be re-used for such things as toilet flushing, which would remove this source from the potential for recharging the groundwater), the potential degree of proposed infiltration (which clearly needs to have been agreed with the Environment Agency), and what mechanisms would be used to filter out pollutants at each stage. Whilst a system designed to be protective of the groundwater environment in theory would minimise residual impacts, it does not prevent any harm. Indeed, the Environmental Statement concludes that “Should an accidental spillage occur, there is the potential for the water quality at the Eagle Lodge PWS borehole to be affected, and in a worst-case scenario having to be taken out of service”. There is no additional assessment of the implications of the loss of this “key local water supply asset” in such a worst-case scenario, particularly in terms of public water supply for the Dorchester area. The Environmental Statement cannot rule out a major adverse impact during the construction or operational phases. On this basis the applicant’s hydrological assessment and mitigation proposals appear wholly inadequate.

In addition to consideration of the potential impact on public water supplies, the changes to the water table and possible pollution also have the potential to impact on local wildlife and habitats. Whilst nutrient neutrality is considered in relation to Poole Harbour, there is no clear evidence that the ecological impacts on the River Frome as a chalk stream environment have been fully considered in terms of the water hydrology and pollution impacts. For example, implications of the drainage scheme discharging into the local watercourse (the Frome), and the extent to which this may contribute to pollution of this habitat. Town Council members are concerned that protected species such as the Atlantic salmon (known to frequent the Frome as far upstream as Maiden Newton⁵) will be further adversely impacted when they are already in severe decline in this area, and no mitigation has been identified due to the absence of a robust assessment.

It is also noted that feedback received from Natural England suggests that “In light of the ecological sensitivity of the southern field and its role as habitat for bats, we recommend that this area remains free from artificial lighting.” This appears to be in direct conflict with the advice on active travel and the applicant’s proposals for these routes to be lit 24/7.

The relevant National Planning Policies for decision-making are P3 and N2. Part 2(f) of NPPF P3 requires applicants to assess and mitigate impacts where the development could have an unacceptable adverse effect on water quality, especially in relation to sensitive water bodies such as chalk streams. N2 requires development proposals to minimise any adverse impacts on biodiversity, and that significant harm to biodiversity that cannot be compensated for must be refused. The lack of an adequate assessment and certainty means that avoidance, mitigation and compensation cannot be assured.

HERITAGE INCLUDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACTS

The Town Council notes that some of the key historic environment consultees have already responded to the consultation and raised significant concerns based on the inadequacy of the assessment provided. This also links with the concerns raised in respect of the landscape and visual impacts assessment. The Town Council shares these concerns.

This includes the lack of a full archaeological assessment and evaluation of the site, in light of the high potential for significant finds given the Roman presence in the area (with the Roman by-pass road running through the site) as well as the prehistoric funerary importance of the area (such as the Stinsford Barrow Group) and potential importance of connections between these and other prehistoric sites.

Another example of the lack of evaluation is in terms of the changes arising from the introduction of a signalised junction with associated lighting connecting from Dorchester along the B3150 and continuing north to this new Neighbourhood. This would clearly impact on the approach into

⁵ <https://www.gwct.org.uk/media/1234772/Fisheries-Report-2020.pdf>

Dorchester from the east, the cultural and historic significance of the watermeadows, and the setting of Eagle Lodge which is a non-designated heritage asset.

The understanding of heritage impacts is also compounded by the poor quality of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. This appears to omit visualisations for viewpoints that are 'scoped in' as potentially significant (such as the visualisation from close to Eagle Lodge) as well as failing to scope in views from heritage assets such as the Stinsford Barrow Group to the north. The LVIA itself recognises a number of limitations, despite the significance of this issue, including:

Winter views (reduced leaf cover) were not obtained for all of the baseline views due to timing of project programme;

Night-time effects have not been assessed.

The relevant National Planning Policies for decision-making are HE5, HE6, HE7, HE9 and HE10. The policies require an assessment of the effect that development would have on the significance of heritage assets (including through effects on their setting), and confirms the need for field evaluation of areas of archaeological interest when this is necessary to understand the asset's significance and the potential effect of the proposal on this. Therefore it is critically important that the assessment is sufficiently robust. Substantial weight must be afforded to a heritage asset's conservation, and any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight. Decisions on non-designated heritage assets continue to require a balanced judgement to be made. Heritage assets with archaeological interest should be preserved in situ where feasible.

Dorchester Town Council
Minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee
7 September 2026

Present: Cllrs. R. Biggs, S. Biles, A. Canning, P. Farmer, F. Kent-Ledger, D. Leaper, R. Potter, K. Reid, M. Rennie, R. Ricardo (Chair), and L. Fry (the Mayor ex-officio & Vice Chair).

Apologies: Councillors D. Taylor, J. Hewitt, S. Jones, V Lloyd Jones. R. Major.

Also in attendance:

23. Declarations of Interest

Councillor L. Fry declared that, as a member of Dorset Council's Northern Area Planning Committee, he would keep an open mind on the planning process and consider all information available at each stage of the decision process. He would take part in the debate but not vote on planning applications at this meeting.

Councillor M. Rennie – item FI1, Nappers House, as Chair of the Board of Trustees at Dorchester Almshouse.

24. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 August 2026 were confirmed by the Committee and signed by the Chair.

25. Dorset Council Local Plan

Members noted the publication of the timetable for the preparation of the Dorset Council Local Plan.

26. Request for 'School Ahead' Signage at Sunninghill Prep School

Members considered correspondence from Sunninghill Prep School requesting the provision of 'School Ahead' warning signs. It was noted that such requests must be submitted through the Town Council rather than directly by the school.

Proposed: Cllr Biggs

Seconded: Cllr Potter

Resolved: That Dorchester Town Council supports the school's request and asks Dorset Council to investigate the installation of appropriate warning signage.

27. Planning Applications for Comment

The Committee considered the planning applications referred by Dorset Council to the Council for comment.

28. Minute Update Report

Members noted the response from the Dorset Council Area Planning Manager.

Questions were raised regarding objections relating to the legality of applications. Members noted

from the officer's response that concerns may be raised, although the legality of a proposal is a matter for Dorset Council to determine.

29. Planning Issues to Note

Dorset Council were holding a planning event for town and parish councils on the 8 September 2026. Members requested feedback following the event.

Durngate Street Car Park

Members noted that Wessex Water's planned works had been delayed due to vehicles remaining in the car park.

Action: Clerk to email Dorset Council Parking Services expressing concern that the car park had not been marked as closed ahead of the scheduled commencement of the works, with East Ward Councillors copied in.

Appendix 1

Dorchester Town Council

Planning & Environment Committee – 7 September 2026

Planning Applications for Comment

East Ward (Councillors P. Farmer, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger and R. Major)

E1. P/HOU/2026/4049 7 little Britain Dorchester DT1 2NN

Erect first floor rear extension and external alterations to ground floor rear extension,

No objection

E2. P/HOU/2026/04167 17 Garland Crescent Dorchester DT1 2SX

Erect a pergola.

Objection

The Committee considers that the proposed structure is of a scale, bulk and form that would result in an overbearing built feature within the rear garden. Particular concern is raised regarding the extent and height of the roof structure, which gives the development the appearance of a substantial building rather than a lightweight garden structure.

The Committee further considers that the proposal would introduce a significant area of hard surfacing and built form, reducing the amount of permeable garden space and potentially increasing surface water run-off within the site.

Members also expressed concern regarding the overall massing of the development in relation to the size of the plot and its proximity to the footpath and adjoining mature tree.

E3. P/HOU/2026/04168 24 Alington Road Dorchester DT1 2NT

Erect 2 storey side extension and single storey rear extension (Demolish Conservatory).

No objection

E4. P/HOU/2026/04234 22 Alington Road Dorchester DT1 1NT

Erect a garden office.

No objection

E5. P/HOU/2026/04625 14 All Saints Road Dorchester DT1 1NT

Erect single storey side extension, erect single storey front extension.

No objection

North Ward (Councillors S. Biles, A. Canning, V. Lloyd-Jones and D.Taylor)

N1. P/LBC/2026/04057 Dorchester Town Hall High East Street Dorchester DT1 1HF

Repairs to lead-covered spire, decayed rafter ends, roof timbers and associated metal fixings. Localised repair and replacement of deteriorated external and internal facing stonework. Repair and strengthening of bell fastenings. Conservation and restoration of historic clock mechanism, clock dials and bells.

No comment

N2. P/LBC/2026/04152 Savernake House 42 High West Street Dorchester DT1 1UU

Repairs to roofs, chimney and dormer window.

No Objection

Councillors praised the restoration works.

N3. P/HOU/2026/03833 & P/LBC/2026/03834 (Listed Building Consent) 62 Stable Cottage High West Street Dorchester DT1 1UY

Refurbishment & improvement works including new entrance porch, replacement rear garden room extension, internal alterations & reconfiguration, replacement stair, fire safety upgrades, installation of conservation rooflights, Juliet balcony guarding, replacement wood burning stove, and formation of new rear access gate and steps.

No Objection

N4. P/FUL/2026/04286 Vespasian House Barrack Road Dorchester DT1 1TS

Change of use of part of existing car park to communal residential garden and erection of an ancillary wellness pavilion, together with associated landscaping, patio areas, relocations of the bin store and associated infrastructure.

No Objection

Whilst rising no objection, members expressed concern regarding the reduction in parking

provision and requested clarification that adequate disabled parking spaces remain available following the proposed development. Concerns were also raised regarding accessibility, including access arrangements to the Dorset History Centre.

Members considered that the proposed garden and wellness pavilion should operate as a genuinely communal amenity space for the benefit of all. In addition, members requested that bird-safe glazing or other appropriate bird-strike mitigation measures are incorporated within the design of the proposed pavilion.

N5. P/HOU/2026/04253 5 Albert Road Dorchester DT1 1SE

Demolish existing single storey addition and erect a single storey extension.

No Objection

West Ward (Councillors L. Fry, J. Germodo, J. Hewitt and R. Ricardo)

W1. P/ADV/2026/03832 40 Great Western Road Dorchester DT1 1UF

Display 1no. non-illuminated fascia sign.

No Objection

W2. P/FUL/2026/03831 40 Great Western Road Dorchester DT1 1UF

Replace existing shop signage.

No Objection

W3. P/HOU/2026/04010 41 Queens Avenue Dorchester DT1 2EP

Single storey flat roof rear extension. Insert new upper floor window on side elevation and reduce width of ground floor side window.

No Objection

W4. P/FUL/2026/03831 40 Great Western Road Dorchester DT1 1UF

Install replacement shopfront, including new entrance door and signage.

No Objection

W5. P/HOU/2026/03580 7 Mithras Close Dorchester DT1 2RF

Erect a single-storey, flat roofed side extension.

No Objection

South Ward (Councillors R. Potter and M. Rennie)

S1. P/HOU/2026/04551 85 Weatherbury Way Dorchester DT1 2EE

Erect single storey front extension and erect single storey rear extension.

No Objection

S2. P/VOC/2026/04591 10 Manor Road Dorchester DT1 2AU

Erect bungalow with associated access and parking with variation of condition 2, 9 & 13 to planning permission P/FUL/2024/07190 to amend approved plans.

No Objection

Members were disappointed by the approach taken to obtain the necessary permission.

Poundbury Ward (Councillors R. Biggs, F. Hogwood and D. Leaper)

P1. P/VOC/2026/04006 Poundbury Phases 3 And 4 Peverell Avenue East Poundbury

Erection of 205 dwellings, 473m² of non-residential development & associated roads, drainage & other infrastructure (with variation of condition 1 of planning permission WD/D/20/002764 – to allow amendments to the design of dwellings in Sectors 4.13 & 4.19).

No Objection

P2. P/VOC/2026/04460 North West Quadrant Poundbury Dorchester

Variation of Condition 1 (approved plans) of planning permission WD/D/20/002764, to allow amendments to the layout of Plot 780 and the enlargement and redesign of the associated garage building to enable the formation of an additional residential dwelling over the garages.

No objection

P3. P/FUL/2026/01263 Crown Point Phases 3 and 4 Poundbury

Erection of 57no. dwellings, public open space & associated infrastructure.
(amended plans / Additional information supplied)

No Objection

For Information

FI1. P/NMA/2026/04532 Nappers House West Walks Dorchester

Noted

FI2. P/NMA/2026/04534 Roman Corner Trinity Street Dorchester

Noted

Dorchester Town Council

Management Committee

14th September 2026

Present: Councillors A. Canning, P. Farmer, W. Gibbons, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger, D. Leaper (Chair), R. Major, M. Rennie, and D. Taylor.

Apologies: Councillors L. Fry, J. Hewitt and R. Potter.

In attendance:

Councillors R. Biggs, S. Biles and F. Hogwood.

Officers: Tony Hurley (Assistant Town Clerk – Corporate) and Carl Dallison (Assistant Town Clerk – Outdoor Services).

13. Declaration of Interests

None.

14. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13th July 2026, adopted by Council on 27th July 2026, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

15. Outdoor Services – Update Report – Late Summer 2026

The Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services) presented the update report on the work of the Outdoor Services team. The impact of the very dry weather on plants and trees was highlighted as was the hard work of the team during these difficult conditions. Cllr Rennie suggested that the Chair should write to all Outdoor Services staff to thank them for their hard work over the summer. In addition, a member of the Gardens' team who had helped the police locate a vulnerable missing person was thanked.

Cllr Canning asked about future measures to mitigate impact of very hot and dry weather on the council's open spaces. The Assistant Town Clerk outlined options such as the planting of more drought-resistant species in certain flower beds, the storage of water from the borehole in Borough Gardens, and the installation of structure providing the public with shade in the Gardens play area.

Cllr Gibbons highlighted the recent wildfire risks and asked that all members be notified in future when fire risk notices are placed in the council's open spaces. Cllr Rennie recommended that the council request the police talk to school pupils about fire risks in woodland.

Resolved:

That the Outdoor Services update report be noted.

16. Lower South Street Planter Options

The Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services) outlined the options for the future of the planters / seats at the southern end of South Street. Members supported the retention of seating in this area given the need to help attract visitors given impact of the long-term road closure. It was also proposed that the Dorchester Business Improvement District be approached to request support for future maintenance. Option B was proposed by Cllr Major and seconded by Cllr Jones.

Resolved:

That the Committee agrees to treat the wooden planter and seating elements, remove current plants, except the Birch tree and replace with drought resistant permanent planting. The cost of the plants could be met from existing budget. Town Council staff will water and maintain.

17. Allotments Annual Report and Proposed Fees for 2027

The Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate) presented proposals for the allotment fees in 2027. The recommendations were proposed by Cllr Kent-Ledger and seconded by Cllr Taylor.

Resolved:

That:

- a) the committee notes the update on the management and administration of the council's allotment sites;
- b) the allotment rent from January 2027 be increased by £1.00 per plot no matter the size;
- c) the water fee from January 2027 be increased by £1.00 per plot no matter the size;
- d) the practice of charging double fees for non-Dorchester residents continues.

18. Proposal for storage unit at Sandringham Sports Centre car park

A proposal for the placing of a storage contained in the car park of Sandringham Sports Centre was presented to the committee. Members were concerned about the impact of the proposals on car park capacity and its affect on other users of the site. It was agreed that consideration of the proposal by the Committee be deferred until the council has consulted with all relevant stakeholders.

Resolved:

That consideration of the item be deferred until following a meeting to discuss the proposals with all relevant stakeholders and involving the Town Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.

19. **Grant Applications**

With regard to grant application from the Dorset Climate Action Network a member of the public had submitted a statement and this was read out to the Committee by the Chair. The Committee considered the requests for financial assistance and it was

Resolved:

- (a) That consideration of the grant application by the AsOne Theatre Company for the cost of venue hire for the Seeds of Hope project be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee subject to clarification on the number of Dorchester-based beneficiaries.
- (b) That no grant be awarded to Loving by Nature CIC for a Saturday art club.
- (c) That no grant be awarded to B Sharp towards the cost of the 'Dorchester Jam' pilot sessions.
- (d) That consideration of the grant application by the Dorchester Disabled Club for the cost of storage shed be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee subject to consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- (e) That a grant of £500 be awarded to the Dorset Climate Action Network towards the cost of transport and equipment for an environmental conference.

20. **Minutes of the Twinning & Cultural Activities Panel**

Cllr Rennie reported that the Lubbecke Society was struggling to re-establish itself and recruit a new chair. Twinning arrangements with Bayeux were being reinforced with a visit by the Society, Mayor and Town Clerk to the town. In future, there was the opportunity for links with Bayeux to be reinforced through the participation of local sports clubs in a coastal running event in Normandy.

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.

21. **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. The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Kent-Ledger and seconded by Cllr Jones.

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. The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Kent-Ledger and seconded by Cllr Jones.

Resolved:

That the actions of the Town Clerk in approving designs numbered 5545 to 5555 be confirmed and the Register of Memorials be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Dorchester Town Council

POLICY COMMITTEE

22nd September 2026

Present: Councillors: The Mayor (Councillor L. Fry) and Councillors R. Biggs, S. Biles (Chair), V. Lloyd-Jones and K. Reid.

Officers: Charmaine Denny (Town Clerk), Tony Hurley (Assistant Town Clerk – Corporate) and Nigel Hayes (Responsible Finance Officer)

One member of the public

Apologies: Councillors R.Ricardo, F.Hogwood, G.Jones and J.Germodo

01. Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were declared.

02. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20th July, adopted by Council on 27th July 2026, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

03. Public Participation

The following questions were asked by a member of the public, and the Town Clerk responses were given (in bold):

Dorchester Town Council's Member Development and Training Strategy states that elected-member development applies to all councillors and should be embedded throughout a councillor's term of office. The Council's earlier governance reporting, including work published by the then Town Clerk, Dennis Holmes, also emphasised member development and appropriate training. Could the Policy Committee clarify whether the Council still considers the Member Development and Training Strategy to be an active policy; how compliance with it is currently monitored; what record is maintained of training and development undertaken by individual councillors; and, in the interests of transparency and good governance, when that record will be made publicly available?

The Member Development and Training Strategy is no longer an active Council policy and has therefore been removed from the Council's website. The Council's current governance arrangements and member training requirements are kept under review, and councillors are advised of relevant training opportunities as appropriate

The Council's Standing Orders state that the terms of reference and membership of a Task and Finish Group should be determined by the appointing committee, and provide for the Council to determine matters including quorum, public and press attendance and advance public notice. The Corporate Plan also states that members of the press and public are welcome to attend Panels and Task and Finish Groups unless confidential matters need to be considered. Given that residents attending Council meetings are expected to comply with the Council's Standing Orders, could the Policy Committee explain how the Council is ensuring that its own Task and Finish Groups comply with those Standing Orders; where the terms of reference, membership, meeting dates and public-access arrangements for each current Task and Finish Group are published; and, if they are not currently published, how residents can exercise the public attendance envisaged by the Corporate Plan?

The Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are currently under review and will be presented to the November Policy Committee for consideration. The Corporate Plan will also be reviewed in the coming months. The operation and governance arrangements for Task and Finish Groups will be considered as part of these reviews, including their terms of reference, membership and arrangements for public and press attendance.

The public Register of Interests currently states that some registers are not yet available and that they will be published as councillors submit them through Dorset Council's new system. Given the importance of transparency and public confidence in the Council's decision-making, could the Policy Committee confirm whether all Dorchester Town Councillors have now submitted an up-to-date Register of Interests, and when residents can expect the published register to be complete and up to date?

19 of the Council's 20 councillors have completed their Register of Interests on the new system. Councillors are reminded periodically by the Town Clerk to complete or update their register as appropriate. Responsibility for completing and maintaining an individual Register of Interests rests with the councillor concerned. Consequently, the Council cannot provide a date by which the outstanding register will be completed

In considering the Council's policy for recognising long service and contribution to Dorchester, will the Policy Committee consider whether the Honorary Citizen Award should form part of the same coherent recognition framework, so that the Council has clear and transparent criteria distinguishing recognition for length of service from recognition for exceptional contribution to the town; and, if Honorary Citizen Awards are to remain outside that policy, could the Committee explain the rationale for treating the two forms of civic recognition separately?

Honorary Citizen status can be conferred (for life) on any individual who has made a significant difference over a long period of time to the community of Dorchester. Recipients do not need to have been either a councillor or member of staff of the Town Council. The two recognition schemes are, therefore, very different and, in

addition, there can only be a maximum of five living honorary citizens at any one time – whereas the staff/member recognition scheme has no ‘cap’ on the number of beneficiaries. There would not, therefore, appear to be any benefits in aligning the schemes

04. Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools

Members considered a report by the Assistant Town Clerk (corporate) which detailed how Cllr Poppy Farmer had submitted a proposal to develop a policy on the use of artificial intelligence (AI)

Members commented on how they felt that this proposal was timely and that a policy was needed.

Resolved

The Committee resolved for officers to develop a draft policy on the use of AI tools following research and stakeholder engagement and for the draft to be presented to Committee early in 2027.

05. Draft Policy – Recognition of Long Service

Members considered a report by the Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate) on a draft Policy for Recognition of Long Service.

Members asked for members to amend the policy so that the voucher had a focus on being spent locally, and any voucher to be accompanied by an appropriate certificate.

Resolved

Members approved the draft Long -Service Recognition Policy (to include the amends detailed) and for it to be included within the council’s Staff Handbook.

06. Financial Update

Members received a financial update from the Responsible Finance Officer which updated them on the financial and cash position of the Council as at end of August 2026. The amount of earmarked reserves at the end of August 2026, debtors over 30 days and gave details of the payment list for the period 1 July to 31 August.

Information was also given relating to the recent procurement exercise for an insurance provider.

Resolved

a) That the payments list, totalling £326,901.00 be resolved

b) That That Clear Insurance Group be appointed as the Council's insurance provider for an initial three-year term commencing 1 December 2026, with options to extend for a further one year and subsequent additional one year (3+1+1), at an estimated annual cost of approximately £44,600.

07. Sub Group – Neighbouring Parish Councils

The Committee were presented a report by the Town Clerk that requested that two councillors along with the Town Clerk meet and form a sub group with the clerks and two councillors each from Bradford Peverell, Charminster and Stinsford Parish Councils.

Resolved

That the Committee appoint Cllr Leaper and Cllr Potter of the Local Plan/Future Direction Task and Finish Group to sit on the Sub Group (name to be confirmed) with neighbouring Parish Councils.

08. Budget Working Group

The Committee was asked to consider establishing a budget working group for the forthcoming financial year.

Resolved

That the Committee appoint up to five Members; to include the Chair and Vice Chair of the Policy Committee; Chair and or Vice Chair of the Management Committee and one other member. The Town Clerk is to email and ask all members.

09. Consultation – Electoral Review of Dorset Council

Members considered a report by the Town Clerk regarding the recent proposals that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England have published.

It was detailed how the only proposed impact to Dorchester has only been a slight change to the Dorset Council ward boundaries between Dorchester East and Dorchester West ward boundaries.

Resolved

Members agreed that there written response to the Electoral Review of Dorset Council Consultation would be that they agree with the current proposals from the Boundary

Commission to make a slight change to the boundary between Dorchester East and West Wards, and that they would *not* support a North/South ward. The committee also supported the Dorchester Town Council boundaries remaining exactly the same.

The meeting ended at 19:52

Dorchester Town Council

Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel

5 August 2026

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

Officers: Charmaine Denny (Town Clerk - DTC), Graham Duggan (Head of Regulatory Services - DC), Nigel Hayes (Responsible Financial Officer – DTC), Daryl Chambers (Markets Officer – DTC) and Keira Lake (Finance Assistant)

Apologies: There were no apologies.

1. Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were declared.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Markets Informal Joint Panel held on 3rd June 2026, were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. Markets Operation Update

Members considered a report by the Markets Officer which updated the panel on the proposed improvements to the Fairfield Indoor Market and gave a summary of how the car boot and Cornhill market are trading.

An overview of the Cornhill Project was also given to the Panel.

Dorchester Town Council (DTC) have recently agreed a contribution of £35,000 towards the Fairfield Indoor Market improvements and members wished for their thanks to DTC to be noted.

Resolved

Proposer: Cllr S. Williams

Seconder: Cllr R. Tarr

It was unanimously agreed that:

- (1) Officers continue to work with Dorset Council and appoint a contractor for the improvement works for Fairfield Indoor Market

- (2) An energy professional to be appointed to complete and submit an application to Low Carbon Dorset for the procurement, installation and commissioning of a solar panel system for the indoor market at a cost of upto £4,000. This is to also include an assessment for further car charging points in the future, as well as LED lighting for the whole site

4. **Markets Future Vision**

The Markets Officer presented a report regarding the importance of creating a masterplan document for the site.

The panel discussed the benefits of having the document and emphasised how the removal of the North Linney's needs to be seen in the wider context e.g. how the removal of them will benefit the wider site.

Once a draft Masterplan has been produced, it should be circulated to the panel in advance of the next meeting, and an additional meeting to be scheduled if needed. Officers also to undertake a public consultation before the document is finalised.

The Panel aspired for the covered area of the Fairfield Car Park to have the same opening times of the main car park in the future.

Resolved

Proposer: Cllr S. Jones

Seconder: Cllr P. Dickinson

It was unanimously agreed that the Panel agree for a contractor to be procured to produce a masterplan document for the markets site and for the costs of this to be paid for from the Market Panels budget.

5. **Financial Outturn Report 2025/26**

The Panel had before it a report from Dorset Council, presented by Graham Duggan which gave the financial outturn position of the Markets panel for 2025/26

Resolved

Proposer: Cllr S. Williams

Seconder: Cllr S. Jones

Members of the Panel unanimously approved the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2026.

6. **2026 – 27 Financial Update**

The Panel had before it a report presented by Keira Lake which gave the financial position of the Markets to date for 2026/27.

Resolved

Proposer: Cllr K.Reid

Seconder: Cllr S.Jones

Members of the Panel unanimously noted the current financial position as at the end of July 2026.