

Dorchester Town Council

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You are summoned to the **Adjourned Annual Meeting** of **Dorchester Town Council** to be held in the Council Chamber, the Municipal Buildings, High East Street, Dorchester, DT1 1HF on **Tuesday 19 May 2026 at 7.00pm**, to conduct the business set out in the Agenda below.

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 30 March 2026 (page 3).

4. **Police Update**

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

5. **Presentations, Communications and Motions**

- a) To receive a presentation from Paul Gleeson, Dorchester Literary Festival.
- b) To receive communications from the Mayor and Town Clerk which will include a communication in respect of Age Friendly Dorset.
- c) To receive motions received from Members no less than 5 days before the meeting.

6. **Minutes of Committees**

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

Planning & Environment Committee	7 April 2026	Page 7
Planning & Environment Committee	27 April 2026	Page 12
Management Committee	5 May 2026	Page 16
Policy Committee	11 May 2026	Page 20

To note the Minutes of the following Joint Bodies

Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee

26 January 2026

Page 24

7. **Outside Body Reports**

To receive reports from Councillor David Taylor in respect of the Dorchester Association and Volunteer Centre Dorset (enclosed – pages 29 and 30).

8. **Annual Business**


(a) Appointments to Committees, Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, Joint Bodies, Outside Body Representative (report enclosed page 32).

(b) To readopt the General Power of Competence (report enclosed page 37).

(c) To authorise up to six Members to operate the Council's Bank Mandates (Currently Councillors P. Farmer, L. Fry, J. Hewitt, S. Jones, M. Rennie and D. Taylor).

9. **Update from Dorset Council Members**

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



Steve Newman
Town Clerk
13 May 2026

At the conclusion of the Meeting members of the public will have the opportunity to address the Council or ask questions on matters of local concern.

Dorchester Town Council

Meeting of the Dorchester Town Council held in the Council Chamber

30 March 2026

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

Apologies: Councillor R. Major.

57. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

58. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 26 January 2026, were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

59. Police Matters

Sergeant Ian Schofield updated the Council on the crime statistics and initiatives for Dorchester over the past two months. He also responded to Members detailed questions. Members were pleased to note the increased police officers in the town and agreed that their actual presence in the town on neighbourhood duties be monitored after a few months.

60. Presentations, Communications and Motions

The Council received a presentation from Emma Teasdale, Litter Free Dorset on the initiatives that were happening around the county. In respect of Dorchester, Litter Free Dorset was working with the Town Council on the Watermark Town project and future opportunities in the town included school engagement, River Frome signage and interpretation, business engagement and helping with a project to make Dorchester the first single use cup free town in Dorset and the UK. The representative also responded to Members detailed questions.

No motions had been submitted.

61. Planning and Environment Committee – 2 February 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 2 February 2026 be adopted.

62. Planning and Environment Committee – 2 March 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 2 March 2026 be adopted.

63. Management Committee – 16 March 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 16 March 2026 be adopted.

64. Mayoral Selection Committee – 23 March 2026

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

Resolved

(1) That Councillor Les Fry be invited to prepare to fill the office of Town Mayor, and Councillor Robin Potter the office of Deputy Town Mayor, of Dorchester during the 2026-27 Council Year.

(2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Mayoral Selection Committee held on 23 March 2026 be adopted.

65. Policy Committee – 23 March 2026

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

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 23 March 2026 be adopted.

66. Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee – 26 January 2026

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

67. **Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel – 28 January 2026**

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

68. **Appointments Panel**

The Chair of the Appointments Panel reported that the Panel had completed the process to appoint a new Town Clerk and the candidate selected was Charmaine Denny.

69. **Calendar of Meetings 2026-27**

The Council considered changing the date of the January 2027 Planning and Environment Committee and it was

Resolved

That the January 2027 Planning and Environment Committee be moved from 5 January 2027 to Thursday 7 January 2027.

70. **Outside Body Reports**

The Council received reports in respect of the following outside bodies:-

- Ashley Churchill & Thorner Trust
- Dorchester Almshouses
- Dorchester Arts
- Dorchester BID
- Dorchester Bayeux Society
- Dorchester Lubbecke Society
- Dorchester Toursim Partnership
- Citizens Advice Central Dorchester
- Dorchester Transport Action Group
- Dorchester Youth & Community Centre
- Municipal Buildings Monitoring Group
- South Wessex Community Rail Partnership
- Thomas Hardy Society
- Transition Town Dorchester
- Sawmills Development Association

Reports in respect of the Dorchester Association and Volunteer Centre Dorset would be presented to the next Council meeting.

It was noted that there had not been any DAPTC Larger Council meetings held in 2025-26.

Resolved

That the Outside Body reports be received.

71. **Update from the Dorset Council**

Dorset Councillors updated the Council on the following matters:-

- Councillor S. Jones reported that Dorset Council had launched its Local Nature Recovery Strategy, a ten year framework aimed at reversing biodiversity decline in the County.
- A booking system had been introduced at the Household Recycling Centre.
- Two new members of Youth Parliament had been elected.
- Councillor R. Biggs reported that Dorset Council was monitoring the effect of the oil crisis on its activities.
- Dorset Council had agreed sixteen affordable housing development sites in the County.
- The Government had committed £20m and further funding had been provided by Dorset Council to establish a new visitor attraction, stone masonry training centre and global diversity beacon on Portland.
- Councillor L. Fry reported on an excellent Dorset Council Chair's Civic Day which had been well attended.
- Verge cutting was to be reduced to twice a year and would be mow and collect.
- A new plaque had been unveiled at County Hall to honour the people of Dorset who were conscripted under National Service.

Council rose at 7.59pm.

Mayor

Public Question Time

A member of the public asked whether the Council would work with Stinsford and Charminster Parish Council's to commission an independent flood risk report in light of the proposed development north of Dorchester and the recent experience of flooding in the town.

It was reported that the Dorset Council was to obtain an independent study and Councillor S. Jones confirmed that she would find out the latest position.

Further consideration to the matter, including the possibility of bring forward a meeting with Stinsford and Charminster Parish Council's, be given at a future meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee.

Dorchester Town Council

Minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee

7 April 2026

Present: Councillors A. Canning (the Mayor ex-officio), R. Biggs, S. Biles, P. Farmer, L. Fry (Vice Chair), F. Hogwood, S. Jones, D. Leaper, V. Lloyd-Jones, R. Potter, M. Rennie and R. Ricardo (Chair).

Apologies: Cllrs J. Hewitt, F. Kent-Ledger and R. Major.

Also in Attendance: Cllr William Gibbons, Cllr Kate Reid, Matthew Besant from Places for People and members of the public regarding application P/FUL/2026/01263.

72. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor L. Fry that as a member of Dorset Council's Northern Area Planning Committee, he would keep an open mind on the planning applications 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.

73. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 March 2026 and ratified at the Full Council meeting held on 30 March 2026 were signed by the chair.

74. **Planning Applications for Comment**

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

Planning Application P/FUL/2026/01263

The Committee heard concerns from several nearby residents regarding the potential clustering of affordable housing on the site. Matthew Besant, representing Places for People, advised that other areas of Poundbury already have comparable levels of affordable housing. He also confirmed that Places for People were exploring whether a caveat could be introduced requiring tenants or shared owners to be on the Dorset Council Housing Register and employed within the town.

Residents also raised concerns about the additional traffic the development might generate, as well as the proposed construction traffic management plan using Poundbury Road. Matthew Bessant explained that a robust traffic management plan would be implemented, but noted that it would not be finalised unless and until the planning application is approved.

Resolved

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

75. Minute Update Report

There were no minute updates to report.

76. Planning Issues to Note

There were no planning issues to note.

Dorchester Town Council

Planning & Environment Committee – 7 April 2026

Planning Applications for Comment

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

E1. P/FUL/2026/01207 Storage space for 9 to 15 Holbaek Close Dorchester

Erect bin storage units.

No objection.

E2. P/LBC/2026/00752 61 High Street Fordington Dorchester DT1 1LD

Replace worn felt to 2 no. dormer windows with traditional material (lead), replace gas fire with wood burning stove and replace existing flu to HETAS regulations.

No objection.

E3. P/HOU/2026/01210 23 Kensington Walk Dorchester DT1 2DS

Erect two-storey rear extension.

No objection.

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

N1. P/FUL/2026/01090 6 South Street Dorchester DT1 1AZ

Replace shopfront and erect signage.

No objection.

N2. P/ADV/2026/01091 6 South Street Dorchester DT1 1AZ

Display 1no. Non-illuminated fascia sign & 1no. Non-illuminated hanging sign.

No objection.

N3. P/HOU/2026/01243 15 Mountain Ash Road Dorchester DT1 2PB

Erect first floor flat roof rear extension. Amend the existing ground floor flat roof from "cold" to "warm".

No objection.

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

W1. P/HOU/2026/01206 24 Barrow Close Dorchester DT1 2HG

Erect single storey rear extension with rooflights (demolish conservatory).

No objection.

W2. P/HOU/2026/01503 5 Mistover Close Dorchester DT1 2EQ

Erect two-storey side, rear extensions and entrance Porch (demolish existing garage).

No objection.

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

S1. P/VOC/2026/01289 24 Manor Road Dorchester DT1 2AU

Erect single storey flat roof side & rear extensions (with variation of condition 2 of planning permission P/HOU/2025/06994 to amend approved plans).

No objection.

S2. P/HOU/2026/01540 35 Weatherbury Way Dorchester DT1 2ED

Erect porch and single storey extension to front elevation. Change existing garage flat roof to pitched roof. Extend garage roof to wrap around to join porch and single storey extension. Form covered way in front of existing garage door.

No objection.

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

P1. P/FUL/2026/01263 Crown Point Phases 3 and 4 Poundbury

Erection of 57no. dwellings, public open space & associated infrastructure.

The Committee raised no objection to the application. However, in light of concerns from local residents and the Dorset Council Senior Urban Design Officer regarding the potential clustering of the proposed affordable housing with existing affordable units near the site, the Committee resolved that the application should be referred to the Dorset Council Northern Area Planning Committee for determination.

P2. P/HOU/2026/00997 14 Coade Street Poundbury DT1 3FP

Retain rear pergola.

No objection.

Dorchester Town Council
Minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee
27 April 2026

Present: Councillors A. Canning (the Mayor ex-officio), R. Biggs, S. Biles, L. Fry (Vice Chair), J. Germodo, S. Jones, D. Leaper, V. Lloyd-Jones, M. Rennie and R. Ricardo (Chair).

Apologies: Cllrs P. Farmer, J. Hewitt, F. Hogwood, F. Kent-Ledger, R. Major and R.Potter.

77. Declarations of Interest

Councillor L. Fry that as a member of Dorset Council's Northern Area Planning Committee, he would keep an open mind on the planning applications 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.

78. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 April 2026 were confirmed by the committee and signed by the chair.

79. Request for Formal Adoption by Dorset Council of Grey School Passage

The Committee considered a request to support an application to Dorset Council for the formal adoption of Grey School Passage.

Members expressed surprise that the passage had not already been adopted and agreed to support the request. The Committee noted that similar unadopted areas elsewhere in the town had caused difficulties for residents seeking to carry out improvements to their properties.

Resolved

That the Clerk to the Committee submit a request to Dorset Council for the adoption of the public right of way, S2/6, known as Grey School Passage.

80. 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.

81. Minute Update Report

Minute 26 of the 1 September 2025 Planning and Environment Committee meeting - Pedestrian Safety at Bitter End

The Committee heard that Dorset Council had requested that the vegetation be cut back to improve visibility and it had but the landowner was reluctant to clear it back further beyond the boundary.

It had been recognised that there was still an issue with highway safety and the issue would be referred to the Highways Improvements Team to seek approval for a feasibility study into possible safety improvements, with updates to follow in due course.

The Committee noted that the clerk to the committee would be contacting Dorset Council to ask if it would be possible for the Dorchester Town Council ward members to meet with them to discuss their concerns.

82. Planning Issues to Note

There were no planning issues to note.

Dorchester Town Council

Planning & Environment Committee – 27 April 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 and V. Lloyd-Jones)

N1. P/FUL/2026/01516 Julia's House 34 South Street Dorchester DT1 1DD

Siting of a statue depicting Susie the cat on a low plinth.

As Dorchester Town Council will in principle have a vested interest in the statue as per minute 43 of the Dorchester Town Council Management Committee meeting held on 16 March 2026, no comment will be made on this application.

N2. P/LBC/2026/01957 4 Cornhill Dorchester DT1 1BA

Instal ventilation and structural support to timber beams within basement.

No objection.

N3. P/FUL/2026/01647 33A South Street Dorchester DT1 1DD

Retain 1no. illuminated fascia sign.

No objection.

N4. P/ADV/2026/01646 33A South Street Dorchester DT1 1DD

Retain 1no. illuminated fascia sign.

No objection.

N5. P/LBC/2026/01958 4 Greenings Court Dorchester DT1 1HR

Replace front door.

No objection.

N6. P/LBC/2026/02057 4 High West Street Dorchester DT1 1UJ

Installation of defibrillator and bleed kit cabinets to external wall of Nationwide Building Society branch.

No objection.

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

W1. P/HOU/2026/01753 2A Alice Road Dorchester DT1 2LJ

Erect first floor rear extension.

No objection.

W2. P/HOU/2026/01923 28 Dagmar Road Dorchester DT1 2NA

Raise the wall on boundary conservatory elevation and extend the monopitch roof across the footprint. Install 4 no roof lights.

No objection.

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

No applications received.

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

No applications received.

Dorchester Town Council

Management Committee

5th May 2026

Present: Councillors L. Fry, W. Gibbons, J. Hewitt, S. Jones, D. Leaper (Chair), R. Potter and M. Rennie.

Apologies: Councillors P. Farmer F. Hogwood, F. Kent-Ledger and R. Major.

In attendance:

Councillor V. Lloyd-Jones.

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

53. **Declaration of Interests**

None.

54. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16th March 2026, adopted by Council on 30th March 2026, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

55. **Outdoor Services – Update Report – Spring 2026**

The Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services) presented the update report on the work of the Outdoor Services team. The new area of Maples in Borough Gardens had been planned out by the staff and the newly planted Limes were doing well. Cllr Jones enquired about the water leak at the Louds Mill depot, and the Assistant Town Clerk explained that monitoring of water bills by the Responsible Financial Officer had identified the problem. The issue of the water feature in The Great Field play area was discussed and officers would bring forward a report to a future meeting proposing the removal of this feature. An update on the Duchy of Cornwall's tree works at the Holmead Walk open space was also provided.

Resolved:

Edward Road play area:

- a) That the Committee agrees works to improve Edward Road play area over the course of the summer. The major elements requiring Play Equipment reserve funding are the renovation of a section of boundary fencing which has corroded and replacement of safety surfacing. It is hoped equipment already in stock will

replace the main climber unit and avoid further capital outlay, existing equipment will not be removed until this is certain.

- b) That Policy Committee is requested to agree the release of £6,000 from Play Equipment reserve.

Poundbury Cemetery Building:

- c) That the Committee agrees works to renovate the main Poundbury Cemetery building over the course of the early summer. The major elements requiring reserve funding are Doors, gates, limited roofing and plumbing. Additional decoration works and rendering repairs will require funding for materials but will be carried out by the in-house team.
- d) That Policy Committee is requested to agree the release of £5,000 from Cemetery reserve.

56. Town Pump Renovation Project

The Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate) provided an update on the work of the Dorchester Civic Society in developing plans for the refurbishment of the Town Pump and re-installing a water fountain. Draft plans for the wider enhancement of the Cornhill area will be shared with the member working group in June and then presented to a future meeting of Policy Committee.

Resolved:

That the Committee:

- a) supports the Dorchester Civic Society's plans for the renovation of the Town Pump;
- b) requests that Policy Committee considers providing funding for the project from the Public Realm reserve as part of the overall Cornhill enhancement scheme.

57. Grant Applications

A member of the public, Mr Peter Foster, addressed the committee and raised various queries with regard to the grants process. Mr Foster suggested that the grant criteria and application process be revised, perhaps including a two-stage process. Cllr Rennie considered these to be valuable suggestions and highlighted the on-going review of the car boot sale grants process now that it was being run directly by the town council. Cllr Jones also welcomed Mr Foster's feedback although Cllr Fry was not sure that a two-stage process would be beneficial. The Chair asked Mr Foster to send his comments to the Assistant Town Clerk and that these would then be reviewed by officers in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

The Committee considered various requests for financial assistance and it was

Resolved:

- (a) That a grant of £500 be awarded to the South West Dorset Multi-Cultural Network towards the One World Festival 2026.
- (b) That no grant be awarded to the Dorchester Trust for Counselling & Psychotherapy.
- (c) That no grant be awarded to the Dorchester Middle School.
- (d) That a grant of £304.99 be awarded to the Daytime Brass Band towards the cost of an A-board and music books.
- (e) That the decision to award a grant of £500 to Kushti Bok towards the cost of of the annual Roma history event in Borough Gardens be delegated to the Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate) in consultation with Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee subject to the provision of more details on the project costs.
- (f) That the decision to award a grant of £450 to Dorchester Youth & Community Centre towards the cost of a Summer Family Fun Day in 2026 be delegated to the Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate) in consultation with Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee subject to the provision of more details on the project costs.
- (g) That no grant be awarded to Litter Free Dorset.

58. **Minutes of the Twinning & Cultural Activities Panel on 16th March 2026**

The minutes of the Panel meeting were considered by members. Cllr Rennie provided an update on the Lubbecke Society and Cllr Jones requested a site meeting to agree the position of an information sign about the twinning relationship with Lubbecke.

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.

59. **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 5527 to 5537 be confirmed and the Register of Memorials be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

60. Public Bodies (Admission 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.

61. Refurbishment of Weymouth Avenue Skatepark

The confidential item on a proposal for the refurbishment of the skatepark was discussed by the Committee. Members highlighted the popularity of the skatepark with local young people and the importance of not undertaking any repair works during the school holiday periods.

Resolved:

That the Committee:

- a) agrees the use of Maverick Industries Ltd as preferred contractor for this project due to their expertise in the provision and maintenance of the skate park and their long-standing relationship with the council;
- b) agrees to the proposed works and recommends to Policy Committee that £5,600 of funding is made available from the council's Play Equipment reserve.

Chair.....

Dorchester Town Council

Policy Committee

11 May 2026

Present: The Mayor (Councillor A. Canning) and Councillors R. Biggs, S. Biles (Chair), G. Jones and V. Lloyd-Jones.

In Attendance

Mr P. Foster – In respect of Minute No. 59.

Councillors L. Fry, D. Leaper, R. Potter and M. Rennie.

Apologies: Councillors J. Germodo, K. Reid, R. Ricardo and D. Taylor.

57. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 23 March 2026, adopted by Council on 30 March 2026, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

58. **Declaration of Interests**

No declarations of interest were declared.

59. **Finance Update**

Mr P. Foster addressed the Committee in respect of Councillors needing .gov email addresses in the future. The RFO confirmed that this was not a mandatory requirement but recommended good practice and that consideration was being given to this matter.

Members considered a report by the Finance Officer which updated them on the financial position of the Council as at end of April 2026, the amount of earmarked reserves as at the end of March 2026, the annual review of the fixed asset register, the level of debt over 30 days and gave details of the payments list from 1 March 2026 to 30 April 2026.

The report also set out the outcome of the internal auditor's third and final audit held in April 2026. The recommendations of the internal auditor and officers responses to them were noted.

Additionally the report presented the 2025-26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements.

Members noted that in November 2023 the Council had reappointed Darkin Miller Ltd as the Council's Internal Auditor for a period of three years and that BDO LLP would continue

as external auditor. The Committee was asked to confirm that the Council had no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP.

Resolved

- (1) That the payments list, totalling £504,193.19 be approved.
- (2) That the fixed asset register as at 31 March 2026 be noted.
- (3) That the report of the internal auditor and the officer response to it be noted.
- (4) That the 2025-26 Annual Internal Audit Report, as required by the AGAR is noted.

It is also

Recommended

- (5) That the Council approves the Annual Governance Statement for 2025-26.
- (6) That the Council approves the Accounting Statements for 2025-26.
- (7) That the Council confirms its satisfaction with the competence and independence of Darkin Miller Ltd and that Darkin Miller Ltd be appointed as the Council's Internal Auditor for the 2026-27 Council Year.
- (8) That the Council has no conflict of interest with BDO LLP.
- (9) That the Council notes that a procurement exercise will be carried out to appoint an internal auditor for the 2027-28 financial year due to the current internal auditor three year term ending in November 2026.

60. Community Sandbag Store

Further to Minute No 51 (1), the Committee considered a report by the Town Clerk on the possible provision of a Community Sandbag Store at Sandringham car park.

It was proposed that a badged metal lockable container of a size suitable for 50 to 100 sandbags be located at the southern end of Sandringham car park. The store to be unlocked and available for community use when weather alerts for heavy rain and flooding were received. This would enable the store to be open when needed out of office hours. Information about the opening of the store to be provided through the Council's social media channels and on the website. It was noted that the Council did not have sufficient staff to deliver sandbags so it would be for residents to arrange their own collection from the store.

Resolved

That a Community Sandbag Store, as proposed in the report, at an approximate cost of £800, be provided at Sandringham car park.

61. **No Vaping Policy**

In pursuance of Minute No 55, Members considered a report by the Town Clerk which attached a revised draft no vaping in the workplace policy.

Resolved

That the revised 'No Vaping in the Workplace' policy be agreed for immediate implementation.

62. **Management Committee Extracts**

The Committee had before it extracts from the Management Committee meeting held on 5 May 2026 which requested that the Policy Committee considered agreeing:-

- The release of £6,000 from the Play Equipment reserve for improvements to the Edward Road play area.
- The release of £5,000 from the Cemetery reserve for renovations to the Poundbury Cemetery building.
- The release of £5,600 from the Play Equipment reserve for refurbishment of the surfaces of the skatepark

The Committee had also been asked to consider funding works, from the Public Realm reserve, to refurbish and straighten the Town Pump and to re-install a water fountain, estimated at £50,000 plus VAT. The Dorchester Civic Society had developed the proposal with the support of the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee. It was noted that an information board about the pump would be included within the project.

In respect of the improvements to the skatepark it was suggested that the project be widened to include a smartening up of the whole area and that, once that was complete a skatejam should be organised.

Resolved

- (1) That £6,000 be released from the Play Equipment reserve for improvements to the Edward Road play area.
- (2) That £5,000 be released from the Cemetery reserve for renovations to the Poundbury Cemetery building.

- (3) That £5,600 be released from the Play Equipment reserve for refurbishment of the surfaces of the skatepark.
- (4) That the project to refurbish and bring a water supply back to the Town Pump be supported and £50,000 be allocated from the Public Realm reserve.

63. **Town Clerk**

The Chair reported that this would be the last solo meeting of the Committee for the Town Clerk and took the opportunity to thank him for his guidance and support to the Policy Committee.

Resolved

That the Committee’s thanks be recorded to the Town Clerk for his guidance and support to the Policy Committee.

64. **Public Bodies (Admission 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 press representatives be excluded from this meeting during their discussion.

65. **Dorset Council Property Assets, Dorchester**

The Committee considered a report by the Town Clerk on the public toilet assets in the town.

Resolved

That the Town Clerk have further discussions with officers at Dorset Council in regard to Trinity Street and Fairfield public toilets and report back to a future meeting of this Committee.

Chair.....

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
DORCHESTER JOINT HERITAGE COMMITTEE

14th APRIL 2026

At a Meeting of the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee held on 14th April 2026:

PRESENT:

Dorchester Town Council	Councillors:	G. Jones (Chair) F. Kent-Ledger S. Jones S. Biles D. Taylor
Dorset Council	Officers:	M. Manley
R. Major	Councillors:	L. Fry
R. Biggs		
Dorset Museum & Art Gallery		C. Dixon
Local Nature Reserve		L. Poulsen
Dorset Council - Archaeology		S. Wallis
Dorchester Civic Society		I. Gosling
Dorchester Civic Society		J. Doak
Dorset History Centre		S. Johnston
Thomas Hardy Society		M. Chutter
Dorchester Chamber of Business		R. Hattersley
Dorchester Association		M. Rice
KeeP 106		A. Worth

39. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R. Tarr (Dorset Council), A. Harrison, V. Smith and J. Wallis.

40. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2026, a copy of which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

41. **DECLARATION OF PREDETERMINATION**

None were declared.

42. **BUDGET UPDATE**

An update report on the committee's budget was presented by the Tony Hurley. Cllr Fry asked about A. Braidwood's contribution in the Victorian Fair and Matilda Manley explained that he was co-ordinating the musical performers for the event.

RESOLVED

That the budget update be noted.

43. **HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY - UPDATE**

Matilda Manley presented an update on progress with the Heritage Tourism Strategy and the work of the Tourism Partnership. Matilda reported that Discover Dorchester's social media accounts were attracting more followers. A new competition was being run in conjunction with Visit Dorset to promote 'dog-friendly' Dorchester with contributions to the prize from several local businesses. A new full-page advert for Dorchester was being paid for in Resort magazine.

RESOLVED

That the report on the activities of the Tourism Partnership was noted.

44. **HARDY 100TH ANNIVERSARY PROJECT**

Matilda Manley provided an update on the development of the funding bid for the Hardy 100th anniversary events in 2028. The preference is to keep the total value of funding sought to just under the National Lottery Heritage Fund's £250,000 threshold for small grants. The project will include a 'refresh' of the Hardy information signs around the town. Cllr Stella Jones requested that improved gateway signage (with references to Hardy) be considered on the main roads coming into the town. It was agreed that a funding request for improved gateway signage would be presented to the Committee's meeting in July.

Mark Chutter highlighted the proposed service commemorating Hardy to be held in Westminster Abbey in 2028. The Abbey choir would be taking part along with the actor Anton Lesser.

45. **HERITAGE OPEN DAY 2026**

The Assistant Town Clerk presented proposals for Heritage Open Day in September 2026.

RESOLVED

That the Committee agreed that Heritage Open Day in Dorchester takes place on Sunday 13th September 2026 and that a budget of £2,500 be allocated to support the event.

46. **HISTORY OF DORCHESTER FACEBOOK PAGE**

Joe Doak of the Dorchester Civic Society gave a presentation on the Society's highly successful 'history of Dorchester' Facebook page. This account currently had over 9,700 followers and its pages had been viewed over 2.36 million times within the last 12 months. This Facebook page required considerable input from Society members but helped to generate more material (photos and memories) from local residents. The Committee thanked Joe and the other members of the Society for their hard work in developing such a valuable resource.

47. **BAYEUX TAPESTRY EVENTS PROGRAMME**

Claire Dixon of Dorset Museum & Art Gallery presented initial proposals for a programme of events at the museum and in Dorchester to complement the Bayeux tapestry exhibition in London. This programme would include working with local schools to create a 'Dorchester tapestry' and an exhibition in partnership with The Keep Military Museum. The Committee welcomed a proposal by Claire Dixon to bring forward a detailed project plan and funding request to the Committee's meeting in July.

48. **THOMAS HARDY STATUE**

The Assistant Town Clerk presented proposals from the Thomas Hardy Society for the relocation of the statue of Thomas Hardy. Mark Chutter and Cllr William Gibbons presented the Society's case for relocating the statue away from Top o' Town – which had been developed by the volunteers of the Society. Cllr Les Fry accepted the limitations of the current site but felt that more work was needed to identify alternatives. A statement by Cllr Kent-Ledger, opposing the relocation of the statue, was read out by the Chair. Cllr Stella Jones explained that previous proposals to relocate the statue, over the last 50 years, had been rejected for good reasons. If funding was available, then perhaps an additional statue or memorial to Hardy could be considered for another part of the town. Cllr Biggs considered the current location to be the right one as it was a prominent location along the line of the Roman town walls and at the entrance to the town. Ian Gosling suggested that the statue was well-positioned as visitors walking between the museums (and up to The Keep) would pass by on their way.

Sam Johnston suggested that the Committee might wish to support the maintenance / cleaning of the William Barnes statue outside St Peter's Church.

Following the discussion, the Committee declined the request to ask Dorchester Town Council to consider relocating the Thomas Hardy statue.

49. **REFURBISHMENT OF TOWN PUMP**

Ian Gosling presented a proposal from the Dorchester Civic Society for the refurbishment of the Town Pump at Cornhill – including the reinstatement of a water supply and drinking fountain. The proposal was welcomed by the Committee.

RESOLVED

That Dorchester Town Council be requested to support the Dorchester Civic Society proposals and contribute significantly towards the costs.

50. **UPDATES FROM MEMBERS**

Dorchester Civic Society: Rob Hattersley is giving a talk to the Society on the Reconnection Dorchester project and its research into suitable historic properties.

Dorset Council archaeology service – Steve Wallis reported that the Roman Town House had been cleaned and that Sam Scriven was researching the origins of the stone tesserae used in the mosaics.

Dorset Museum & Art Gallery. Claire Dixon reported that in order to meet a challenging financial situation, the organisation had made several staff redundant but that its focus was on protecting its core functions. Maintenance work was proceeding on the Victorian Hall and there was liaison with English Heritage with regard to tours of Maiden Castle.

Dorset History Centre. Sam Johnston reported that the Centre has secured a stage one grant from the Lottery of £600,000 to develop its ambitious scheme for £3.8 million of capital improvements.

Dorchester Association. Michael Rice reported that the Association was organising its day school on 31st October 2026 on the theme of maritime archaeology and its relation to the maritime history of Dorset.

Dorchester Chamber of Commerce. Rob Hattersley reported that the Reconnection Dorchester project was currently looking at the former Lloyd's Bank building and is enquiring about potential Lottery funding.

Clr David Taylor was still working of the Dorchester (Boston) 400th anniversary commemorations and a proposal would come to a future meeting of the Committee.

Clr Stella Jones reported that the Town Council was now operating Dorchester's Fairfield and Cornhill markets and these had the potential to be significant attractions for the town.

51. **QUESTIONS**

None were raised.

52. **URGENT ITEMS**

None were raised.

Chair.....

OUTSIDE BODY REPORT

DORCHESTER ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

1. The Dorchester Association for research into local history and archaeology was founded in 1982 and is dedicated to the study and appreciation of local history and archaeology in Dorchester and its surroundings.
2. The Dorchester Association has had a good year, finances are stable, membership has increased and things are afoot for bringing together the Commemoration of the Two Dorchesters in 2030
3. The programme of monthly lectures, held at the Dorford Centre, have been well received, the next lecture is 'Victorian School Logbooks' by Mike Randall to be held on 28 May.
4. The Maiden Castle day school was attended by 146 people and was a great success. Speakers from universities all over the county gave presentations, giving a view of what current thinking is about the ancient monument.
5. The next day school will be "Maritime Archaeology; A window on the past" on Saturday, 31st October. It will look at what can be learned about the past from the contents of wrecks dating from multiple periods.
6. Our summer programme of guided walks will commence in June – details will be available on the website.

Kind regards,

Cllr David Taylor
Town Council Representative

OUTSIDE BODY REPORT

VOLUNTEER CENTRE DORSET

Latest news is the GAP Project will be taken under the umbrella of VCS to continue its work for mental health services in Dorchester

The Vision (Volunteer Centre Dorset)

- To be the central hub for volunteering across Dorset Council area - connecting people, organisations, and opportunities to strengthen communities.
- To make volunteering inclusive, accessible, and meaningful for everyone, regardless of background, or circumstance.
- To support a thriving voluntary and community sector that is resilient, well-resourced, and able to meet local needs.
- To position volunteering as a key driver of community wellbeing, social cohesion, and prevention of wider public service pressures.

Our Priorities & Plans Going Forward

- **Expand access to volunteering** by reaching underrepresented groups (eg young people, people with disabilities, those experiencing isolation or unemployment). We have secured a four-year grant from The National Lottery to bolster our DC funding and deliver 'Volunteering for All'. This has brought two additional team members who are working in the community with organisations, referrers and volunteers to ensure that anyone has the opportunity to volunteer, should they wish to.
- **Strengthen infrastructure support** for local VCS groups and organisations, including help with policies and procedures, good governance, volunteer recruitment, marketing, business planning and training and development.
- **Enhance digital access** to volunteering opportunities through improved platforms and outreach. Ensuring that we are both being a modern digital organisation, and that our services and support remain accessible.
- **Develop partnerships** with local authorities, health services, and businesses to embed VCS involvement and partnership as how they do business. This includes promoting volunteering in wider system priorities (eg health, wellbeing, cost-of-living response) and finding meaningful ways that the wider VCS can impact on place-based services and outcomes.
- **Support organisations with sustainability**, including guidance on funding, project development, and volunteer-led service delivery. Taking an asset-based and strength-based approach, not creating grant dependency, but thinking creatively, developing partnerships and working to the benefit of communities.
- **Champion the value of the VCS and volunteering** through advocacy, data, and storytelling to influence local decision-making.
- **Strategic infrastructure partner** that represents the sector in strategic conversations, being the go-to for Dorset Council and NHS to understand how to strengthen their services and delivery through VCS partnership.

Key Successes (Last 12–18 Months)

- Supported a wide range of local organisations to become resilient.
- Recruit and manage volunteers effectively to the benefit of wider VCS.
- Increased the number and diversity of volunteers and volunteering opportunities available across Dorset.
- Delivered targeted support and training to strengthen the capacity of voluntary and community groups.
- Facilitated partnerships and collaboration between organisations to better meet local needs.
- Helped individuals access volunteering opportunities that improve wellbeing, skills, and employability.
- Contributed to local priorities such as reducing isolation, supporting health and wellbeing, and building stronger communities.
- Continued to adapt services to respond to emerging challenges (eg cost-of-living pressures, demand on community services)

As you can see a lot going on with enormous benefit to Dorchester

CLlr David Taylor
Dorchester Town Council Representative

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

ADJOURNED FULL COUNCIL – 19 MAY 2026

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

1. At each Annual Meeting of Council there is a fresh opportunity to appoint Committees, with their Chairs, and to make appointments to joint bodies and outside bodies. All Members were invited to express their Committee preferences. This report highlights the issues that Council will need to address.
2. Appendix 1 considers appointments to the Council's three Committees, two Joint Bodies and one Panel. The following matters need to be resolved:-
 - There are four requests to sit on the Joint Markets Panel when there are only three seats available.
 - There are six requests to sit on the Joint Heritage Committee when there are only five seats available.
3. The following Councillors have indicated a willingness to serve in the role of Chair or Vice Chair of Council Committees. If there are no further nominations the Council will be asked to confirm these appointments.

Committee	Chair	Vice-Chair
Policy	S. Biles	V. Lloyd-Jones
Management	D. Leaper	F. Kent-Ledger
Planning & Environment	R. Ricardo	L. Fry

4. Appendix 2 considers appointments to Outside Bodies. As it stands the Council will be required to confirm who it wishes to appoint to the following outside bodies:-
 - Dorchester Tourism Partnership (two applicants one seat)
 - Dorchester Youth & Community Centre (three applicants two seats)
5. Members are reminded that those appointed as Council representatives on outside bodies will be required to report back on the work of that body at the March Full Council.

Steve Newman
Town Clerk

APPENDIX 1

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Management Committee (11 and 11 requests)

A. Canning	P. Farmer	W. Gibbons	J. Hewitt	S. Jones	F. Kent-Ledger
D. Leaper	R. Major	R. Potter	M. Rennie	D. Taylor	

Policy Committee (8 and 8 requests)

R. Biggs	S. Biles	J. Germodo	F. Hogwood	G. Jones
V. Lloyd-Jones	K. Reid	R. Ricardo		

Planning & Environment (no limit - 16 requests)

R. Biggs	S. Biles	A. Canning	P. Farmer	J. Germodo	J. Hewitt
S. Jones	F. Kent-Ledger	D. Leaper	V. Lloyd-Jones	R. Major	R. Potter
K. Reid	M. Rennie	R. Ricardo	D. Taylor		

If appointed as Mayor, Councillor Les Fry will be ex officio to the 3 Committees

JOINT BODIES

Dorchester Markets Informal Joint Panel (3 Members, 4 requests)

L. Fry	S. Jones
K. Reid	M. Rennie*

*Councillor Rennie's justification for staying on the Markets Panel for longer than four years:-

I feel it is important to continue as we move forward with DTC management of the markets in Dorchester. This is a new venture -- being in complete control but maintaining a relationship with DC. We will have a new Town Clerk who comes from an organisation with no markets experience. And no past knowledge. I feel we need that experience and knowledge as we move forward to be able to share this, if needed and to encourage a good working relationship with the new panel and staff involved. I feel I am the one who can do this.

Dorchester Heritage Joint Committee (5 Members, 6 requests)

L. Fry	W. Gibbons	F. Hogwood	G. Jones*	S. Jones	D. Taylor
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*Councillor G. Jones's justification for staying on the Joint Heritage Committee for longer than four years:-

Whilst I am not the only Councillor interested in Heritage, I am currently as Chair, pushing a broad scope project for the town, with the assistance of the Civic Society, to develop an on-line "Story of Dorchester". We are currently working on the first on-line 'chapter' about Roman Dorchester. Further 'chapters' under discussion range from the Victorian expansion period back to pre-history. As I am so closely involved with getting Dorchester's story on-line, I would suggest it would be good for project continuity if I were to remain as Chair until at least the roman 'chapter is in place.

Twining / Cultural Activities Panel (5 Members plus the Mayor – 5 requests)

J. Hewitt F. Hogwood S. Jones R. Major M. Rennie

APPENDIX 2 - APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Internal Roles	Appointed 2025-26	Appointed Since	Expression of Interest
DAPTC Larger Towns Rep	The Mayor R. Potter	N/A 2025	The Mayor S. Biles
Municipal Buildings Monitoring Group (3)	F. Kent-Ledger V. Lloyd-Jones D. Taylor	2022 2025 2024	F. Kent-Ledger D. Leaper V. Lloyd-Jones
Youth Council (2)	S. Jones M. Rennie	Since inception	P. Farmer K. Reid
Charitable Trusteeships			
Dorchester Almshouses (2)	S. Biles V. Lloyd-Jones (The Mayor is an observer)	2024 2025	S. Biles V. Lloyd-Jones
Ashley Churchill & Thorne Trust (2)	L. Fry M. Rennie	2024 2024	L. Fry M. Rennie
Other Bodies			
Dorchester Arts	F. Kent-Ledger D. Leaper	2025 2022	F. Hogwood
Dorchester Association L. History & Arch.	D. Taylor	2024	D. Taylor
Dorchester BID	J. Hewitt	2023	J. Hewitt
Dorchester Bayeux Society	M. Rennie	2023	M. Rennie
Dorchester Lubbecke Society	F. Hogwood	2024	F. Hogwood
Dorchester Tourism Partnership	R. Potter	2023	R. Potter W. Gibbons
Citizens Advice Central Dorset	D. Leaper	2024	D. Leaper
Dorchester Transport Action Group (2)	R. Potter W. Gibbons	2023 2025	R. Potter W. Gibbons

Dorchester Youth & Community Centre (2)	P. Farmer J. Germodo	2024 2024	P. Farmer J. Hewitt K. Reid
South Wessex Community Rail Partnership (previously Heart of Wessex Rail Partnership)	F. Hogwood	2024	F. Hogwood
Thomas Hardy Society	W. Gibbons	2025	W. Gibbons
Transition Town Dorchester (3 for 2025-26)	P. Farmer	2024	P. Farmer
	F. Hogwood	2019	K. Reid
	D. Taylor	2025	D. Taylor
Volunteer Centre Dorset	D. Taylor	2025	D. Taylor
Sawmills Development Association (2 reps)	J. Germodo	2024	J. Germodo
	K. Reid	2024	K. Reid

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

ADJOURNED FULL COUNCIL - 19 MAY 2026

ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

1. As a rule a Council can only deliver services when it has a specific legal power or duty. Technically the only statutory duty that the town and parish sector has is a requirement to make provision for allotments, but the sector also has power to provide a wide range of discretionary services under the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, various Local Government Finance Acts, much of the legislation governing Burials, plus other assorted pieces of legislation.
2. Where the Council does not have a specific power to act, unless it is specifically prohibited from doing so by legislation, it still has a “catch-all” opportunity under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972, which permits use of a capped amount of funding each year to undertake services that the Council does not otherwise have a power to deliver.
3. However, via orders made as a result of the Localism Act 2011 a qualifying Town or Parish Council (qualifying means one which has a CILCA qualified Clerk and where two thirds of Councillors have been elected (including non-contested elections)) may adopt the General Power of Competence (the Power has to be adopted every year at the Annual Council Meeting), which allows it to “do anything that individuals generally may do”.
4. In practice at the Town and Parish tier adopting this Power removes uncertainties around minor operational issues but does not fundamentally change the way the Council acts. This Council has resolved to adopt the power annually since it was possible to do so following the 2011 Localism Act.
5. **It is recommended** that the Council adopts the General Power of Competence for the period to the next Annual Meeting of Council.
6. For information the Council now has four officers (Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services), Responsible Finance Officer and Mayor’s Secretary) who have achieved the CILCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) qualification. The incoming Town Clerk also has the CILCA qualification.

Steve Newman
Town Clerk