



Dorchester Town Council

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12 July 2017

Agenda for the meeting of the **Policy Committee** which will be held in the **Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Dorchester** on **Tuesday 18 July 2017** at **7.00pm**.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

Public 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 ask the Chairman before the meeting starts. We ask speakers to confine their comments to the matter in hand and to be as brief as is reasonably possible.

Member Code of Conduct: Declaration of Interests

Members are reminded that it is their responsibility to disclose pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests where appropriate.

A Member who declares a pecuniary interest must leave the room unless a suitable dispensation has been granted.

A Member who declares a non-pecuniary interest may take part in the meeting and vote.

Membership of the Committee

Mayor T. Harries and Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, R. Biggs, A. Chisholm, S. Hosford, G. Jones (Chairman), T. Jones and P. Stein.

1. Apologies & Signing of Minutes adopted at Council on 23 May 2017

To sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2017

2. Financial Report 2017-18

A

3. Corporate Plan Review

Separate Pack

4. Ridgeway Radio application for Radio Licence

B

5. DCC Working Together Programme

C

6. Dorchester Town Bus Services

D

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE – 18 JULY 2017
FINANCE REPORT AT 30 JUNE 2017

1. Summary of Current Position

- Position at 30 June 2017 at Appendix 1 - £17k below profile
- Cemeteries income down (£4k) and cover for sickness absence in Outdoor Services Team will be put in place (possibly will be £5k over budget)
- Too early to take a view on year end projection

2. Cash Position at 30 June 2017

- Lloyds Bank £690,000 0.00% interest
- Payden Global £1,000,000 0.75% average return
- Total Cash & Investments £1,690,000 (30 April 2017 £1,921,000)
- **RECOMMENDED** that existing National Savings & Investment and Invesco MMF accounts (0.40% return) are used for surplus cash not immediately required for cash flow purposes, and actively managed versus cash flow needs

3. Debtors & Payments

- Debt outstanding over 30 days at 30 June 2017 is £106 related to 1 debtor (30 April £138, 3 debtors)
- Payments list 1 May – 30 June 2017 on website. Supporting vouchers can be inspected by Members during normal office hours
- **RECOMMENDED** that the Payments list, totalling £222,832.79 is approved

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MANAGEMENT REPORT AT 30 JUNE 2017

By Spend Type	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Staff	682	170	153	-17
Capital Financing	49	17	17	0
Other Payments	531	194	186	-8
To Specific Reserves	141	141	141	0
Income	-204	-52	-44	8
Net Budget	1,198	470	453	-17

By Service	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Allotments	-2	0	-0	-0
Parks & Open Spaces	141	85	88	3
Cemeteries	-12	9	15	6
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	36	12	12	-1
Cultural & Twinning	47	11	10	-1
Municipal Buildings	130	92	94	2
Other Services	89	34	29	-5
Office Team	360	111	101	-9
Outdoor Services	410	116	104	-12
Net Budget	1,198	471	453	-18

Earmarked Reserves with budgeted Expenditure In Year	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Borough Gardens	20	0	0	0
Play Equipment	13	9	9	0
Cemeteries	80	0	0	0
Dorchester West Railway Station	10	0	0	0
Maumbury Rings s106	13	0	0	0
Corporate Projects	410	9	9	0
Net Budget	546	18	18	0

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**POLICY COMMITTEE – 18 JULY 2017****RIDGEWAY RADIO COMMUNITY RADIO LICENCE APPLICATION**

1. The Committee received a report in March on RR's plan to seek to secure a community radio licence, should one be advertised. At Minute 2016/30 it was resolved

That Ridgeway Radio be encouraged to develop a robust business plan for the delivery of a community radio service and that further discussions take place across the full range of possible financial, promotional and practical support that the Town Council might make available.

2. Along with 25 other towns (from several hundred initial expressions of interest) Ofcom have now invited RR to submit an application for a 5 year licence for the Dorchester area, the closing date for the application being 27 July. This is likely to be the last time Ofcom intend to offer FM licences for community radio stations.
3. The application process requires RR to formulate a business plan, which is currently in preparation, supported by local radio industry and marketing professionals. Key elements of the draft Business Plan are: -
 - Start-up costs of c £2,500 for the FM transmitter including installation
 - Annual costs of c. £8,500 including licences (£2,000), rent of a unit at Little Keep (£5,000), plus occasional replacement of equipment or other one off costs
 - Income sources including Membership (£1,500), Sponsorship by local businesses (direct advertising is not seen as viable), RR's normal fundraising (typically £1,500pa) and possibly an Ofcom grant if the station proves successful
 - Recognising the fluidity relating to income generation there is currently a gap between known costs and possible incomes ranging from £500 surplus to £8,000 deficit
 - A Friends Of group will be set up to provide financial transparency and tax efficiency
 - Existing studio equipment and online broadcasting software is fit for purpose
4. RR have written to the Town Council requesting assistance as follows: -
 - A grant of £1,000 to help fund set up costs
 - Consideration of ongoing financial support of £1,000pa
 - Other building hire options if we wish to make them
5. The Committee may wish to consider the following in making any grant available: -
 - The town has one commercial radio station which provides a modest level of local content, primarily on a reactive basis, plus very occasional local BCC coverage
 - Other towns in Dorset are operating local community stations, including Sherborne (Abbey) and Weymouth (Air)
 - RR have a good track record of delivery and have been very proactive in broadcasting

Town Council and other community events

- Ongoing financial support could be tapered to help RR become established without creating a significant ongoing liability
- The Council has recently reduced its newsletter production from 4 to 3 editions a year, reducing its budget by £1,000 a year as a consequence
- RR have a track record of providing opportunities for young people to develop their skills as radio presenters
- RR are carrying out public research, which has thus far been very supportive of a community radio station

6. The Committee's instruction is sought.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**POLICY COMMITTEE – 18 JULY 2017****DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL WORKING TOGETHER PROGRAMME**

1. As a response to significant budget cuts DCC Highways have developed a programme to allow Town and Parish Councils to play an enhanced role in the delivery of highway-related activity, known as “Working Together”. DCC are reducing service provision to minimum standard based on highway safety requirements, but permitting Town and Parish’s to contribute towards a higher level of service or in some cases take on maintenance themselves.

Current situation

2. This Town Council has been working together with DCC for a number of years, although there is no formalised agreement in place. Operational examples include roundabout maintenance on Alington Avenue and maintenance of small pieces of land around the town centre (DCC pays a nominal amount for its highways cuts, which we choose to supplement with additional planting and maintenance), sign-washing, plus a cash contribution to the Dorchester Tree Partnership.
3. Most recently the Town Council has accepted DCC has highway rights over The Walks, transferring the obligation to maintain the land to DCC. The two Councils are in the final stage of agreeing the schedule of maintenance works, following which DTC will take back and manage some elements (e.g. grass cutting), again with a nominal contribution from DCC.
4. DTC is currently making a significant financial contribution to projects to improve the environmental appearance of the town centre in South Street and on The Walks. The P&E Committee has expressed an interest in funding works outside the town centre, e.g. Herringston Road kerbing and Alfred Road/Monmouth Road parking restrictions. Hitherto these have been identified ad hoc rather than using any systematic evaluation of impact.

Formalising a Working Together Agreement

5. In formalising an agreement with DCC there are a number of points to be considered:
 - Our Outdoor Services team is freeing itself up from less valuable tasks and being upskilled to take on more, and more complex, grounds maintenance tasks
 - In general, retaining work in house gives us more control than paying money to DCC. Occasionally the special nature of the work makes contributing to DCC more appropriate, e.g. Tree maintenance
 - There will never be enough money to replicate the levels of service that residents have historically enjoyed and may still aspire to. There are early indications that DCC may seek to transfer dissatisfied residents to Towns and Parishes. This needs to be resisted
 - Both for ongoing maintenance and one-off spending it will be difficult to evaluate and prioritise competing demands
 - There is no certainty that some things that DTC might prioritise, e.g. TROs and Parking controls, are purchasable from DCC

- There is a risk that DCC's focus will increasingly turn to support towns who are not able to step up their involvement, leaving more proactive towns to carry a greater burden
 - Financial contributions from DCC towards meeting minimum Highway standards cannot be guaranteed long term
 - There is a functional but fine distinction between works to reduce negative visual impacts, e.g. verge cutting, weed control, sign-washing and those focused on highway maintenance and safety, e.g. potholes, white lines and replacing signs
6. In adopting a strategy the Council might consider the following questions
- Is there a benefit in documenting the already existing collaboration covered by the Working Together programme?
 - Does DTC wish to consider a greater in-house highway grounds maintenance role? If so, how would resources be prioritised?
 - Does DTC wish to use one-off funding to deliver projects not viewed as a priority by DCC? If so, how do we assess competing demands against limited available resources?
 - Does DTC wish to limit its role to focus on visual improvements only, or does it wish to include highway maintenance issues?
7. The Committee may wish to address the issue this evening or alternatively may wish to form a Task and Finish Group to consider the issues raised.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE – 18 JULY 2017
DORCHESTER BUS SERVICES

1. In March the Committee heard of plans to withdraw DCC Bus Subsidy grant from three bus services operating within the town and resolved

That the Town Clerk explore options for the Town Council to support alternatives to the number 1/2 bus service through community transport operators, including using low pollution vehicles; obtain an up to date position regarding the future of service 101; and encourage consideration of options that provide a commercial alternative for the number 6 service

Number 1/2 service

2. In April DCC announced the outcome of tenders for the THS and Dorchester Middle School bus contract, appointing Damory. It should be noted that the contract brings users from the villages to the town and does not provide a cross town service for school users and commuters. Primary school services have not been tendered to date.
3. Damory subsequently announced their intention to provide a 1/2 service with no subsidy on a reduced Mon-Fri 0930 – 1455 schedule, a reduction which removes pre 0930 and post 1530 weekday services and Saturdays.
4. At a meeting with Damory they explained how they would operate the service, using a conventional 30 seat diesel bus and driver from their school contract service to provide five circuits of the town between the school contract periods. For continuity purposes this would continue during holiday periods but there will be no weekend service. Damory expect to operate this service throughout the life of the contract and welcomed the support of the Town Council to promote use of the service to maintain its viability.
5. During June/July the Mayor's Secretary undertook a study of current usage patterns. A summary of her findings is attached at Appendix 1 and the conclusion from the work is that the current services provide a valued social benefit to a very small group of residents, some of whom would not be able to access alternative bus services due to mobility issues.
6. The reduced commercial service is likely to have the following impacts
 - It will continue to meet the needs of older residents using the bus for social purposes during weekdays
 - This group do not generally see the loss of the Saturday service as significant, although we haven't researched whether Saturday usage is different from other days
 - Early morning 0825 service, used by a small number of families to transport children to Manor Park/St Osmunds, plus a few commuters, will be missed by users
7. Damory's service 101 will end in July. First Bus have registered a commercially operated service 5 operating from Weymouth via Crossways to Dorchester, which will operate hourly during summer months and two-hourly in winter months, providing a continued access to town for residents of the Alington Avenue area.

8. It has subsequently been confirmed that service 6 will continue in the short term with developer s106 funding, although longer term the need for the service may be superseded by revisions to other bus services.
9. At present the primary role for the Town Council appears to be to promote use of local bus services in order to preserve their viability. Contact will be maintained with Damory and occasional monitoring of usage will take place.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DATA COLLECTED FROM JOURNEYS ON 1/2 SERVICE DURING JUNE/JULY

Summary of Usage

1/2	Day Date Time	To Town	From Town	Total	Pay?
2	Fri 30/6 1602	1	2	3	1
1	Fri 30/6 1630	1	5	6	1
2	Mon 3/7 1430	2	3	5	0
2	Wed 5/7 0930	14	2	16	0
1	Wed 5/7 1000	13	2	15	0
2	Thu 6/7 0930	10	2	12	1
1	Thu 6/7 1000	9	5	14	1
2	Thu 6/7 1230	3	6	9	1
1	Thu 6/7 1300	1	8	9	0
2	Fri 7/7 1330	3	6	9	0
1	Fri 7/7 1400	3	4	7	0
1	Tue 11/7 0900	6	0	6	2
Total		66	45	111	7

- Plus Route 2 Tue 11/7 0825 10 adults, 9 children, all paid for their journey
- 84 female, 37 male journeys

Summary of Comments received during contact with Bus Users

- Most were regular users, typically 2-3 times per week. Later on, faces became familiar from previous journeys
- The bus primarily provides a way of getting out of the house and offers social contact, and provides opportunities for food shopping
- Most, not all, users would struggle to walk to/from town
- Fewer journeys had a clear purpose (e.g. visit to hospital/dentist, volunteering, etc)
- Journeys were made to all points on the route (St Georges/Edison, Balmoral/St Davids, Vespasian/Celtic, Rothesay/Weatherbury, Old Poundbury)
- Limited users to Syward, Normandy Way
- Mixed views re loss of Saturday service, most not worried

Other Comments and Observations

- Inclusion of Mansell Square on Route 1 is unnecessary
- On the early morning bus 6 children went to Manor Park and 3 to St Osmunds, mostly accompanied, from St Georges/High St areas
- The service benefits from a consistent and personable bus driver
- The trips undertaken were helpful in producing feedback across a number of issues currently affecting the town