



# Dorchester Town Council

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17 January 2018

**Agenda** for the meeting of the **Policy Committee** which will be held in the **Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Dorchester** on **Tuesday 23 January 2018** 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 S. Hosford and Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, R. Biggs, A. Chisholm, T. Harries, G. Jones (Chairman), T. Jones and P. Stein.

1. Apologies, Declarations of Interest & Signing of Minutes  
To sign the Minutes of the meeting of 21 November 2017, adopted by Council on 28 November 2017.
2. Financial Report at 31 December 2017 **A**
3. Medium Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget 2018/19 **B**
4. Corporate Plan Update at 31 December 2017 **C**
5. Affordable Housing Sites and Draft Outdoor Recreation Strategy **D**
6. Local Government Reorganisation and Cuts to Services **E**
7. The Draft Dorchester Community Plan **F**
8. The St Georges Road/Lubbecke Way Junction **G**

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**  
**POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2018**  
**FINANCE REPORT AT 31 DECEMBER 2017**

**1. Summary of Current Position**

- Month 9 spend v. profile at Appendix 1 indicates underspend of £40,000
- Reasons include Pension payments (-£7k), Special Items (-£7k), Outdoor Services supplies (-£10k), although there are overspends on Rates (+£13k) and Municipal Buildings fees are below budget (+£6k)
- Year End position is likely to be £30 - £60k underspend. The budget for 2018/19 has been adjusted accordingly
- Spending from Earmarked Reserves likely to be lower than budgeted
  - Bowling Green Tennis Courts project and Cemetery Walls project unlikely to start until April
  - However Gardens Clock and South Walks refurbishment likely to happen this financial year

**2. Cash Position at 31 December 2017**

	<b>£000</b>	
• Lloyds Bank	80	Nil interest
• Payden Global	1,000	c. 0.70% return
• National Savings and Investments	700	0.40% interest
• Total Cash	1,780	(31 Oct £1,947k)

**3. Debtors & Payments**

- Debt over 30 days at 31 Dec 17 is £435, 1 debtor (31 October £588, 6 debtors)
- Payments list 1 November – 31 December 2017 on website. Supporting vouchers can be inspected during normal office hours

**RECOMMENDED** that the Payments list, totalling £216,216.89 is approved

**4. Business Rates on Weymouth Avenue Pavilion**

- Appealed rating decision to set RV at £23,750, annual bill £11,000, 3 years paid
- Discussions ongoing with VOA about lowering the RV
- Tribunal Appeal hearing to be held 10 April.

**5. Recommendations from Management Committee**

- See Appendix 2
- **RECOMMENDED** that responses approved in line with Proposed Response

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

## MANAGEMENT REPORT AT 31 December 2017

By Spend Type	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Staff	701	524	513	-12
Capital Financing	49	41	41	0
Other Payments	512	376	346	-29
To Specific Reserves	141	141	141	0
Income	-204	-148	-148	0
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>-41</b>

By Service	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Allotments	-2	-0	-3	-3
Parks & Open Spaces	141	122	123	0
Cemeteries	-12	-5	-7	-2
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	36	27	25	-2
Cultural & Twinning	47	38	30	-8
Municipal Buildings	132	120	119	-1
Other Services	70	30	42	12
Office Team	367	285	275	-10
Outdoor Services	419	318	292	-27
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>-40</b>

Earmarked Reserves with budgeted Expenditure In Year	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Borough Gardens	20	20	11	-9
Municipal Buildings	0	0	4	4
Play Equipment	13	13	9	-4
Cemeteries	80	80	1	-79
Dorchester West Railway Station	10	10	0	-10
Maumbury Rings s106	13	13	2	-11
WAP Conversion	0	0	7	7
Corporate Projects	410	410	121	-289
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>-391</b>

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE EXTRACTS – 16 JANUARY 2018

RECOMMENDATIONS TO POLICY COMMITTEE

46. **2018-2019 Estimates and Special Items**

- (2) That the Policy Committee be requested to consider establishing a Coronation earmarked reserve.

Proposed Response: Reject; the General Reserve is retained for situations such as this and there will be a significant lead in time to the event

- (3) That the Policy Committee be requested to provide funding of up to £2,000 so as to enable the Municipal Buildings gates to be repaired in the 2017-18 financial year.

Proposed Response; Approve, to be funded from the Municipal Buildings Reserve

55. **Dorchester Arts**

**Resolved**

- (2) That the Policy Committee be requested to establish a task and finish group to consider the future management and maintenance of the Municipal Buildings. The group to include representatives from the Management Committee.

Proposed Response; Approve, request each Committee approves 2 Members during the March cycle, the Group to report back to Committees by November 2018

## DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

### POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2018

#### MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY & REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19

1. The officer team have reviewed the Medium Term Financial Strategy and a budget for the next financial year within the context of current year spending and the external environment.
2. The element of the budget relating to the **Policy Committee** is included at Appendix 1. The services provided by the Committee have decreased from £341k to £329k (-£12k), the key changes being: -
  - A reduction in Debt Charges (-£2k) plus increase in Market/Treasury incomes (-£1k)
  - The removal of a cash based contribution to the Pension Fund (-£19k) offset by increased recharges from the Offices Team resulting due to Pension contribution increases (+£10k)
3. The element of the budget relating to the **Management Committee** was included in the agenda for and approved at a meeting on 16 January 2018 and totals £882k (2017/18 £857k, a net increase of £25k). Key changes include:
  - The impact of the Employers pay offer which favours lower paid workers (+£15k) plus changes to the Outdoor Services Team structure approved in September 2017 but offset by efficiencies due to changes in work practices (net +£3k)
  - Removal of equal amounts of income and expenditure at Weymouth Avenue Recreation Ground and Pavilion as the site transfers to the Cricket Club (£9k gross, £0k net)
  - Increased Pension Fund payments (+£13k) (but see para 2, bullet 2 above)
  - Special Items as follows

	£
Borough Gardens Clock Painting	10,000
WW1 Commemorations	8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,000</b>
4. The key inflationary pressure in 2018/19 and also in 2019/20 will be **Staff Pay**. The Employer's negotiating body has made a complex offer to Unions to cover these two years which increases higher salaries by 4% over 2 years, but increases salaries between scp11 - 18 by between 8% - 15%. Two thirds of our staff are paid on the lower grades, so the figures above add significantly more to the pay bill than normal (c. £10k above the 2% assumed in the MTFs), with a similar effect in 2019/20. Unions have not yet responded to the offer.
5. In overall terms the Operational **Revenue Budget for 2018/19** has increased from £1,198k to £1,211k, up £13k, 1.1% (Appendix 2).
6. The **Tax Base**, at 7,345 (up 280) has grown by an astonishing 4.0%, presumably from new high-value properties at Queen Mother Square and Brewery Square. This adds over £50,000

to our precept before any increase in the Council Tax.

7. The MTFs assumes a 2% Council Tax increase (up £3.67 to £187.17) in 2018/19 which, combined with the tax base rise, would generate a **Precept** of £1,375k, up £79k (6.1%). The Committee may wish to consider two alternative approaches to the level of Council Tax charged
  - A 0% Council Tax increase – the Precept would still rise by 4% adding £51k to income
  - A 3% Council Tax increase in line with the capping limit for other authorities – the Precept would rise by £92k, an extra £13k over the MTFs assumption

While the budget and recommendations has been prepared on the basis of a 2% increase the Committee may want to consider a 3% carefully.

8. If both the precept and Revenue Budget are accepted, a 2% increase will create a **net operational surplus** of £164k in 2018/19 (+£66k compared to 2017/18). Of this £30k is notionally set aside to take on extra grounds maintenance costs on new development in the west of the town.
9. While this leaves the Town Council in an incredibly strong position next year it is becoming increasingly clear that, however high the increase, the cost of services that will be at risk from cuts in funding at West Dorset District and Dorset County Councils far exceed any sum the Town Council can generate.
10. In 2018/19 it is proposed that the net operational surplus (£164k) is again transferred to the **Corporate Projects Reserve**, the operation of which was reviewed in detail at your November meeting.
11. The **Medium Term Financial Strategy** (Appendix 3) lists the assumptions taken account of in its preparation. The key assumption is that the Town Council will fully use its operational surplus to take on support of at risk District and County services from April 2019.
12. **Earmarked Reserves** (Appendix 4) will total £1,386k at April 2018, with an additional £144k added in 2018/19, plus the £164k operational surplus. With some projects delayed from 2017/18 due to problems engaging construction contractors significant expenditure totalling £600k is planned for 2018/19: -

	£000
Corporate Projects – South St paving Phase 2	70
BG Tennis Courts	173
Heritage Tourism & Town Centre Signage	70
Grants, inc Dorchester Town CFC and Shire Hall	69
Planning experts	10
South Walks & Street Furniture refurbishment	75
Poundbury Cemetery Wall and internal Roads/Paths	80
Vehicles and Equipment – New Pick Up	15
Borough Gardens – Repaint Clock	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>

At March 2018 Earmarked Reserves are estimated at £843k.

13. The **General Reserve** is held to deal with problems and opportunities that might arise. It should reflect the operational environment and the economic circumstances within which the Council operates, and the level of Earmarked Reserves held. Appropriate cover at the present time would be:

	£000
Emergency staffing cover (assuming half and no pay as per contracts)	55
Other temporary budget increases @ 15%	75
Temporary loss of income @ 15%	30
1 major one off event not covered by Insurance or Reserves	20
2 minor events not covered by Insurance or Reserves	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>

The General Reserve is estimated at £251k at 31 March 2019, more than sufficient for the purposes outlined above. However this will be adjusted by under/overspends in both this year and next; historically the Town Council has underspent its budgets but this should not be automatically assumed, especially as the budget has tightened.

14. It is **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the MTFs and Revenue Budget are adopted as laid out in the Appendices, to include: -
- a. A Council Tax Band D charge of £187.17, an increase of £3.67 (2.00%)
  - b. A precept of £1,374,801, an increase of 6.05%

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

**APPENDIX 1**

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£	£
<b>CORPORATE &amp; DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT</b>				
Members Allowance	18,919	19,177	20,600	20,800
Members Training (inc CRB) & Travel	524	65	700	500
Civic & Ceremonial Expenses	549	488	1,500	1,000
Mayoral Expenses	10,016	9,523	11,600	11,800
Town Crier	552	552	600	600
Entertaining & Gifts	412	208	500	400
Youth Council & Democracy Day	128	136	200	200
Office Team	163,765	180,483	176,395	184,874
<b>Met by Precept on Taxpayer</b>	<b>194,865</b>	<b>210,632</b>	<b>212,095</b>	<b>220,174</b>
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b>				
Sawmills rent	7,060	7,560	7,600	7,700
Public Realm Improvements	0	0	18,000	18,400
Youth Centre support	0	18,700	30,000	30,000
Apprenticeships	6,000	3,000	15,000	15,000
CCTV	0	0	5,000	5,000
Additional Pension	19,000	13,100	19,000	0
Debt Charges	61,651	54,528	48,500	46,400
Staff - Community Development	3,127	-6,000	39,603	41,379
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>96,838</b>	<b>90,888</b>	<b>182,703</b>	<b>163,879</b>
Treasury Interest - Net of Arlingclose	-7,599	-6,436	-5,000	-6,000
Sawmills rent recharged	-3,521	-3,780	-3,800	-3,850
Market Income	-50,004	-56,045	-45,000	-45,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-61,124</b>	<b>-66,261</b>	<b>-53,800</b>	<b>-54,850</b>
<b>Met by Precept on Taxpayer</b>	<b>35,714</b>	<b>24,627</b>	<b>128,903</b>	<b>109,029</b>



**APPENDIX 1**

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£	£
<b>OFFICES TEAM</b>				
Salaries	180,545	202,378	217,648	223,022
Overtime	726	632	800	700
Employers National Insurance	12,429	16,815	20,564	21,295
Employers Superannuation	29,707	32,306	40,265	49,065
Training Courses	1,080	786	1,800	1,800
Travel & Subsistence	1,431	1,509	1,000	1,500
Subscriptions (Professional Bodies)	3,176	3,575	3,600	3,600
Cleaning Materials	1,100	1,209	1,200	1,200
Rates	4,560	4,598	4,900	6,000
Gas	897	1,059	1,000	1,100
Electricity	1,364	1,244	1,200	1,300
Water	311	314	300	300
Repairs & Maintenance	2,605	2,412	2,700	2,700
Financial Services inc Audit, Bank & Sage	9,241	7,651	9,500	9,700
Employment Law and H & S	3,312	2,971	3,400	3,500
Legal & Professional Fees, Advertising	3,114	199	3,000	2,000
Insurance	28,945	31,912	32,000	32,500
Printing & Stationery	1,203	796	1,200	1,000
Newsletter	3,937	2,683	5,000	5,000
Office Equipment & IT	5,040	8,174	5,200	5,300
Telephones	3,565	1,907	1,800	1,800
Photocopier Charges	2,599	3,617	1,000	800
Postage	1,627	1,862	2,000	1,800
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>302,514</b>	<b>330,609</b>	<b>361,077</b>	<b>376,983</b>
Recharge to Dorchester Markets Panel	-1,642	-1,560	-1,560	-1,600
<b>Net Expenditure recharged to Services</b>	<b>300,872</b>	<b>329,049</b>	<b>359,517</b>	<b>375,383</b>

**APPENDIX 2**

<b>REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19</b>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£	£
Parks & Open Spaces	538,569	581,490	559,377	582,495
Allotments	3,707	3,254	5,324	3,541
Municipal Buildings	137,726	140,240	184,273	187,036
Cemeteries	53,239	66,894	54,355	56,432
Cultural & Twinning Activities	52,724	63,076	54,008	52,370
Corporate & Democratic Manage.	194,865	210,632	212,095	220,174
Other Services	35,714	24,627	128,903	109,029
<b>Operational Budget</b>	<b>1,016,544</b>	<b>1,090,213</b>	<b>1,198,335</b>	<b>1,211,078</b>
Precept	1,209,555	1,251,000	1,296,336	1,374,801
<b>Transfer to General Reserves</b>	<b>193,011</b>	<b>160,787</b>	<b>98,001</b>	<b>163,724</b>
 <b>Subjective Analysis of Revenue</b>				
Employees	590,458	642,954	694,035	718,718
External Payments	434,109	462,382	509,860	491,610
Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	154,306	157,505	141,100	144,000
Capital Financing Costs	61,651	54,528	48,500	46,400
Income	-223,970	-227,156	-195,160	-189,650
<b>Operational Budget</b>	<b>1,016,554</b>	<b>1,090,213</b>	<b>1,198,335</b>	<b>1,211,078</b>
 <b>General Reserve</b>				
Opening Balance at 1 April	608,932	751,931	464,377	250,708
Transfer from Ops Budget	193,011	160,787	98,001	163,724
Council Tax Support Grant	69,988	46,659	23,330	0
To Corporate Projects Reserve	-120,000	-495,000	-335,000	-163,724
<b>Closing Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>751,931</b>	<b>464,377</b>	<b>250,708</b>	<b>250,708</b>
 <b>Earmarked Reserves</b>				
Opening Balance at 1 April	407,534	613,584	956,392	1,105,612
Transfer from Revenue Budget	274,306	652,856	476,100	307,724
Expenditure from Reserves	68,256	310,048	326,880	445,000
<b>Closing Balance 31 March</b>	<b>613,584</b>	<b>956,392</b>	<b>1,105,612</b>	<b>968,336</b>
 <b>All Reserves held at year end</b>	 <b>1,365,515</b>	 <b>1,420,769</b>	 <b>1,356,320</b>	 <b>1,219,043</b>
Tax Base	6,853	6,950	7,065	7,345
Band D Charge	176.50	180.00	183.50	187.17
O/s PWLB Debt at 31 March	498,000	264,000	230,000	196,000

<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	<b>Yoy %</b>
	£000	£000	£000	£000	<b>Change</b>
<b>Revenue Budget</b>					
Employees	694	719	743	758	2.00
External Payments	510	492	501	511	2.00
Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	141	144	147	150	2.00
Capital Financing Costs	49	46	44	42	-
Income	-195	-190	-193	-197	2.00
New/Transferred Services	0	0	160	160	
<b>Operational Budget</b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>1,211</b>	<b>1,402</b>	<b>1,424</b>	
Precept	1,296	1,375	1,402	1,430	2.00
<b>Transfer to General Reserves</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	
<b>General Reserve</b>					
Opening Balance at 1 April	464	250	250	250	
Transfer from/to Operational Budget	98	164	0	6	
Council Tax Support Grant	23	0	0	0	
Transfer to Corporate Projects Reserve	-335	-164	-0	-6	
<b>Closing Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>	
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>					
Opening Balance at 1 April	956	1,106	918	695	
Transfer from Revenue Budget	476	308	147	156	
Expenditure from Reserves	-327	-495	-370	-100	
<b>Closing Balance 31 March</b>	<b>1,106</b>	<b>918</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>751</b>	
<b>All Reserves held at year end</b>	<b>1,356</b>	<b>1,169</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>1,002</b>	
Corporate Project Unallocated at Year End	130	294	294	294	
Outstanding Debt at Year End	£k	230	196	162	128
Council Tax	£	184	187	191	195
Tax Base		7,065	7,345	7,345	7,345

## Notes

1. Inflation at 2.00%, Debt repayment per current debt profiles
2. Precept based on Council Tax rise @ 2.00%, no allowance for Tax Base growth
3. Best estimate of new or transferred services, driven by cuts in other tiers
4. Operational surplus transferred to Corporate Projects Reserve, but not reallocated
5. Earmarked Reserves expenditure reflects best available knowledge
6. Further savings may be identified in budgets as a result of review processes

**APPENDIX 4**

RESERVES	Ctte e	Balance	Paid In	Spend	Balance	Paid In	Spend	Balance	Reason for holding Reserve
		Mar17 £	17/18 £	17/18 £	Mar 18 £	18/19 £	18/19 £	Mar 19 £	
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>									
<b>Infrastructure &amp; Equipment</b>									
Cemeteries	Man	84,222	12,000	0	96,222	12,300	80,000	28,522	Roads and Walls at Poundbury
Municipal Buildings	Man	52,340	60,000	25,000	87,340	61,200	0	148,540	Exterior works
Borough Gardens	Man	24,305	5,100	11,000	18,405	20,000	38,400	5	Painting Bandstand and Clock
Play Equipment	Man	51,748	13,000	9,000	55,748	0	0	55,748	Replace equipment
	Pol	50,224	30,000	0	80,224	32,100	75,000	37,324	Resurface Walks, new furniture
Walks, Trees & Public Realm									
Vehicles & Equipment	Man	15,632	18,000	17,000	16,632	18,400	14,500	20,532	Fleet replacement
<b>Cultural</b>									
Arts Festival	Man	9,000	3,000	0	12,000	0	2,000	10,000	Periodic Festival
Christmas Lights	Man	4,795	0	0	4,795	0	0	4,795	-
<b>Miscellaneous Reserves</b>									
Corporate Projects	Pol	630,126	335,000	225,000	740,126	163,724	390,000	513,850	Own or partner capital projects
Maumbury Rings s106	Man	9,780	0	9,780	0	0	0	0	Heritage refurbishment
Dorchester West Rail. St'n	Pol	10,000	0	0	10,000	0	0	10,000	Access Ramp
Graves In Perpetuity	Man	14,220	0	100	14,120	0	100	14,020	Maint., flowers on 6 graves
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>		<b>956,392</b>	<b>476,100</b>	<b>296,880</b>	<b>1,135,612</b>	<b>307,724</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>843,336</b>	
General Reserve	Pol	464,377	121,331	335,000	250,708	163,724	163,724	250,708	Back Up. Min £200k required
<b>Total Reserves</b>		<b>1,420,769</b>	<b>597,431</b>	<b>631,880</b>	<b>1,386,320</b>	<b>471,447</b>	<b>763,724</b>	<b>1,094,043</b>	

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL****POLICY COMMITTEE – 18 JANUARY 2018****CORPORATE PLAN – PROGRESS AGAINST STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL MILESTONES**

1. The last full update on all projects took place at the 21 November Policy Committee. Key changes since November are listed on the table below.
2. There are specific update reports elsewhere on the agenda regarding
  - Working with Magna to consider possible Housing sites – Magna wish to start public consultation on 5 sites
  - Local Government Reorganisation
  - Community Plan – Summary Plan produced
3. Additional information is provided for two of the Actions as follows: -
  - **Dorchester Area Community Land Trust**
    - Special General Meeting on 11 Jan 17 formally created the Trust Board
    - Reed Watts appointed as Architects after competition – track record of delivering blocks of small floor area flats to a budget on difficult to develop sites
    - Second meeting with Architects on 19 January to discuss details of design and firm up development timeline
    - Porter Dodson appointed as our solicitors to negotiate transfer of land to DACLT, based on £100,000 sale price and process for ensuring land secured should CLT fail
    - Discussions to start with WDDC regarding site access across Trinity St Car Park and use of proceeds from disposal
  - **Heritage Tourism**
    - See Appendix 2 which includes notes of the first meeting with heritage and tourism sector representatives, and the agenda and note that was prepared for the meeting
    - A second meeting is planned for February, leading to a wider discussion with the sectors in March

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

**CORPORATE PLAN MILESTONES WORKING WITH PARTNERS**

Project	Cttee	Milestone	Anticipated Outcome	Current Progress	Success ?
<b>Local Economy</b>					
Work proactively with developers	Pol	Quarterly meetings	Better understanding of emerging issues	Duchy – regular contact. Significant focus on Great Field at present Brewery/Prison – no recent contact	😊↑  😊
Develop shared vision for future of Wednesday Market	Pol/ DMJP	Strategy in place to revitalise Wednesday Market Mar 18	Vibrant Market contributing to town’s attractiveness & retail offer	Informal presentation to Cllrs in December, including an Action Plan that could be adopted.	😊
Develop & Implement Heritage Tourism strategy	Pol/ HerJ	Steering Group in place Sep 17 Preliminary strategy shared with wider Forum Mar 18	Increased tourism visits to Dorchester -	First meeting held, see note attached	😊
<b>Housing</b>					
Develop our Housing sites					
• Trinity St site with Dorchester CLT	Pol	Planning application Dec 17	20 1bed flats for sale to young workers	See attached report	😊↑
• Other possible sites	Pol	Sites agreed Nov 17 First site to planning application Mar 18	3-5 sites, 20-70 units for sale/rent to young families and workers -	See attached report	😊

Debate future housing need and possible locations	P&E	See Local Plan Review (Democracy etc)	Positive contribution influencing WDDC Local Plan	Report to P&E on 8 Jan considering way forward	😊
<b>Traffic &amp; Highways</b>					
Support DTEP project	Pol	South St paving works Phase 1 completed Aug 17 Phase 2 completed Mar 18	Improved appearance of main shopping street	Works completed, likely to be below budget Work commencing Spring '18	😊 😊↑
Influence Traffic & Parking Strategy development	Pol	Role on Steering Grp agreed Dec 17	Cohesive strategy to manage competing parking needs in town	Regular officer meetings WDDC & DCC. Report to DTEP Group 31/1 re future governance	😊
Agree interest in DCC H'ways Working Together	Pol	Decision on expanding role agreed Sep 17	Worst impacts of DCC budget cuts mitigated	Agreed. Need to work on policy and budget alongside District services	😊
Support continued Bus provision across the town	Pol	Understand current usage & re-provision Aug 17	Continued delivery of relevant service	No need for involvement of DTC in short term. Maintain watching brief	😊
<b>Community Wellbeing and Cultural</b>					
Develop and support implementation of Community Plan	Pol	10 new community led initiatives underway Mar 18	Increased opportunities for all sectors of the community	Range of projects identified, grant support made available, e.g RR, School Holiday meals. See attached report	😊
Support Dorchester Town CFC to implement a 3G pitch	Pol	Decision made re level of capital support Nov 18 Funded plan in place for new pitch Mar 18	Better use of private football assets, creating opportunities to reuse our existing assets	Up to £50k grant allocated. Review meeting late January	😊
				-	

Support Maltings Arts to deliver The Maltings	Pol	Decision made re level of capital support Nov 18	Improved Arts facilities in town	£250k grant reserved. MA in active discussions with WDDC and ACE	☺
Support groups to develop Recreational, Cultural and Community infrastructure	Pol	Decisions re levels of capital support on demand Mar 18	Community groups delivering extra operational infrastructure	Oct 17 S106 mtg – +ve progress £10k grant to Shire Hall agreed	☺
<b>Environmental &amp; Heritage</b>					
Refurbish parts of the Town Walks, upper South Street and Southgate	Pol	Phase 2 Walks project agreed Jan 18 Also see Traffic & H'ways DTEP	Improved appearance of The Walks -	South Walks scheduled for Feb '18 @ £25-£30k	☺↑
Engage with Heritage and Business partners to create shared tourism vision	Pol/ HerJ	See Local Economy	See Local Economy	See Local Economy	☺
Carry out Informal heritage sites audit	Pol/ HerJ	Auditor appointed Nov 17 Audit completed Mar 18	Improved accessibility of town centre	Awaiting Steering Group discussion	☺
Replace tourism signage	Pol/ HerJ	Funding in place Sep 17 Contract let Jan 18	Funding agreed inc £20k DTC -	Project plan in place	☺



**CORPORATE PLAN MILESTONES WORKING ON OUR OWN SERVICES**

Project	Cttee	Milestone	Anticipated Outcome	Current Progress	Success ?
<b>Allotments</b> Develop Red Cow site as garden plots	Man	Site handed over Mar 18	Site ready for occupation	Group formed. Working with them on Action Plan	😊
<b>Parks &amp; Open Spaces</b> Build 2 Tennis Courts on BG Bowling Green	Man	Courts operational Apr 18 (new date due to costs)	Improved courts, land released for Housing	Contract let. Start on site delayed to Apr 18	😞↓
Locate all existing service infrastructure (Benches, Bins, Trees, etc) onto digital maps	Man	All databases plotted on GIS maps Mar 18	More efficieint and effective service delivery	Work underway	😊
Support Dorch. Cricket Club to develop its capacity	Man Man	Recreation Pavillion handed over Aug 17 Pitch booking handed over Jan 18	Club becomes self-reliant, reducing our costs	Club has taken over bookings for 2018. Club to assist maintenance during 2018 season	😊↑
Enable Dorch. Boxing Club to create permanent base	Man	Pavilion Changing rooms converted Dec 17	Effective use of redundant space	Successful SE application £15k. Work commenced 15/1	😊↑
Develop plan for facilities on The Great Field	Man	Preliminary consultation Sep 17	New and Interesting public open space with facilities in Dorchester	Successful Consultation completed . Costing & funding underway	😊
Decide re Hawthorne Rd MUGA	Man	Decision made to proceed or not Nov 17	Possible new play space	Decision not to proceed taken Jul 2017	😊

<b>Cemeteries</b> Complete Poundbury Infrastructure	Man	Ext walls built and internal roads underway Mar 18	Infrastructure in place. Will assist grave locating	Works delayed until 2018/19	☹️⬇️
<b>Municipal Buildings</b> Refurbish stonework	Man	Works completed Nov 17	Part of building refurbishment	Completed	☺️
<b>Culture, Twinning &amp; Other</b> Co-ordinate WW1 Commemorations	Man	Centenary Park dedicated and Trail in place Mar 18	Dorchester's role in WW1 commemorated	Funding Application approved. Project Mgr appointed. Background work largely complete	☺️
<b>Governance &amp; Admin.</b> Engage in Local Government Reorganisation discussions	Pol	Develop options to support at risk services Nov 17	Mitigate impact of anticipated cuts in local service delivery	Member briefing delivered Ongoing discussions with WDDC.	☺️
Continue to respond to WDWP Local Plan Review	P&E	Review Turnberry N.D. submission Sep 17	Better knowledge of long term options	See Housing.	-

☺️ Positive progress  
⬆️ Major Step Forward

☹️ No tangible progress  
⬇️ Major Step Backward

⊗ Project has a problem likely to result in missing objective

**NOTE OF HERITAGE TOURISM IDEAS MEETING – 30 NOVEMBER**

Attending: AS (DTC), JM (DCM), AB (SH), LR (KMC), SJ (Jordans Jewellers), TH (WDDC)

No apologies but 2 gaps to fill from Accommodation and Catering sectors

1. Agenda for the meeting is attached
2. All shared their reasons for being at the meeting and being willing to focus on Heritage Tourism – several attendees learned some of the details of new developments for the first time.
3. AS shared a briefing note (attached), which prompted discussions in relation to the questions outlined.
4. Actions agreed by the Group included:-
  - There was clear consensus that the opportunities for working together needed to be grasped
  - All to identify possible comparator towns that had undertaken rebranding exercises, for consideration at the next meeting
  - TH agreed to circulate the “Blue Sail” report commissioned for the WDCG Group, which covers the potential for tourism growth across Weymouth & West Dorset – now available and edited to be specific to Dorchester
  - TH also agreed to circulate the Branding Brief written for NDDC who were looking at the potential to develop the Blackmore Vale as a destination – the document could act as a prompt for the development of a brief for a possible Rebranding exercise for Dorchester
  - TH agreed to supply details of the Dorset Ambassador programme, which was focused on upskilling the knowledge of Dorset workers to be able to respond better to the needs of visitors – details received
  - Representatives of the Heritage and Business sectors would look for informal opportunities to brief sector colleagues regarding the preliminary discussions held and some of the emerging ideas
  - AS to commission audit of informal heritage sites, assimilating and mapping already existing information
  - AS & SJ to continue to try to identify additional reps from the business sector
  - AS to organise a second meeting in February to consider
    - Comparator towns and a rebranding project
    - The Blue Sail report findings
    - How to bring the wider heritage and business sectors together for an event to share views on developing the Heritage Tourism market

AS

11 December 2017 (updated 16 January 2018)

## **DORCHESTER HERITAGE TOURISM IDEAS MEETING**

**THURSDAY 30 NOVEMBER 5.30PM**

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL, 19 NORTH SQUARE DT1 1JF**

Attendees: Jon Murden Director Dorset County Museum  
Anna Bright Director Shire Hall  
Luke Rake Principal Kingston Maurward College  
Sandy Jordan Retailer Jordans Jewellers, Dorchester BID and Chamber  
Trevor Hedger Economic Dev. West Dorset DC  
Adrian Stuart Town Clerk Dorchester Town Council

Vacancies Representatives from the Business sector, Accommodation and Restaurants

### **AGENDA**

1. Introduction – quick explanation of interest in Heritage Tourism in Dorchester
2. Current Developments in Dorchester
3. What is our vision for developing Heritage Tourism in Dorchester?
4. What do we do to capitalise on our Current Developments?
5. What resources do we need to support our ideas? Money, People, Time?
6. How do we build consensus across the Heritage and Business sectors?
7. How do we capture Dorchester's full Heritage and Tourism offers?

**In support of the above see Attached, for discussion**

## **DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL AIM**

To capitalise on the provision of new heritage opportunities to rebrand Dorchester as a Heritage Tourism destination.

## **RELEVANT DEVELOPMENTS**

### **Heritage Attractions**

- Dorset County Museum - £14M to create the Museum of the future for Dorset
- Shire Hall - £4.0M – Justice themed Museum opening Spring 2018

### **Informal Infrastructure**

- Pedestrian Signage project - £90k investment to refresh current signage offer
- Lower South St Paving - £600k to pave lower South St, improving connectivity between High St and Brewery Square
- The Walks Refurbishments - £200k to refurbish the town's historic Walks
- Upper South St and High St Paving - £300k+ to improve pedestrian access and environmental impact of the heritage area
- Traffic Light improvements programme (DTEP)
- Town Wi-fi - £50k+ project co-funded by DCC, WDDC, DTC and managed by DBiD
- Many recent and new smallscale environmental heritage projects (John's Pond, Millstream Nature Reserve, WW1 Centenary project)
- Roman Town House refurbishment

### **Future Potential Major Heritage/Culture Capital Projects**

- Maltings Arts - £12M Arts Centre inc commercial space, within Brewery Square
- Dorset History Centre extension - £2.5M (since heard HLF bid had not succeeded)
- The Keep Museum refresh

### **Commercial Tourism Provision**

- Brewery Square
  - Now established as an entertainment location, inc Restaurants and Cinema,
  - Premier Inn operating at capacity
  - Uncertainty re major hotel and Maltings
- Elsewhere in Town Centre
  - Restaurant offer growing, plus well-established cinema
  - Adequate retail, again uncertainty re future, not particularly heritage/visitor focused (ltd arts and crafts, limited independent offer)
  - Low quality Wednesday market in need of refresh
  - Kings Arms due to be developed, hotel space is limited
- Outside Town Centre and Outside Town
  - Hall & Woodhouse at Poundbury – 20 rooms at Duchess of Cornwall
  - Poundbury as a tourist destination

- Hardy – National Trust at Max Gate and Bockhampton
- Growth plans for Kingston Maurward
- Further afield – Portland Port cruise ships

## HOW DO WE REBRAND DORCHESTER?

- DTC has £50,000 if others willing to match it
- Want to establish Steering Group – initial discussions with Jon Murden and Anna Bright led to inviting this Group together to develop ideas
- Do we need to identify a Project Manager to oversee a project?
  - Needs to focus on
    - Collaboration between Heritage providers and tourism providers
    - Persuading visitors to come to Dorchester
    - Providing a good experience while here
    - Getting them to spend money in Dorchester
    - Revisits and recommendations
  - Possible target audiences
    - Our own residents and hinterland
    - Those living 20-50 miles out – daytrips and overnights
    - Further afield – South East/Midlands short stay overnights and Dorset summer/shoulder holidaymakers
    - Cruise ship and related markets
  - The product
    - Main heritage providers working together
    - Making informal heritage accessible and attractive
    - Links through to tourism businesses
    - Leakage into and from Dorset (very few bed spaces in Dorchester)
  - Marketing Tools
    - Significant improvement in online presence required
    - What is the role of traditional tools (brochures, TIC, flyers)?
    - What is the role of new tools (Apps, internet content, prompts on info boards)?

**POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2018**

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING SITES AND OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGY**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Our Corporate Plan, first formally adopted in 2015 with revisions made in 2017, included among our Aims and specific Tasks a desire to drive forward an agenda to deliver Affordable Housing for Young Workers in the town alongside a number of tasks which changed the way that the Town Council will deliver and support outdoor recreation provision going forward.
2. Because of sensitivities around sites, working relationships with particular organisations and uncertainty surrounding the deliverability of key projects much of the work we have been doing to move both agendas forward has been through informal discussion and in Confidential formal sessions. Many of the projects have now reached a stage where they need to be publicly formalised into strategy upon which appropriate consultation can be taken.
3. In September 2017 the Council accepted a Policy Committee resolution that

*Dorchester Town Council and Magna Housing jointly hold discussions with West Dorset District Council regarding the changing recreational needs of the town and how a new recreational strategy might free up five specific sites to help provide affordable housing for young workers in the town*

**DRAFT OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGY**

4. Appendix 1 details how the Council's role relating to Outdoor Recreation has changed over the last three year and continues to evolve
  - Historically the Town Council has been the key, but not exclusive, provider in of some services while having little/no involvement in other activities, with variable outcomes
  - Increasingly an enabler, working with existing and new groups to improve the infrastructure available to them while transferring management of that infrastructure to them to allow them to develop their offer...
  - ...At the same time freeing up both land and buildings to be available to be reused, either for alternative Recreation purposes or other Council priorities such as Parking or Affordable Housing...
  - ...And freeing up budgets for reuse for other Council priorities

- To that end a draft Action Plan has been prepared to continue the process, both to complete pieces of work already planned and to continue to explore new possibilities
5. It is **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the draft Outdoor Recreation Strategy is made available for consultation with key partner organisations, including Councils, Sports Groups and other interested parties.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING SITES**

6. The Town Council has, for over two years, been actively considering whether to release some of the less well-used land it manages for alternative use as affordable housing.
7. The September resolution (para 3) was based on information which is now placed in the public domain for the first time at Appendix 2. Based on that information the Council resolved to explore, with Magna and West Dorset DC, the potential for developing the following sites for affordable housing for young workers:

Site	Recreational Need which should continue to be met
Elizabeth Place	Different sized swings plus Climbing Frame. Seating
Sandringham Annexe	None
Fortress Green	None
Mellstock Avenue	Small swings plus Climbing Frame. Seating
Poundbury Crescent	None OR Different sized swings plus Climbing Frame. Seating

8. Discussions have been positive to date, although there is a need to formalise the Outdoor Recreation Strategy on which the release of the above sites relies.
9. Accepting that not all residents will support the development of individual sites Magna remain keen to hear the public’s views on the sites under consideration and are willing to organise public consultation that should also involve the Town Council.
10. It is **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the Town Council work with Magna to engage the public regarding the positive benefits arising from the development of the following sites:
- Elizabeth Place (owned by Magna)
  - Sandringham Annexe
  - Fortress Green Open Space
  - Mellstock Avenue Play Area
  - Poundbury Crescent Play Area

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk



**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**  
**OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGY**

**Our Historic Approach as a Provider...**

- Only public Park provider (Borough Gardens, Kings Road, Salisbury Fields, Great Field)
- Provider of first resort for Cricket (1 square on Weymouth Ave plus artificial wicket at Great Field),
- Provider of first resort for Football (2 adult and 4 junior pitches across 2 sites at Weymouth Ave and Sandringham), plus 3 sites temporarily mothballed at Sandringham, Great Field and Kings Road
- Two Changing Room facilities at Sandringham and Weymouth Avenue, plus meeting facilities at Weymouth Avenue
- Active provider of Tennis court space (4 courts in central Dorchester)
- Primary provider of Playspace
  - Only Skatepark (Maumbury) and Parkour (Sandringham) provider
  - 15 playspaces (5 NEAP, 8 LEAP, 2 LAP) in parks, playing fields, open spaces or dedicated spaces
  - 2 MUGAs (Great Field and Kings Road)
- Primary Open Space provider
  - Grass kick around space (c. 8 sites)
- Significant budget in excess of £500,000 a year with no real pressure on budget
- Active focus on expanding provision, but not based on evaluation of need or usage
- Focused on provision, with users as hirers with no active involvement in delivery

**...but not the Exclusive provider...**

- Schools also provide Football, Tennis, playspace, open space – sometimes only during term time
- Two schools use distinct governance arrangements (THS 1610, St Osmunds CSC)

**...and not Comprehensive Provision**

- No Town Council involvement in support for many sports (Rugby, Athletics, Swimming, Hockey, Netball)

**Outcome**

- Extensive availability of some key services – Parks, Play, core traditional Sport
- Generally of good quality and well regarded, some very high quality, relatively responsive to demand from some quarters
- Not involved in or engaged with some important provision
- Operational, not strategic, left development and community support to others
- Expensive, missing opportunities for efficiency and effectiveness

## **What does the future look like? How will our role change?**

- Very constrained budgets as Town Council prepares for service cuts at West Dorset DC and Dorset CC – difficult choices between sustaining our services v. taking on roles previously supported by upper tier Councils
- More Strategic, less operational
  - Clearer long term picture
  - Improved analysis of value provided through operation of each sites to ensure relevance and value for money
  - Not taking every “asset” that is offered (planning gain, opportunity, upper tier liability) – focus on reducing risk of taking on unsustainable or non-relevant liabilities
- More focus on Enabling - to build community capacity, support fundraising, improve networking, encourage partnering
  - Support development of stronger clubs and organisations, self-managing facilities. Improves club activity opportunities and develop infrastructure to be available to the wider community, and will also reduce our costs
- Fewer recreation sites overall but delivering a wider range of recreation benefits
- Surplus recreation sites put to alternative community-based uses (not disposed of for commercial gain)

### **Action Plan**

The attached Action Plan has been developed to move from our present role to a new role. The Council’s staff, with partners, have been engaged on delivering the Action Plan since 2015 primarily gathering data and ideas.

Some individual quick win projects are now reaching conclusion while some more complex projects, particularly relating to the development of land, are now reaching the stage where wider public engagement is required.

## ACTION PLAN

Action	Detail	Who?	When?	Status
Basic site Audit of all Outdoor sites	Produce a list of each site and its current function	AS/SN	Jul 15	Completed – see below
Evaluation of Sport Clubs potential to self-manage	Conversations with two sports clubs leading to possible Action Plan to move towards self-management	AS/SN	Apr 16 Apr 16	Cricket Plan Completed. Gradual transfer of WA ground was feasible, subject to removal of football. Football Plan Completed. Addl 3G capacity, plus increased flexibility at THS would remove need for DTC to provide grass pitches
Support Sports Clubs to self-manage	Detailed Action Plans to implement change. Help Clubs to take on management roles. Help them to raise capital funds including s106 allocations.	AS/SN/CD AS	Sep 16 Sep 16	Cricket - Steps in place to transfer Ground to DCC by Spring 19 Football - Steps in place to support bid to deliver 3G at The Avenue by Sep 18
Develop plans for new key Recreation sites	The Great Field – work with Duchy and partners to develop and implement a plan for new facilities  Kings Road/Lubbecke Way – develop ideas for improved recreation provision and parking space	AS/SN/CD /DoC  AS/SN/CD	Jun 17  May 17	Public consultation process leading to Planning application Mar 18  Agree a long term plan to investigate use of Kings Road Green Space by Spring 2019
Consideration of Alternative Site Uses	Where current usage perceived to be low, informal discussion with partners re possible alternative uses to match DTC's Corporate Plan priorities re Affordable Hsg, Traffic & Parking and Recreation	AS/ DCC/ WDDC/ Magna/CL T	Jul 17 May 17  Mar 17 Jun 17  Jun 17	Recreation WA Changing to be converted - Boxing Club Two upgraded Park spaces at Gt Field and Kings Rd/Lubbecke Way Housing options completed. CLT created to develop Tennis Courts Magna identified first possible sites Traffic & Parking Prelim. Discussions with WDDC & DCC re options for edge of town parking
Play Area Site Usage Audit	Data collection re 8 sites to establish current usage levels, including 5 sites which Magna expressed preliminary interest in and 3 sites where evidence of use will aid future planning or to be used for data interpretation	AS/CD/ DTC	Sep 17  Jul 18	Completed Supported previous views re usage Further exercise to be conducted for other sites in 2018

Preliminary Discussions with Planning Authority	CLT – Tennis Courts to be led by Architect	CLT/Rd Watts	Nov 17	Commenced Jan 18
	Possible Magna sites – Development Team to lead	Magna	Nov 17	Commenced. Public consultation Feb 18 leading to a number of planning applications
Submission of proposals to Planning Authority	CLT – Architect submission	Reed Watts	Mar 18	Planning applic'n likely Mar 18
	Magna sites – first site	Magna	Apr 18	Several applications over time
Review other opportunities	Consider role of Sandringham Changing Rooms and Car Park, Borough Garden House and Nursery and other sites	AS/SN/CD	Jul 18	Generate ideas for less obvious sites

<b>Current Outdoor Recreation Sites</b>							
<b>Site</b>	<b>Foot/Cric</b>	<b>Play</b>	<b>Open Sp.</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Tenure</b>	<b>Current Usage</b>	<b>Possible Alternative Uses</b>
<b>Key Sites</b>							
Borough Gardens		Y	Y	Gardens, Tennis & Table, Events, Gym	Owned	V. High	-
Sandringham Main	Y	Y	Y	Boules, Changing, Parkour, Gym	Owned	High	-
Weymouth Avenue	Y		Y	Changing	Leased	High	-
Kings Road	Y	Y	Y	MUGA	Leased	High/None	Parking
The Great Field	Y	Y	Y	Gym, MUGA	Licensed	Low	To be developed, Allotments
<b>Other Sites</b>							
Poundbury Crescent		Y			Owned	V. low	Housing
Elizabeth Place		Y	Y		Licensed	Low	Housing
Holmead Walk		Y	Y		Licensed	U/k	-
Woodlands Crescent		Y	Y		Licensed	U/k	-
Edward Road		Y			Leased	U/k	Housing
Maiden Castle Road		Y	Y		Leased	Med.	Local Plan led Housing
Kensington Walk		Y			Owned	U/k	-
Mellstock Avenue		Y	Y		Owned	Low	Housing
Sandringham Annexe	Y				Owned	None	Housing
Syward Close		Y			Owned	U/k	Housing
Salisbury Fields		Y	Y		Owned	U/k	-
Alfred Road (Kings Park)		Y			Owned	U/k	-
Fairfield Skatepark				Skatepark	Leased	V. High	-
Trinity St CP Tennis Courts				Tennis	Owned	Low	Housing
Maumbury Rings			Y	Heritage, Events	Leased	U/k	-
Fortress Green			Y		Owned	None	Housing
Gabriel Green			Y		Owned	None	?
Fordington Green			Y		Owned	U/k	-
Frome Terrace Green			Y			U/k	-

Information provided to Policy Committee in September 2019 to support the development of a plan to release underused Play Areas and Open Space

PLAY SPACES FOOTFALL AUDIT

VISITS SUMMARY JULY – SEPTEMBER

Location	Visits No.	Occas people on site No/%	Tot. Users No.	What did they make use of?
Poundbury Crescent Play Area	23	6/26	25	Swings, climbing frame
Elizabeth Place Play Area	22	14/64	46	Swings, not green space
Fortress Green Green Space	23	1/4	8	Short cut
Mellstock Avenue Play Area	21	13/62	89	Swing, sitting, not grass
Sandringham Annexe Green Sp.	23	5/22	7	Short cut
Maiden Castle Road Play Area	23	18/78	188	Equip, sitting, ltd grass use
Skate Park	21	21/100	360+	Heavily used
Kings Road Play Area	21	19/91	465+	Everywhere but grass

Specific detail is available on the timing of and findings from each visit.

KEY OBSERVATIONS REGARDING POTENTIAL HOUSING SITES

- Two spaces, **Sandringham Annexe** and **Fortress Green**, currently provide no recreational purpose. It is unlikely these will be needed for recreation purposes in the future
- **Poundbury Crescent** usage is very low and confined to two pieces of equipment. There is marginal benefit in continuing to provide play on this site, especially when The Great Field has been fully developed. Magna are willing to consider some land they own on the opposite side of the road if a small facility is suitable
- **Elizabeth Place** usage is also very low. The green space and much of the equipment were not used during any of the visits. Magna own the freehold and will take back this site, so our role is now only consultative
- **Mellstock Avenue** play space was lightly used during the summer holiday, solely for swings and seating. Subsequent to the above a visit on the first afternoon of the school term identified 20 users at one time, so clearly there is value in space being retained for play in this area, albeit with less equipment

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

- **Maiden Castle Road Play Area** was used as a control for comparison purposes with the three other play grounds. By comparison it has much higher levels of usage, although the availability of Prince of Wales School playground means this usage appears to be focused primarily on school holiday time. In the event that this area is scheduled for development as part of the Local Plan Review securing a play area within the development will be a priority
- While the **Skatepark** is very well used, particularly in the afternoons, the busiest site by far was **Kings Road**; this is despite its edge of town location, lack of pedestrian crossing and

very poor parking arrangements. The steam engine was clearly a key draw, but usage included all ages with both toddlers and teenage equipment being regularly accessed. Seating areas were very popular but, with the exception of one game of rounders, the green space was untouched. The findings support the suggestion that a plan to introduce parking to the site and improve access to Lubbecke Way for river walks could increase the popularity of what is already the most popular playground in the town outside the Borough Gardens

POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2018

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND CUTS TO SERVICES**

1. Since the Local Government Minister's "minded to" comment regarding support for reorganisation of the upper tier Councils before Christmas, there have been developments in several directions.

**MINISTERIAL CONSULTATION ON REORGANISATION PROPOSAL**

2. Firstly Town and Parish Councils were encouraged by DAPTC to write to the Local Government Minister by his 8 January deadline for consultation responses. Attached at Appendix 1 is a letter written by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor, which presents views discussed within Council regarding a range of relevant issues for the Minister to consider. While offering support for the reorganisation of Upper Tier authorities the letter also requests that the Minister give more careful thought to the role of the Town/Parish sector and how resources might be provided to help us develop our role. The letter has been acknowledged.

**WEST DORSET TOWNS PROGRAMME BOARD**

3. West Dorset have been proactively engaged with Town Councils in their area for over two years, initially meeting quarterly at officer level but more recently involving Members, routinely Town Mayors, and monthly; our current Mayor has now attended four meetings with a further four scheduled before the end of May.
4. West Dorset are now committed to a Programme Board approach, which they would like to formalise, with each of 6 Town Councils being requested to formally appoint a Board Member. The Board is advisory and has no decision making powers, but has already proved an effective sounding board to assist the District Council to gather a range of views to help shape its service transfer/devolution agenda.
5. From the District Council's perspective the primary role of the Board is to ensure the continued smooth delivery of valued discretionary services that are at risk of loss due to funding pressures and LGR. Town Councils have been clear that the transfer/devolution of services can only be accommodated with some form of additional funding and all have referred to Car Parks as part of the solution.
6. It is **RECOMMENDED** that
  - a) the Council formally signs up to the Programme Board
  - b) for continuity purposes the current Mayor continues as this Council's representative until May 2019, when arrangements for the Board may need to be reviewed

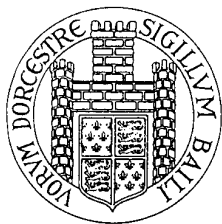
**LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCE CENTRE (LGRC)**

7. In order to move the service transfer/devolution agenda forward on a practical level West Dorset DC have engaged additional resources to facilitate a series of one to one conversations between individual towns with WDDC. They have appointed LGRC to initiate these conversations.



8. LGRC have a significant, possibly unrivalled, depth of knowledge of the Town and Parish sector which will hopefully enable them to identify practical solutions to the issues that will arise between the District looking for whole service solutions when individual towns and parishes will have a range of views about the relevance of individual services.
9. LGRC have been specifically tasked by WDDC with identifying the response of each town to WDDC's initial offer of discussions regarding five specific services (TIC, Toilets, Local Economic Development, Discretionary Grants and Discretionary Street Cleaning). The Town Clerk has had one meeting with Nick Randle from LGRC and more will be scheduled soon.

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk



# DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, 19 North Square, Dorchester, Dorset. DT1 1JF

Telephone: (01305) 266861 e-mail: A.Stuart@dorchester-tc.gov.uk

**Adrian Stuart, Town Clerk**

The Right Honourable Sajid Javid MP  
 Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government  
 2 Marsham Street  
 London  
 SW1P 4DF

3 January 2018

Dear Minister,

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION OF DORSET**

Please find below the response of Dorchester Town Council regarding the proposed reorganisation of Local Government in Dorset.

The Town Council has consistently supported the proposals of the other tiers of local government for reorganisation and welcomes the Minister's "minded to" support for the proposals. We would encourage the Minister to make a final decision so that the new Council structures can be put in place by April 2019.

In offering our support the Town Council is very conscious of the continuing and worsening financial pressure on the two upper tier authorities serving Dorchester, being West Dorset DC and Dorset CC. Without reorganisation, and the potential to streamline governance, management and back office processes, we see both authorities having to continue their current programmes of cuts to important local discretionary services currently provided to our residents. Even post-reorganisation we accept that there is a significant risk of further cuts to service levels as well as a loss of focus on local issues as they follow through on the internal reorganisation process.

The Town Council is conscious and proud of the role it is already playing and will continue to need to play to mitigate the worst impacts of these cuts and has been preparing for some time to take on a more significant role in providing highly valued, but often operationally basic, discretionary services in the town. Valued District and County services are as diverse as public toilets, tourist information, youth clubs, the arts, citizens advice, public realm and environmental work, grants to support community groups, even libraries, local economic development, street sweeping and basic highway maintenance, all of which are already at risk of loss. Increasingly we are taking a lead role in services traditionally provided by other tiers; we have recently set up a Community Land Trust to build housing for young workers on land we own; we have taken the lead in introducing public realm improvements on land managed operationally by the County Council; we

have driven the agenda to bring the County and District Council together to tackle the very serious issues of traffic and parking in a thriving county town.

Over the last four years this Council has already managed its budget carefully to manage the impact of the unilateral decision by West Dorset DC to withhold Council Tax Support Grant from the Parish and Town tier, which by next year will result in a significant annual financial loss of c. £120,000 to our budget. We would encourage you to take steps to fulfil the promise you made at the October NALC conference to strengthen the requirement for principal authorities to pass on our share of the Council Tax Support Grant, and include that requirement in any new arrangement for the Unitary Council.

The Town Council has, over the last four years, increased its £1.3M precept and c. £180 Council Tax by no more than the 2% limit set by Government for upper tier authorities, acknowledging the need to act responsibly even though capping did not apply to our sector. During this period we have not only dealt with the progressive loss of Council Tax Support Grant but also responded to cuts to services valued locally, stepping in to save the local youth club when faced with closure as a result of a County Council decision, also working closely with our local Arts centre after it lost its National Portfolio status from Arts Council England. We are ready to do more to safeguard services under threat from cuts to services initiated by either the District/County tier or the new Unitary tier when it is inevitably forced to deliver a lowest common denominator approach to discretionary service delivery.

We would however ask that we are given a realistic chance to continue to work with our community to support the delivery of services now at risk. To achieve this we need an additional source of income to the Council Tax, especially if, as is likely, our tier becomes compulsorily absorbed into the Council Tax capping and referenda regime. The alternative income is required both at a practical level; because while we can probably streamline the “at risk” services mentioned above to achieve savings, we simply can’t deliver them all within our current Council Tax level; and also from a philosophical point of view, because it is unreasonable to expect taxpayers within the town to fully meet the costs of services used by commuters, shoppers from the villages and visitors to the town; after all that was the point of District Councils. There are two possible forms of extra income you could make available to us.

If we are to take on services that have hitherto been delivered by the district and county council, now may be an appropriate time to transfer a proportion of the business rates raised locally to us. As we will become the primary authority supporting local business and the local tourism economy, most responsible for seeing it stabilised and developed, it seems only reasonable that we should receive some of their rates payments to underpin that support.

Accepting that the above is likely to be more controversial due to its national implications, an alternative is to write into your Unitary orders that the Parish tier should benefit from income generated from the assets previously enjoyed by, in particular, the district sector. Without wanting to give a history lesson, in 1974 when the Districts were created they became the

successor authority to Rural and small Borough Councils. In our case Dorchester Borough Council transferred all its assets to West Dorset District Council; as an afterthought town councils were created and we received the less attractive assets (i.e. those which cost more to run than they generated in income) while the District Council retained commercial and car park assets that generated a surplus. These have been rationalised and added to over the last 40 years, but now provide an important income that helps the District Council provide the raft of discretionary services that are now under threat. It is only fair and just that towns and parishes should have the right to take these assets back to help them fund the discretionary services that the new Unitary Council will have neither the time or interest in delivering. There is a real frustration that the assets that were bought and developed locally will be lost by the towns that historically made those developments and acquisitions possible. I know that as a sector the Towns and Parishes of Dorset would welcome the chance to discuss this issue in more detail with you.

So in summary we support the move to a single unitary model for rural Dorset. We do however have real fears that the Unitary will be remote from and not interested in local issues and that locally important services will be at risk as a result. We would therefore urge you to carefully consider either, or both, making a share of business rates available to our tier or require the Districts to return assets to the tier that nurtured them where a town/parish is interested.

We look forward to your decision in the new year and encourage you to implement change without further delay.

Yours sincerely



Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

**POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2018**

**THE DRAFT DORCHESTER COMMUNITY PLAN**

1. The Council's Community Development Officer has been progressively working on the development of a Community Plan since her arrival in August 2016. Key parts of the evolution of the document have included:
  - A review of all previous Dorchester focused elements of published Community Plans from several bodies, to identify common themes, outstanding actions, strategic and operational partners and other relevant information
  - Engagement with local Community Groups and public agencies - initially this involved meeting with over 70 groups to document their current operations and future aspirations
  - The development of a directory of organisations operating in Dorchester – currently this is held electronically and runs to 273 regular contacts from 235 organisations, with c. 100 additional agency contacts – the large number reflects both the strength of community involvement in the town but also the town's role as a hub for both its hinterland and wider Dorset
  - The distillation of the ambitions these organisations have and the projects they are currently working on into a register document – initially it was hoped that this could be the Community Plan, but already stretching to 100 actions listed on 19 pages it has proved too detailed to be of use as a practical document – it remains in the background as an important resource to allow partners to engage with each other
  - Collective engagement with Community Groups through networking – there have now been three Community Lunch events, which served a dual purpose of educating the sector (specialists have been brought in to update participants regarding funding and social media) and generating feedback on early iterations of the Community Plan. More lunches are planned, potentially with future meetings being themed to target specific partners, e.g. Heritage, Health
2. A draft summary of the current priorities within the plan is included at Appendix 1. In addition the following documents are available to view with the Community Development Officer:
  - The Directory of Organisations (there is a level of confidentiality regarding some contacts)
  - The Full Register of Projects and Actions
  - The Community Action Plan Actions and Priorities
3. The Committee may wish to set up a small Task and Finish Group to review the content of the Plan with the Community Development Officer and agree any remaining requirements to consult on the Plan before its adoption.

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

**COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN – SUMMARY OF PROJECTS/ACTIONS 2018****1. Culture, Heritage, Tourism, Leisure**

1. Help to develop Heritage Tourism strategy, for instance by:
  - a. Mapping existing reports and evidence for need to develop heritage tourism
  - b. Hosting accommodation providers event
2. Help plan/deliver WW1 com memoration projects
3. Support project to update town signage

**2. Transport & Access**

1. Continue to support Dorchester Access Group particularly
  - a. To create an accessibility guide for Dorchester
  - b. To lobby for better access at Dorchester South Station
  - c. To do an accessibility audit of Brewery Square

**3. Community**

1. General – continue to advise and support local groups – particularly those at risk
2. Complete Try This Dorchester website and run 2 x events
3. Keep contact database updated
4. Complete and share online venue directory
5. Support development of a community events diary
6. Develop 2 x shows to broadcast on Ridgeway Radio
7. Promote better networking between statutory bodies and local community – for instance through events including:
  - a. 2 x Community Lunches per year
8. Lead/support 8 key community events

**4. Health**

1. Put on a health and well-being fayre with partners
2. Develop pilot project with Thomas Hardy School to support young people with their mental health

**5. Housing**

1. Continue to support the Dorchester Area Community Land Trust
2. Research if there is demand for & look to develop a Homeshare scheme

**6. Economy, Training/Education & Volunteering**

1. Hold a community/voluntary group networking and training conference
2. Liaise with Citizens Advice to look at developing a financial advice pack for young people
3. Help set up First Aid training session/s for 30 young people

**7. Environment**

1. Support completion of the Poppy Trail Project
2. Support plans to develop the Great Field
3. Look at developing a food share scheme to donate allotment produce to people/communities that are in need.

POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2018

THE ST GEORGES ROAD/LUBBECKE WAY JUNCTION

1. The Committee will be aware of the complications surrounding the delivery of a new access from Lubbecke Way into St Georges Road in order to create an improved access to the industrial units and Household Recycling Centre at the end of St Georges Road.
2. Following the collapse of Mildren Homes, who were obliged to carry out improvements to bring the junction up to highways adoption standard discussions have been ongoing between the landowner, the Duchy of Cornwall and the highway authority, Dorset County Council, to resolve how the improvements will be completed and the s106 obligations discharged.
3. The current position is as follows: -
  - The Duchy of Cornwall will organise the completion of the works to bring the road, junction and other accesses up to adoptable highway standards, requiring the signing of a s278 agreement for the junction works and a s38 agreement for the road in Lubbecke Way
  - The s38 agreement has hit a technical hitch because the Land Register identifies the Town Council as having a lease across part of the road, a legacy from the historic lease for the St George allotments. The Town Council has records of being given a notice to quit in 2012 but this has not been registered with the Land Registry
  - One solution, possibly the quickest, is for the Town Council to become signatories to the s38 agreement. Dorset County Council are willing to include a paragraph in the agreement to make it clear that the Town Council have no responsibilities for the highway or any other activities, and are signing the agreement only because of the registered land interest.
  - Other solutions involve delaying signing the agreement while the Town Council's interest is removed on the Land Register, which could cause further delays to commencement of the works.
4. It is **RECOMMENDED** that subject to agreeing appropriate wording limiting the Council's responsibilities under the agreement, the Town Clerk be authorised to apply the Council's seal to a s38 agreement relating to highway works in Lubbecke Way.
5. Once legal formalities are completed works can commence. The most likely completion date for the rerouting of traffic into Lubbecke Way is summer 2018.

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk