

# Dorchester Town Council

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11 September 2019

**Agenda** for the meeting of the **Policy Committee** which will be held in the **Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Dorchester** on **Tuesday 17 September 2019** 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 R. Biggs and Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, A. Chisholm, T. Harries, F. Hogwood, S. Hosford (Chairman) and G. Jones.

1. Apologies, Declarations of Interest & Signing of Minutes  
To sign Minutes of the meeting of 16 July 2019, adopted by Council on 23 July 2019.
2. Financial Update at 31 August 2019 A
4. Corporate Plan 2019 - 2024 B
3. Town Pump Project – Feria C
4. Free Parking Days D
5. Community Development E
6. Commissioning Short Films F
7. To **RESOLVE**

“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”.

8. Staffing matter Separate report from Deputy Town Clerk



**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**  
**POLICY COMMITTEE – 17 SEPTEMBER 2019**  
**FINANCE REPORT AT 31 AUGUST 2019**

**1. Current Financial Position at 31 August 2019**

- Month 5 spend (Appendix 1) £4k above profile – full year likely to be neutral
  - General savings offset by Outdoor staff sickness and poor Municipal Buildings and Cemetery incomes

• Cash Position	<b>£000</b>	
Lloyds Bank	223	Nil interest
Payden Global	1,000	c. 0.70% return
National Savings and Investments	456	0.70% interest
<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>1,679</b>	<b>(30 Jun £1,923k)</b>

£200k transferred from NS&I account in August 2019 to manage cash flow

- Debt over 30 days = £2,721, 3 debtors (28 Feb £1,717 5 debtors)
- Payments list 1 July – 31 August 2019 on website. Supporting vouchers can be inspected during normal office hours. **RECOMMENDED** that the Payments list, totalling £293,010.59 is approved
- Two deposit agreements signed to hold cash for local organisations – Friends of Dorchester West Station (£25,000 for ramp) and Dorchester Town FC (£12,000 and increasing, for pitch replacement)

**2. External Audit Report 2018/19**

- Audit completed with no amendments, available on our website
- **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the certificated Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year ended 31 March 2019 is approved and accepted

**3. Financial Regulations**

- New NALC templates have been received – no major changes to the 2016 model
- Revised Regulations, based on the new NALC model will be implemented in May 2020

**4. Purchase of a Speed Indicator Device (SID)**

- Appendix 2 discusses a request from the Planning & Environment Committee

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

## MANAGEMENT REPORT AT 31st AUGUST 2019

By Spend Type	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Staff	753	305	305	0
Capital Financing	44	22	22	0
Other Payments	525	251	243	-7
To Specific Reserves	247	247	247	0
Income	-180	-69	-57	11
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>4</b>

By Service	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Allotments	-6	1	1	-0
Parks & Open Spaces	160	91	86	-5
Cemeteries	-15	0	11	10
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	39	15	14	-1
Cultural & Twinning	38	19	19	0
Municipal Buildings	263	226	228	1
Other Services	95	37	31	-6
Office Team	381	174	172	-2
Outdoor Services	435	192	199	7
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>4</b>

Earmarked Reserves with budgeted Expenditure In Year	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Play Equipment	10	0	0	0
Vehicles and Equipment	15	15	18	3
Cemeteries	5	5	4	-1
Walks, Trees & Public Realm	100	20	20	0
Art & Cultural	12	12	6	-6
Dorchester West Ramp	10	0	0	0
Corporate Projects	77	10	6	-4
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>-8</b>

## ACQUISITION OF A SID

1. At its meeting on 2 September the Planning & Environment Committee received a presentation from members of the DC Highways Team covering the use of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs), which are now extensively used across the county.
2. Members received the presentation positively and resolved:

That it should be recommended to the Policy Committee that a SID should be purchased by the Council to be deployed at sites identified at the next Planning and Environment Committee.

The total cost of equipment, site testing and posts for up to 3 sites, would be c. £4,500, for equipment, site approval and solar powered posts for 3 sites.

3. The SID can only be used on sites approved by the Dorset Council, following a speed survey. A SID is shared between no more than 3 sites on a revolving 4-6 week cycle. Our staff could be trained to set up the SID at each site.
4. There is one negative. The current SID programme is a mix of DC operated SIDs at 10 high profile sites, plus 39 community operated SIDs in local villages and urban areas on sites that have passed the site survey criteria. DC have indicated that, should we purchase a SID, they will withdraw support for the Bridport Road hot spot and expect us to cover that site – essentially the purchase of one SID would only result in two extra sites being covered in Dorchester, while DC would redeploy their SID to another high profile site elsewhere. This approach reduces the benefits of purchasing a SID for Dorchester by a third.
5. The Committee is invited to consider two options
  - Approve the purchase of a SID now, from the General Reserve, allowing the Planning and Environment Committee to identify preferred sites to be surveyed, leading to 2 additional sites becoming operational
  - Include the purchase of a SID as a project to be considered as a Special Item in the 2020/21 budget and enter into discussions with the DC Highways Team linking the purchase to the retention of the SID in Bridport Road for as long as the DC Highways Team continue to operate their own “High Profile sites” programme

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL****POLICY COMMITTEE – 17 SEPTEMBER 2019****DEVELOPMENT OF A CORPORATE PLAN 2019 – 2024**

1. In July the Committee considered a programme to refresh the Corporate Plan, as follows
  - August/September Informal sessions on distinct elements of the plan
  - September Council First draft of a new Corporate Plan
  - October – December Consultation and redrafting of the plan
  - January Council Adopt a new Corporate Plan with a new Medium Term Financial Strategy
2. During August/September, supported by an external facilitator and the Town Clerk, the Council discussed six themes during three informal sessions. Notes of the meetings held to date have been prepared and a full set will be made available to all Members. The notes effectively present long lists of the aspirations that the Council may wish to deliver against during its period of office.
3. The July Committee discussed some of the more important Medium Term Financial Strategy issues (Reserve levels, Debt, Tax Base growth and Council Tax increases) and more information is being gathered regarding how other Councils manage these.
4. The big gap in our knowledge remains the impact of service changes at the Dorset Council and it would be unwise to commit to new initiatives until the full implications of these is known.
5. The next step will be to hold an informal session to consider the outcomes of the six themes against each other and identify the most important priorities to be consulted on. A date is being arranged for this purpose.
6. A separate exercise is being conducted, initially by officers but then by a Task and Finish Group reporting to the Management Committee, relating to projects that might be required for the land and buildings that we manage. This is due to report back in November.
7. The next phase that needs to be planned relates to consultation.
8. Notwithstanding the above it is still important to pursue the Corporate Plan review, as much of its direction can be established without knowing the Dorset Council exercise outcome.

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL****POLICY COMMITTEE – 17 SEPTEMBER 2019****TOWN PUMP AREA REFURBISHMENT PROJECT**

1. Over the past three years the Town Council, working with the other tiers of local government, has delivered significant improvements to the public realm of the town centre, including the paving of lower South Street, the refurbishment of The Walks and remedial works in upper South Street.
2. The next phase of works covers the area around the Town Pump, the historic centre of Dorchester. Funding totalling £200,000 has been made available by Dorchester Town Council and West Dorset District Council, and this phase of the works will again involve close working with the Dorset Council Highways team. Additional funding is available in our Reserves if required, including a sum for new street furniture.
3. The works would cover broadly the area outlined in Appendix 1. Most of the land is in the ownership of Dorset Council and retained for highway purpose. The Town Council owns a small piece of land immediately around the Town Pump obelisk.
4. The primary use of the land is as a highway and footpaths, with controls in place to restrict the highway to pedestrian use during the day. A limited number of vehicles have right of access during the pedestrianised period but there is also extensive abuse of the access by delivery vehicles.
5. The space has secondary uses for seating, bike security, a map and bins. The space is also used informally for sitting out associated with a local café and is also used as an unregulated advertising space for “A” boards by local businesses. The 10 stall 6-day Cornhill market is held immediately adjacent to the space and the town’s Christmas Tree also features during December; in recent years the space has been used as a gathering place when remembering national events.
6. Today’s layout of the Town Pump area is the result of incremental creep; it was never planned to function and appear the way it does today. As the acknowledged centre of the town the space offers an opportunity to act as a social hub, as a natural link to cultural venues to the north of High West/East Street (Shire Hall, County Museum, Corn Exchange) and to more fully present and promote the town and its events programme.
7. Managing a project to make more of this space is however, a far more complex exercise than was the case with the other works undertaken in South Street and discussions have been held with the Dorset Council regarding the appointment of a project manager to oversee the delivery of a project that considers the views of users alongside the technical requirements of Dorset Council Highways, and to implement a design that better suits the potential wider role that the space could provide for.
8. West Dorset District Council appointed FERIA Urbanism to undertake a master planning exercise for Dorchester town centre, following a competitive process. While this work is

still being completed it had already identified the Town Pump as an important area for public use, which needs to be considered within the overall plan.

9. The Town Council has engaged Feria as its advisor on the Local Plan review for the past three years, again appointed using a competitive process. It also worked closely with Feria when they were consulting as part of their work on the master planning exercise.
10. The work required of a Project Manager on this project is to
  - Engage with interested parties, including the Highways teams, to identify what their needs from the space are
  - Engage with the wider community to understand their ideas for how the space can be made more attractive to and more useable by them
  - Working with a landscape architect and DC Highways, develop a design that maximises the potential of the site while ensuring that its primary use as a highway is protected
  - Support the construction of the scheme by DC Highways

The options for appointing a Project Manager are

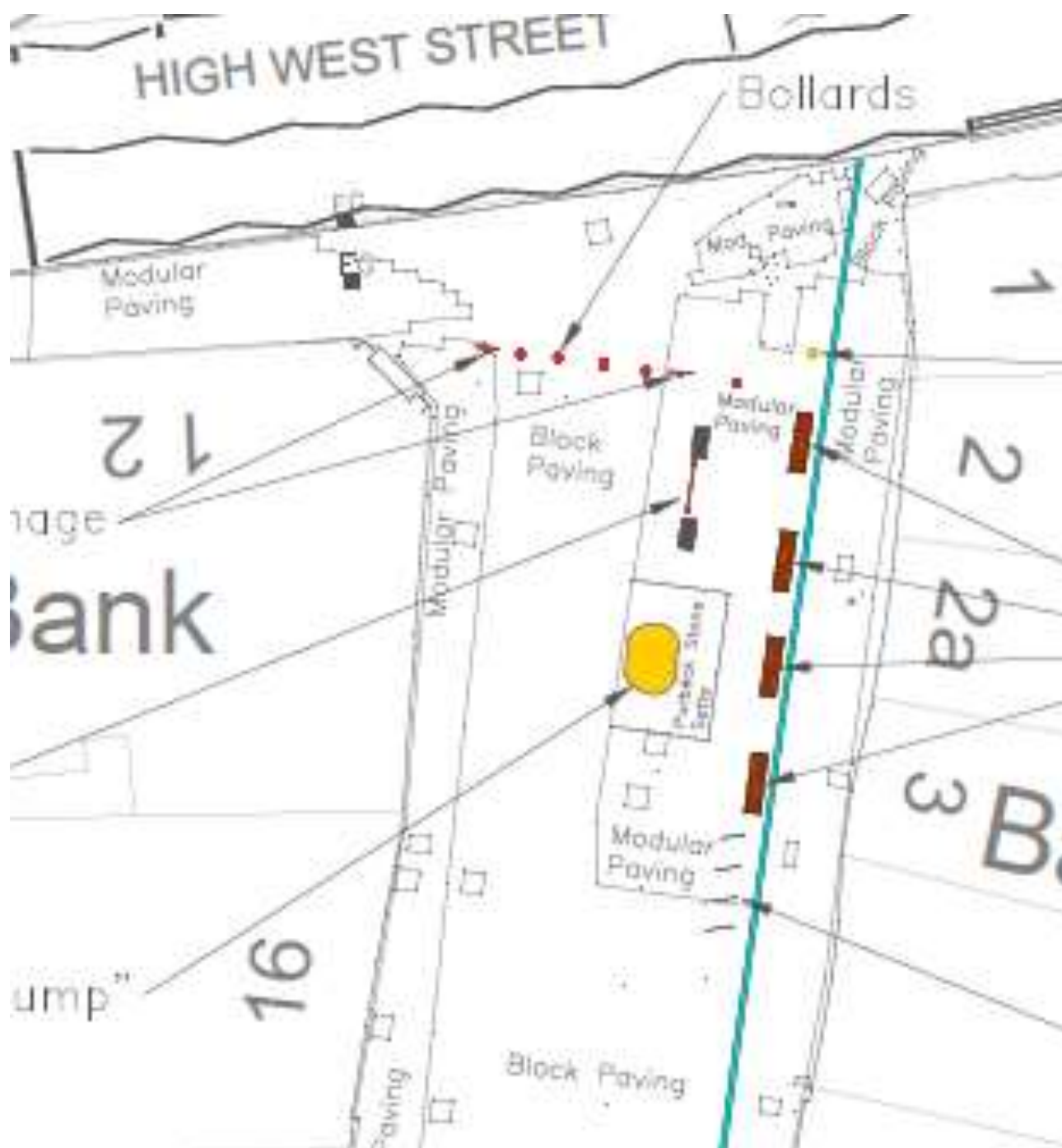
- Advertise for a Project Manager to lead the project, with a skill set based on both community engagement and the ability to advocate community needs to professional engineers
- Engage Feria Urbanism to develop the work they were already undertaking for WDDC/DC into a specific project for the town pump area. Feria were engaged by WDDC during a competitive process but there is no option built into the contract to extend their remit to individual projects.

As an added factor, the Council would need to decide whether to appoint each specialism within the project (Town Planning, Community engagement, Landscape Architecture, specialist engineering) or to invite the Project Manager to put a team together.

11. As a start point Feria were invited to submit an Expression of Interest for the work and took the opportunity to provide a comprehensive document that identified how they would approach the task and how they would supplement their team to deliver specific elements of the project. The expression has not yet been costed, but is likely to fall into the 3 quotes range (£5,000 - £25,000).
12. Members are invited to consider the following **RECOMMENDATION**

That because of the knowledge base developed through working with the West Dorset District Council and Dorchester Town Council on a masterplan for Dorchester and the West Dorset Local Plan Review, the Town Council waives Financial Regulations and the Town Clerk, in consultation with Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, invites Feria Urbanism to provide a detailed costing for project management work associated with the Town Pump Area Refurbishment project.

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk





**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL****POLICY COMMITTEE – 17 SEPTEMBER 2019****FREE PARKING DAYS**

1. The Dorset Council has confirmed its intention to offer 5 free parking days in the town for 2019/20, echoing a policy introduced by West Dorset DC in 2018 to replace a long standing, much more useful financial contribution towards the cost of providing Christmas Lights.
2. As a policy Free Parking days have limited value in Dorchester
  - The Dorset Council does not charge for parking on Sundays
  - Providing free parking Monday-Friday doesn't work because the spaces are taken up by office workers
  - Free Parking on Saturdays has limited benefit because many of the spaces are taken up by Saturday workers
  - Parking charges are low, and a parking refund scheme is operated by the BID, so the financial benefit to the user is modest
3. In 2018 we argued for continuing a £3,000 contribution towards the provision of Christmas Lights, in lieu of 4 days of free parking (the 5<sup>th</sup> used for Carnival day). Recognising that free parking was costing West Dorset DC significantly more than the cash contribution District Council officers agreed to recommend the contribution to the Council, but the idea was subsequently rejected due to a desire to maintain consistency across towns.
4. Dorchester BID requested free parking for 3 Saturdays and Christmas Eve and this was accepted by WDDC. Dorchester BID believe the outcome was positive, with car parks busy throughout the day. An alternative view is that the car parks were very busy from very early on in the day, before shops opened.
5. Dorchester BID have made a request that we support free parking on the four Saturdays leading up to Christmas and Christmas Eve, and if supported, this request is likely to be agreed by the Dorset Council. The BID would like a decision expedited so they can maximise advertising of the offer during the autumn.
6. Other towns, including Bridport and Weymouth, instead introduced free afternoon parking over more days. Feedback from Weymouth was negative as there was no perceptible increase in footfall and the offer led to confusion for customers; this may be partly to do with how the scheme was implemented.
7. It is **RECOMMENDED**
  - That the Town Clerk makes another approach to exchange free parking days for a £3,000 contribution to the Christmas Lights
  - That if this request is rejected a request is made for free parking on Saturdays 30 Nov, 7, 14 & 21 December and Tues 24 December
  - That further information is gathered about the benefits of free afternoon parking during the Christmas period for consideration in future years

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL****POLICY COMMITTEE – 17 SEPTEMBER 2019****COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

1. In 2016 the Council appointed its first Community Development Officer and the post quickly became an integral part of the Council's service offer. Today the postholder spends her time on
  - Supporting individual community groups to thrive, including fundraising and governance advice – recent examples include the Munchkins Café, AET and the CLT
  - Developing networking opportunities for the Dorchester community sector, the most visible example being the Community Lunches programme
  - Maintaining contacts with Dorset Council, other towns and parishes, the NHS and other agencies, identifying good practice, new collaborative opportunities, linking professionals to community groups and emerging issues – recent opportunities include the Connected Minds mental health programme, a social prescribing initiative, the development of a digital health resource and the development of the Dorchester Access Group to work with Highways and other urban space providers
  - Developing a programme of new and enhanced events with willing partners – this year has seen two Science days a Plastic Free Picnic and a Health and Wellbeing picnic added to a wider programme of returning events
  - Bringing a community focus to the wider work of the Town Council team
2. The nature of the role, especially in a dynamic environment such as Dorchester, is that there are always far more opportunities to use the postholder than they can possibly engage with. Managing the expectations of individual groups and partners is a challenge which has in part been achieved by documenting both the wider work being undertaken by our community sector (The Dorchester Directory of Community Aims and Aspirations 2017 – 2020), then identifying particular projects and opportunities where our involvement can make a tangible difference (the postholder has been set a general target of delivering five new projects a year).
3. We have recently reported back to a meeting of the West Dorset Local Area Partnership, (run by Dorset Council), providing the bullet points at Appendix 1 as examples of the activity that has been going on at the Town Council. The Council will receive £6,000 from the Dorset Council towards our costs of delivering this work this year.
4. It is particularly opportune to undertake a review of how our resource should be used going forward, because:-
  - This is a new Council thinking through what it wants to achieve, which it will include in a new Corporate Plan
  - It is clear that many of our community organisations will be affected in some way by how the new Dorset Council operates as it redefines its role in the community
  - The postholder has been in place for three years and has a good understanding of what works and doesn't work in Dorchester, where the gaps are and where the community sector is already strong

- The Directory of Community Aims and Aspirations is due to be refreshed in 2020
5. It is **RECOMMENDED** that a Task and Finish Group of up to four Policy Committee Members is appointed to undertake the following
- Initially to gain a greater understanding of how our Community Development service is delivered and how it manages the competing demands placed on the service
  - To understand how decisions of the Dorset Council are already impacting, and will increasingly impact, on the community sector in Dorchester and consider what options the Council might have to respond to this challenge
  - Consider how the ideas emerging from the Corporate Plan might be delivered by engaging with the Community sector

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

APPENDIX 1

## **WEST DORSET LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP MEETING 2 SEPTEMBER 2019**

### **PROJECTS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY IN DORCHESTER, SUPPORTED BY THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER**

Some projects/activities I anticipate working on over the next year include:

- Developing an Access Guide for Dorchester – and using this as part of a tourism marketing strategy to welcome people with additional access needs to visit Dorchester.
- Supporting the creation of a heritage-tourism strategy for the town.
- Continuing to support the Plastic Free initiative and widen its scope, including a full audit of the Town Councils own use of plastic & how to reduce it.
- Bringing commercial and community organisations together to look at how we can address the issue of shops closing in the town.
- Developing closer links with health providers and looking at ways for them to strengthen their own partnerships and improve access to their services.
- Review projects supporting people in food poverty and help ensure a joined up approach.
- Re launching the ‘Try This’ community group which is a skills sharing project providing a free programme of taster sessions in a diverse range of activities.
- Continue to work on initiatives to support young people with their mental health
- Run several large scale events in 2020, including commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of VE and VJ day.
- Review of the Community Directory of Aims and Aspirations for Dorchester
- Working with the Dorset Council and other partners, to develop and embed an effective way for the new council to work alongside and support local communities.

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL****POLICY COMMITTEE – 17 SEPTEMBER 2019****COMMISSIONING SHORT FILMS**

1. The Committee will be aware of a number of events in the town this year that have benefitted from being recorded and then celebrated with short films. The front page of our website records six such films that have been in use this summer, one promotional, the other five after the event celebrations.
2. A local film maker, who made some of this summer's short films, has approached the Council inviting us to consider a proposal for a service package which includes
  - Filming of events on a call off basis, including vox pops
  - Production of short films using material collected at events
  - Library storage of filmed material for re-editing for subsequent purposes
3. The Council has not taken a structure approach to film commissioning, relying instead on individual projects deciding whether to film their event or not. Some events are clearly Town Council led, others are partner led. Many events are too small to justify creating a film in their own right, but having a record would be a valuable resource that could be used as part of a wider presentation of the town's activities.
4. The six films used four different filmmakers, each with its own commissioning model, with costs varying from Nil through to over £1,000. They show varying film-making style, from a skilled professional to the competent amateur, include content of different complexities, and also raise legacy questions regarding ownership and reuse of the images.
5. In the modern social media environment film is becoming the norm; it is a cost-effective way of getting a message out. While the Council has not previously considered a more structured, efficient and economic approach to building a film bank, the experience from this summer suggests it worthy of further consideration. It also makes sense that the Town Council takes a lead with partners in commissioning film, enabling the end product to be used by multiple clients – partners may or may not contribute funds.
6. The range of different solutions used this summer demonstrates that the local film-making market is buoyant. It would be difficult to specify our needs in detail in a contract as each film-maker brings a different approach, but the core of any contract would need to be the recording of material, storage in a library and the ability to edit material for multiple uses. It would not be appropriate to award a contract without a competitive process.
7. The Council has no budget at present, but is awarding grants to bodies that are engaging film-makers. Members may wish to consider putting a sum in the budget for 2020-21 during the Budget process in January; a budget of £5- £6,000 would be appropriate.

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk