



Dorchester Town Council

Council Offices, 19 North Square, Dorchester, Dorset. DT1 1JF
Telephone: (01305) 266861

For information about this agenda contact Adrian Stuart
a.stuart@dorchester-tc.gov.uk

15 January 2020

Agenda for the meeting of the **Policy Committee** which will be held in the **Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Dorchester** on **Monday 20 January 2020** 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 18 November 2019, adopted by Council on 25 November 2019.
2. Financial Update at 31 December 2019 A
3. Climate Emergency Plan (First Draft) B
4. Revenue Budget 2020/21 & Medium Term Financial Strategy C
5. Corporate Plan: 2019 – 2024 development and 2015 – 2019 update D



DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE – 20 JANUARY 2020
FINANCE REPORT AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

1. Financial Position

- Month 9 spend (Appendix 1) £11k below profile – full year likely to be from neutral - £20k under
 - General savings, plus £10k saving on elections, offset by Outdoor staff sickness and poor Municipal Buildings and Cemetery incomes
- Use of Corporate Projects Reserve will return to neutral on receipt of LAG grant for Signage project (£59k received 8 Jan)

• Cash Position	£000	
Lloyds Bank	337	Nil interest
Payden Global	1,000	c. 0.70% return
National Savings and Investments	705	0.70% interest
Total Cash	2,042	(31 Oct £2,163k)

£250k transferred from NS&I to Lloyds in December 2019 for cash flow

- Debt over 30 days = £1,049, 3 debtors (31 Oct £809 1 debtors)
- Payments list 1 November – 31 December 2019 on website. Supporting vouchers can be inspected during normal office hours. **RECOMMENDED** that the Payments list, totalling £217,184.31 is approved

2. Procurement

- Minute 2019/16(d) from November 2019 Committee agreed a process to review 16 specific corporate supplies within a 12 month period
- Documentation drafted relating to two of the services has been circulated separately, with the intention of completing similar forms for review by the Committee at its November meeting. Members are invited to respond direct to the Town Clerk with questions.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

MANAGEMENT REPORT AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

By Spend Type	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Staff	753	570	560	-10
Capital Financing	44	44	44	-0
Other Payments	525	382	367	-15
To Specific Reserves	247	247	247	0
Income	-180	-151	-136	15
Net Budget	1,389	1,092	1,081	-11

By Service	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Allotments	-6	-5	-5	-0
Parks & Open Spaces	160	105	98	-7
Cemeteries	-15	-7	-1	7
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	39	27	26	-1
Cultural & Twinning	38	27	30	3
Municipal Buildings	263	247	256	9
Other Services	95	67	51	-16
Office Team	381	300	292	-8
Outdoor Services	435	331	334	3
Net Budget	1,389	1,092	1,081	-11

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	9	4
Walks, Trees & Public Realm	100	20	20	0
Art & Cultural	12	12	9	-3
Dorchester West Ramp	10	0	0	0
Corporate Projects	77	77	128	51
Net Budget	229	129	184	55

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**POLICY COMMITTEE – 20 JANUARY 2020****CLIMATE EMERGENCY – DRAFT PLAN**

1. In May 2019 the Council declared a Climate Emergency. While there has been positive progress on individual initiatives since then, today's report is the first to attempt to outline the Council's strategic response to the issue.
2. A first draft Climate Emergency Plan is attached below. The draft outlines that the Council is seeking to achieve change in three areas; with the services it directly controls, with services delivered by partners and with/through the wider community.
3. The Plan also recognises an intention to extend the plan to incorporate an Ecological Emergency as well as considering the resources that will be needed to deliver change.
4. Finally the Plan identifies the need for regular review of the Plan's ambitions due to the fast moving pace of change in this dynamic area; collaborative working will need to be at the heart of the plan.
5. Appendix 1 of the Plan provides more details regarding some of the key environmental impacts of our operations and a preliminary Action Plan, attached at Appendix 2, begins to scratch the surface of the amount of work that is required to make a tangible difference.

Link to the Corporate Plan

6. There is a natural tension between the exercise to deliver a carefully thought through holistic Corporate Plan, which the Council started in July and is still working on, and the need to be seen to be responding to the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency. Thusfar there is very little in the draft Climate Emergency Plan that would not have emerged anyway through a Corporate Plan process that was climate emergency focused.

Municipal Buildings

7. Council Minute 2019/34(b) resolved to explore alternative approaches to the heating of the Municipal Buildings and work has already commenced on the project. The work requires a detailed understanding of the Municipal Buildings and a recommendation is included to waive Financial Regulations to engage Crickmay Stark, who have acted as architects for all structural work on the building for at least the past 20 years. They would be employed on standard percentage terms, with the best estimate for their fee being £15 - £20,000. There is no chance that the Council would be able to act quickly enough to secure a grant from Low Carbon Dorset towards the total works unless they are engaged now.
8. Officers have undertaken two visits to biomass sites to understand the operational requirements of such a system should it be installed at the Municipal Buildings and are looking for further opportunities to consolidate the evidence in favour of such an approach, as well as wanting to talk to those whose experiences have not been so positive.

Resourcing the Plan

9. The 2020/21 Budget report has been constructed on the basis that two significant contributions to Reserves will be made
- A further £100,000 to be added to the Municipal Buildings Reserve to meet the cost of new heating plus other related energy reduction and supply initiatives
 - A Climate Emergency Fund of £125,000 to enable the Council to continue and accelerate a programme of change to its own buildings and equipment, as well as to work with community partners to introduce changes to their operations

10. Examples of the use of the Climate Emergency Fund might include

- Solar or other introductions at our smaller sites – these are technically possible but have a much longer/no payback than our recent experience at Louds Mill depot
- Part purchase of a solar farm to mitigate the impact of continued use of operations that generate CO₂ - in particular this recognises that it may prove impossible to meet all of the energy needs of the Municipal Buildings and Borough Gardens from within those sites
- Grant or loan funding towards the introduction of solar, air/ground (from under our land) source heat pumps or other infrastructure on community partner buildings
- Financial support for initiatives led by other agencies or community organisations that implement reductions in the amount of CO₂ generated by the town's residents and businesses or increase the town's capacity to absorb CO₂

Rules for the use of the Fund would be established by this Committee.

Consultation

11. If adopted by Council it is proposed that the draft Climate Emergency Plan be consulted on with the aim of adopting an updated plan by May 2020.

12. It is **RECOMMENDED** that

- Due to the specialist architectural knowledge accumulated of the grade 2* Municipal Buildings, due to the need to expedite the work in order to secure grant support, and noting that the fee proposal is in line with industry standards for this form of work, Crickmay Stark are appointed as architects for the Municipal Buildings Heating project
- £100,000 is transferred to the Municipal Buildings Reserve to fund a new low carbon heating system
- A new Climate Emergency Fund is created, with an initial contribution of £125,000 to be used to support the delivery of a new Climate Emergency Plan
- The draft Climate Emergency Plan at Appendix A is forwarded to Council for approval, to be subjected to consultation in order to adopt the Plan by May 2020.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN

WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF THIS PLAN?

1. In May 2019, in response to growing evidence and public concern, Dorchester Town Council declared a Climate Emergency. This plan takes, as a given, the overwhelming evidence supporting the case for a change in attitudes and approach regarding how the earth's resources are used.
2. The Council has committed to a systematic review of the climate change impact of each area of its activities, including energy use, with the aim of being zero-carbon by, at the latest, the year 2030. This will in itself be a major undertaking and is likely to require significant financial investment and staff resource. The first section of this plan, relating to Dorchester Town Council Operations, responds to the commitment made by Council in May.
3. Over the last few years the Council has increasingly worked to deliver services through partnerships with other bodies, mainly from the community sector. Our partners have taken on assets or responsibilities and we have often helped them, financially and with advice, to become established and to deliver discrete projects. Whereas the Council's original declaration did not refer to these bodies, who we ultimately cannot control, the Plan indicates the Council's desire to work proactively with partners on projects to reduce their carbon footprints.
4. The community of Dorchester is already very engaged with the issue of the climate emergency and there are many examples of good practice. The Town Council will look to support groups to take practical steps either to deliver their own initiatives or to give them a voice to advocate changed behaviours to the wider population of residents, workers and visitors. The Town Council can also act as a broker between the community and larger service providers such as Dorset Council and the NHS.
5. Since declaring a Climate Emergency a number of organisations have gone on to declare an Ecological Emergency. The Town Council adopted a Biodiversity strategy in 2018, thrown its support behind initiatives to move the plastic free agenda forward and will quickly explore what the additional implications are of declaring an Ecological Emergency and then what additional steps it can take towards delivering against such a declaration.
6. The Town Council's staff have experience in delivering discrete elements which have already contributed towards reducing our carbon outputs. There are, however, gaps in our knowledge, new technology and solutions, new funding and partnering opportunities and a wealth of support from other agencies and it is important that the Council taps into these. In particular it would be advantageous to have specialist advice available to deliver energy efficiencies on our own and partner premises.
7. Finally, the way we respond to the climate emergency, both on the services we or partners provide and among our local community, is evolving rapidly. Any plan developed needs to be flexible and dynamic to adapt to fresh challenges and capture new opportunities as they arise.

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Overview

8. To avoid delaying and overcomplicating our initial response to reducing our carbon footprint there are two major elements of our work which, if they can be altered, will have the greatest impact
 - The direct consumption of energy use and waste production from our activities
 - The carbon impact of bought in supplies and services
9. In the short term the focus will be on changing our direct consumption, while we undertake a fuller audit of the impact of our bought in supplies. Once these exercises are completed we will undertake a further review of our operations to identify any other changes in practices that would deliver benefits.
10. Appendix 1 provides a measurement of the carbon footprint of the Council's estate and equipment, using most recent (worst of 2017/18 or 2018/19) data. The Council is currently directly emitting c. 150 tonnes of CO2 each year.

Delivering Reductions on direct energy consumption

11. Appendix 1 also outlines a plan to reduce emissions by c. 80% over the next decade, the key components of which might be:-
 - Replacing the gas boiler heating system in the Municipal Buildings with a biomass system
 - Relocating the 19 North Square headquarters to another building, likely to be the Municipal Buildings
 - Introducing a range of modest onsite solar installations and seeking efficiencies in the use of electricity, as well as decommissioning facilities that are no longer required
 - Continuing the phased replacement of the Council's vehicle fleet and hand-held equipment from petrol/diesel to electric

The key risks associated with the above are

- Ensuring that biomass is suitable for the Municipal Buildings. An evidence gathering exercise has already commenced
 - A current lack of a suitable working alternative for the Council's larger vehicles, tractor and shredder, which are used extensively to maintain our greenspaces around the town
12. The Council's Budget process for 2020/21 will propose that funding is secured for both the Municipal Buildings heating (the Council also hopes to achieve a 40% grant towards this project) and also for a Climate Emergency Reserve Fund, in part to deliver minor projects. There are likely to be longer term budget savings as a result of the interventions.

Bought In Supplies and Services

13. The Council buys in a range of supplies and services, which broadly break down as follows
 - Regular services similar to those our own Grounds staff undertake – e.g. Cemeteries grass cutting, Walks Cleaning
 - Major one-off projects, e.g. Tennis Courts, Cemetery Infrastructure, Municipal Buildings reroofing
 - One off/Annual repairs or maintenance to Council buildings and equipment

- Consumables, including chemicals and single use plastics such as dog bags, bin liners, stationery, protective clothing, screws and fixings
- Costs associated with events, including payments for infrastructure (staging, lighting, toilets) and direct to artists

It is anticipated that action will be undertaken in two ways for these purchases

- Fully audit what we buy, whether we need it, how we buy it, and also consider the degree to which we may wish to focus on local suppliers and climate friendly work practices when we next undertake procurement
- Understand how our suppliers are modifying their work practices to respond to the climate emergency and encourage them to match our own plans

14. The Action Plan includes milestones for both of these actions.

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL'S PARTNERS

15. Increasingly the Council is delivering services through partnership with local organisations, including cultural groups (Dorchester Arts, Dorset County Museum, Keep Military Museum, etc) sports clubs (Football, Cricket, Bowls, etc), community groups (Sawmills Association members, Dorchester Youth Club, Food groups, etc). Many of these groups have carbon footprints which are in part linked to their role as partners, influenced by the direction the Town Council has taken over the last few years.
16. Generally the groups do not have either the resource or technical knowledge to achieve reductions in their carbon footprint. The Council would look to provide support by brokering professional expertise, assisting partners to fundraise and also using its Climate Emergency Fund to assist partners to reduce their carbon footprint.
17. The Action Plan includes milestones for identifying partners and opportunities to assist them to reduce their carbon footprints.

THE TOWN OF DORCHESTER

18. Residents, businesses, workers and visitors in Dorchester can all make a contribution to reducing the town's overall carbon footprint. A growing number of groups are taking actions that contribute to an overall reduction in carbon emissions or mitigate the impact on the environment.
19. The Town Council will assist volunteer groups to promote their ideas to residents as they go about their daily life, with the aim of educating and changing mainstream behaviour. The Town Council will also work with, and challenge, the business community to implement initiatives that benefit the wider environment.
20. Milestones in the Plan cover the need for an audit of the work already underway at community level and a plan to promote it to the wider Dorchester audience.

ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY

21. A number of public bodies, including Dorset Council, have extended their declaration of a Climate Emergency to include specific reference to the world's ecology, recognising the impact of the change in climate on the planet's flora and fauna.

22. In accepting a need to extend its own declaration the Council will review its existing Biodiversity Strategy and identify practical steps to contribute towards safeguarding the local ecology and include these in the Action Plan.

RESOURCES

23. In order to deliver change the Town Council will need to allocate officer time and cash resources to deliver the Plan and, to deliver some parts of the Plan, secure access to paid specialist technical advice.
24. The Council has some knowledge of some of the issues that need to be addressed in the Plan and, should Members require it, can adjust their workloads to accommodate a greater workload in this area with only modest detriment to other services. There is no proposal to recruit additional in-house resource to deliver the plan.
25. Officers are aware, however, how limited any free access resources from other parties will become. They have made use of Low Carbon Dorset and also intend to liaise with others to identify whether there are projects on which we can work together to mutual benefit.
26. There is limited independent specialist advice available locally, with much of the available advice being linked to the marketing of specific products. Many of the suppliers have short track records and technology is evolving rapidly, while demand for suppliers is likely to grow to the stage where they might be able to choose which projects to bid for; while the nature of many of the solutions that we will be looking to deliver on are bespoke. The Council will need to decide whether to waive standing orders to develop a relationship with one or two local suppliers with a proven track record in Dorchester.
27. An Action in the Plan requires officers to report on available advice and delivery mechanisms.

CONSULTATION & REVIEW

28. There is a significant level of interest in the Climate Emergency and the actions that public bodies are taking to respond to it. There is also significant interest among peers about the actions being undertaken in similar organisations.
29. It is inevitable that this Plan will have missed many good opportunities, so the potential for constructive feedback is significant. It is proposed that information is provided and consultation is undertaken during the spring, with peers, partners and the wider community, to provide initial feedback that can be incorporated into a refreshed document to be presented to Council in May 2020.
30. Community engagement will become a permanent feature of the Council's approach to this issue. It is anticipated that the preliminary feedback received will present opportunities to create a more permanent body to develop and monitor a longer term response to the Climate Emergency.

APPENDICES

1. Carbon Footprint from Council's own buildings and equipment
2. Preliminary Action Plan

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL CARBON FOOTPRINT

	Kwh	Current t/CO2	Current Plan	By 2030 t/CO2
Electricity (Kwh)				
Municipal Buildings	81,900	25.9	Solar & Efficiencies	10.0
Borough Gardens	31,800	10.0	Timers & Solar	5.0
Weymouth Avenue Cemetery	12,200	3.9	Decommision/Solar	-
19 North Square	12,000	3.8	Investigate relocation	-
Louds Mill Depot	11,500	3.6	Solar Installed - reducing	0.5
Poudbury Cemetery	4,200	1.3	Decommision/Solar	-
Other (3 sites)	2,200	0.7	-	0.7
	155,800			
Gas (Kwh)				
Municipal Buildings	258,200	59.6	Investigating Biomass	-
Borough Gardens	-	-	-	-
19 North Square	32,600	7.5	Investigate relocation	-
	290,800			
Diesel & Petrol (l.)				
Bins Flatbed	2,400	7.5	Replaced with Electric	0.5
Grounds Flatbed	1,700	5.3	Replace 2024	0.5
Grounds tractor	1,200	3.8	Replace 2029	0.5
Grounds Flatbed	1,100	3.4	Replace 2024	0.5
Grounds Flatbed	1,100	3.4	Replace 2029	0.5
Gardens Pick Up	700	2.2	Replaced with Electric	0.5
Equipment Petrol	700	2.2	Replacing with Electric	0.5
	8,900			
Water & Waste				
Water all sites		3.2	-	3.2
Waste all sites		3.5	-	3.5
Total t/CO2		150.9	Investigate Solar offset	26.4

DRAFT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN - ACTION PLAN

Section	Project	Likely Outcome	By	Lead	Reduction t/CO2	Est. Cost £000
T.C. Ops	Municipal Buildings Energy New Heating System Roof Solar Other	Biomass Boiler system	Oct 21	SN/CD	50.6	100
		East/West solar on listed bldg.	Oct 22	SN/CD	20.0	10
		Internal Fans, Lagging and int. Heat Pumps	Oct 21	SN/CD	5.9	15
T.C. Ops	Relocate HQ from 19 North Square	Relocated to Municipal Buildings	Mar 23	AS	11.3	Net 0
T.C. Ops	Minor Sites Electricity Generation Borough Gardens Weymouth Ave Cemetery Poundbury Cemetery Louds Mill Depot Skatepark Maumbury Rings	Solar & Heat Pumps solutions	Mar 22	CD	5.0	15
		Solar	Mar 22	CD	3.9	10
		Solar	Mar 22	CD	1.3	5
		Battery storage	Mar 22	CD	3.1	10
		Solar	Mar 22	CD	0.4	3
		Solar	Mar 22	CD	0.3	3
T.C. Ops	Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Replace Grounds Team flatbed x 2 Replace Grounds Team flatbed Replace Grounds Team tractor Replace all Equipment	Electric vehicles	Dec 24	CD	7.7	Net 0
		Electric vehicle	Dec 29	CD	2.9	Net 0
		Electric vehicle	Dec 29	CD	3.3	?
		Electric equipment	Dec 29	CD	1.7	Net 0
T.C. Ops	Deliver Solar offset programme	Solar on roofs of partner buildings or in green spaces	Oct 25	AS	26.4	?
T.C. Ops	Audit bought in services Work with suppliers to minimise the impact of their contracts with us	List of services where suppliers will be challenged to deliver a no/low carbon service	Sep 20	NH/CD	-	0
			tba	CD	-	?
Partners	Identify partners and opportunities Assist them to develop their response to the Climate Emergency	Investment/grant support to enable partners to install solar and other solutions	Mar 21	AS/NH	-	Net 0
			Mar 25	AS/NH	-	100

Wider Dorchester	Audit community involvement Support Community Groups to develop initiatives to enable residents and businesses to respond to the Climate Emergency Support Dorset Council to get key messages out to residents/businesses	Greater community engagement in the issue, leading to greater adoption of solutions at an individual level	Mar 21	ES	-	Net 0
			Ongoing	ES	-	50
			Ongoing	ES/AS	-	Net 0
Ecological Emergency	Review current Biodiversity Strategy and implement any identified improvements	Modest changes to current operations Changes to management approach of individual sites, e.g. tree planting, wilding	Mar 21	CD	-	Net 0
			Ongoing	CD	-	20
Resources	Develop in house knowledge and skills relating to latest developments Identify new ways of procuring solutions which accelerate the response to the Climate Emergency	Staff better able to spot opportunities Better solutions installed more quickly	Ongoing	All	-	Net 0
			Mar 21	AS/CD	-	Net 0
Consultation & Review	Consult peers and community regarding our first Plan Regularly review progress on the plan and introduce change as appropriate	Increased engagement, buy in and ideas Iterative improvement to the Plan	May 20	ES/AS	-	0
			Annual	AS	-	0

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 20 JANUARY 2020

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY & REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21

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 cost of services provided by the Committee has reduced from £396k to £377k (-£19k), the key changes being: -
 - Removing the budget for Town Council Election in May 2019 (-£20k)
 - Deletion of the part-time Committee Administrator post (-£10k)
 - Reduced reliance on income from Dorchester Market (+£5k)
 - Reduced support for Dorchester Youth Centre as it moves into its fourth year of operation (-£3k), for Dorchester Cricket Club (-£2k) and the removal of a long unused budget for CCTV (-£5k), as well as lower debt charges (-£2k)
 - The introduction of a budget for videoing community events (+£5k), consistent with the latest position relating to minute 2019/12 resolved by the Committee in September
 - NB: As shown Appendix 1 assumes the inclusion of a contribution of £125k to a new Climate Emergency Reserve, the subject of an earlier report on the agenda
3. The **Management Committee** budget was approved at a meeting on 13 January 2020 and totals £996k (2019/20 £992k), an increase of £4k. The budget assumes an additional one off contribution to the Municipal Buildings Reserve of £100k, noting Council minute 2019/34b relating to the replacement of gas boilers.
4. Taking account of new contributions to Reserves the Operational **Revenue Budget for 2020/21** has increased from £1,389k to £1,499k, up by £110k. This includes one off contributions totalling £225k and takes account of all inflationary and other pressures. Note that pay inflation at 2.0% has been allowed and that the triennial Pension Fund revaluation has resulted in no change to headline contributions.
5. The **Tax Base**, at 7,646 (up 52), has grown by only 0.7%, with Dorset Council taking an increasingly prudent attitude on both overall collection and growth rates. The tax base rise adds around £10,000 to our precept before any increase in the Council Tax.
6. The MTFs assumes a 2% Council Tax increase (up £3.86 to £196.64) in 2020/21 which, combined with the tax base rise, would generate a **Precept** of £1,504k, up £40k (2.7%). 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 0.7% adding £10k to income

- A 3% Council Tax increase in line with the likely capping limit to be imposed on the Dorset Council – the Precept would rise by £54k, an extra £14k over the MTFS assumption
7. If the Revenue Budget is accepted, alongside the Reserves contributions requests totalling £225,000, a 2% tax increase would create a **net operational surplus** of £5k in 2020/21 (2019/20 £75k). The £5k operational surplus will be transferred to the **New Corporate Projects Reserve**.
 8. Whichever decision is taken regarding the setting of Council Tax the Town Council remains in a very strong position financially. It should be noted, however, that, in confirming an extension of discretionary grants for a further year 2020/21, the new Dorset Council, which faces a significant budget deficit, has made a clear commitment to a review of discretionary spending to influence the setting of their 2021 budget and that, no matter how strong its position is, the Town Council would need to make difficult decisions about support for discretionary services should there be a major reduction at Dorset Council level.
 9. The **Medium Term Financial Strategy** (Appendix 3) lists the assumptions taken account of in its preparation. The key assumptions are that the Town Council will take on services at an additional cost of £200,000 pa from 2021/22, largely removing its operational surplus to support at risk Dorset Council services; and that the New Corporate Projects Reserve of £471k, plus Community Infrastructure Levy totalling £44k, will be allocated in 2020/21 and subsequently spent from 2021/22 onwards.
 10. 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.

As part of its consideration of its new Corporate Plan the Council noted a significant number of mitigating factors that enable the Council to hold a very low level of General Reserve (Policy, 16 Jul 19). After reviewing reserve levels at small district councils (Policy, 18 Nov 19), which carry greater risk than the Town Council, the Council resolved to hold a reserve of £100,000, approximately 7% of its combined gross Expenditure and Income budgets.

The General Reserve is currently estimated at £250k at 31 March 2020, plus/less a small under/overspend. All sums above the £100,000 Reserve will be transferred to the Corporate Projects Fund as part of the year end process.

11. **Earmarked Reserves** (Appendix 4) will total £1,681k at April 2020. An additional £399k will be added in 2020/21 (being £169k regular contributions, £225k one-off contributions and £5k operational surplus). Expenditure totalling £412k is planned for 2020/21: -

	£000
Town Pump Environmental works	250
Heritage Tourism Strategy	35
Poundbury Cemetery Fence and Wall Repairs	30
Play Equipment – Holmead and other sites	25
Municipal Buildings lift	24
Dorchester West Railway Station Access	10
Climate Emergency works	20

Planning advice re Local Plan	10
Christmas Lights	8
Total	412

At March 2021 Earmarked Reserves are estimated at £1,672k to be used broadly as follows

	£000
Corn Exchange Roof, Heating and other Municipal Buildings Issues	468
Maltings Arts or adaptation of Corn Exchange	250
Unallocated Corporate Reserve & Community Infrastructure Levy	515
Future Public Realm and Climate Emergency projects	218
Reserves for all other projects and replacements	216
Total	1,667

12. 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 £196.64, an increase of £3.86 (2.00%)
- b. A precept of £1,503.515, an increase of 2.70%
- c. The inclusion of one-off contributions to a new Climate Emergency Reserve (£125,000) and the Municipal Buildings Reserve for climate emergency related works (£100,000).

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

APPENDIX 1

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£
CORPORATE & DEMOCRATIC			
Members Allowance	19,736	21,200	21,600
Members Training (inc CRB) & Travel	335	3,900	500
Civic & Ceremonial Expenses	644	1,000	1,000
Mayoral Expenses	10,766	12,000	12,200
Town Crier	641	600	600
Entertaining & Gifts	1,167	400	400
Youth Council & Democracy Day	143	200	200
Office Team	179,700	187,681	192,472
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	213,132	226,981	228,972
OTHER SERVICES			
Sawmills rent	7,560	8,500	8,500
To Public Realm Reserve	50,500	51,500	52,600
To Climate Emergency Reserve	0	0	125,000
Youth Centre support	30,000	23,300	20,400
Dorchester Cricket Club	4,580	6,000	4,000
Apprenticeships	6,750	15,000	15,000
CCTV/Video Recording	0	5,000	5,000
Election Costs	0	20,000	0
Debt Charges	45,333	44,300	41,200
Staff - Community Development	37,296	41,833	42,702
Total Expenditure	182,019	215,433	314,402
Treasury Interest - Net of Arlingclose	-4,694	-7,000	-7,000
Sawmills rent recharged	-3,780	-4,250	-4,200
Market Income	-30,000	-35,000	-30,000
Total Income	-38,474	-46,250	-41,200
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	143,545	169,183	273,202

APPENDIX 1

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£
OFFICES TEAM			
Salaries	221,563	228,658	224,576
Overtime	614	800	-
Employers National Insurance	20,779	21,681	22,068
Employers Superannuation	48,834	50,305	49,407
Training Courses	591	1,000	1,000
Travel & Subsistence	1,057	1,500	1,500
Subscriptions (Professional Bodies)	3,206	3,600	3,600
Cleaning Materials	1,200	1,200	1,200
Rates	5,453	6,000	6,300
Gas	893	1,100	1,200
Electricity	1,979	1,500	1,600
Water	519	400	500
Repairs & Maintenance	3,140	2,700	2,700
Financial Services inc Audit, Bank & Sage	7,377	8,300	8,500
Employment Law and H & S	2,778	3,000	3,000
Legal & Professional Fees, Advertising	3	2,000	1,000
Insurance	31,920	33,000	34,000
Printing & Stationery	823	1,000	1,000
Newsletter	5,516	5,000	5,000
Office Equipment & IT	3,933	5,500	5,500
Telephones	1,937	1,900	1,900
Photocopier Charges	561	600	800
Postage	1,010	1,500	1,000
Total Expenditure	365,686	382,244	377,351
Recharge to Dorchester Markets Panel	-1,623	-1,700	1,700
Net Expenditure recharged to Services	364,063	380,544	375,651
Recharged to			
Corporate & Democratic Management	179,700	187,681	192,472
Allotments	5,090	5,005	3,632
Community Development	37,296	41,833	42,702
Cemeteries	24,749	25,462	25,915
Parks & Open Spaces	60,414	60,136	56,248
Municipal Buildings	36,023	40,258	40,942
Cultural Activity & Twinning	19,623	20,170	13,739
	362,895	380,545	375,651

APPENDIX 2

REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21	2018/19 Actual £	2019/20 Budget £	2020/21 Budget £
Parks & Open Spaces	480,463	566,091	558,832
Allotments	3,289	4,952	3,331
Municipal Buildings	202,438	312,528	320,441
Cemeteries	42,284	51,407	64,921
Cultural & Twinning Activities	67,045	57,770	49,039
Corporate & Democratic Manage.	213,132	226,981	228,972
Other Services	143,545	169,183	273,202
Operational Budget	1,152,196	1,388,912	1,498,739
Precept	1,388,243	1,463,971	1,503,515
Transfer to General Reserves	236,047	75,059	4,777
Subjective Analysis of Revenue			
Employees	656,483	729,202	729,078
External Payments	418,922	529,460	511,860
Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	216,657	265,600	394,000
Capital Financing Costs	45,333	44,300	41,200
Income	-185,199	-179,650	-177,400
Operational Budget	1,152,196	1,388,912	1,498,739
General Reserve			
Opening Balance at 1 April	322,261	250,261	100,000
Transfer from Ops Budget	236,047	75,059	4,777
To Corporate Projects Reserve	308,047	225,320	4,777
Closing Balance at 31 March	250,261	100,000	100,000
Earmarked Reserves			
Opening Balance at 1 April	1,043,492	1,204,233	1,729,608
Transfer from Revenue	524,704	490,920	398,777
Other Income & Transfers	0	78,912	0
Expenditure from Reserves	363,963	44,457	412,482
Closing Balance 31 March	1,204,233	1,729,608	1,667,403
All Reserves held at year end	1,454,494	1,829,608	1,767,403
Tax Base	7,345	7,594	7,646
Band D Charge	189.00	192.78	196.64
O/s PWLB Debt at 31 March	196,000	162,000	128,000

Medium Term Financial Strategy	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Revenue Budget				
Employees	729	729	744	759
External Payments	529	512	522	533
Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	266	394	177	180
Capital Financing Costs	44	41	39	28
Income	-180	-177	-181	-185
New/Transferred Services	0	0	200	200
Operational Budget	1,389	1,499	1,501	1,515
Precept	1,464	1,504	1,534	1,564
Transfer to General Reserves	75	5	33	50
General Reserve				
Opening Balance at 1 April	250	100	100	100
Transfer from/to Operational Budget	75	5	33	50
Transfer to Corporate Projects Reserve	225	5	33	50
Closing Balance at 31 March	100	100	100	100
Earmarked Reserves				
Opening Balance at 1 April	1,204	1,681	1,667	1,177
Transfers/Payments in to Reserves	571	399	210	230
Payments/Transfers out from Reserves	94	412	700	400
Closing Balance 31 March	1,681	1,667	1,177	1,007
All Reserves held at year end	1,781	1,767	1,277	1,107
Corporate Project Unallocated at Year End	467	471	33	83
Outstanding Debt at Year End	£k	162	128	94
Council Tax	£	193	197	201
Tax Base		7,594	7,646	7,646

Notes

1. Inflation at 2.00%, Debt repayment per current debt profiles
2. Precept assumes Council Tax rises @ 2.00%, no Tax Base growth
3. Best estimate of new or transferred services, driven by cuts in other tiers
4. Operational surplus is transferred to Corporate Projects Reserve
5. Corporate Projects Reserve to be allocated as part of next Corporate Plan
6. Earmarked Reserves expenditure reflects best available knowledge
7. General Reserve reduced due to other mitigation measures in place
7. Further limited savings may be identified in budgets during review processes

APPENDIX 4

RESERVES	Cttee	Balance	Paid In	Spend	Balance	Paid In	Spend	Balance	Reason for holding Reserve
		Mar 19	19/20	19/20	Mar 20	20/21	20/21	Mar 21	
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Earmarked Reserves									
Infrastructure & Equipment									
Cemeteries	Man	41,617	5,000	17,000	29,617	15,500	30,000	15,117	Buildings/infrastructure refurb.
Municipal Buildings & Maltings	Man	395,852	175,100	6,000	564,952	176,600	24,000	717,552	Reroofing, Lift, Heating, etc
Borough Gardens	Man	10,879	5,000	0	15,879	5,100	0	20,979	Buildings/infrastructure refurb.
Play Equipment	Man	44,984	10,200	0	55,184	0	25,000	30,184	Equipment replacement
Public Realm	Pol	278,697	51,500	20,000	310,197	52,600	250,000	112,797	Infrastructure refurb
Vehicles & Equipment	Man	31,792	18,800	18,250	32,342	19,200	0	51,542	Fleet & equipment replacemen
Dorchester West Rail. St'n	Pol	10,000	0	0	10,000	0	10,000	0	Williams Ave Access Ramp
Cultural									
Arts Festival	Man	16,107	0	16,107	0	0	0	0	-
Christmas Lights	Man	6,882	1,500	0	8,382	0	8,382	0	Replace lights
Heritage Tourism Strategy	Pol	50,000	50,000	7,000	93,000	0	35,000	58,000	Develop/impelement Strategy
Miscellaneous Reserves									
New Corporate Projects	Pol	251,338	225,320	10,000	466,658	4,777	0	471,435	Own or partner capital projects
Planning Advice Reserve	Pol	32,000	0	0	32,000	0	10,000	22,000	Local Plan & other advice
Climate Emergency Reserve	Pol	0	0	0	0	125,000	20,000	105,000	Own or partner Climate projects
Community Infrastructure Levy	Pol	14,901	28,912	0	43,813	0	0	43,813	Recreation infrastructure
Treasury	Pol	5,000	0	0	5,000	0	0	5,000	To offset losses on asset sale
Graves In Perpetuity	Man	14,184	0	100	14,084	0	100	13,984	Maint. and flowers on 6 graves
Total Earmarked Reserves		1,204,233	571,333	94,457	1,681,109	398,777	412,482	1,667,403	
General Reserve	Pol	250,261	75,059	225,320	100,000	4,777	4,777	100,000	General Emergency Fund
Total Reserves		1,454,494	646,392	319,777	1,781,109	403,553	417,259	1,767,403	

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE – 20 JANUARY 2020
CORPORATE PLAN 2019 – 2024

High Level Focus Document

1. In November the Committee considered a summary of the strategic issues that the Plan was seeking to address and agreed to invite comment from Members and reconsider it again at this meeting. That process is completed and an amended revised document is included at Appendix 1.
2. It is **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the Corporate Plan High Level Focus is adopted for consultation with partners and the community.
3. As laid out the high level focus is light on detailed actions. The report on the Climate Emergency Plan highlights the level of detail that might be required for the more intensive aims in the Plan, while others may involve only one or two actions. In order to make the individual aims more understandable during consultation the Town Clerk will use some of the material generated through the workshops as examples of what might be considered as specific projects.
4. The High Level focus document has already been shared with senior colleagues at the Dorset Council. They have agreed to consider how they respond to it alongside the need to respond to similar lists created by other town councils.

Issues outstanding from the Corporate Plan 2015-2019

5. There are a number of ongoing projects outstanding from the previous Corporate Plan and the Council continues to work on the following tasks: -

Task	Latest Position
Explore opportunities to improve Market operations	DC have indicated their preference to continue to manage. DMJP mtg 29 Jan 20
Develop & implement (Heritage) Tourism Strategy	DHJC on 21 Jan 20 considers Project Manager report on Strategy development
Influence delivery of Traffic/Parking strategy	No progress on Strategy development due to reorganisation of Dorset Council. Contact on routine operational matters continues. Hospital Multi-Storey planning application submitted
Develop Trinity St tennis courts with a Hsg CLT	Planning application submitted for 19 flats. Legal work to tfr land underway
Support delivery of Great Field	Duchy delivering preliminary works. Play equipt/Pavilion to commence late Spring 20
Support delivery of improved Arts offer in town	No progress re support for The Maltings by any other organisation

Replace Pedestrian Tourism Signage	Completed – minor overspend
Refurbish Town Pump public realm	Project Mgr interviews commenced
Refurbish South Gate public realm	Not started – Town Pump first
Municipal Buildings (Roof, Lift, Heating)	Detailed discussions with lift contractor
Respond to Local Plan (North Dorchester)	Awaiting next DC Local Plan proposal Member workshop to be scheduled

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**HIGH LEVEL FOCUS OF THE CORPORATE PLAN****AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

- Work proactively with the Dorset Council to develop stronger policies to support the delivery of truly affordable housing
- Focus resources and effort into working with key partners on a programme of unlocking and developing sites across the town for affordable housing

COMMUNITY, CULTURE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Working with other agencies and community partners, develop our understanding of the general needs of our community and the specific needs of vulnerable groups
- Maintain and, where appropriate, adapt the Council's Community, Sports, Cultural and Health & Wellbeing service delivery to meet the requirements of the town's residents and visitors, either directly or working with local partners
- Resolve the future of the Municipal Buildings to make a relevant and environmentally efficient contribution to the town's community

THE ENVIRONMENT

- In response to the declared Climate Emergency, proactively support practical steps to reduce the impact that the Council and the town's community has on its environment
- Focusing in particular on the Town Centre, support the introduction of sustainable practices that assist the town's community to improve the town's appearance

LOCAL ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND PARKING

- Working with other agencies and business representatives, develop our understanding of how the town's economy can be strengthened
- Working initially with the town's Heritage and Tourism sectors, develop a holistic strategy to maximise the benefits of tourism to the town
- Work with the Dorset Council to agree a new Transport and Parking strategy that resolves the competing demands of residents, workers and visitors to the town

FUTURE GROWTH OF DORCHESTER

- Develop the Town's existing response to the pressure for development of new housing emerging through the Local Plan process

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- Ensure that the Council's governance and administration arrangements remain relevant to the needs of the town and are delivered efficiently and effectively