



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

10 November 2020

Agenda for the meeting of the **Policy Committee**, which will be held via the Zoom video conferencing platform on **Monday 16 November 2020 at 7.00pm**.

You will be able to join the meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82034084135>

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 **contact the Clerk by 9.00am on the morning of the meeting**. 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 confirm that the Chair may sign Minutes of the meeting of 21 September 2020, adopted by Council on 28 September 2020, at the next available opportunity.
2. Financial Update A
3. Municipal Buildings Works and Relationships with Dorchester Arts. B
4. Tourism Services in Dorchester C
5. Strategic and Operational Risk Registers D



DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 16 NOVEMBER 2020

FINANCIAL UPDATE

1. Financial Position

- Month 7 spend (Appendix 1) net £5k below profile
 - General underspends (£17k) plus delayed replacement and pension savings for Outdoor staff (£23k)
 - Offset by net extra cost due to Covid 19 (£40k) being £45k lost room hire for the full year, £10k for Cemeteries and £5k on grants, offset by savings on the summer events programme (£20k).
 - Year-end position likely to be neutral

• Cash Position	£000	
Lloyds Bank	260	Nil interest
Payden Global	1,000	c. 0.70% return
National Savings and Investments	1,000	0.01% interest
CCLA Deposit Account	500	0.15% avge
Total Cash	2,760	(30 Jun £2,183k)

- Debt over 30 days = £1,299, 3 debtors (30 Jun £1,242, 2 debtors)
- Payments list 1 Sep – 31 Oct 20 on website. Supporting vouchers available from Financial Controller. **RECOMMENDED** that the Payments list, totalling £260,012.13 is approved
- Will continue to transfer funds from NS&I account to CCLA over next 3 months
- CIL Payment (1 of 3) received £19,641 for London Road site – added to Corporate Projects Reserve

2. External Audit Report 2019/20

- Audit completed with no amendments, certificate available on our website
- **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the certificated Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year ended 31 March 2020 is approved and accepted

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

MANAGEMENT REPORT AT 31 OCTOBER 2020

By Spend Type	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Staff	858	552	524	-29
Capital Financing	41	38	38	0
Other Payments	561	358	333	-25
To Specific Reserves	216	216	216	0
Income	-177	-117	-69	48
Net Budget	1,499	1,048	1,043	-5

By Service	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Allotments	-6	1	2	1
Parks & Open Spaces	123	52	59	7
Cemeteries	-3	10	11	1
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	37	16	16	-0
Cultural & Twinning	35	28	10	-18
Municipal Buildings	270	222	249	27
Other Services	231	226	229	3
Office Team	376	230	228	-2
Outdoor Services	438	263	240	-23
Net Budget	1,499	1,048	1,043	-5

Earmarked Reserves with budgeted Expenditure In Year	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Play Equipment	25	8	8	0
Parks Premises	0	0	2	2
Municipal Buildings	24	2	10	8
Vehicles and Equipment	0	0	0	0
Cemeteries	30	0	0	0
Public Realm	250	10	10	0
Art & Cultural	0	0	0	0
Heritage Tourism PM	35	14	14	0
Dorchester West Ramp	10	0	0	0
Climate Emergency	20	20	46	26
Christmas Lights	8	0	0	0
Planning Advice	10	0	1	1
Corporate Projects	0	0	0	0
Net Budget	412	54	91	37

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**POLICY COMMITTEE – 16 NOVEMBER 2020****MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS WORKS AND THE RELATIONSHIP WITH DORCHESTER ARTS**

1. Minute 2020/15 of the July Council resolved as follows:

a) That the Council develops an implementation programme to include

- Procurement of the reroofing of the Council Chamber, Corn Exchange and apse (cost estimate £820,000)
 - To include discussions with users to keep the building closed to deliver these works at the earliest opportunity
- More detailed development of the Offices over Biomass option, being
 - Submission of a planning application to Dorset Council for a two storey extension into the Car Park (cost estimate £460,000)
 - The conversion of the upper space into offices, on the assumption that once completed, the Town Council would move into this space, possibly with other community partners
 - The conversion of the ground floor into a multi-use space, specifically meeting the needs of groups to meet, for food preparation for casual hires, and dressing room space for performers, as well as facilities for disabled staff and users (cost estimate for these two parts £520,000)
- Preparation of a loan request for up to £1.4 Million from the Public Works Loan Board, to supplement the use of existing Earmarked Reserves totalling £400,000

b) That a Task and Finish Group is established, consisting of the Mayor, Chairs of Policy and Management Committee and the relevant Outside Body Representative, to discuss options for the future involvement of Dorchester Arts in the operation of the building

2. A significant amount of work has been undertaken since, as follows

Municipal Buildings Works

- Final Tenders for the main roofing and extension contract will be received on Friday 13 November. An additional written report may be provided either at the meeting or at the subsequent Council meeting
- Full tender exercises for scaffolding and the biomass boiler have also been conducted and will be reported alongside the main contract
- Planning applications have been submitted for the Council Chamber roof and rear “office over biomass” extension; they are currently subject to the statutory consultation process prior to their determination
- Discussions have been held with affected staff covering their ongoing roles during the construction contract period and subsequently should Dorchester Arts take on management

19 North Square

- A valuation of the building has been received slightly in excess of the figure first identified by the Town Clerk.
- The valuation is, however, based on the property being converted into a single residential unit rather than into affordable flats. The valuer identified construction issues related to subdividing the property into flats which would lower the property value if this approach was taken

Discussions with Dorchester Arts

- Dorchester Arts, working with the Town Council and Thomas Hardy School, have submitted proposals to use £1.0M s106 monies, previously reserved for the Arts in Dorchester. The Dorset Council will make its decision in December 2020
 - Specific proposals relating to the Municipal Buildings would allow for a major upgrade of the Corn Exchange infrastructure (raked seating, lighting and sound, projection), the relocation of the bar to the Magistrates Room (vacated if Dorchester Arts moves offices to the rear of the buildings), as well as a longer term plan to improve use of front of house space by relocating the toilets away from the primary front of house space
 - Two Task Group meetings have taken place with Dorchester Arts, leading to a draft proposal (Appendix 1) to allow Dorchester Arts to take on the operational management of the building
 - Dorchester Arts has received funding from DCMS which has stabilised their financial position into Spring 2021, along with funding for a Business Planner (appointed) to develop a business case based on new facilities for performances and a more community focused offer. Dorchester Arts is also in the process of submitting a request to Dorset Council for ongoing core revenue support
 - Discussions continue with Dorchester Arts, focusing in particular on widening community use of the building beyond their historic arts remit and ensuring that they have the capacity to manage the building
3. Funding arrangements for the capital works are as outlined at Appendix 2 (subject to change when tenders are known). The cost of revenue support for Dorchester Arts is the same as the costs and incomes that the Council would otherwise incur at the building. Neither the capital investment or ongoing revenue support will fundamentally change the Council's budget or precept.
4. It is **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that recommendations are phrased around the following
- A final decision regarding the appointment of a main contractor and sub-contractors is made
 - Disposal of 19 North Square be confirmed. You may wish to give the Town Clerk 12 months to identify a solution that makes the site available as Affordable Housing, otherwise disposed of on the open market
 - A lease and management arrangements for the building to Dorchester Arts based on Appendix 1

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

DRAFT HEADS OF TERMS OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL (DTC) AND DORCHESTER ARTS (DA) FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

The Buildings Structure

- Maintenance of the fabric of the building will remain with DTC. Fabric includes all external walls and roofs, all internal walls, the lift, all fire and safety equipment, alarms, boiler servicing, gates equipment, clock servicing and window cleaning as well as any long term decorations to the heritage parts of the building; and insurance of the building
- DTC will be responsible for a number of capital investments in the building at the point of transfer
 - Roof works to the Corn Exchange and Apse, Council Chamber and Rear extension
 - Installing a biomass system and other equipment to reduce the carbon footprint of the building
 - The creation of a first floor office space to be used by Town Council and Dorchester Arts staff
 - The refurbishment of the ground floor spaces at the rear of the building to create a multi-purpose space for food preparation, dressing room, meeting and storage facilities
 - Upgrade of the current lighting, sound, AV and seating provision within the Corn Exchange
 - Upgrade of the bar infrastructure at the front of the building
 - The opening up of the front of the building to create improved circulation space, necessitating the relocation of the existing toilet facilities
- To fund improvement works DTC will use its own funds plus s106 funds and any other external funding secured in partnership with DA
- DA may not alter the external or internal appearance of the structure without the permission of DTC, permission not to be unreasonably withheld

Use of the Building

- DA will be responsible for all bookings at the Municipal Buildings. Bookings made will be consistent with DTC's policy on openness and equal access for all groups and individuals with a link to Dorchester. DA will enjoy all income from bookings
- DA will be responsible for all utilities and business rates, and for the cost of routine maintenance and cleaning and waste removal at the building
- DTC will have free access to the Council Chamber for its meetings and the meetings of partner organisations. It will have first choice of any bookings of this space and may exclude uses which it feels are inappropriate for the Chamber
- DTC will have free access to use the building's facilities for a fixed number of events each year (to be defined), to include the civic activities of DTC and of the Mayor. Ad hoc events will also be supported, provided there is no implication for DA income generation
- DA will meet the costs of serviced office space on the first floor of the rear extension of the building to meet the needs of DTC staff, and to DTC partners to whom a fee may be charged

- DTC will provide 2.85fte Town Hall Keeper staff to support the operation of the building, such staff to be supervised and instructed by DA. Responsibility for disciplinary and grievance of the staff will remain with DTC
- For the first 12 months of operation (and thereafter by mutual agreement) DTC will make available staff currently engaged in bookings and finance activities related to the Municipal Buildings

Financial Arrangements

- At the point of transfer DTC enjoyed income of c. £45,000 from DA (£11,000) and other hirers (£34,000)
- At the point of transfer DTC incurred costs of c. £51,000 for Utilities, Business Rates, routine maintenance and cleaning materials and equipment
- For the duration of the lease DTC will pay DA a grant of £6,000pa to support their delivery of performance arts and community space hire at the Municipal Buildings (indexed annually to CPI for the 5 years of the first agreement and reviewed at that point)
- Should DTC reduce the number of Town Hall Keeper staff it will provide a cash equivalent grant to DA
- DA will pay a fixed lease of £1 pa for 5 years, with an option to renew the lease contingent on successful delivery of an arts and community based programme at the building

FUNDING CAPITAL WORKS AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS**(Subject to review once main contract tenders have been received)****£000****Roof Works (Corn Exchange & Apse, Council Chamber)**

Use of the Municipal Buildings Reserve	240
Debt repayable max. 10 yrs (c. £61k pa, offset by lower Reserve contributions)	580
	820

Climate Emergency (Biomass System and construction works, Solar, Insulation, etc)

Use of Climate Emergency Reserve	170
Grant sought from Low Carbon Dorset	200
Debt repayable max. 20yrs (c. £8kpa, offset by Renewable Heat Incentive)	90
	460

Remodelling of First Floor Dressing Rooms and Rear Ground Floor Areas to provide offices, meeting spaces, food preparation, accessible Dressing Room and Office space and storage spaces

Disposal of 19 North Square at Market Value	300
Debt Repayment max. 15 years (c. £15k pa, offset by operational savings)	220
	520

Works to enable better use of the building for Arts and Community purposes

Use of the Municipal Buildings Reserve	250
Request for funding to Dorset Council – s106 monies	500
	750

CAPITAL BUDGET SUMMARY

Expenditure of £2,550,000, met by	
Use of Council Reserves already in place	660
Section 106 Monies applied for	500
Sale of 19 North Square at market value within 12 months	300
Grant under discussion with Low Carbon Dorset	200
Borrowing (Debt repayments fully offset by new income and budget reductions)	890
	2,550

NOTES ON DEBT

- The Council's current cashflow is such that it should not need to take on debt during 2021/22.
- Beyond April 2022 it may be the case that borrowing could be delayed further. This is dependent on other projects and plans that the Council may choose to deliver through its Corporate Plan
- The Council will also monitor rates set by the Public Works Loan Board to seek to ensure that any long term borrowing is made at the lowest possible interest rate

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**POLICY COMMITTEE – 16 NOVEMBER 2020****TOURISM SERVICE DELIVERY****SERVICE OVERVIEW**

1. Historically Tourism services have been delivered by the District tier of Councils. In simple terms they have generally consisted of:
 - Promotional Activity – focused on persuading people to visit the local area, ordinarily focused on British residents but also recognizing the value of foreign visitors and to a lesser degree the residents of the immediate area
 - Local Information Activity – routinely provided through TICs plus passive information (signage, maps and pamphlets), focused on informing and answering the questions of visitors when in the location
2. The Dorchester picture very much follows the national pattern:
 - Promotional Activity is delivered by Visit Dorset, initially a loose partnership of Dorset Districts and now a team within Dorset Council. There is a clear focus on minimizing the cost of this to the Dorset taxpayer by generating income from the business tourism sector – this makes the service less at risk of being lost but also places it at risk of becoming focused on the needs of the businesses that pay for the service rather than the wider tourism sector
 - Dorchester TIC was traditionally one of four very well-funded TICs in West Dorset; it's focus has been in supporting the wider West Dorset area rather than the underdeveloped tourism offer available in Dorchester; it also provided services with no immediate tourism benefit to the local area, using retail and ticketing opportunities to attempt to reduce the net cost of operation, although this changed when the service relocated to Dorchester Library.

CONSULTATION REGARDING THE FUTURE OF DORCHESTER TIC

3. Dorset Council have provided some helpful information regarding the current TIC in Dorchester:
 - The current operational cost is c. £80k a year, being the cost of staff, premises and supplies, offset by a modest surplus generated from the sale of tickets and other supplies
 - Direct contacts from users are c. 27,000 a year
 - Three quarters are walk ins, the balance being a mix of phone and email
 - Two thirds are from Dorset, the rest from around the UK, with a 4% international footfall
 - Six out of 10 enquiries relate to Dorset or Dorchester tourism, while a quarter are related to purchases
 - In addition there will be many more visits to the TIC to search for information and literature which do not require a contact with staff

It is difficult to sustain an argument that the service in its current form, with its current costs, should be continued. It is, however, clear that for a number of local people and visitors from further afield some form of informed professional local information service is still valued. It is not clear what the impact of Covid 19 and the closure of Dorchester TIC through summer

2020, anecdotally one of the busiest summers for Dorset for some years, has been and how visitors have adapted to the lack of a local TIC.

4. The creation of the Dorset Council has led to a number of tensions for the local service:
 - Delivery of TICs across Dorset is now patchy and it is difficult for Dorset Council to justify why they continues to operate their three remaining TICs at Dorchester, Sherborne and Wareham – where a TIC is provided elsewhere there is a mix of Town Council and/or tourism/heritage/volunteer sector provision
 - As a discretionary service tourism is inevitably under close scrutiny as the Dorset Council retrenches into delivering its statutory obligations

Dorset Council have embarked on a consultation exercise regarding their three TICs and we have had one informal meeting with them to discuss the emerging options.

A (HERITAGE) TOURISM STRATEGY FOR DORCHESTER

5. Attached at Appendix 1 is a summary of the work undertaken by the Project Manager employed to develop a Tourism Strategy for the town. This work is initially based on the town's strongest offer related to its heritage, and has been overseen by the Heritage Joint Committee, but it will, over time cover all of the town's tourism offer and may be brought under the Council's existing Committee structure.
6. The strategy seeks to encourage more day and staying visitors to come to the town, stay longer, and spend more in local businesses, particularly outside of the main summer holiday season
7. The summary identifies that no one organisation should take sole responsibility for tourism, rather it should be a collaborative approach with local tourism, heritage, cultural and other partners, with the Town Council well placed to take a co-ordinating role. The document highlights the need for a dedicated co-ordination resource and projects budget, costed at c. £30,000 a year ongoing. There would also be one off set up costs.

The Strategy advocates a model where a central co-ordinator works with sectors that draw in tourists (Heritage, the Environment, Culture, Sport etc) plus additional sectors that benefit from tourist spend (retail and hospitality). The Strategy Action Plan identifies a number of steps that widen the number of paid and volunteer "ambassadors" available to manage visitor enquiries across the town, as well as exploiting the potential of self-help information services, thus reducing the reliance on a single point of contact in the TIC.

8. A full copy of the strategy, with its detailed Action Plan, can be found on the Town Council website at

<https://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk/docs/downloads/Draft-Dorchester-Heritage-Tourism-Strategy-v4.pdf>.

CONCLUSIONS AND OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

9. It is very clear that the needs of tourists, and also the importance of tourism to Dorchester's economy, are changing. It is also clear that the ability of Dorset Council to continue to independently provide significant resource to support tourists is declining.
10. It is important to note that the Town Council was already sponsoring development of a new tourism strategy, initially through the Heritage Joint Committee. It should also be noted that, while it is important reputationally for the Town Council that visitors have a good experience of the town, the Town Council benefits very little financially from visits. The tourism business and voluntary sectors, which make no financial contribution to the work of

the Town Council, and the Dorset Council through parking revenues, are the main beneficiaries.

11. Regarding service delivery

- Accepting some limitations, Visit Dorset remains the main means for promoting the town outside of Dorset. There is no clear risk to the service continuing, so for the present any service developed through the Town Council should continue to engage with it
- Dorchester TIC is clearly at risk. Neither the volumes nor the cost of the service justify it continuing in the long term
- The Tourism Strategy advocates an alternative way forward, with the Town Council employing a co-ordinator to work with interested sectors to provide a good standard basic tourism information service at multiple points across the town

12. With regard specifically to the Dorchester TIC the options appear to be

- Continue to champion to Dorset Council that they continue to operate the service – difficult to sustain long term
- Seek to bring the TIC within the Town Council's service offer – the current cost of the service and the user numbers make it difficult to do this, while it will also limit the Council's ability to deliver other services
- Accept that the TIC service will end. Instead develop the ideas included in the (Heritage) Tourism Strategy, based on a part-time co-ordinator and willing partners. Seek financial support from Dorset Council in order to deliver a smooth transition to the new service.

13. If Members wish to pursue the final option it should be noted that the January cycle will determine the budget for 2021/22. In the current climate it would be difficult for business partners to fund an additional cost at short notice. Over time it might be considered unreasonable to expect Dorchester taxpayers to meet the full financial burden of delivering a service that primarily benefits the business communities. The Council could commit to getting a new service up and running, preferably with support from Dorset Council, on the understanding that the business community makes contributions at a later date.

14. The Committee's view is sought.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

Dorchester (Heritage) Tourism Strategy – Executive Summary

Background

1. A Corporate Plan objective from 2015 aimed to support the local economy by developing a Tourism Strategy, initially focused on maximising the benefits resulting from investment in the town's heritage sector.
2. Work commenced in November 2019, and the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee approved the Dorchester (Heritage) Tourism Strategy, subject to some minor amendments on 20 October 2020.

The Tourism Strategy

3. The Strategy is informed by background research and papers looking at:
 - Why heritage related tourism in particular is an opportunity
 - What data is there about tourism locally?
 - How is tourism delivered locally and by whom?
 - What is the industry view of the visitor market?
 - How is tourism delivered in other similar sized or heritage destinations?
 - How is the Dorchester visitor offer promoted to potential visitors?
 - What is available in Dorchester for visitors?
4. The Strategy includes an action plan divided across six themes with high medium and low priority actions. It identifies partnership and collaborative working opportunities as well as roles for a variety of organisations to take, from leading to supporting actions. The Town Council is not identified as the lead body for all actions.
5. The action areas address:
 - Governance – including a delivery partnership, performance measures and a part time post
 - Communications and marketing – developing an appropriate affordable approach to marketing the Dorchester offer to visitors
 - Community – including a developing a long-term vision and supporting volunteers
 - Environment – including planning considerations and sustainability issues
 - Visitor offer – including developing new experiences and events, collaborative working and assessing the quality of the visitor experience
 - Industry – including industry support, resource library and event support

Taking the strategy forward

6. The background papers confirm that there is no one organisation with a responsibility for developing tourism in Dorchester. The Town Council has a key role to play in enabling the successful delivery of the strategy through agreeing both the detail of the Governance proposals and the employment of a part time post to lead the Council's actions and coordinate the efforts of partners.
7. A budget of £30,000 per annum would cover a part-time post and on costs (£25,000), with a small project delivery and marketing budget (£5,000). Dorchester Heritage Joint Committee will consider detailed proposals for governance arrangement and a job description in January.

T. Hedger
(Heritage) Tourism Project Manager

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 16 NOVEMBER 2020

STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTERS – ANNUAL REPORT

1. The Council manages its risks through a process that concludes in an annual risk review report presented to Policy Committee. The Council's adopted Risk Management Policy, which details the methodology used to assess the risks being faced by the Council, is attached at Appendix 1.
2. The Council's Risk Registers currently hold eight risks classified as 'high' and ninety risks classified as 'medium', as assessed in accordance with the Council's adopted Risk Policy. The whole register is available from the Deputy Town Clerk.
3. Following comments made by the Committee last year two high level risks relating to local government reorganisation in Dorset and pressure to top up other local authority services have been combined into one risk (SO47 – The Future Direction of Dorset Council). This new risk also recognises the potential impact of the loss of a number of Dorset Council staff with significant experience and knowledge of issues important to Dorchester.
4. The Committee also previously requested that two new risks, related to the uncertainty surrounding the future use of the Municipal Buildings and the risks associated with extending the Council's service offer into wholly new activities within the Corporate Plan, be added to the register.
5. A lot has happened since last year's review of the registers. The Council has publicly declared a Climate Emergency with significant associated works to the Municipal Buildings agreed, the Council's future relationship with Dorchester Arts is under detailed discussion; the Covid-19 pandemic arrived, the initial impacts managed, but it remains unclear what the longer term impacts will be.
6. The risk registers have been amended to take into account those matters set out in 4 and 5 above and can be found in Appendix 2. Members are invited to review these and the remaining high strategic and operational risks included within the appendix.
7. As well as reviewing the highest risks the Committee is asked to identify any new risks it feels should be included within the Registers, with an appropriate score.
9. It is **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**
 - i) That the assessed high level strategic and operation risks be approved.
 - ii) That any new risks identified at the Committee be included within the registers.
 - iii) That the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers, as a whole, be approved.

Steve Newman
Deputy Town Clerk

1. INTRODUCTION

Risk can be defined as the 'uncertainty of an outcome', primarily relating to a negative threat to business plans or activities. The effective management of risk is a key issue for the success of any organisation or activity, for in many cases it is only by taking risks that progress is made. The importance is to understand the risks that are inherent in a decision. A structured approach to risk management can achieve this by enabling the decision to be made against a background of better information about the potential outcome of a particular course of action. The Town Council has adopted a structured approach to Risk Management.

2. AUDIENCE

This Policy is intended as the primary guidance to the Council and senior management but is made available to all employees.

3. STAKEHOLDERS

It is important to involve stakeholders in the risk management process as this will give access to the widest possible range of views about the potential threats and opportunities affecting the Council and its services. A stakeholder in this context is an organisation or individual who can affect, or is affected by decisions of the Council. Stakeholders will change depending on whether the risk is project-related or more general, but Councillors and senior management will always be involved.

4. AIMS & BENEFITS

The aim of this policy is to develop an awareness of the benefits of risk management within the Council. It also encourages everyone involved to adopt an open and structured approach to risk management. The Council hopes that effective risk management will help to deliver –

- Increased certainty and fewer surprises.
- Better management of threats to cost, time and performance, leading to improved service delivery.
- Better grasping of opportunities to improve our services.
- More effective management of change.
- Better management at all levels through improved decision making.
- Clear ownership and accountability for risk and its management.
- Better value for money for the Council Taxpayer.
- Easier achievement of Key Performance Indicators by enabling effort to be targeted.

5. PROCESS

The overall process for the management of risk is set out at Annex A.

6. OWNERSHIP

The Risk Policy is owned by the Council and implemented through the offices of the Town Clerk.

7. ASSESSMENT OF RISK

Each risk will be assessed in terms of its probability of occurrence and the potential impact on the Council. The following are the criteria by which each risk will be assessed:

Probability of Occurrence:

Category	Probability	Possible Indicators
Almost Certain (4)	>90% ¹	Frequent Occurrence
Likely (3)	>60%	Regular Occurrence
Possible (2)	>10%	Occasional Occurrence
Unlikely (1)	<10%	Has Never Occurred

¹Risks that are almost certain to happen should be addressed as an issue

Evaluation of Impact:

Impact on Performance	Risk Threat
Major (4)	Financial Impact >£25,000 Fatality / disabling injuries to public or staff / Adverse national media attention / external intervention / total service disruption / extensive legal action against the Council
Serious (3)	Financial Impact >£15,000 Adverse local media attention / extensive public complaints / adverse comments by regulators or auditors / significant service disruption / failure to meet key performance targets / service disruptions / injuries to public or staff / legal action against the Council
Significant (2)	Financial Impact >£5,000 Adverse service user complaints / service disruption / minor injuries and near misses to staff and public
Minor (1)	Financial impact less than £5,000 / isolated complaints / minor service disruption

Priority Ranking:

The ranking of an individual risk is calculated by a simple combination of its probability and impact.

Risk Matrix:

The risk, using the above impact and likelihood ratings, can then be plotted onto the risk matrix and its classification identified:

8 – 16 = High Risk 3-6 = Medium Risk 1-2 = Low Risk

Probability	4	4	8	12	16
	3	3	6	9	12
	2	2	4	6	8
	1	1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4

Impact

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Risk management is only considered to be truly embedded when it functions as part of the Councils day to day operations. In order for this to be achieved it is vital that clarity exists to determine the various roles and responsibilities of individuals involved throughout the Council in the risk management process.

To ensure that this level of clarity exists, the Council has established a structure that depicts how Members, Officers and the various Committees, Panels and individuals contribute to the overall risk management process.

Organisational Structure and Summary of Key Roles

Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor annual report on risk management activity (via Policy Committee) • Certification of the Council's annual Statement on Internal Control
Policy Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve risk management policy and strategy and related documents • Approve content of risk registers and proposed risk mitigation plans and monitor implementation via regular monitoring reports • Monitor annual report on risk management activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General oversight of the Councils risk management process • Receiving regular reports to review/scrutinise/challenge current and proposed risk management procedures and processes • Give initial consideration to the annual report on the Councils risk management activity • To recommend a risk management framework, strategy and process • Identify, analyse and prioritise risks • Determine responsibilities and actions to control risks • Monitor progress on managing risks against action plans • Review implementation of the of the risk management framework, strategy and process
Town Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to Members and external stakeholders on the framework, strategy and process • Provide advice and support on risk management matters • Maintain the risk management policy, strategy and framework • Produce an annual report on overall risk management activity • Identifying, analysing and prioritising risks • Determining risk management action plans and delegating responsibility for control • Monitoring progress on the management of risks
Staff and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining awareness of risks, their impact and costs and feeding these into the formal risk management process • Controlling risks in their every-day work • Monitoring progress in managing job related risks

9. RISK REGISTERS

The Council will maintain computer based Strategic and Operational Risk Registers which will be developed further so as to link in with the Council's other corporate documents such as the Performance and Policy Plan.

RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

RISK IDENTIFICATION

Risks may be identified at any stage and should be included in the Risk Register. In order to capture as many of the risks facing an activity or project methods used for identification could include:

- Brainstorming sessions with individuals, committees or panels, all tiers of management and external stakeholders.
- Check lists & Questionnaires.
- Learning from other projects, councils and auditors.

Each risk must be described in terms of the source of the risk, the consequences if it happens and the effect it would have on the Council's activities or project as the case may be.

RISK OWNERSHIP

Once a risk has been identified, it will be given an owner who is the person best able to manage the risk. The owner will be responsible for all aspects of the management of the risk.

RISK EVALUATION

Each risk will be evaluated in accordance with the rules laid down in this Plan. This information will be entered in the Risk Register and will enable prioritisation of the risks within a certain area.

RISK PLANNING

Once each risk has been identified and evaluated actions for dealing with it will be developed. These are known as risk responses and fall into one of four areas:

- Terminate: An action that allows the risk to be avoided.
- Treat: An action that will reduce the impact and/or the probability of a risk.
- Transfer: Is there a stakeholder or another organisation better able to manage the risk?
- Tolerate: Accept the consequences if the risk occurs.

The Risk Register will identify the option selected to deal with each risk together with any actions that might be required.

The risk owner will decide which option to adopt. A cost/benefit comparison should be made. For mitigation activities attracting significant cost (> £10,000) results will be recorded. External help may be required to help decide the appropriate course of action, in which case the risk owner should record the date by which a decision must be made and the potential consequences if the decision is not taken by that date.

Following the decision to adopt a particular risk response, the owner must ensure that:

- Secondary risks associated with implementing the risk response are assessed and recorded.
- Any project plan is updated to include the activities associated with the risk response.
- Entries are made in the fields on the risk register detailing the predicted probability and impact evaluation, once the response activities are completed.
- A fallback/contingency plan is developed to address the consequences of the risk happening despite the response activities.

Risk owners will monitor progress and success of their response to risk on a regular basis. They should review all their risks and provide an evaluation of probability and impact on a regular basis.

REVIEW

The highest priority risks are to be reviewed by the Policy Committee. Risk monitoring will be regularly reported to the Policy Committee.

The effectiveness of the process will be reviewed by the Policy Committee periodically.

STRATEGIC RISKS SCORED 'HIGH'

Appendix 2

Risk	Risk No	Responsible Officer	Impact and Effect of Deliverables	Probability	Impact	Total	Controls in Place	Risk response	Notes
Significant re-organisation of Local Government in Dorset The future direction of Dorset Council	S047	TC	Pressure on the TC to take on additional services or fund services/ voluntary organisations, reduced partnership working, loss of DC staff with experience and knowledge of issue important to Dorchester resulting in significant financial and political implications.	4	3	12	Members to be kept informed. The TC to have as much input as possible into any consultations. Robust Corporate Plan to be put in place. Financial provision to be put in place. Relationships with new / changed officers to be cultivated.	Treat / Monitor	This risk also presents an opportunity to the Council to impact on services not previously within its remit.
Poor future management of the Market operation post LGR in April 2019	S050	TC	Reduced income, poor visitor experience, reputational damage	2	4	8	Representation on Markets Panel, negotiations to take place with Dorset Council in respect of future management.	Treat / Monitor	
The Climate Emergency <i>(This risk replaces the 'Climate Change' risk (SO25) which was previously on the register)</i>	S051	TC	Being ill prepared for weather related incidents/changes – TC facilities not equipped to cope. Reputational damage if the Council does not fulfil its carbon neutral, plastic free and biodiversity pledges.	2	4	8	Biodiversity plan approved. Plastic Free Town declaration, Draft Climate Emergency Plan approved. Action already being undertaken – move to electric vehicles and tools, ground source heating at Weymouth Ave Pav, Solar Panels at	Treat / Monitor	

							the depot, Biomass boiler to be installed at the Municipal Buildings. Biodiversity and tree planting being undertaken.		
The Town Council extending its service offer into wholly new activities	S052	TC	Providing a poor service, financing significantly higher than anticipated, service failing resulting in significant financial damage and reputational damage	2	4	8	Members to carefully consider detailed costed action / business plans prior to entering into any new service – robustness of plans to be tested by an independent specialist if felt necessary	Treat / Monitor	
Covid-19 or other pandemic	S053	TC	The Town Council not being able function due to absence of staff, significant pressure points on particular key services, not in a position to support the community, staff not equipped to be able to work from home, democratic process unable to function, possible financial implications through loss of income or the need to spend outside of the agreed budget resulting in a moribund Council with significant reputational damage	4	2	8	Specific Risk Assessments for revised working practices and Covid safe environments. Laptops with cloud licences being purchased to replace existing PC's. Zoom licences and new legislation enable virtual meetings. Phone system allows call forward to mobiles. Relationships built with other organisations to help with key functions such as grave digging. Further refinements and learning points will no doubt emerge from existing pandemic. Most office	Treat / Monitor	

							functions now able to be completed remotely.		
The future use and management relationship (with Dorchester Arts) of the Municipal Buildings	S054	TC	Confusion over responsibilities for buildings maintenance / staff, lack of opportunity for public hire, ongoing sustainability of Dorchester Arts	4	2	8	The Council to be involved with and approve agreements over maintenance and staff provision, the need for financial support already recognised.	Treat / Monitor	Note – although a risk this is also an opportunity to increase use of the building and to create a fit for purpose and vibrant cultural and community hub in the centre of town. DA is securing funding to see it through the present pandemic as well as funding for improvements to the front of house of the building and theatre infrastructure.

OPERATIONAL RISKS SCORED 'HIGH'

Other

<p>Serious incident at Council run outside event</p>	<p>OTH 010</p>	<p>TC</p>	<p>Loss of life/injury to public/staff. External criticism. Negative local and national press coverage. Increased insurance premiums.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>PLI. Risk assess prior to event. Take note of 'purple book guidance'.</p>	<p>Treat/ Monitor</p>	<p>Note – due to Covid-19 there were no large events during 2020</p>
<p>Failure to insure or secure (where appropriate) public art/civic assets</p>	<p>OTH 011</p>	<p>TC</p>	<p>Loss or damage. Significant unexpected expenditure. Criticism for lack of care/civic pride. Loss of irreplaceable public art.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Assets identified and those in the ownership of the Council to be insured or the Council self-insures - Council decision. Additional security measures to some assets. Annual review of insurances and three yearly assessments of re-build costs.</p>	<p>Treat/ Monitor</p>	