



# Dorchester Town Council

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19 July 2023

**Agenda** for the meeting of the **Policy Committee**, which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at **THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, HIGH EAST STREET, DORCHESTER** on **MONDAY 24 JULY 2023** at **7.00pm**.

Steve Newman  
Town Clerk

### **Public Attendance and 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 possible.

### **Member Code of Conduct: Declaration of Interests**

Members are reminded that it is their responsibility to disclose interests where appropriate. A Member who declares any interest must leave the room. A Member who declares a registerable interest as a Council nominee to a partner organisation may first address the meeting as a member of the public.

### **Membership of the Committee**

Councillors B. Armstrong-Marshall, R. Biggs (Chair), S. Biles, T. Harries, J. Hewitt, F. Hogwood, S. Hosford (Vice-Chair), G. Jones and The Mayor ex-officio.

## **Agenda**

### **1. Apologies**

### **2. Declaration of Interests**

### **3. Minutes**

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 May 2023 (adopted by Council on 23 May 2023). A copy of the Minutes can be found at <https://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk/Committees/Management+Committee/Minutes>

### **4. Financial Update – Page 3**

To consider a report by the Responsible Financial Officer (enclosed).

### **5. Cornhill / South Street Task and Finish Group – Page 5**

To consider the notes of the Task and Finish Group meeting held on 12 June 2023 (enclosed).

**6. New Member Induction – Page 7**

To consider a report by the Town Clerk (enclosed).

**7. Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Data Protection – Page 8**

To consider a report by the Responsible Financial Officer (enclosed).

**8. Corporate Plan Update – Page 9**

To consider a report by the Town Clerk (enclosed).

**9. Town Centre Working Group – Page 15**

To consider a report by the Tourism Development Officer (enclosed).

**10. North Square Offices – Carbon Reduction Options – Page 18**

To consider a report by the Town Clerk (enclosed).

**11. Dorset Council - Free Parking Days – Page 19**

To consider a report by the Town Clerk (enclosed).

**12. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960**

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”.

**13. Tourism Development Officer Post – Page 20**

To consider a report by the Town Clerk (enclosed).

**14. Skilled Workers Outdoor Services Depot Team – Page 22**

To consider a report by the Town Clerk (enclosed).

## FINANCIAL UPDATE AT 30 JUNE 2023

### 1. Financial Position

- Month 3 spend (Appendix 1) £40k under:
  - £13k under on Office Staff (staff not at top of scale)
  - £11k over on Treasury income
  - £3k up on Cemetery income
  - £1k loss on hire from BG House being closed
  - All other under and overspends net £5k under
  
- Cash Position **£000**

Lloyds Bank	116	Nil interest
National Savings and Investments	7	0.6% interest
CCLA Deposit Account	1,900	4.79% interest
<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>2,023</b>	

#### Notes:

- £100k transferred from CCLA to Lloyds in June.
  
- Debt over 30 days = £2,421.55, 3 debtors (31 May £0, 0 debtors)
- Payments list 1 May to 30 June on website. Supporting vouchers available from Financial Controller
  - **RECOMMENDED** that the Payments list, totalling £251,499.47 is approved.

Nigel Hayes

Financial Controller

**MANAGEMENT REPORT AT 30 JUNE  
2023**

By Spend Type	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	Under/Over £000
Staff	895	228	209	-19
Capital Financing	17	7	7	0
Other Payments	547	204	198	-6
To Specific Reserves	345	345	345	0
Income	-138	-32	-46	-15
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,666</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>-40</b>

By Service	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	Under/Over £000
Allotments	-11	1	1	0
Parks & Open Spaces	164	97	94	-3
Cemeteries	-12	7	2	-5
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	39	9	9	-0
Cultural & Twinning	68	20	20	0
Municipal Buildings	373	293	296	3
Other Services	58	40	28	-12
Office Team	500	148	132	-15
Outdoor Services	489	137	130	-7
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,668</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>-40</b>

Earmarked Reserves with budgeted Expenditure In Year	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	Under/Over £000
Cemeteries	30	0	0	0
Municipal Buildings	46	6	6	0
MB Front of House	250			
Parks Premises	50	0	0	0
Play Equipment	0	0	0	0
Public Realm	0	0	0	0
Vehicles & Equipment	20	0	0	0
Arts & Cultural	16	16	16	0
Tourist Information	5	8	8	0
Christmas Lights	0	0	0	0
Corporate Projects	0	0	0	0
Planning Advice	10	0	0	0
Climate Emergency	50	0	0	0
Trees	0	3	3	0
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>0</b>

## Cornhill Task and Finish Group Meeting Notes

**Date of Meeting: 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

### **Present:**

- Emma Scott, Community Development Officer, Dorchester Town Council
- Matilda Manley, Tourism Development Officer, Dorchester Town Council
- Carl Dallison, Assistant Town Clerk, Dorchester Town Council
- Tony Hurley, Assistant Town Clerk, Dorchester Town Council
- Frances Hogwood, Councillor, Dorchester Town Council
- Stella Jones, Councillor, Dorchester Town Council
- Susie Hosford, Councillor, Dorchester Town Council
- Dorchester Youth Council representatives
- Grant, Cornhill Market Manager

### **Notes of meeting:**

The group met at the Town Pump to visualise their developing plans for the Cornhill area. The Tourism Development Officer updated on correspondence with Dorset Council regarding the groups proposals:

Matilda met with Stephen Mephram and Corinne Holbrook from Dorset Council Highways Team to sense check the plans that the Task and Finish Group have been developing for Cornhill area. The following comments were made:

- 1- They are not keen for events to be held at Cornhill – “currently we allow events at Barclays on South St only. I am reluctant to change this to include Town Pump area at present as I feel that this location is very busy for pedestrians and High West / East / South St junction is also the busiest part of town for vehicles. There are a lot of pedestrians crossing High West at this point and I do not feel comfortable adding a distraction (live music, lego tables etc) into this mix.”
- 2- They would be happy with paving supplied by Marshalls as long as it is “type approved”. We would need to buy a surplus stock of paving that they could use for repairs if needed, otherwise the area needing repair would be backfilled with tarmac.
- 3- Initial thoughts were that they liked the proposed seating layout and would be happy if the bins and town trains signs were relocated. However, any new seating or bins would be our responsibility. They thought that Dorchester Town Council owned the current bins and seating.
- 4- The highway element at Cornhill would need to be 3.5 metres minimum in their opinion.
- 5- There are no restrictions on the types of vehicles that can use the highway along South Street during the permitted times.
- 6- They talked about legal changes to the highway. They spoke about the possibility of them making the town pump seating area non highway again. If they did this then they would have to find out who owned it originally, before it became a highway, then the town Council could buy it from them.
- 7- Trees – they would need to know more about the height and leaf fall before they commented.

- 8- Dorset Council will look at the proposal more with us. Then Dorset Council will give a yes or no to the concept. After that we will have to have a site meeting with them and then Dorset Council will draw up a legal agreement. The construction would have to be carried out by Dorchester Town Council.
- 9- Stephen said not to go any further with exact paving and seating and technical drawings yet, wait for more feedback from Dorset Council first on their initial thoughts.

After the meeting with Stephen Mepham, he sent our last meeting notes and his own comments to colleagues in Dorset Council Highways for initial thoughts. Colin Moors (Highways Improvement Team Leader, Economic Growth and Infrastructure, Dorset Council) and Neil Turner (Service Manager for Network Operations, Dorset Council) have now been assigned to look at the area with us and will be working with the group on the redevelopment plans.

The group discussed the implications of the feedback from Dorset Council on their plans. They also showed the plans for comment to Grant from Cornhill Market and Carl Dallison. The following suggestions were made:

- Put another semi circular bench at the Christmas tree end of the seating area that can be removed for the Christmas tree each year
- Shorten the Cornhill market area so that there is room for a vehicle to pass between the market and the end of the seating area
- Create a planted bed and sign to mark the start of the Cornhill Market. This will help deter vehicles from travelling down South Street between 9:30 am and 4:30 pm. It would also help bring recognition and an identity to the Cornhill market (which is over 100 years old)
- Move the Traffic signs at the Cornhill entrance to South Street and mount them on planters at the entrance instead.

Following this meeting site meetings have been arranged with Dorset Council and a further Task and Finish Group Meeting needs to be arranged.

Matilda Manley  
Tourism Development Officer

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**POLICY COMMITTEE – 24 JULY 2023**

**NEW MEMBER INDUCTION**

1. The whole of the Town Council will be up for election in May 2024 and it is likely that a number of new Councillors will be elected to the Town Council for the first time.
2. It would seem sensible to review the new Member induction process over the next few months with the aim of giving new Councillors the best experience and knowledge for the start of their Council journey.
3. It is suggested that a task and finish group be established to undertake the review. It would be helpful if the group consisted of the Mayor plus four others being a mixture of Policy, Management and Planning and Environment Committee members. Those Members to be a mix of longer serving Councillors and Councillors elected for the first time at the last elections.
4. The Committee is invited to agree the establishment of a Councillor Induction Task and Finish Group as set out above.

Steve Newman  
Town Clerk

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**POLICY COMMITTEE – 24 JULY 2023**

**STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND DATA PROTECTION**

1. *‘Model versions of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are provided by NALC. Authorities should ensure that they are working from the latest model and that it has been appropriately adapted for their size and requirements. This should be annually reviewed and minuted’.*
2. The Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Data Protection Policy have been reviewed, updated and have been circulated with the agenda. Draft versions have also been made available on the Dorchester Town Council website.
3. It is **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the draft Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Data Protection Policy, as circulated, be adopted.

Nigel Hayes  
Responsible Financial Officer



**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**POLICY COMMITTEE – 24 JULY 2022**

**CORPORATE PLAN UPDATE**

1. The Committee last reviewed its high level 2019 -2024 Corporate Plan at its November 2022 meeting.
2. The Plan has been updated reflecting the decisions made at that meeting in regard to Poundbury Cemetery affordable housing and the Cornhill project.
3. The Plan attached to this report identifies the changes and updates made since the last review and gives the latest information regarding projects and aspirations.
4. The Committee is invited to review the Plan and make any comments or changes that it wishes to make.

Steve Newman  
Town Clerk

## HIGH LEVEL FOCUS OF THE CORPORATE PLAN – JULY 2023 UPDATE

High Level Focus	Projects	Milestone	Current Progress	😊😊😊
<b>Affordable Housing</b>				
Deliver sites	Tennis Courts	Planning Application agreed Jul 21	Awaiting DC decision	😊
	19 North Square	Feasibility Study rec'd Sep 21	Decision not to proceed made at Council Nov 21	-
	<del>Poundbury Cemetery</del>	<del>Preliminary evaluation Nov 21</del>	<del>Request removal from the site list.</del>	😊
	Other Sites	<del>New site identified Jan 22</del>	<del>Management Cttee agreed to consider possible site Jan 22</del>	😊
	Potential new site Garfield Avenue	Submit EOI June 22	<del>Further consideration (on receipt of information) due to be given November 2022 or January 2023</del>	
<b>Community Culture Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>				
Understand residents needs	Residents feedback	Comments received Apr 21	Completed.	-
	Review Community Register of Projects	New Register of Projects Dec 21	Delays continue due to focus on specific project work and difficulties holding meetings. Review to be commenced at the Community Lunch in December 2022	😊
Maintain and adapt our services	Programme of Revenue Projects	<del>Special Items in Budget Jan 21</del>	<del>Completed</del> Ongoing	-
	The Great Field	<del>Support infrastructure Dec 21</del>	Play Equipment installed March 22	😊
		Take full operational responsibility for the Great Field Apr 24	Lease signed and completed April 22	Ongoing snagging / neighbour issues

	Kings Road & Lubbecke Way Open Spaces Project	GAP Project at Lubbecke Way <del>Oct 21</del> June 23	Planning application approved. <del>submitted, revised budget produced.</del> Awaiting s106 funding approved. <del>release following planning approval.</del>	-  ☹️
		Park ideas developed Mar 22	Prelim. Discussions with DC re s106/CIL and EA re bridge. Initial request for s106/CIL funding for a bridge rejected. Tree planting completed. Still awaiting lease from Duchy.	
Municipal Buildings	Refurbish Municipal Buildings	Phase 1-4 works completed Jan 22	Ph1 (Roof) completed Ph2/3 (Biomass/Offices) <del>commenced, due Jun 22</del> , Ph4 (Corn Ex) completed Sept 2022	☺️  ☺️
	Work with Dorchester Arts to develop use of the site	Operating Agreement signed Sep 21 First review meeting Mar 22	Lease signed. <del>First review meeting due Jun 22</del> — meeting being arranged for <del>Nov/Dec 22</del> Review meetings established and regular.  Lease being revised	☺️  -
	Work with Dorchester Arts to improve front of Building Ph5	Planning Application submitted June 23 Works to commence Summer 24	Plans agreed for submission	
	Update / Refurbish Council Chamber / Town Hall	Establish T&F Group Nov 22 Refurb plan Nov 23	T&F Group established.	

**The Environment**

Climate Emergency Programme	Municipal Buildings	Phase 1 – 4 works completed	Jan 22	<del>Ph2(Biomass) commenced, Completed</del> Sept 22 – EV charger still to be installed in car park	☺ - ☺
	Vehicles & Equipment Partner Programme	Grounds equipt purchased	Mar 22	No new purchases made – EV tested	
		Identify new partner project	Mar 22	Major grant rec'd from Forestry Commission for Tree Planting in Kings Road, completed	
		Weymouth Ave Pav	Jan 23	Contract let – 50% grant received from ECB Solar Panel installed – March 23	
	New project Borough Gardens Hse / Greenhouses	<del>Investigate options for ground or air source / solar</del>		<del>Report to Management Committee – November 2022</del> Carbon reduction works agreed May 23.	
	19 North Square	Complete carbon reduction works	June 24		
		Implement carbon reduction works to the offices	Nov 23	Report to Policy Committee July 24	

**Local Economy Transport and Parking**

Tourism	Implement Tourism Development Strategy	App launched	Jun 21	Completed	-
		Website launched	Sep 21	Completed Dec 21	☺
		Front Desk training	Dec 21	Training package under development	☺
	Opportunities to improve Markets	Present options to Panel	Jan 22	<del>Monthly Fairs supported by Markets Panel Feb 22. To be developed</del> Tender	☺
		Tender Market operation	2023-24		

	Market Charter	Open discussion with Markets Panel Dec 23	<del>process for new market operator to be developed Early 2023</del> Markets Panel sub group being formed	
<b>Future Growth of Dorchester</b>				
Local Plan DOR13	Respond to Local Plan consultations	Response to Options Mar 21 Monitor next phase Mar 22	Completed Dorset Council Local Plan process formally set back two years	☺ -
Town Centre Masterplan – Improvements, Transport, Economy, Parking	Prepare the ground for a new master plan to be recognised as part of the Local Plan or as a separate Neighbourhood Plan	Finalise internal scheme for Cornhill Dec 21 23  Develop Plan for Masterplan Aug 21  Consult on Masterplan ideas Jan 22	<del>Awaiting pre-app discussions with DC and budget review by FERIA – pre-app information now received. Next steps to be considered.</del> T&F Group established and meeting Completed Partner consultation complete and final version of the vision <del>to be agreed at Nov 22 Council</del>	☹ - ☺
<b>Internal Governance Arrangements</b>				
Communications	Improve use of Social Media  <b>New</b> – Develop a new Town Council website	Develop Social Media Policy Oct 21  Style and content protocols to be agreed - Aug 23 Decide on style, content, accessibility standards etc – August 2023	<del>Delayed by other projects.</del> Complete - Comms Policy agreed. Social media presence increased significantly  <del>Policy Committee to consider funding during 2023-24 budget setting process</del> Funding agreed, T&F group established and meeting	☹

MTFS	Ability to respond to new threats and opportunities	Review MTFS	Jan <del>23</del> 24	<p>Review completed. MTFS remains in strong position</p> <p>Due to national and international events it is suggested that the MTFS be reviewed again in Jan <del>23</del> 24</p>	😊
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## DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

### POLICY COMMITTEE – 24<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023

#### PROPOSAL FOR A TOWN CENTRE WORKING GROUP

##### **Introduction:**

In 2022, the Town Council adopted its *Vision for Dorchester* and this included the aim that, by 2038, there would be: *a vibrant and accessible town centre that people want to visit and walk around, to access local services, explore its rich history, culture and arts and enjoy its shops, museums, its historic market and its hospitality.*

This report sets out, therefore, a proposal for the establishment of a Town Council-led working group focusing on improvements to Dorchester town centre. The proposed group would comprise representatives from the council, Dorset Council and local businesses with the aim of helping to reduce vacant shops and supporting improvement to the town centre experience for both residents and visitors.

##### **Background:**

At present, Dorchester town centre has several empty retail properties, some of which have been vacant for a long time. There are concerns about the state of some of these properties due to their age and the level of building maintenance.

Although some businesses in the town centre are thriving, others are not and a number of business owners have contacted council to express a desire to work in partnership to help improve the situation in the town.

The situation in Dorchester is not unique. It is being experienced on other high streets around the country due to economic and legislative pressures. However, some high streets around the country seem to be doing well or have made changes that have helped to ease the situation. There is an opportunity to learn from best practice in other towns – for example, Shaftesbury Town Council recently set up a High Street Working Group, comprising councillors, property owners and retailers, in order to support local business. In addition, the national Association of City & Town Management is a good source of advice and information.

##### **Proposed Aims of Working Group:**

It is proposed to create a Town Council-led working group to bring together interested parties to develop new ways to support the town centre businesses and help attract visitors to the town. The key aims of the Group would be to:

- reduce the number of vacant properties in the town centre;
- improve the town centre experience and public realm for both residents and visitors;
- develop proposals for events and initiatives to attract visitors to the town centre;

- help promote the town centre in order to attract investment.

### **Proposed Approach:**

Clearly the Town Council has limited influence over the way private landowners (both national and local) manage their town centre properties and so the working group will need to focus on facilitation and coordination in order to pursue its aims. If there are specific actions that could be delivered by the Town Council (such as the funding public realm improvements) then these will be presented to Management Committee for consideration.

### **Proposed Working Group Membership:**

It is proposed to invite the following to join the working group:

- Dorchester Town Council members – perhaps 3 members (representing Policy and Management committees) with one as chair.
- Dorset Council – either members or offices (perhaps from economic regeneration, conservation or highways as needed).
- Dorchester BID
- Dorchester businesses, developers, agents and landlords.

The group would be supported by Town Council officers.

### **Proposed work plan:**

- **Listening & research:**
  - Learn from other towns and share best practise.
  - Listen to local businesses, landlords, agents and developers to hear their views on the situation and what the issues are.
  - Undertake a survey or ‘health check’ to create a baseline of information.
  - Investigate ownership of vacant commercial properties in Dorchester.
  - Review what is missing in Dorchester town centre in terms of shops, experiences and services and research what a thriving town centre needs (day and night) to be successful.
- **Action scoping & prioritising:**
  - Review learning from phase one and scope out possible actions that could be taken.
  - Work together to prioritise which of these actions would have the greatest impact and which of these actions the group could have the most influence over.

The proposed action plan will be presented to Policy Committee for consideration.

### **Links with other initiatives:**

The working group will link to the following projects/policies/plans/documents. The proposed action group would ensure they are kept informed of relevant developments/amendment to reduce duplication and ensure consistency:



- Cornhill / Town Pump Enhancement task & finish group
- Local Plan
- Dorchester Town Council's *Vision for Dorchester* (2022).
- Dorchester Tourism Partnership
- Conservation Area appraisal
- Markets panel projects – including the Linneys' redevelopment
- Dorchester Totally Locally Group
- Dorchester BID and Chamber of Commerce

**Timescales and budgets:**

The working group would aim to develop its draft action plan before the end of 2023 and continue its work into 2024 with regular updates to Policy Committee. To be successful the work of the group would need to be ongoing and adapt to the changing needs of the town centre over time. There would be no specific budget needed for the group at this stage. However, there may be specific grants or measures that the group would like to seek funding for from Dorchester Town Council and other partners and these would be the subject of separate proposals to Policy Committee.

**Recommendation:**

Members are invited to consider the proposals set out above and, if agreed, ask Council to appoint three members to the working group at its next meeting.

**Matilda Manley**  
**Tourism Development Officer**

## **DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

### **POLICY COMMITTEE -24 JULY 2023**

#### **CARBON REDUCTION – 19 NORTH SQUARE**

1. The Council has agreed that the offices at North Square remain in use for at least the next few years. In accordance with the Council's carbon reduction pledge it is now necessary to look at how to reduce the building's carbon emissions.
2. An officer from Low Carbon Dorset has undertaken a site visit and made the following recommendations / options:-
  - Install LED lighting throughout the building – this is very cost effective and you should see an ROI of around 12-18 months. PIR sensors on the areas which are not so often used.
  - Insulation in the loft space – it is not straightforward due to the attic rooms but there is still an opportunity to add some to the underside of the existing roof – expected 5-10% saving on the heating bill.
  - Possible Solar Panels – the building has a single phase supply so limited to 3.68kw before having to ask the distribution network operator for permission to connect more. Planning approval would also be required and a structural engineers report on the strength of the roof. Install cost around £8,000.
  - Possible Air source heat pump – cost around £15-16,000 installed – this would fit into the existing wet system.
3. Investigations have also been made into whether it would be possible to connect to the biomass boiler at the Corn Exchange. It is possible but the cost (mainly for groundworks) was estimated at around £40,000.
4. Another option is to replace the condemned gas boiler with a new efficient hydrogen ready gas boiler at a cost of around £6,000.
5. It is suggested that the recommendations in regard to LED and insulation are undertaken as soon as possible.
6. The Committee is invited to consider the options available for heating the building and the possible introduction of solar panels.

Steve Newman  
Town Clerk

## **DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

### **POLICY COMMITTEE – 24 JULY 2023**

#### **FREE PARKING DAYS**

1. Dorset Council's policy on free parking days in its town centre car parks is as follows:-

To support local economy, Dorset Council will give a total of six free parking days in Dorset Council car parks. This is made up of the following:

- At the request of the Town or Parish Council free parking in all Dorset Council car parks for four days each year, for events which generate valuable footfall for that town. These four days cannot be used in December
- At the request of the Town or Parish Council free parking in all Dorset Council Town Centre car parks for that town on one weekday in December
- Free parking in all Dorset Council Town Centre car parks on Small Business Saturday in December

No other days in December will be considered unless the Town Council, Local BID or other organisation(s) are willing to meet the cost of the lost income at an amount to be calculated by the Council's parking team based on average weekend costs for that time of year.

2. For the past few years most of the Town Council's free parking days have been allocated to early Christmas shopping days – the last two Saturdays in November and one Thursday in December. Plus the December small business Saturday.
3. If this pattern continues it leaves two free parking days potentially unallocated each year.
4. For this year it is suggested that one of those days might be allocated to the Heritage Open Day event to be held on Sunday 10 September 2023.
5. The remaining day could be held pending a request being received – if no request is received it be allocated to the early bird Christmas shopping days.
6. Dorset Council has previously been requested to be flexible with its free parking policy days so as to enable free parking for the Christmas Cracker event but this has not resulted in approval.
7. For future years it is proposed that the Committee gives consideration to allocating its free parking days earlier in the year once the town's larger free access events are known.

Steve Newman  
Town Clerk