



Dorchester Town Council

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17 January 2024

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 22 JANUARY 2024** 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 20 November 2023 (adopted by Council on 27 November 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 Finance Officer (enclosed).

- 5. Medium Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget 2024-25 – Page 5**

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

6. Scheme of Delegation – Page 12

To approve the Council’s Scheme of Delegation. The Scheme was originally agreed some years ago and has been updated to reflect the changes to the staffing and committee structures and the additional services now undertaken by the Council (enclosed).

7. Dorchester Literary Festival – Page 22

To give consideration to sponsoring the tenth annual Dorchester Literary Festival. Other event sponsors include Dorchester BID, Thomas Hardy Society and the Duchy of Cornwall. Information enclosed.

8. Town Centre Working Group – Page 26

To receive an update from the Town Centre Working Group which last met on 11 January 2024 (enclosed).

9. Corporate Plan Update – Page 27

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

10. Calendar of Meetings 2024-25 – Page 33

- (i) To consider the draft 2024-25 Calendar of meetings (enclosed).
- (ii) Informal Annual Town Meeting – In 2022 the Council trialled holding an informal ATM as a part of the scheduled Community lunch. This worked well for community organisations attending the lunch but was not readily accessible to general members of the public. So, last year, the Council trialled holding a stand alone event with partners aimed at attracting attendance by local residents. It was held on the Friday morning the week before the formal ATM in May. That event did attract a number of members of the public and gave an opportunity to the Council’s partners to showcase their good work.

The Committee is asked to consider what arrangements it would like to make for any informal ATM this year. Members are reminded that by law the formal ATM has to be held in the evening.

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE – 22 JANUARY 2024
FINANCIAL UPDATE AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

1. Financial Position

- Month 9 spend (Appendix 1) £108k under:
 - £52k over on Treasury income
 - £11k over on Markets income
 - £16k up on Cemetery income
 - £26k under Parks R&M, including £4k grant received from Forestry Commission
 - All other under and overspends net £5k under

- Cash Position

Account	Balance as at 31/12/2023	Balance as at 31/10/2023	Movement	Interest
Lloyds	94,811	44,716	50,095	0%
NS&i	6,739	6,739	0	0.60%
CCLA Deposit	2,150,000	2,450,000	-300,000	5.26%
	2,251,550	2,501,455	-249,905	

- Debt over 30 days = £1,038.80, 3 debtors (31 October £2997.80, 9 debtors).
- Payments list 1 November to 31 December on website. Supporting vouchers available from Financial Controller
 - **RECOMMENDED** that the Payments list, totalling £304,085.80 is approved.

Nigel Hayes

Responsible Financial Officer

MANAGEMENT REPORT AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

By Spend Type	Budget	Profile	Actual	-Under/Over
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Staff	895	673	678	5
Capital Financing/Debt	17	15	15	-0
Other Payments	547	414	380	-33
To Specific Reserves	345	345	345	0
Income	-138	-108	-189	-81
Net Budget	1,666	1,339	1,231	-108

By Service	Budget	Profile	Actual	-Under/Over
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Allotments	-11	-12	-5	6
Parks & Open Spaces	164	144	110	-34
Cemeteries	-12	-6	-26	-19
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	39	27	26	-0
Cultural & Twinning	68	46	43	-4
Municipal Buildings	373	350	357	8
Other Services	58	42	-22	-63
Office Team	500	377	359	-18
Outdoor Services	489	372	388	16
Net Budget	1,668	1,339	1,231	-108

Earmarked Reserves	Budget	Profile	Actual	-Under/Over	Balance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Tourist Information	5	5	11	6	5
MB Front of House	250	12	12	0	235
19 North Square Works	11	0	0	0	11
Municipal Buildings	46	13	13	0	50
Parks Premises	50	4	4	0	61
Planning Advice	10	0	0	0	18
Trees	0	0	18	18	12
Vehicles & Equipment	20	20	20	0	97
Play Equipment	0	0	4	4	19
Christmas Lights	0	0	0	0	4
Apprenticeships	0	0	0	0	8
Public Realm	0	0	0	0	463
Climate Emergency	50	2	2	0	140
Corporate Projects	0	0	0	0	385
Cemeteries	30	0	0	0	88
Arts & Cultural	16	16	16	0	0
Net Budget	488	72	100	28	1,596

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE – 22 JANUARY 2024

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY & REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25

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 at Appendix 1. The cost of services provided by the Committee has increased by £3k, the key changes being: -
 - An increase on treasury interest from £20k to £50k due to higher interest rates.
 - A budgeted 5% pay award.
 - £15k for election costs
 - £5k for the new Town Crier initial expenses.
3. The **Management Committee** budget was considered at a meeting on 15 January 2024 and totals £1,283k (2023/24 £1,228k), an increase of £56k. Included in the budget is: -
 - A 5% staff pay award.
 - £30k moved from the Parks & Open Spaces R&M budget to a new Great Field Maintenance budget.
 - £16k for a new member of staff for Outdoor Services, on an 18.5hpw contract.
 - The creation of a new Great Field Reserve for future works with an initial £2k contribution, to be reviewed next year.
4. As a result of the above, the operational **Revenue Budget for 2024/25** (summary at Appendix 2) has increased from £1,668k to £1,726k, up £58k.
5. The **Tax Base**, at 8,206, is up 115 (1.4%), enabling £24k to be added to the precept before any increase in the Council Tax is required.
6. The Council may wish to consider the following options for 2024/25:
 - A 2.0% increase in line with our MTFS – **the budget has been prepared on this basis.**
 - A 4% increase, due to the current higher inflation levels. This would generate an additional £34k above the 2% proposed increase.
 - A 0% Council Tax increase – if this approach is applied the proposed precept would reduce by £33k, reducing the repayments for the Municipal Buildings works. While this could be accommodated this year the option has the potential to result in a permanent loss of £33k a year if Members do not implement an above inflationary increase in a future year. This option is not consistent with the policy adopted for the MTFS last year.

7. Whichever decision is taken regarding the setting of Council Tax the Town Council remains in a solid position financially.
8. The Corporate Projects reserve covered the Municipal Buildings works to the sum of £666,940.35, under this budget the reserve will be fully repaid by the 25/26 financial year:

Total Borrowed	<u>666,940.35</u>
Underspend 22/23	33,064.55
23/24 Contribution	260,000.00
24/25 Contribution	260,000.00
25/26 Contribution	<u>113,875.80</u>
	<u>0.00</u>

9. The **Medium-Term Financial Strategy** (Appendix 3) lists the assumptions taken account of in its preparation. The key assumptions are that:
 - There are no contributions to the Corporate Projects reserve in 2024/25. Prior to covering the Municipal Buildings works, the Corporate Projects reserve had a balance of £695k plus the potential for limited CIL contributions. The Corporate Projects reserve will be allocated as part of the Corporate Plan review, taking place from 2024.

10. The **General Reserve** (£100k) 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. This level was fully tested during the pandemic.

11. Expenditure is planned from the **Earmarked Reserves** (Appendix 4) for 2024/25: -

	£000
Municipal Buildings front of house works	235
Poundbury Cemetery Fence and Wall Repairs	60
Vehicles and Equipment (purchase of electric works vehicle)	70
Trees	10
19 North Square	11
Total	386

12. **Current Debt** will total £42k at 31 March 2025 and would be fully repaid by 31 March 2027.

13. It is **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the MTFs and Revenue Budget are adopted as laid out in the appendices, to include: -

- A Council Tax Band D charge of £210.33, an increase of £4.12 (2%)
- A precept of £1,726,115, an increase of 3.4%

Nigel Hayes
Responsible Finance Officer

APPENDIX 1

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£
CORPORATE & DEMOCRATIC			
Members Allowance	22,618	23,500	24,440
Members Training & Travel	25	400	2,500
Civic & Ceremonial Expenses	1,963	1,000	1,000
Mayoral Expenses	11,032	12,850	13,107
Town Crier	552	600	600
New Town Crier Expenses			5,000
Election Costs			15,000
Entertaining & Gifts	125	408	420
Youth Council & Democracy Day	208	600	1,000
Office Team	214,374	229,249	244,257
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	250,897	268,607	307,324
OTHER SERVICES			
Tourism Development	8,000	8,000	8,000
Sawmills rent	8,600	8,600	8,600
To Public Realm Reserve	54,700	10,000	5,000
To Development Reserve	0	0	0
Dorchester Heritage Joint Committee	3,000	3,000	3,000
Citizens Advice	8,000	8,887	9,065
Dorchester Youth & Community Centre	21,200	21,200	21,200
To Climate Reserve	0	0	
Apprenticeships	9,177	15,000	12,000
Videographer	5,480	5,500	5,500
Debt Charges	27,399	16,752	16,104
Staff - Tourism/Community/Assistant	47,572	113,813	126,068
Total Expenditure	193,129	210,752	214,537
Treasury Interest	-29,479	-20,000	-50,000
Sawmills rent recharged	-4,300	-4,300	-4,300
Market Income	-20,287	-15,000	-25,000
Total Income	-54,066	-39,300	-79,300
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	139,063	171,452	135,237

	APPENDIX 1 (Continued)		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£
OFFICES TEAM			
Salaries	241,211	303,041	318,853
Employers National Insurance	23,655	30,377	32,523
Employers Superannuation	49,833	66,669	70,148
Training Courses	5,208	7,000	8,000
Travel & Subsistence	1,922	2,500	3,000
Ex Town Clerk	27,791		
Subscriptions (Professional Bodies)	2,843	3,800	3,800
Cleaning Materials	27	1,000	750
Rates	7,236	7,236	5,614
Gas	686	2,000	0
Electricity	3,624	4,500	4,500
Water	352	550	550
Repairs & Maintenance	831	3,400	3,400
Financial Services inc Audit, Bank & Sage	8,216	8,670	8,843
Employment Law and H & S	3,225	3,225	3,800
Legal & Professional Fees, Advertising	1,698	500	500
Insurance	29,418	34,000	35,000
Printing & Stationery	739	1,000	1,000
Newsletter	4,569	5,415	5,415
Office Equipment & IT	3,917	10,500	12,000
New Website		3,000	0
Telephones	1,718	2,000	2,000
Photocopier Charges	626	600	600
Postage	501	550	600
Total Expenditure	419,845	501,533	520,896
Recharge to Dorchester Markets Panel	-1,688	-1,800	-1,800
Net Expenditure recharged to Services	418,157	499,733	519,096
Recharged to			
Corporate & Democratic Management	214,374	229,249	244,257
Allotments	4,048	12,408	12,924
Development	47,572	113,813	126,068
Cemeteries	28,839	44,417	45,654
Parks & Open Spaces	62,471	63,836	56,156
Municipal Buildings	45,548	20,181	17,565
Cultural Activity & Twinning	15,306	15,830	16,472
	418,158	499,734	519,096

REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	APPENDIX 2 2024/25
	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£
Parks & Open Spaces	603,813	654,307	724,430
Allotments	4,704	15,045	22,598
Municipal Buildings	435,506	406,996	400,308
Cemeteries	33,086	68,006	55,855
Cultural & Twinning Activities	70,179	83,330	80,019
Corporate & Democratic	250,897	268,607	307,324
Other Services	139,063	171,452	135,237
Operational Budget	1,537,248	1,667,743	1,725,770
Precept	1,581,669	1,668,507	1,726,115
Transfer to General Reserves	44,421	764	345
Subjective Analysis of Revenue			
Employees	809,061	885,665	965,728
External Payments	570,933	579,206	597,503
Transfers to Earmarked	315,900	325,100	345,600
Capital Financing Costs	27,399	16,752	16,104
Income	-173,689	-138,980	-199,166
Transfer from Earmarked	0	0	0
Operational Budget	1,549,604	1,667,743	1,725,770
General Reserve			
Opening Balance at 1 April	118,287	100,000	100,000
Transfer from Ops Budget	44,421	764	345
To Corporate Projects Reserve	18,287	764	345
Closing Balance at 31 March	144,421	100,000	100,000
Earmarked Reserves			
Opening Balance at 1 April	1,899,451	1,323,957	1,379,688
Transfer from Revenue	440,060	430,102	345,600
Other Income & Transfers	459,767	0	0
Expenditure from Reserves	1,247,980	535,466	386,087
Closing Balance 31 March	1,551,298	1,218,593	1,339,201
All Reserves held at year end	1,695,719	1,318,593	1,439,201
Tax Base	7,823.30	8,091.30	8,206.70
Band D Charge	202.17	206.21	210.33
O/s PWLB Debt at 31 March	£ 70,000	56,000	42,000

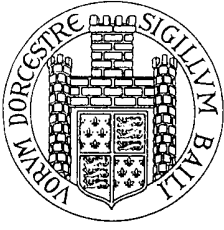
APPENDIX 3

Medium Term Financial Strategy	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Yoy %
	£000	£000	£000	£000	Change
Revenue Budget					
Employees	886	966	985	1,005	2.00
External Payments	579	598	609	622	2.00
Transfers to Earmarked	325	346	353	360	2.00
Capital Financing Costs	17	16	16	15	-
Income	-139	-199	-203	-207	2.00
New/Transferred Services	0	0	0	0	
Operational Budget	1,668	1,726	1,760	1,794	
Precept	1,726	1,726	1,761	1,796	
Transfer to General Reserves	58	0	1	2	
General Reserve					
Opening Balance at 1 April	118	100	100	100	
Transfer from/to Operational Budget	0	0	0	0	
Transfer to Corporate Projects Reserve	18	0	0	0	
Closing Balance at 31 March	100	100	100	100	
Earmarked Reserves					
Opening Balance at 1 April	1,305	1,380	1,339	1,292	
Transfers/Payments in to Reserves	387	346	353	360	
Payments/Transfers out from Reserves	312	386	400	400	
Closing Balance 31 March	1,380	1,339	1,292	1,251	
All Reserves held at year end	1,480	1,439	1,392	1,351	
Corporate Project Unallocated at Year End	385	645	594	594	
Outstanding Debt at Year End	£k	56	42	28	14
Council Tax	£k	206	210	215	219
Tax Base		8,091	8,207	8,207	8,207

Notes

1. Precept assumes Council Tax rises @ 2.00% from 2025/26, no Tax Base growth
2. Any CIL receipts credited to Corporate Projects Reserve
3. Best estimate of new or transferred services, driven by cuts in other tiers
4. Operational surplus is transferred to the Climate Emergency Reserve
5. Earmarked Reserves expenditure reflects best available knowledge
6. General Reserve set at £100k
7. Further limited savings may be identified in budgets during review processes

RESERVES	Cttee	Balance	Paid In	Spend	Balance	Paid In	Spend	Balance	Reason for holding Reserve
		Mar 23	23/24	23/24	Mar 24	24/25	24/25	Mar 25	
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
APPENDIX 4									
Earmarked Reserves									
Infrastructure & Equipment									
Cemeteries	Man	81,811	6,100	240	87,671	6,100	60,000	33,771	Buildings/infrastructure
MB Repairs & Maintenance	Man	52,356	10,000	54,896	7,460	12,500	0	19,960	Building works/refurb
MB Front of House works	Man	247,370	0	12,327	235,043	0	235,043	0	
Parks Premises	Man	56,831	8,000	59,000	5,831	9,000	0	14,831	Buildings/infrastructure refurb.
Play Equipment	Man	11,525	11,000	3,811	18,715	11,000	0	29,715	Equipment replacement
Great Field Reserve	Man	0	0	0	0	2,000	0	2,000	
Tree Reserve	Man	0	30,000	16,000	14,000	20,000	10,000	24,000	Tree Works
19 North Square Refurb	Pol	0	11,000	0	11,000	0	11,000	0	
Public Realm	Pol	453,280	10,000	0	463,280	5,000	0	468,280	Infrastructure refurb
Vehicles & Equipment	Man	89,457	20,000	20,000	89,457	20,000	70,000	39,457	Fleet & equipment replacement
Cultural									
Arts, Culture & Sport	Man	15,666	-11,000	4,666	-0	0	0	-0	
Christmas Lights	Man	4,420	0	0	4,420	0	0	4,420	Replace lights
								0	
Tourist Information	Pol	16,008	0	11,014	4,994	0	0	4,994	TIC Replacement Projects
Miscellaneous Reserves									
New Corporate Projects	Pol	93,100	292,065	0	385,165	260,000	0	645,165	Own or partner capital projects
Apprenticeship Reserve	Pol	7,565	0	0	7,565	0	0	7,565	
Planning Advice Reserve	Pol	18,793	0	20	18,774	0	0	18,774	Local Plan & other advice
Climate Emergency Reserve	Pol	142,267	0	130,000	12,267	0	0	12,267	Own or partner Climate projects
Graves In Perpetuity	Man	14,059	0	14	14,045	0	44	14,001	Maint. and flowers on 6 graves
Total Earmarked Reserves		1,304,510	387,165	311,987	1,379,688	345,600	386,087	1,339,201	
General Reserve	Pol	132,065	0	32,065	100,000	0	0	100,000	General Emergency Fund
Total Reserves		1,436,575	387,165	344,051	1,479,688	345,600	386,087	1,439,201	



DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

1 COUNCIL FUNCTIONS

1.1 The matters listed below are the responsibility of the full Council:

- (a) Adopting and changing the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Powers and Duties of Committees;
- (b) Approving, adopting or making material changes to the Council's policy framework;
- (c) Approving the Council's Budget and the level of its precept levied on the Dorset Council;
- (d) Authorising borrowings;
- (e) Authorising the incurring of expenditure not provided for within the approved Budget or otherwise permitted under the Council's Financial Regulations;
- (f) Annual review of the council's Risk Register;
- (g) Appointing Council representatives to outside bodies;
- (h) Confirming the appointment of the Town Clerk;
- (i) Making, amending, revoking, re-enacting or adopting byelaws and promoting or opposing the making of local legislation;
- (j) All other matters which must, by law, be reserved to the full Council.

2 DELEGATIONS TO COMMITTEES

2.1 The matters listed below are delegated to the Council's committees, sub-committees, working groups or panels. They must be exercised in accordance with the law, the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and approved policy framework and may only be exercised where sufficient budgetary provision exists or can be vired from within the approved budget of the Committee concerned.

2.2 Where a sub-committee, working group or panel in lieu of exercising its delegation refers a matter to its parent committee the delegation is exercisable by the committee. Nevertheless, the committee may decide not to exercise this delegated power and may instead make a recommendation to the Council.

Service Area	Function	Committee/Panel
Agency Agreements	Recommending agency agreements and joint working practices	Policy Committee
Allotments	See Land Management	
Arts	Managing the Council's arts-related activities including direct promotions and liaison with DA and other providers	Management Committee
Audit	Responsibility for maintaining a continuous internal audit system.	Policy Committee
	Receiving and considering reports on internal audit and monitoring the implementation of approved action plans	Policy Committee
	Receiving and considering reports of the District Auditor and monitoring the implementation of approved action plans	Policy Committee
Budgetary Control	Recommending the annual Budget and resolutions for level of precept	Policy Committee
	Managing budgetary control matters including the allocation of financial resources and virement of revenue expenditure other than within the approved budget of a committee (see para 2.1)	Policy Committee
Byelaws and local legislation	Recommending the making or adoption of byelaws	Management Committee
	Recommending the sponsoring of local legislation	Policy Committee
	Enforcing byelaws including instituting legal proceedings	Management Committee
Capital Expenditure	Recommending capital works and resourcing their implementation	Policy Committee
Car Parking	Commenting on all matters relating to the management of public car parks in the town	Planning & Environment Committee
Cemeteries	Operation of the Council's burial functions and responsibilities	Management Committee

Civic Events	Organising civic events appropriate to Dorchester's status as historic County Town	Management Committee Twinning & Cultural Activities Panel
Committee and Member Support	Recommending the annual calendar of meetings	Policy Committee
	Recommending changes to Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Powers and Duties of Committees	Policy Committee
	Managing all committee and member functions	Policy Committee
Community Development	Development and implementation of the Local Community Plan	Policy Committee
Community Support	Managing community support activities including provision and maintenance of facilities, liaison with other bodies and cultural support	Management Committee
Complaints	Monitoring the complaints procedure	Management Committee
Conservation	Commenting on proposals for the creation or modification of conservation areas	Planning & Environment Committee
Constitution	See Committee and Member Support	
Culture	See Arts	
Development Control	Commenting on planning applications referred to the Council for comment	Planning & Environment Committee
Electoral Matters	Initiating requests for boundary reviews and commenting during the course of such reviews	Policy Committee
Entertainments	See Arts	
Environment	See Heritage	
External Consultation and Representation	Commenting on consultation documents from other bodies	Appropriate committee
	Recommending appointments to serve on outside bodies:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annually • when a casual vacancy arises 	<p>Policy Committee</p> <p>Policy Committee</p>
Financial Matters	Managing the Council's financial affairs	Policy Committee
Grants	Award of general revenue grants to local organisations and groups	Management Committee
	Award of cultural activities grants	Management Committee
Heritage	Dealing with general matters affecting the historic environment and heritage of Dorchester including all matters connected with the Council's involvement in the Dorchester Heritage Committee	Management Committee
Highway Maintenance	Commenting on proposals for highways maintenance and repairs and associated matters	Planning & Environment Committee
Insurance	Arranging and maintaining insurance cover in respect of the Council's assets and activities against a wide range of risks	Policy Committee
Land Management	Managing and maintaining the Council's various buildings	Management Committee
	Maintaining the Council's various areas of amenity land, play areas, recreation grounds and open spaces including setting hire charges	Management Committee
	Managing, maintaining and monitoring demand and availability of allotment gardens	Management Committee
Legal Proceedings	To institute, defend or settle any judicial or quasi-judicial proceedings on behalf of the Council and to engage legal advisors and barristers as required	Policy Committee
Markets	Dealing with matters referred to this Council by the Dorchester Markets Joint Panel	Policy Committee

Municipal Buildings	Managing the lease to Dorchester Arts and the council's freehold/landlord responsibilities.	Municipal Buildings Monitoring Group Policy Committee
Performance Matters	Recommending adoption of the Corporate Plan	Policy Committee
	Overall management and review of performance targets contained within the Performance and Policy Plan	Policy Committee
Planning Policy	Commenting on proposed revisions of the Local Plan and other service-specific long-term planning documents	Planning & Environment Committee
Play Areas	See Land Management	
Policy Issues	Recommending and reviewing policies	Policy Committee
	Assisting in the development of new policies or changes in policy	All committees
	Commenting on strategic policy documents and consultation papers issued by the Government and other bodies	Policy Committee
Publicity	Managing the Council's public relations activities and the content and circulation of the Council's newsletter	Policy Committee
Public Footpaths	Making observations on matters affecting public footpaths in and around the town	Planning & Environment Committee
Public Lighting	Commenting on matters affecting public lighting provision or maintenance in the town	Planning & Environment Committee
Public Toilets	Commenting on matters affecting public toilet provision in the town	Planning & Environment Committee
Public Transport	Making observations on matters affecting public transport in and around the town	Planning & Environment Committee
Rights of Way	See Public Footpaths	

Risk Management	Recommending the Council's risk management practices and procedures	Policy Committee
Skate Park	See Land Management	
Sports Grounds	See Land Management	
Staffing	Recommending changes to the Council's approved staffing establishment	Policy Committee
	Reviewing and monitoring the Council's employment arrangements	Policy Committee
Standing Orders	See Committee and Member Support	
Street Lighting	See Public Lighting	
Street Naming	If requested, to consider new street naming.	Planning & Environment Committee
Tourism	Development and implementation of a Tourism Strategy for Dorchester	Policy Committee
Town Clerk and Proper Officer	Recommending the appointment of the Town Clerk and Proper Officer	Policy Committee
Traffic Issues	Making observations on matters affecting traffic management proposals in and around the town	Planning & Environment Committee
Trees	Managing tree planting schemes.	Management Committee
	Making observations on proposals to introduce new tree preservation orders or allow works to trees covered by existing tree preservation orders or within conservation areas	Planning & Environment Committee
Twinning	Making arrangements for twinning visits and activities including liaison with twinning societies	Management Committee Twinning & Cultural Activities Panel

3 DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS

- 3.1 The Council does not generally operate a formal scheme of delegations to officers but there are certain matters which might be regarded as routine managerial issues by some people whilst others might regard them in a different way.
- 3.2 The following table, whilst not comprehensive, seeks to clarify responsibility in respect of at least some of these matters. Needless to say, the delegations are subject to them being implemented in accordance with the law, the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, within the accepted policy framework and where budgetary provision exists or is otherwise authorised in accordance with Financial Regulations.

Service Area	Function	Officer
Audit	To maintain a continuous internal audit	Town Clerk Responsible Financial Officer
Communications	To deal with all press and public relations on behalf of the Council	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerks
Data Protection	To have overall responsibility for the Council's duties under the General Data Protection Regulations	Responsible Financial Officer
Documents	To sign documents on behalf of the Council	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerks
Elections	To notify the Returning Officer of all casual vacancies arising in the membership of the Council as required by statute and to liaise with him or her regarding the conduct of elections	Town Clerk
Emergency Planning	To lead the Council's response in the case of a major emergency in consultation with and/or under the direction of the Emergency Planning Officers to the Dorset Council	Town Clerk
Finance	To administer the Council's bank balances	Responsible Financial Officer
	To maintain adequate insurance cover for the Council's activities and property	Responsible Financial Officer

	To act as Responsible Financial Officer for the purposes of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996	Finance Officer
	To authorise the payment of accounts	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerks
	To write-off outstanding debts in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.3	Town Clerk
Freedom of Information	To have overall responsibility for the Council's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme	Town Clerk
Information and Communication Technology	To be responsible for the provision and management of information and communication technology provided throughout the Council including the replacement of out-dated equipment or the purchase of new equipment within the approved Budget	Town Clerk
Land and Property	To purchase necessary goods and supplies	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerks
	To maintain the Council's offices and property in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations	Town Clerk
	To adjust grass cutting frequencies in relation to the maintenance of the various open areas for which the Council is responsible	Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services)
	To devise planting schemes for the various open areas for which the Council is responsible	Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services)
	To ensure that trees for which the Council is responsible are maintained in a safe condition in accordance with good arboricultural practice	Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services)
Lettings	To authorise casual lettings of the Council's various properties subject to payment in accordance with the approved scale of charges where appropriate	Town Clerk

Members Support	To deal with requests from Members for secretarial or administrative support in connection with their duties	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerks
Motor Vehicles and Plant	To maintain, repair and renew the Council's motor vehicles, plant and equipment	Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services)
Proper Officer	To act as proper officer for the purposes set out in Standing Order 51 and for all other purposes prescribed by law	Town Clerk
Staffing	To undertake the duties of Head of Paid Service	Town Clerk
	To implement national pay awards and conditions of service	Town Clerk Responsible Financial Officer
	Within the approved budget and in accordance with Standing Orders to administer the staffing establishment and the national agreement on pay and conditions of service	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerks
	To engage temporary or seasonal workers and determine their wages and conditions of service	Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services)

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 22 JANUARY 2024

DORSET LITERARY FESTIVAL

Background information from the Organisers:-

It was great to meet you both yesterday and discuss the ways in which Dorchester Town Council can work together with the Dorchester Literary Festival in order to promote the festival, boost other local businesses and enhance awareness of Dorchester's many amenities and attributes. Just to recap on our discussion: this year we had around 5,500 attendees to our main programme of 36 events, with another 2500 joining in the free events for young people at Thomas Hardy's School, and others attending free children's events at the library. The main programme of events was held in the centre of town at the Museum and the Dorford Centre.

As a result, the benefits to the local business community were manifest: the festival was directly responsible for Waterstones selling a good number of books at the festival locations, with a further increase in sales at the shop. Many other local restaurants and cafes reported a noticeable upsurge in business during the week. In addition, we always support a local charity. Over the years these have included Dorset Community Trust, Julia's House, Dorset School Readers, Macmillan Cancer Trust, and Weldmar Hospice Care and have raised many thousands for good local causes.

Although the majority of attendees come from the local area, we are also aware that many come from further afield and so we can confidently say that the festival is helping to raise the profile of the town in a wider sense. The feedback we receive is enormously encouraging, with both local residents, visitors and sponsors, all saying how much they enjoy the programme, and expressing the hope that it will continue to flourish. I have attached a few of these for your interest.

Looking ahead to next year (2024) the festival will be celebrating its 10th Anniversary and we are aiming to make it bigger and better than ever. As I explained, we rely on sponsors to help with the increasing running costs of the festival – these include the hire of venues, the technical costs, printing of brochures, website, paying speakers, providing accommodation. We would be most grateful if the Dorchester TC would consider sponsoring us in some way and I am attaching a list of the costs and benefits of various sponsorship packages for your consideration. Other sponsors include Dorchester BID, Duchy of Cornwall, Hall & Woodhouse, Humphries Kirk, Duke's, Porter Dodson, Domvs, Monart Spa, The Gardens Group and the Thomas Hardy Society.

We very much look forward to working with you to enhance the reputation of our county town.

Testimonials 2023

Everything I attended was excellent - thank you. Lesley

Polly Toynbee and Ed Stourton have been favourite journalists of mine for decades and did not disappoint, nor did Kate Adie - a very astute interviewer who brought out the best in them while slipping in her own contributions.

It would be very difficult to think of ways to improve either of the events I attended. The venue was comfortable, the refreshments were a surprise and very tempting and everything ran exactly to time. Margaret S

I attended the Festival for the first time last Friday, for 3 of the speakers ...Daniel Finkelstein, Tim Spector & Polly Toynbee. I was very impressed with all three.

I used to attend events at the Cheltenham Literary Festival, but found that gradually more & more T.V. 'celebrities' were being featured. The actual literary element seemed to me to be being watered down. So, it was refreshing to read the good spread of 'literary' content in your whole programme. Jane F

Thank you for all your work. It was a great programme this year.

I went on the Hardys walking tour which was excellent - informative and entertaining (helped by the wonderful weather).... And to Lemn Sissay - what a treat. Susie M
Congratulations on such a successful festival. What a lineup of authors! Your hard work is really appreciated and we look forward to next year. You obviously have a very loyal team behind you, they deserve our thanks also. Yours, Jenny M

I attended Angus Waycott's talk on self publishing in the Museum. The talk was very informative and entertaining and the museum a lovely venue.

Maggie H

Thanks so much for all you do. People have no concept of the enormous amount of work that goes on behind the scenes The Festival. really is getting noticeably better year on year. We can't wait for the 2024 10 year anniversary. Hay on Wye and Cheltenham better watch out!!!
Caroline

It was a pleasure to attend Damien's talk at this year's festival and to know that plans are underway for 2024. Unfortunately we were unable to attend the Russian themed event nor Daniel Finkelstein's. However, knowing you have had a Russian/USSR and Eastern European thread over the years of, there is one author I would love to hear from as it would add additional context to that thread.

Currently Chancellor of Durham University and a Senior Fellow at the Washington based Brookings Institution, she has advised 3 US presidents and was a star witness at President trump's 1st impeachment hearings. Those clues as to her identity are probably enough but if

not, her name is Fiona Hill, author of, among other things of "There's Nothing For You Here".

Her back story is as interesting as the atmospheric world she grew to inhabit and her grasp of issues likely to become more absorbing next year, would lead to enough material for a much longer slot than available. Although not one to name drop, question time may yield some interesting natter.

I am sure Fiona has an extraordinarily busy schedule and not sure whether a literary festival is within her comfort zone. I believe she may have done some media work in the US relating to "There's Nothing". Wouldn't it be a coup if you are able to secure a date for her.

Hope you don't mind the interference and I'm keeping fingers crossed.

Paul Sherratt

We attended about 6 events. All interesting and very well conducted. I think having someone like Kate or Michael to keep authors on topic is a good idea and worked well. Well done.

Roy B

Just to let you know that I really enjoyed all seven of the events that I attended. It really stirred up my ageing brain. I look forward to next year's Festival.

Liz G

We thoroughly enjoyed Julia Bradbury's talk, what a wonderful speaker, so inspirational.

Susan A

An excellent festival!

Thank you and the team for organising. I only managed to attend four events but they were all incredibly informative and enlightening. A real range in diversity of themes and topics too.

Brilliant that this event was on my doorstep! I will certainly be booking again next year.

Maggie G

Thank you for your kind message. Michael and I loved the festival and were filled with enthusiasm by your speakers. You and Janet have added so much richness to the lives of the people of Dorset. We are looking forward to the 2024 festival.

Barbara

I thought that the talk we went to, on John Le Carre, was excellent. It was well organised, sound, and video was great. The interviewer was very good and the interviewee was interesting and entertaining. Keep up the good work and thank you for putting it on this year. Joe.

The festival was clearly a great success and a very successful partnership between each speaker and all the necessary organisational work.

Along with friends I look forward to 2024! John H

Dorchester Literary Festival Sponsorship Packages 2024

Saturday 12th – Saturday 19th October 2024

Main sponsor: Your company name and logo on the cover of the festival brochure and on screen prior to all events. Your company name and logo featured as main sponsor on our website. Your company thanked in introductory speeches and other linked events. The option to purchase an advertisement in brochure at a discount of 50%. 12 complimentary tickets for events. Further tickets can be purchased at a 20% discount. Invitation to launch event. Reserved seating.

£5000 (joint main sponsor £3000)

Gold Sponsor: Your company name listed on our website and in front of the festival brochure as Gold Sponsor. Your company mentioned as Gold Sponsor before each event. The option to purchase advertisements in the brochure at a 50% discount. 10 complimentary tickets for events. Reserved seating. £1000

Silver Sponsor: Your company name listed on our website and in front of the festival brochure as a Silver Sponsor. The option to purchase an advertisement in the brochure at a 50% discount. 8 complimentary tickets for events. Further tickets can be purchased at a 20% discount. Reserved seating. £750

Headline Event Sponsor: Your company name and logo printed in the festival brochure with listing for the event by a well-known author and acknowledged as sponsor in the details of the event. Your company logo and name listed on our website. The option to purchase an advertisement in the brochure at 50% discount. The option to introduce the event or to have your company thanked as sponsor in introduction to the event, and name and logo displayed on the screen prior to the event. 6 complimentary tickets to the event. Further tickets can be purchased at a 20% discount. Reserved seating. £500

Event Sponsor: Your company name and logo printed in the festival brochure with listing for the event by an author and acknowledged as sponsor in the details of the event. Your company logo and name listed on our website. The option to purchase an advertisement in brochure at a discount of 50%. The option to introduce the event or to have your company thanked as sponsor in the introduction to the event and name and logo displayed on screen prior to the event. 6 complimentary tickets to the event. Reserved seating. £350

£400 – Full page advertisement in the brochure (225mm x 155mm)

£200 – Half page advertisement in the brochure (150mm x 110mm)

£100 – Quarter page advertisement in the brochure (75mm x 105mm)

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE - 22 JANUARY 2024

Update from Town Centre Working Group

The Committee established a Town Centre Working Group in 2023 to focus on identifying ways in which the council can support the 'high street' economy and environment.

The Working Group comprises Cllrs Fry (chair), Taylor, Chisholm, Hewitt, Hogwood and Ricardo.

Following an initial meeting of the group, a round table discussion was arranged in January 2024 with representatives from the local business community (particularly retail) to explore how the council can contribute to the following key objectives:

- reducing the number of vacant properties in the town centre;
- improving the town centre experience and public realm for both residents and visitors;
- developing proposals for events and initiatives to attract visitors to the town centre;
- helping promote the town centre in order to attract investment.

The meeting included representatives from the Dorchester BID (Neil Strudwick), the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce (Steve Bulley), Brewery Square (Tara Bailey) and the independent trader Martin Green.

The discussion considered a range of issues, particularly the challenge of securing improvements to properties given the cost of rents and business rates, and the fact that many property owners are not local. In addition, some key properties are in need of significant physical improvements and their current condition detracts from the appeal of the town centre. However, there will be opportunities resulting from the footfall generated by the new Premier Inn hotel and the NHS Outpatient Assessment Centre (South Walks House).

In general, the meeting concluded that Dorchester has a very positive 'story' to tell with regard to the high street and more effort could be made to attract inward investment. A key role for the town council, working in partnership with the BID and Chamber, could be to develop a promotional campaign to attract inward investment and encourage more retailers to appreciate the benefits and opportunities from opening stores in Dorchester. This idea will be developed further and a report, with a request for resources, will be presented to a future meeting of Policy Committee.

Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate)

DORCHESTER TOWN CLERK

POLICY COMMITTEE – 22 JANUARY 2024

CORPORATE PLAN UPDATE

1. The Committee last reviewed its high level 2019 – 2024 Corporate Plan at its July 2023 meeting.
2. The attached Plan has been amended to take account of changes and updates since the last review and gives the latest information regarding projects and aspirations.
3. Some highlights and lowlights below:-
 - The new Directory of Community Priorities 2023 – 2028 has been completed and approved by the Council.
 - The Borough Gardens House Community Room will be brought back into use later this year now that the works to extend the Gardeners Facilities Building is underway.
 - Further actions under the Council’s Climate Emergency Plan are underway with the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps and Solar at the Borough Gardens House and Greenhouses and the same again at North Square later in the year.
 - Improved use of Social Media – A new Communications Policy, covering social media, has now been adopted and the Council’s social media activity is improving with two posts at the end of last year having reaches in excess of 46,000 and 55,000.
 - Disappointingly the Council and the CLT’s joint approach for the land being disposed of by Dorset Council at Garfield Avenue not accepted.
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 – JANUARY 2024 UPDATE

High Level Focus	Projects	Milestone	Current Progress	😊😐😞
Affordable Housing				
Deliver sites	Tennis Courts	Planning Application agreed Jul 21	Awaiting DC Planning	😞
	19 North Square	Feasibility Study rec'd Sep 21	Decision not to proceed made at Council Nov 21	-
	Poundbury Cemetery	Preliminary evaluation Nov 21	Not feasible, agreed to remove from list July 2023	😊
	<u>Other Sites</u>			😊
	Potential new site Garfield Avenue	Submit EOI June 22	DC disposed of the site elsewhere	😞
Community Culture Health & Wellbeing				
Understand residents needs	Residents feedback	Comments received Apr 21	Completed.	-
	Review Community Register of Projects	New Register of Projects Dec 21	Directory of Community Priorities 2023 - 2028 agreed by Council – September 2023	😊
Maintain and adapt our services	Programme of Revenue Projects	Special Items in Budget Jan 21	Completed Ongoing	-
	The Great Field	Support infrastructure Dec 21	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 Oct 21	Planning application approved. Work ongoing. submitted, revised budget	-	

	Extension to Gardeners Facilities building so as to enable the BGH to be freed up as a bookable community space	<p>June 23 Planning Permission to be received June 23 Works Completed March 2024</p> <p>Park ideas developed Mar 22</p>	<p>produced. Awaiting s106 funding approved. release following planning approval.</p> <p>Planning Permission received and works due to commence 22 Jan 24</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>☹️</p> <p>☹️</p> <p>☹️</p>
Municipal Buildings	<p>Refurbish Municipal Buildings</p> <p>Work with Dorchester Arts to develop use of the site</p> <p>Work with Dorchester Arts to improve front of Building Ph5</p>	<p>Phase 1-4 works completed Jan 22</p> <p>Operating Agreement signed Sep 21 First review meeting Mar 22</p> <p>Planning Application submitted June 23 Works to commence Summer 24</p>	<p>Ph1 (Roof) completed</p> <p>Ph2/3 (Biomass/Offices) commenced, due Jun 22, Ph4 (Corn Ex) completed Sept 2022</p> <p>Lease signed. First review meeting due Jun 22 — meeting being arranged for Nov/Dec 22 Review meetings established and regular.</p> <p>Lease being revised</p> <p>Planning Permission received, tender process underway, possible funding</p>	<p>☺️</p> <p>☺️</p> <p>☺️</p> <p>-</p>

	Update / Refurbish Council Chamber / Town Hall	Establish T&F Group Nov 22 Refurb plan Nov 23	gap. Work due to commence late August 2024 T&F Group met a number of actions agreed, work to be timetabled around front of house works	
The Environment				
Climate Emergency Programme	Municipal Buildings	Phase 1 – 4 works completed Jan 22	Ph2(Biomass) commenced, Completed Sept 22 – EV charger still to be installed in car park	☺ - ☺
	Vehicles & Equipment Partner Programme	Grounds equipt purchased Mar 22 Identify new partner project Mar 22	No new purchases made – EV tested Major grant rec'd from Forestry Commission for Tree Planting in Kings Road, completed	
	New project Borough Gardens Hse / Greenhouses	Weymouth Ave Pav - Jan 23 Investigate options for ground or air source / solar	Contract let – 50% grant received from ECB Solar Panel installed – March 23 Report to Management Committee – November 2022 Carbon reduction works agreed May 23.	
	19 North Square	Complete carbon reduction works June 24 Implement carbon reduction works to the offices Nov 23	Contractor agreed, LCD Grant submitted Dec 2023 work to commence Feb / March 2023	☺

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	Monthly Fairs supported by Markets Panel Feb 22. To be developed	😊
		Tender Market operation	2023-24	process for new market operator to be developed Early 2023 Markets Panel sub group formed	
	Market Charter	Open discussion with Markets Panel	Dec 23	Discussions ongoing with the Markets Panel and Officers	😊
New Independent Market for Dorchester	Supplement existing Market provision with a regular curated independent market		Agreed by Markets Panel and Council first trial market to be held April 2024	😊	
Future Growth of Dorchester					
Local Plan DOR13	Respond to Local Plan consultations	Response to Options	Mar 21	Completed	😊
		Monitor next phase	Mar 22	Dorset Council Local Plan process formally set back two years	-
Town Centre Masterplan –	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	Awaiting pre-app discussions with DC and budget review by FERIA – pre-app information now received. Next steps	😊
					-

Improvements, Transport, Economy, Parking		Develop Plan for Masterplan Aug 21 Consult on Masterplan ideas Jan 22	to be considered. T&F Group established and meeting Completed Partner consultation complete and final version of the vision to be agreed at Nov 22 Council	☺
Internal Governance Arrangements				
Communications	Improve use of Social Media New – 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	Delayed by other projects. Complete - Comms Policy agreed. Social media presence increased significantly – a couple of recent posts have seen reaches of 46,000 and 55,000. Policy Committee to consider funding during 2023-24 budget setting process Funding agreed, T&F group established and meeting	☺
MTFS	Ability to respond to new threats and opportunities	Review MTFS Jan 23 24	Review completed. MTFS remains in strong position Due to national and international events it is suggested that the MTFS be reviewed again in Jan 23 24	☺

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024-25

	2024								2025				
	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
COUNCIL	20 MM 21 (Tu)		29		30		25		27		31		19 MM 20 (Tu)
POLICY	-		22		23		18		20		24 MS@ 1830		12
MANAGEMENT	-		15		16		11		13		17		6 (Tu)
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT	-	3	1	5	2	7	4	2	7 (Tu)	3	3	7 (Tu) & 28	-
MARKETS JOINT PANEL			10 (Wed) @1730						29 (Wed) @1400				
HERITAGE JOINT			23 (Tu) @1730			15 (Tu) @1730			21 (Tu) @1730			15 (Tu) @1730	
SITE VISITS	14 @ 9.30AM				10 @ 9.30AM								
CIVIC EVENTS	21 ATM	Hardy Sun 2					Remem Sun 10						20 ATM
BANK HOLIDAYS	6, 27			26				25, 26	1			18, 21	5,26

MM Mayor Making

MS Mayoral Selection Committee

ATM Formal Annual Town Meeting (it is proposed to hold an 'informal' ATM on a date to be agreed prior to the formal ATM)

Meetings will ordinarily take place at 19.00 in the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings.

* The dates and timing of Markets Joint Panel meetings are still to be agreed with Dorset Council.