

Dorchester Town Council

Council Offices, 19 North Square, Dorchester, Dorset. DT1 1JF

Telephone: (01305) 266861

For information about this agenda contact Steve Newman
s.newman@dorchester-tc.gov.uk

18 March 2026

Agenda for the meeting of the **Policy Committee**, which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, HIGH EAST STREET, DORCHESTER** on **MONDAY 23 MARCH 2026** 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 R. Biggs, S. Biles (Chair), J. Germodo, G. Jones, V. Lloyd-Jones (Vice-Chair), K. Reid, R. Ricardo, D. Taylor 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 19 January 2026 (adopted by Council on 26 January 2026). A copy of the Minutes can be found at [Policy Committee](#)

4. Dorset Climate Action Network – Environment and Climate National Emergency Briefing– Page 3

To receive a request from Dorset Climate Action Network and to consider a report by the Town Clerk (enclosed).

5. Dorchester Market Policies and Signage – Pages 4 and 12

To consider the Council’s market policy and proposed signage (enclosed).

6. Financial Update – Page 16

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

7. Urgent Works to the Municipal Buildings Town Hall – Page 19

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

8. Community Resilience Strategy – Page 21

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

9. Town Centre Working Group – Page 23

To consider the notes of the last meeting held on 9 March 2026 (enclosed).

10. Free Parking Days – Page 24

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

11. Data Retention Policy – Page 25

To consider adopting a draft Data Retention Policy (enclosed).

12. No Vaping Policy – Page 32

To consider adopting a draft No Vaping Policy (enclosed).

13. Management Committee Extract - Fordington Cemetery Wall – Page 34

To consider the proposal set out in the Management Committee extract in regard to Fordington Cemetery Wall (enclosed). **NOTE** Confidential background papers were sent to all Members with the Management Committee Agenda on 11 March 2026.

If the Committee wishes to discuss the detail of these reports, it will be necessary 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”.

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 MARCH 2026

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE NATIONAL EMERGENCY BRIEFINGS

1. On 27 November 2025, ten of the UK's leading experts briefed an invited audience of more than 1,200 politicians and leaders from business, culture, faith, sport and the media in Westminster.
2. Their presentations set out the implications of climate and nature breakdown for health, food systems, national security and the economy. The presentations, about ten minutes each, can be viewed at www.nebriefing.org
3. The purpose was to demonstrate what a clear, evidence-led national emergency briefing could look like and why it is needed. And build an irresistible call for the Government to stage a televised emergency briefing as an essential first step towards the climate and nature response now required.
4. A 45-minute documentary (to be called The People's Briefing), builds on the National Emergency Briefing and is due for release on 7th April 2026. The documentary will present the national implications of climate and nature breakdown - along with positive actions - into a single, accessible account designed for screening in as many locations as possible across the UK –along with a discussion about its contents and possibly a Q and A.
5. This idea is receiving the support of many local organisations across the county including Dorset Council a number of town and parish councils and local eco groups including Dorset Climate Action Network.
6. We have been approached about partnering to host a community screening of the film. The Council could arrange for the film to be shown in the Corn Exchange and local National Emergency Briefing Campaign supporters will host a debate afterwards. All Councillors and Edward Morello MP would be invited to attend, along with members of the public
7. The Committee is asked to consider partnering to facilitate a community screening of the film in the Corn Exchange with a debate afterwards managed by local National Emergency Briefing Campaign supporters.

Steve Newman
Town Clerk

Dorchester Town Council

Policy Committee – 23 March 2026

Draft Dorchester Markets – Policy Statement

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Dorchester Town Council will support and direct the growth and development of markets to meet its economic, social and environmental development objectives. These include regenerating the town centre, encouraging tourism and trade, and supporting local producers to bring their produce to the customer.
- 1.2 The Council will make every effort to pursue its objectives relating to markets.
- 1.3 The existing town centre Cornhill market and the main Fairfield market will be directly operated by the Town Council, and charges and rules will be reviewed annually. These are set out in Section 6 and Appendix 1.
- 1.4 Other externally administered markets seeking to operate in the Town will be reviewed to decide whether they should be supported on an individual basis.
- 1.5 This policy will enable the Council to run its markets responsibly and fairly. Where a market sets up illegally, the Council may request action to stop that market.

2. Definition of a market

- 2.1 A market is a franchise with the right of having a concourse of buyers and sellers to dispose of commodities in respect of which the franchise was given.
- 2.2 It is relevant to consider what constitutes a concourse. Section 37 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 provides assistance. In relation to a temporary market a concourse of buyers and sellers is referred to as “comprising not less than five stalls, stands, vehicles (whether moveable or not) or pitches from which articles are sold”

3. Scope of Policy

- 3.1 This policy identifies distinct types of market:
 - Dorchester Town Council Markets (including Market rights)
 - Farmers Markets
 - Car Boot Markets
 - Commercial Markets
 - Charity & Community Markets/Craft Fairs

4. Objectives

4.1 Dorchester Town Council Markets Fairfield and Cornhill

- a) Regenerate town centres through the development retention and growth of the town markets.
- b) Establish markets, as an integral part of the shopping experience within the town.
- c) Make markets a vibrant centre of activity and social community interaction.
- d) Establish new reasons for shoppers to visit the markets, review time of existing shoppers and increase shoppers spend.
- e) Identify the role markets have in facilitating the start-up of small businesses.
- f) Promote markets as a place for affordable, quality products.
- g) Establish markets as centres of environmental sustainability demonstrating examples of best practice.
- h) Recognise the integral role that other street trading options add to the economic and vitality of the market.
- i) To respond as appropriate to Dorset County Council on street trader licence applications, pedlars applications etc.
- j) Encourage casual traders to become regular traders. Casual traders will not be allowed on markets unless they provide evidence of public liability insurance.
- k) Review market rules and regulations on an annual basis.
- l) Promote an opportunity for market traders, as sole traders to operate their businesses in the town of Dorchester.
- m) Liaise with external bodies such as National Association of British Markets Authorities, Retail Market Association and National Market Traders Association.
- n) Compare all aspects of markets with other local authority markets.
- o) New traders will be encouraged to trade on the market providing that they do not, in the view of the Market Management overlap products with an existing trader; however, applications will be assessed individually (buyers choice) and the Council may take the view their commodities will enhance the market.

4.2 Farmers/Artisan Markets

- a) Increase opportunities for local producers and craft makers to sell to a broader range of customers.
- b) Bring local produce to more people living and working in the Town.
- c) Help protect the rural environment of the surrounding district which looks to Dorchester through supporting diversification into food processing for local farmers.
- d) Liaise with the National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association and the operators of privately run Farmers Markets.
- e) Work with the operators to provide a clean and safe area to trade.
- f) Provide guidance about trading standards to operators.
- g) Identify opportunities to promote the Farmers/Artisan Markets through existing publications and websites.
- h) Identify ways to link the farmers markets with businesses and business support services.

- i) Contribute to the low carbon agenda by reducing food miles through promoting local produce.
- j) Set criteria to ensure stallholders source products locally where possible.

4.3 Car Boot Markets

- a) Operate or support operation where they do not compete with other markets and where they enhance the retail experience of the Town.
- b) Work with the operators to provide a clean and safe area to trade.
- c) Provide guidance about trading standards to operators.
- d) Avoid duplication with others markets of a similar nature.

4.4 Charity & Community Markets

- a) Review seasonal markets (i.e. Summer/Christmas) based on the contribution it makes to the Town events.
- b) Review the number, locations and when markets can operate in the Town in order to prevent duplication liaising with Poundbury and Brewery Square management companies
- c) Proof of non-profit making other than funds to assist a charity or community event must be supplied if requested. Applications for a charity market must supply charity registration number.
- d) By prior arrangement with Dorchester Town Council, charities & community organisations can promote themselves during a Dorchester Town Council Market at a reduced rate providing space is available and charity registration number supplied.

4.7 Rules for Market Stall Holders

- a) For markets operated by Dorchester Town Council, terms and conditions for stall holders are maintained. The Terms and Conditions for Dorchester Market are shown at Appendix 2, and these will apply for other occasional markets run by the Council. The rules for Car Boot Sales are the same as the market as this is how they are legally defined, these will apply for other car boot sales

4.8 Non-compliance with this policy

- a) Any non-compliance will be raised in the first instance with the individual business or organisation in order to try to negotiate an agreeable outcome. Should a suitable agreement not be found, Dorchester Town Council may take the appropriate action against the individual, business or organisation in question.

6. Fees & Charges

Cornhill Daily Market

- Pitch fee £20.00 per 3mt

Fairfield

- Pitch Fee £25.00 per 3mt
- Table fee £12.00 per table
- Lockups £40

Car Boot

- Cars £8.00
- Vans / Commercial £15.00

Dorchester Market - Rules for Market Stall Holders DRAFT

1. Definitions

1.1 “The Market” is held in the Town on Wednesday (Fairfield) and daily (Cornhill) of each week.

1.2 “The Market Superintendent” is the person appointed by the Town Council to supervise all aspects of the market such as allocation of pitches, collection of fees etc.

1.3 “Stallholders” are either:-

“Registered Traders” - those who have traded regularly in the town for a continuous period of 13 weeks and have completed a Registration form. If a Registered Trader is absent for more than 4 weeks, excepting sickness or bad weather, the trader shall revert to a Casual Trader. The Market Superintendent must be formally notified of genuine absences.

Casual, “Non-Registered Traders” - those who trade on a non-registered basis.

2. General Conditions

2.1 These conditions apply to all categories of Stallholder.

2.2 The Market Superintendent has authority to refuse to let a pitch to any Stallholder who does not comply with any of these conditions.

2.3 Registered traders shall display their names and registration particulars on their stalls at all times. Failure to do so will result in tolls being levied at rates applicable to Non-Registered Traders.

2.4 Non-Registered Traders shall visibly display their names on their stalls at all times.

2.5 Occupiers of premises/lockups who operate on the market shall visibly display their names on their stalls etc. when trading in the Market.

2.6 Traders shall ensure that their stalls are continuously manned by at least one competent person over the age of sixteen years. The stall holder shall be responsible for the actions of any person working from their stall.

3. General Obligations

3.1 Stallholders shall indemnify the Council from and against all claims, damages, loss, expenses and costs in respect of any explosion, fire, accident or injury to property, persons or things which may arise or occur through or in connection with the occupation or use of the stall. Valid Public Liability Insurance and, if appropriate,

Market Traders Employers' Liability Insurance Certificates must be presented with the application to trade on the market and must be produced when requested for inspection by the Market Superintendent. Valid insurance must be held at all times when trading on the market. The Town Council is not liable for any damage caused by the stallholder, their stall or goods.

- 3.2 Stallholders shall not cause or permit any public or private nuisance in or upon the stall or anything which shall cause annoyance, inconvenience or disturbance to the Council or its staff or to other Stallholders or to the public resorting thereto.
Stallholders shall not bring the market into disrepute.
- 3.3 The continuity of specific locations by traders is encouraged. However no trader has the right to trade from a particular pitch in the Market.
- 3.4 No guarantee of the continuing availability of a specific pitch in the Market, or any pitch in the Market, should be given by any Trader when disposing of his goods to a successor.
- 3.5 Registered Traders who intend to cease trading in the Market are requested to advise the Town Council accordingly.
- 3.6 All traders must sign that they will abide by these conditions before being allowed to trade on the market.

4. The Stalls

- 4.1 Spaces reserved and occupied by lockups shall be sited immediately in front of their property.
- 4.2 Pitches must be occupied by Stallholders before 7.45am unless the Market Superintendent has been advised accordingly. Pitches not occupied by 7.45am will be allocated on a "first-come" basis.
- 4.3 The positions of all stalls shall be sited as directed by the Market Superintendent.
- 4.4 Stalls shall not be fixed to buildings or street furniture.
- 4.5 Stallholders may only sell or offer for sale those goods listed on their application form. A stallholder may not amend the list of goods that they sell unless approval has been given in writing by the Town Council.

5. Consideration of the Public and Safety

- 5.1 Stallholders shall not cause nuisance by noise, obstruction etc. to residents and users of the highway when erecting and dismantling their stalls and during the Market. Erection of stalls shall not commence before 6.00 am and be removed by 6.00pm.
- 5.2 Stallholders shall ensure that their stalls are set up, their vehicles unloaded and removed by 8.30 am, unless agreed otherwise with the Market Superintendent

- 5.3 Access to seats, telephone call boxes, shelters, crossings etc shall be maintained at all times.
- 5.4 Where a pitch is located adjacent to live traffic a 300mm (1ft.) safety zone shall be maintained to the edge of the carriageway. No chairs, stools or goods on the highway.
- 5.5 A minimum footway width of 2.0 METRES must be maintained at all times. Stalls shall be positioned behind any red lines on the pavement (where marked) to ensure maintenance of this footway width.
- 5.7 Canopies, clips and display goods must be positioned high enough so as to cause no risk or danger to pedestrians.
- 5.8 Stalls and Stallholders shall not obstruct or endanger the users of the adjacent highway. This includes the footway and carriageway.
- 5.9 Where these can be issued, taking account of the position of a stall, if a market stall holder has been issued with a permit by the Town Council (to allow them to park their vehicle with their stall) then the permit shall be displayed at all times. Where spaces are available, day permits can be obtained from the Market Superintendent.

6. Food

- 6.1 Food Hygiene (Market Stalls and Delivery Vehicles) Regulations 1966. Notification must be given to the Dorset Council Environmental Health Division by Stallholders proposing to conduct a food business from any stall. A summary of the principal requirements of the regulations is obtainable from the Senior Environmental Health Officer. All Stallholders conducting a food business must comply with these Regulations.

7. Litter

- 7.1 Stallholders are responsible for ensuring that all rubbish, litter, unwanted goods, etc., are properly stored throughout the day, and removed at the end of the day's trading. Additional precautions shall be taken by Stallholders during inclement weather to prevent litter from their stalls being blown along the highway. Stallholders will be charged at business rates for the removal of any litter remaining at the end of trading.

8. Payment

- 8.1 Fees due shall be paid to the Market Superintendent on demand.

9. Non-compliance with Market Conditions

- 9.1 If any trader fails to observe any of these conditions and/or the instructions of the Market Superintendent, a verbal warning will be issued in the first instance.

- 9.2 Continuing failure to observe the market conditions and/or the instructions of the Market Superintendent will lead to a written final warning being issued.
- 9.3 If the written final warning is not observed, then a trader may receive a temporary ban for a period of 4 weeks or a permanent ban.
- 9.4 A verbal warning may be issued by the Market Superintendent or the Market Officer. Written final warnings and a decision on a temporary or permanent ban shall be made by the Market Officer or, in his absence, the Town Clerk.

10. Appeal Rights

- 10.1 If a decision is taken by the Town Council to permanently ban a trader, then the trader may appeal against this decision and the appeal will be heard by the Informal Dorchester Joint Markets Panel.
- 10.2 Any complaints regarding decisions taken by the Market Superintendent shall be submitted in writing to the Markets Officer.

11. Meanings

Any references in these conditions to the Market Superintendent shall also be taken to apply to other persons who may be undertaking those duties.

PROPOSED SIGNAGE FOR FAIRFIELD MARKET

not to scale



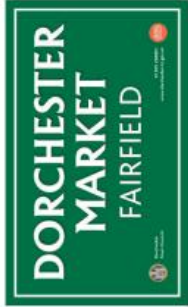
1.



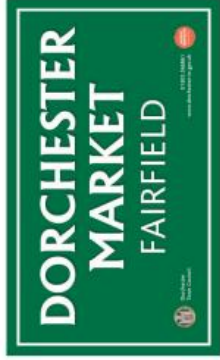
2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.



1. Fairfield Road/Maumbury Road entrance, South Lineys gable: 1200mm Ø



2. Fairfield Road/Maumbury Road entrance Toilet Block gable: 800mm Ø



3. Fairfield Road Short stay left side: 1000x600mm



4. Fairfield Road Short stay right side: 1000x600mm







DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 MARCH 2026
FINANCIAL UPDATE AT 28 FEBRUARY 2026

1. Financial Position

- As at Month 11 (28 February 2026), budget is **£44k under**.
 - £7k over on Sponsorship due to grant to Keep 106 and Helios contribution (both agreed by Policy Committee).
 - £23k over on Municipal Buildings R&M: Gate repairs/fencing (£12k), clock tower works (£8k) and electrical testing and remedial works (£3k).
 - £13k under on Cemetery Income.
 - £8k under on Great Field Works (any underspend at year-end will be transferred to Great Field Reserve).
 - £74k under on staff due to vacancies and lower than budgeted pay award.
 - £4k over on Allotments Water due to two leaks (potential to claim back from water company).
 - £5k under on Cemetery Grass Cutting, less cuts needed.
 - £6 over on Waste Services due to more collections.
 - £7k up on treasury Interest.
 - All other under and overspends net £5k under.

- **Reserves Note:**

£49k unbudgeted expenditure from Corporate Projects Reserve due to Town Hall leak. Potential for insurance claim.

- **Cash Position**

| Account | Balance as at 28/02/26 | Balance as at 31/12/25 | Movement | Interest |
|--------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------|----------|
| Lloyd's | 82,265 | 72,653 | 9,612 | 0% |
| NS&i | 0 | 6,859 | -6,859 | 1.00% |
| CCLA Deposit | 1,725,000 | 1,875,000 | -150,000 | 4.03% |
| | 1,807,265 | 1,954,512 | -147,247 | |

- NS&i account closed on 12 February 2026, funds transferred to Lloyd's account.
- £100,000 Received from East Borough Housing Trust for old tennis courts site, paid into Corporate Projects Reserve, less £7,561 solicitor fees.
- Debtors over 30 days at 28/02/26 = £1,200, 1 Debtor (31/12, £1,200, 1 Debtor).
- Payments list 1 January to 28 February 2026 on website. Supporting vouchers available from RFO.
 - **RECOMMENDED** that the payments list, totalling **£315,265.31** is approved.

2. Internal Audit Visit 2 of 3.

- The Internal Auditor carried out the second of three audits in January, covering Risk Management, proper book-keeping, Payments, Budgetary Control and Income.

- Four recommendations made, one high priority, one medium priority and two low priority.
- Recommendations and officer responses at Appendix Two.
- It is **RECOMMENDED** that the report, and officer responses are noted.

Nigel Hayes

Responsible Financial Officer

APPENDIX ONE

MANAGEMENT REPORT AT 28th February 2026

| By Spend Type | Budget £000 | Profile £000 | Actual £000 | -Under/Over £000 |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Staff | 1,125 | 1,035 | 961 | -74 |
| Capital Financing/Debt | 15 | 15 | 15 | 0 |
| Other Payments | 556 | 511 | 541 | 30 |
| To Specific Reserves | 344 | 344 | 344 | 0 |
| Income | -216 | -199 | -198 | 1 |
| Net Budget | 1,823 | 1,706 | 1,662 | -44 |

| By Service | Budget £000 | Profile £000 | Actual £000 | -Under/Over £000 |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Allotments | -10 | -11 | -8 | 3 |
| Parks & Open Spaces | 179 | 171 | 163 | -8 |
| Cemeteries | -24 | -18 | -9 | 9 |
| Corp. & Dem. Manage. | 42 | 35 | 38 | 3 |
| Cultural & Twinning | 71 | 71 | 77 | 6 |
| Municipal Buildings | 355 | 353 | 376 | 23 |
| Other Services | -12 | -12 | -26 | -14 |
| Office Team | 582 | 528 | 514 | -14 |
| Outdoor Services | 640 | 588 | 537 | -51 |
| Net Budget | 1,823 | 1,706 | 1,662 | -44 |

| Earmarked Reserves | Balance 1 Apr 25 | Contribution | Reserve transfers | Income | Expenditure | 28/02/26 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | £ | £ | | £ | £ | £ |
| Municipal Buildings | 56,994.27 | 20,000.00 | | | 51,565.99 | 25,428.28 |
| Front of House | 31,642.81 | 239,000.00 | 20,000.00 | 10,000.00 | 295,557.22 | 5,085.59 |
| Vehicles & Equipment Replacement | 113,473.22 | 22,000.00 | | 400.00 | 45,171.22 | 90,702.00 |
| Parks Premises | 10,053.93 | 19,000.00 | | 5,217.00 | 6,686.55 | 27,584.38 |
| Cemeteries | 36,931.25 | 10,000.00 | | | 37,320.56 | 9,610.69 |
| Play Equipment Replacement | 29,714.65 | 1,000.00 | | 655.00 | 18,189.28 | 13,180.37 |
| Great Field Reserve | 11,000.00 | 2,500.00 | | | | 13,500.00 |
| Climate Emergency Reserve | 30,948.70 | | 57,067.60 | | 14,804.49 | 73,211.81 |
| Public Realm | 440,310.47 | 5,000.00 | | | 7,273.00 | 438,037.47 |
| Christmas Lights | 4,420.45 | | | | | 4,420.45 |
| Arts & Cultural Reserve | 4,871.85 | | | 6,500.00 | 2,507.93 | 8,863.92 |
| Apprenticeship Reserve | 16,565.43 | | | | 1,062.40 | 15,503.03 |
| Planning Advice Reserve | 18,498.62 | | | | 2,255.00 | 16,243.62 |
| Trees Reserve | 13,663.30 | 20,000.00 | | | 16,870.73 | 16,792.57 |
| Tennis Courts Refurb | 10,800.00 | 3,200.00 | | | | 14,000.00 |
| Tourism Reserve | 33,975.43 | | | | 7,483.19 | 26,492.24 |
| 19 North Square | 11,000.00 | | | | | 11,000.00 |
| DTC Website & IT | 1,230.00 | | | 1,431.37 | 2,345.40 | 315.97 |
| Corporate Projects Reserve | 714,958.39 | 5,082.00 | -20,000.00 | 100,000.00 | 64,550.25 | 735,490.14 |
| Graves in Perpetuity | 14,010.67 | | | | 25.00 | 13,985.67 |
| Total | 1,605,063.44 | 346,782.00 | 57,067.60 | 124,203.37 | 573,668.21 | 1,559,448.20 |

APPENDIX TWO

Darkin Miller Chartered Accountants
2025/26 INTERNAL AUDIT OF DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL - FINAL REPORT VISIT 2 OF 3: 5th FEBRUARY 2026
Appendix 1 – Recommendations and Action Plan

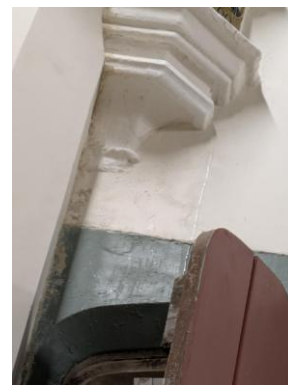
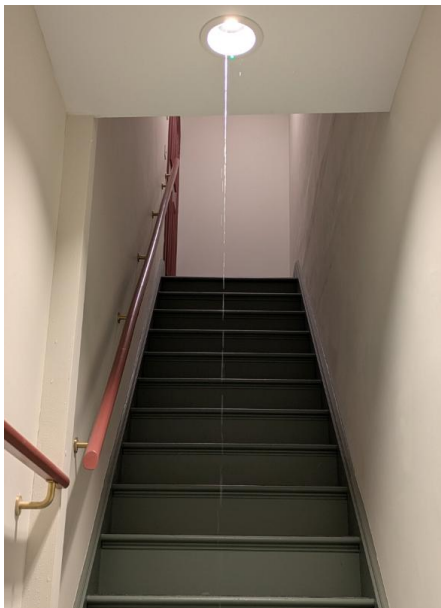
| Recommendation number | Detail | Pr | Management Response | Resp Off | Due Date |
|---|--|----|---------------------|----------|----------|
| 2.1 – Ensure all income that is netted off in the year is included on the gross-up list at year end | I checked to see that a sample of payments from the bank account were correctly coded. I found that cashback received on the credit card statement was coded to expenditure. The RFO typically nets off certain income during the year for management accounts purposes, but maintains a list of such income so that the income can be grossed back up in the accounts at year-end in accordance with the Practitioner's Guide. I noted that cashback was included for some months last year, but that the list omitted other months meaning that income and expenditure was slightly (not materially) understated. I recommend that the RFO ensures that all income is included on the gross-up list at the year-end. | L | Agreed | NH | Feb-26 |
| 4.1 – Recode miscoded expenditure | I reviewed the most recent budget monitoring report (to 31/12/25) to confirm that there were no significant unexplained variances from budget. During the discussion with the RFO, he confirmed that £400 of the overspend shown against the Civic and Ceremony budget was to do with the production of a video for which there is a separate budget. The RFO confirmed that the expenditure would be recoded against the correct budget. I recommend that the expenditure is recoded as planned. | L | Agreed | NH | Feb-26 |
| 5.1 – Ensure VAT is correctly applied to the recharge of administration or salary costs | I checked to see that a sample of income had the correct VAT treatment. I found that 9/10 samples were correctly treated, but that the administration recharge to the Dorchester Markets Joint Panel for the Clerk's time did not have VAT charged on it. VAT should have been applied at the standard rate. VAT was applied when I last tested this income stream in 20/21. I recommend that the recharge is amended so that the correct rate of VAT is applied. | M | Agreed | NH | Feb-26 |
| 5.2 – Update regular hirer discounts and report to Members annually | I checked to see that the correct prices were charged in relation to a sample of services provided by the Council. I found that all but one of relevant income streams had been charged at the correct rate, but I noted that one regular room hirer had been given a discounted rate based on the 2020 discount levels. Whilst the Council used to receive an annual report noting which individuals or groups were in receipt of a discount (based on regularity, community connection, small business/social purpose), this report does not appear to have been made in some time which potentially means that Councillors have agreed the undiscounted charges but are unaware that other rates are applied based on pre-set criteria. I recommend that the discounted rates are rebased to the 26/27 agreed room hire charges, a policy is established which sets out the reasons for and percentages related to agreed discounts, and that a report is made once a year of which hirers are in receipt of the discounts. This will ensure that prices charged by the Council agreed with those set by Members. | H | Agreed | NH | Feb-26 |

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 MARCH 2026

TOWN HALL URGENT WORKS

1. The Committee, at its meeting held in November 2025, agreed to appoint Crickmay Stark Architects to prepare a scheme of works in respect of works to the Municipal Buildings clock tower and Town Hall parapet gutters.
2. Significant bouts of heavy rain occurred before Christmas which resulted in water accessing the building soaking the new plaster in the Town Hall, cascading into the first floor, setting off the fire alarms and causing an electrical failure.



3. The two downpipes at the front of the building were rodded and cleared but unfortunately, whilst this improved the situation, further heavy rain in January saw the same problem occurring again on a number of occasions.
4. Scaffolding was erected so as to enable a more detailed assessment of the situation to be undertaken. The assessment identified significant issues with the parapet guttering /

sump arrangement which, if not resolved, would continue to allow rainwater to access the building, causing significant disruption and damage, during periods of heavy rainfall.

5. A copy of the report prepared by Crickmay Stark Architects has been circulated separately to Members. This report details the findings and the urgent work required to prevent further water ingress.

6. This urgent work was carried out by the contractor previously appointed to complete the internal work to the Town Hall.

7. Due to the need for the whole of the front of the building to be scaffolded for the parapet works to be carried out, the opportunity was taken to undertake stonework repairs and maintenance to the windows, including repair to the hinges of one of the windows so as to allow it to be opened during periods of hot weather and redecoration.

8. The total cost of the works undertaken to the roof and ceiling was £36,718.25 plus scaffolding costs of £12,250.00 to be funded from the Corporate Projects Reserve.

9. Members are asked to approve the urgent action taken to appoint a contractor and undertake the works as set out above and detailed in the report prepared by Crickmay Stark Architects.

Steve Newman
Town Clerk

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 MARCH 2026

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLAN – FLOODING

1. The Council adopted its Community Resilience Plan in 2023. In light of the recent heavy and persistent rain, which caused some flooding in the Castle Park area of town, the Committee may wish to review the ‘Flooding’ element of the Community Resilience Plan’s adopted Risk Assessment which is attached to this report.
2. The recent flooding highlighted the confusion around the provision of sandbags in the town. The Town Council promoted Dorset Council’s social media posts about how to access sandbags but, there was no provision in the town with residents having to travel to Charminster, Bere Regis, Broadmayne or elsewhere to get them.
3. At the time the Community Resilience Plan was developed, the Council considered and dismissed the possibility of establishing a Dorchester store mainly due to lack of a suitable site, staff resource implications in monitoring, maintaining, issuing and replacing stock and arrangements for opening out of office hours and at the weekend.
4. Whilst Dorset Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority for Dorset it is home and business owners own responsibility to protect their home or business from floodwater. Dorset Council was however, very helpful in arranging sandbags to be delivered to Castle Park when asked.
5. In order to help increase awareness of the flooding issue and to identify what measures can be taken by local households at risk of flooding before and during an event, the Town Council, as a part of its Wessex Water Watermark work, is planning to run an open access community event later in the year / early next year involving Dorset Council and other partners.
6. Members are asked to give some consideration to the risk assessment and give an indication as to any amendments they may wish to see ahead of the whole plan review next year.

Steve Newman
Town Clerk

Dorchester Community Resilience Plan – Risk Assessment

| Hazard | Warned or Declared By | Impact on Community | Potential Town Council role |
|-----------------|-----------------------|--|--|
| FLOODING | Met Office | <p>Types of flooding: surface water or ground water flooding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced access on roads, may isolate people, limit access to food, help or emergency services • Building damage • Road damage • Risk to schools (Manor Park School) • Mass panic may cause bulk buying of goods • Contamination of drinking water • Injury or loss of life • Flooding to homes | <p>Preparation or prevention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTC to sign up to receive Met Office weather warnings for South West England email alerts using - www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/guide-to-emails • Make residents aware that it is their responsibility to protect their home against flood damage • Encourage residents to store their own flood protection gear if they are in an at-risk area • Report gully or drain flooding to DC via, https://dorset-self.achieveservice.com/service/report-a-gully--drain-or-flooding-issue or ring DC on 01305 221000 for a faster response • <u>Engage with Environment Agency and Dorset Council on prevention strategies and public education</u> <p>During:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the relevant flood agency to contact, see Risk Management Responsibilities. • Encourage residents to (safely) check in on neighbours via socials or any other possible means <p>Post actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signpost information via website such as warning of risks of flood water to health, contacting insurance company etc. • Use existing community networks to contact vulnerable people and groups, where appropriate |

TOWN CENTRE WORKING GROUP

SITE VISIT – 13th MARCH 2026

NOTES

In attendance: Cllrs Frances Hogwood, Janet Hewitt, Les Fry and Molly Rennie. Also, Tony Hurley, Nigel Hayes and Georgina Wakely.

Key issues identified from the walks along South Street, New Street and Bowling Alley Walk:

1. Members were pleased that there weren't many vacant units in South Street although concerned regarding the future of the former bank buildings.
2. There were concerns about the condition of some retail buildings, with owners not maintaining them properly.
3. Concern was expressed about graffiti on both bins (and a loose door) and utility boxes along Bowling Alley Walk, although the efforts of Dorset Council in removing graffiti from the wall along the Walk were welcomed.
4. The derelict building backing onto Bowling Alley Walk was highlighted and enquiries should be made with Dorset Council.
5. Some fingerposts and other street furniture (e.g. bollards near Coffee No. 1) were in need of repainting.
6. The wooden planters in the southern end of South Street needed re-staining.
7. Redundant fairy lights across the front of the building at Cornhill (previously Re-Loved café) should be removed as are unsightly.

**Assistant Town Clerk
Dorchester Town Council**

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE – 23RD MARCH 2026

ALLOCATION OF FREE PARKING DAYS 2026

1. Each calendar year, Dorset Council offers town councils across the county the opportunity to make its town centre car parks free to use for any four days from January to November. In December of each year, Dorset Council makes all its town centre car parks free to use on Small Business Saturday and allows town councils the opportunity to identify one other weekday in December for free use.
2. For 2026, it is proposed, therefore, that Dorset Council is requested to make its Dorchester car parks free to use on the following dates:
 - Sunday 31st May – Thomas Hardy Victorian Fair
 - Saturday 8th November – Remembrance Sunday
 - Saturday 21st November – Christmas shopping
 - Saturday 28th November - Christmas shopping
 - Thursday 10th December - Christmas shopping

In addition, the car parks will be free to use on 5th December for Small Business Saturday.

3. Dorchester BID has been consulted, and it feels that the run up to Christmas is, and always will be, the best time for free parking from the businesses point of view. DBID would therefore wish for the usual pattern of free parking days to continue for this year meaning that the proposed 31 May date would revert to Saturday 14 November.
4. If agreed, all these days will be publicised to residents via social media, the Discover Dorchester website, the council newsletter and posters.
5. **Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Committee agrees the allocation of free parking days as set out in paragraph 2 of this report and that this allocation is submitted to Dorset Council.

**Assistant Town Clerk
Dorchester Town Council**

Dorchester Town Council

Data Retention Policy

Adopted: xx/xx/2026

Review Due: Every three years, or sooner if required by legislation or operational need.

1.0 Introduction

Dorchester Town Council (DTC) creates, receives and maintains a wide range of documents and records in the course of its activities. These records are an essential asset, supporting effective administration, transparency, accountability and compliance with legal obligations.

Records may exist in paper or electronic form. For the purposes of this policy, the terms *document*, *record*, and *data* refer to all information created, received, or maintained by the Council, regardless of format.

The Council is committed to ensuring that:

- Records are retained for no longer than necessary.
- Records required for legal, financial, administrative, or historical purposes are preserved appropriately.
- Records are disposed of securely and systematically when no longer required.

This policy sets out the framework for the retention, management and disposal of Council records.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all records created, received or held by DTC, including:

- Governance and decision-making records.
- Financial and audit records.
- Personnel and employment records.
- Property, legal and contractual documents.
- Cemetery and allotment records.
- Planning documents.
- Correspondence and administrative records.
- Electronic files, emails and digital media.

It applies to all councillors, employees, contractors and representatives who create or handle Council records.

3.0 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Support efficient administration and decision-making.
- Protect the rights and interests of the Council, its staff and the public.

- Preserve records of historical or local significance.
- Ensure secure and timely disposal of records that are no longer required.

The Council will retain the minimum amount of information necessary to fulfil its functions and meet its legal obligations.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Council

DTC holds overall responsibility for ensuring that records are managed in accordance with this policy.

4.2 Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) – Data Officer

The Council has appointed the RFO as the Data Officer. The Data Officer is responsible for:

- The maintenance and operation of this policy.
- Providing advice and guidance to councillors and staff on retention and disposal.
- Conducting ad hoc checks to ensure compliance with the policy.
- Arranging for secure disposal of records at the end of their retention period.

4.3 All Councillors and Employees

All individuals who create or handle Council records are responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy and managing the records in their possession in accordance with its provisions.

5.0 Document Retention Protocol

5.1 The Council will maintain an adequate system for documenting its activities, taking into account the legislative and regulatory environment in which it operates.

5.2 Records of each activity must be complete and accurate enough to:

- Facilitate annual audits and internal reviews.
- Protect the legal rights of the Council and any other persons by its actions.
- Verify individual consent for the processing of their personal data.
- Provide authenticity so that evidence derived from them is credible and authoritative.

5.3 To facilitate this, records should be arranged in a logical record-keeping system (both physical and electronic) that enables quick and easy retrieval of information, for example, to comply with Subject Access Requests under data protection legislation.

5.4 The Retention Scheme in Appendix A: List of Documents for Retention and Disposal provides guidance on the recommended minimum retention periods for specific classes of documents and records. This schedule has been compiled from recommended best practice from recognised sector bodies, including NALC and SLCC, and takes into account the Limitation Act 1980.

- 5.5 Whenever there is a possibility of litigation or a known information request, the records and information that are likely to be affected should not be altered or disposed of until the matter has been fully resolved.

6.0 Document Disposal Protocol

- 6.1 Documents should only be disposed of if after being reviewed in accordance with the following questions:
- Is retention to fulfil statutory or other regulatory requirements?
 - Is retention required to meet the operational needs of the Council?
 - Is retention required to evidence events in the case of dispute?
 - Is retention required because the document is of historic interest or intrinsic value?
- 6.2 When documents are scheduled for disposal, the method of disposal must be appropriate to the nature and sensitivity of the documents concerned.
- 6.3 Documents can be disposed of by any of the following methods:
- **Non-confidential records:** Place in recycling bins.
 - **Confidential records or records containing personal data:** Shredding (either by council staff or by a reputable, accredited shredding company which provides a Certificate of Destruction), or permanent and secure deletion of electronic records.
 - **Records of Historical Interest:** Transfer to the appropriate county record office, in line with s.227 of the Local Government Act 1972, for permanent preservation.
- 6.4 The following principles should be followed when disposing of records:
- All records containing personal or confidential information must be destroyed at the end of the retention period. Failure to do so could lead to the Council being prosecuted under the Data Protection Act 2018.
 - Where computer records are deleted, steps should be taken to ensure that data is 'virtually impossible to retrieve' as advised by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
 - Back-up copies of documents should also be destroyed or deleted unless specific provisions exist for their retention.

7.0 Data Protection Act 2018

- 7.1 This policy sits alongside the Council's Data Protection Policy. The Council is responsible for ensuring compliance with the data protection principles set out in the Data Protection Act 2018, particularly the requirement that personal data shall be:
- Kept in the form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which the personal data are processed.

- Processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage.

8.0 Electronic Records and Metadata

Electronic documents, email, databases and digital media are subject to the same retention rules as paper records. NALC states that councils should apply identical retention principles to electronic and paper-held documents.

The Council will ensure that:

- Electronic files retain essential metadata to demonstrate authenticity.
- Electronic signatures are accepted where lawful (e.g., typed signatures).
- File formats are monitored to prevent loss of access due to software changes.
- Systems are regularly backed up in line with IT policy.
- Deleted electronic files are securely erased following ICO guidance, ensuring data is ‘virtually impossible to retrieve’.

9.0 Freedom of Information – Section 46 Code of Practice

NALC recommends that local councils follow the Code of Practice on the Management of Records (Section 46, Freedom of Information Act 2000) as best practice, even though it is not strictly mandatory for town councils.

Accordingly, the Council will:

- Maintain reliable, complete and accessible records.
- Review its record management system annually, including both paper and electronic systems.
- Ensure secure storage, controlled access, and timely disposal of records.
- Maintain an audit trail for movements, access and destruction of records.
- Ensure all retention and disposal decisions are documented and defensible.

This section forms part of the Council’s wider FOI compliance framework.

10.0 Review of this Policy

It is planned to review, update, and where appropriate, amend this document regularly (at least every three years) in accordance with advice and recommendations from recognised sector bodies such as NALC and SLCC, and to reflect any changes in legislation.

Appendix A: List of Documents for Retention and Disposal.

Notes:

- The retention period should be the number of years specified plus the current financial/operational period (e.g., '6 years' means the current year plus six complete years after).
- This list is non exhaustive. If you are unsure about any documentation, contact the Data Officer for clarification.
- 'Indefinite' means the record has permanent historical or legal value and must be kept permanently, either by the Council or a designated archive.

| Document Type | Minimum Retention Period | Disposal Method | Reason / Comments |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Governance & Corporate | | | |
| Minutes of Council and Committee Meetings | Indefinite | N/A (Permanent Retention) | Archive; legal record of decisions. Original signed copies to be kept securely. |
| Agendas & Reports for Meetings | Indefinite | N/A (Permanent Retention) | Archive; to provide context for minutes. |
| Title Deeds, Leases, Agreements, Contracts | Indefinite | N/A (Permanent Retention) | Audit and management. |
| Trust Deeds and Schemes | Indefinite | N/A (Permanent Retention) | Limitation Act 1980 – no limitation period for breach of trust. |
| Members' Allowances Register | 7 years | Confidential Waste | Tax and Limitation Act 1980. |
| Neighbourhood / Town Plans (final adopted) | Indefinite | N/A (Permanent Retention) | Historical Purposes. |
| Local Plans / Development Plans | Retained as long as in force | Recycling | Reference, superseded versions can be disposed. |
| Financial | | | |

| | | | |
|--|---|--------------------|---|
| Income & Expenditure Accounts | Last completed audit + 6 years | Confidential Waste | HMRC, audit, financial management. |
| Annual Return (signed by External Auditor) | Last completed audit + 6 years | Confidential Waste | Audit. |
| Bank Statements | Last completed audit year | Confidential Waste | Audit / financial management. |
| Bank Paying-in Books | Last completed audit + 6 years | Confidential Waste | Audit. |
| Paid Invoices | 7 years | Recycling Bin | VAT and Limitation Act 1980. |
| VAT and HMRC Records | 7 years | Confidential Waste | Tax, VAT, and Limitation Act 1980. |
| Quotations and Tenders (successful) | 7 years from contract end | Confidential Waste | Limitation Act 1980. |
| Quotations and Tenders (unsuccessful) | 1 year | Confidential Waste | Management. |
| Grant Records (received or given) | 7 years from finance year end | Confidential Waste | Audit and accountability. |
| Credit Card Records | 7 years | Confidential Waste | Audit. |
| Personnel | | | |
| Personnel Files / Employment Contracts | 7 years after termination of employment | Confidential Waste | Legal claims, references. |
| Wage / Payroll Records | 7 years from finance year end | Confidential Waste | HMRC / Superannuation. |
| Pension Records | N/A – held by Dorset Council | N/A | Legal purposes. |
| Timesheets | 3 years (or last audit year) | Confidential Waste | Legal purposes. |
| Accident / Incident Reports | 25 years | Confidential Waste | Potential personal injury claims (Limitation Act: 3 years from date of knowledge, which can be much later). |
| Health & Safety | | | |
| Employers' Liability Insurance Certificate | Indefinite (or until no claim can possibly arise) | Confidential Waste | The 40-year specific retention rule was removed in 2008. However, due to latent diseases (e.g., asbestosis), claims can arise decades later. Best practice is to keep certificates permanently or for a |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | | | very long period (e.g., 60+ years). |
| Insurance Policies (General) | While valid + 7 years | Confidential Waste | Management. To cover the period a claim can be made. |
| Insurance Policy Numbers and Company Names | Indefinite | N/A Permanent Retention | Trace Cover. |
| Health & Safety Risk Assessments | Ongoing + 6 years after update | Confidential Waste | Management / Legal. |
| Play Area Inspection Reports | 21 years | Confidential Waste | Latent Defects. |
| Property, Assets & Other | | | |
| Hall/Asset Hire Agreements/Invoices | Current + 7 years | Confidential Waste | VAT. |
| Allotments Register and Plans | Indefinite | N/A Permanent Retention | Audit / Management. |
| Cemetery Records (Burial Registers, Deeds etc.) | Indefinite | N/A Permanent Retention | Legal, Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977. |
| Photos / Recordings of Public Meetings | 31 days or as needed | Secure Deletion | Data Protection. |

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Vaping in the Workplace Policy

1. Policy Statement

Dorchester Town Council is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and comfortable working environment for all employees, visitors, and contractors. This policy sets out the Council's rules on vaping (use of electronic cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or similar devices) in and around its premises, in compliance with UK legislation and best practice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, and visitors;
- All Dorchester Town Council premises.

3. Definition

For the purpose of this policy, vaping refers to the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems including e-cigarettes, vape pens, and other similar devices.

4. Policy Guidelines

- **No Vaping Indoors:** Vaping is not permitted inside any enclosed or substantially enclosed workplace premises, including offices, meeting rooms, toilets, corridors, lifts, kitchens, and communal areas.
- **No Vaping in Front of Clients:** Employees must refrain from vaping when on client premises, during off-site meetings, or in any situation where they represent the Council.
- **Consideration for Others:** Employees should be mindful of the comfort of others when vaping outdoors, and avoid crowded public areas or gathered entrances/exits.

5. Exceptions

Under exceptional circumstances, such as health-related issues, an employee may request reasonable adjustments. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6. Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action in line with Dorchester Town Council's disciplinary procedures.

7. Support

Support for employees who wish to stop vaping or smoking is available.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary to reflect legislative changes or Council requirements.

END

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY COMMITTEE – 23 MARCH 2026
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE EXTRACT

Management Committee 16th March 2026

Minute Extract

50. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

Resolved:

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 press representatives be excluded from this meeting during their discussion.

51. Fordington Cemetery Wall - Land Purchase

The Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services) presented a report on the current situation with regard to discussions with the Mill Street Housing Society relating to the acquisition of land to enable the rebuilding of the collapsed section of cemetery wall at Fordington Cemetery.

The options for negotiations were outlined as were the aspirations of the Society with regards to off-site improvements to the public realm. Members also discussed the potential for acquiring additional land for future use.

The Assistant Town Clerk highlighted the on-going cost of temporary, safety scaffolding and the benefits of a swift resolution to the matter.

Resolved:

The Management Committee agrees to further negotiate on the final sum, this would form a recommendation to Policy Committee, on the basis of agreeing that the Chair and Vice Chair have the authority to approve the sum negotiated by the council's officers but not to exceed £31,000.