

# Dorchester Town Council

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12 November 2014

**Agenda** for the meeting of the **Policy Committee** which will be held in the **Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Dorchester** on **Tuesday 18 November 2014** at **7.00pm**.

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

## Public Speaking at the Meeting

The Chairman has discretion to allow members of the public to speak at the meeting. If you wish to speak please ask the Chairman before the meeting starts. We ask speakers to confine their comments to the matter in hand and to be as brief as is reasonably possible.

## Member Code of Conduct: Declaration of Interests

Members are reminded that it is their responsibility to disclose pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests where appropriate.

A Member who declares a pecuniary interest must leave the room unless a suitable dispensation has been granted.

A Member who declares a non-pecuniary interest may take part in the meeting and vote.

## Membership of the Committee

Councillors V. Allan, R. Biggs, A. Canning, T. Harries, G. Jones, T. Jones, D. Roberts, and The Mayor ex-officio.

### 1. Apologies

### 2. Minutes

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 September 2014 (adopted by Council on 23 September 2014).

### 3. Finance & Performance Report

**A**

### 4. Risk & Resources Panel – Minutes of 4 November 2015

**B**

### 5. Affordable Housing on site adjacent to Red Cow Farm

**C**

### 6. Warding Arrangements for Dorchester

**D**

**7. Dorset County Members Personal Grant Scheme**

To consider supporting a proposal, by County Councillors Trevor Jones and Richard Biggs, to award the remaining part (£1,500) of the county members' budget to the Whetstones Garden Refurbishment scheme.

**10. Urgent Items**

To consider any other items that the Chairman or Town Clerk decides are urgent.

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

To resolve "That in view of the fact that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the following matters the public and representatives of the press be excluded from this meeting during their discussion".

**12. Exploration of further use of Municipal Buildings by Dorchester Arts**

**Separate Report**

## DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

## Policy Committee – 18 November 2014

## Financial &amp; Performance Report at 31 October 2014

**1. Summary of Current Position**

- At end of month 7 underspend v. profile is £60,000
- Still awaiting outcome of national pay negotiations
- Likely to result in underspend of c. £50,000 at year end, primarily related to Staff & Supply savings
- Income likely to be under on Markets and possibly also Municipal Buildings
- Allowing for final 2013/14 Closedown. budget revisions made earlier this year and the above, likely to be c. £90,000 extra in General Reserve at year end than MTFS identifies

**2. Cash Position at 31 October 2014**

• Lloyds Bank (2 accounts)	£648,000	0.30% interest
• National Savings & Investments	£752,000	0.75% interest
• Other (Unity & Petty Cash)	£1,000	
Total Cash	£1,401,000	(At 31 Aug was £962,000)

**3. Reserves & Balances**

- Spending on Specific Reserves is within the profile anticipated
- The General Reserve is likely to be c. £560,000 at the year end, around £300,000 more than required for emergency purposes. The Council could choose to top up Specific Reserves or allocate this surplus to projects at its discretion

**4. Debtors**

Debts outstanding for longer than 30 days at 31 October is £2,001 (31 August £2,605). Further information can be provided if required.

**5. Performance**

The Council's draft Corporate Plan identified a number of strategic and operational tasks for this financial year. The Performance report identifies progress to date.

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk

MANAGEMENT REPORT TO 31 OCTOBER 2014

By Spend Type	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Employees	665	395	363 -	32
Premises	148	103	103 -	0
Supplies & Transport	342	198	172 -	26
Capital Financing	89	89	86 -	3
To Specific Reserves	115	115	114 -	1
Income	- 216 -	122 -	120	2
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,143</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>718 -</b>	<b>60</b>

By Service	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Allotments	- 4	1	1 -	0
Parks & Open Spaces	158	101	93 -	8
Cemeteries	8	16	7 -	9
Corp. & Dem. Manage.	35	21	20 -	1
Cultural & Twinning	43	38	36 -	1
Municipal Buildings	89	60	64	3
Other Services	46	66	62 -	4
Office Team	355	220	204 -	16
Outdoor Services	412	256	231 -	25
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,143</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>718 -</b>	<b>60</b>

Specific Reserves	Budget £000	Profile £000	Actual £000	-Under/Over £000
Cemeteries	5	0	0	0
Municipal Buildings	20	0	0	0
Play Equipment	10	10	8 -	2
Vehicles & Equipment	20	0	0	0
Dorchester Festival	0	0	5	5
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>

## CORPORATE PLAN ACTIONS

Corporate Plan Aims – Short Tem Milestones (to be delivered by March 2015)			
Area	Activity	Smart Target	Performance so far
Local Economy	Work proactively with developers	Quarterly meetings with key developers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duchy of Cornwall</li> <li>• Brewery Square</li> <li>• Charles Street</li> <li>• Dorchester Prison</li> </ul>	Regular meetings with notes, constructive Town Clerk has not yet made approach Special P&E meeting, occasional contact Established link to MOJ, awaiting sale
	Facilitate discussions with business representatives to improve how the town is marketed	Establish forum of key partners by Mar15 DBiD, Chamber, WDDC	Informal discussions on strategy Positive outcomes on a number of small operational delivery projects
Housing	Understand steps that WDDC can take to reduce dwellings not in use, and promote their use	Establish WDDC powers by 31 March 2015	Preliminary meeting arranged
Traffic & Highways	Facilitate engagement by DCC with the community	Facilitate discussions on DTEP 3 proposals by 31 July 14	Successfully completed
	Work with town centre businesses to ensure that proper parking arrangements are made during the construction of Charles St	Understand the plan in advance of the scheme starting (date not yet fixed)	WDDC have identified that Simons will take the lead role in developing the plan – anticipate contact once planning application determined
Community Wellbeing & Cultural	Contribute to the Better Together database of community infrastructure	Plan in place to identify how DTC can support the programme, by 31 Mar 2015	Informal contact made with Better Together Team
	Actively promote use of the database by residents of Dorchester	Dependent on the above target. Likely to be Summer 2015	No progress to date
Environment & Heritage	Engage with Heritage and business partners to create a shared tourism vision	Outline plan to Heritage Committee Jan 2015	No progress to date
	Proactively engage with Simons to ensure that the Charles St development complements the town's existing heritage	Discussions with Simons within 3 months of Planning Application approval	Simons presentation to Councillors as part of submission of application. Comments made on Archaeology

## REVIEWING & IMPROVING OUR CURRENT SERVICES

Service	Project	Milestone	Anticipated Outcome	Progress to Date
Allotments	Review fees	Complete Sep 14	New fee structure	No changes proposed in 2015. Focusing on reducing expenditure prior to consultation for 2016
Parks & Open Spaces	Borough Gardens - rejuvenate Bowling Green Area  Improve Skate Park fencing  Support District Council to carry out Sports Pitch audit	List of ideas Apr 14 Develop preferred option for consultation Sep 14 Contract let Sep 14 Completion Dec 14 Agreed approach Dec 14	New use for Bowling Green area  Safe fencing, new access points  Data to support new strategy	Ideas reviewed Apr 14 Update report to Man. Nov 14 Proposals scheduled for Mar 15 Let Jul 14 Expected Nov 14 below budget Approach agreed Sep 14 Preliminary review findings Dec 14
Cemeteries	Review fees Poundbury – review digging process Full Memorials testing	Complete Sep 14 Complete Nov 14 Contract let Sep 14	New fee structure Equipt suitable for purpose/efficient dig Safe memorials	In place Jun 14 – est. extra £10k pa Completed – 6ft digs, extending life of mechanical digger Staff training in house scheduled Dec 14
Municipal Buildings	Review fees & develop marketing strategy Investigate further repairs	New fees Sep 14 New Strategy Mar 15 Contract let Nov 14	Better use, higher income New hirers Mar 15 Better data re condition of parts of building	Fee Proposal to Man. Nov 14 DA proposal to Man. Nov 14 Roof repairs completed. Damp issue may have been resolved by stone repairs
Culture & Twinning	WW1 Commemorations	Programme of events Jun 14	Better access to events	Dorchester at War Aug 14 Tattoo in BG Aug 14 War Memorial refurbished Oct 14 plus support for several other events
Democracy, Governance & Administration	Facilitate Speedwatch in residential areas Prepare for new Council in 2015 Continue to develop the role of the Youth Council	Discuss need with Police Jun 14 Develop induction plan Feb 15 New aspects of Councils activity Mar 15	Access to equip for residents  Well trained and supported members  Well trained and supported Youth Council	Herrison Rd group reported to P&E. Monitoring need for new equipment Preliminary discussions within Team  Attended Management, Comm. Activities, Council, DPCC conference, Dorset YC, Carnival Cttee

**Dorchester Town Council****Risk and Resources Panel****4 November 2014**

**Present** Councillors T. James, G. Jones (Chairman), Trevor Jones, and R.B. Potter.

**Apologies** for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor P. Mann) and Councillor R. Biggs.

1. **Review of the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers**

(a) Review of the Strategic Risk Register

The Panel reviewed the strategic risk register which identified the overarching risks faced by the Council and made the following risk scoring amendments and comments:-

S002 – Pace of Innovation and Modernisation – reduce impact score from 3 to 2.

S005 – Inappropriate officer and Member relationships / corruption – increase impact score from 3 to 4.

S007 – Major budget overspend / variation resulting from unplanned work or work required at short notice – reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

S010 - Over reliance and / or too demanding of key officers, taking on too many responsibilities – reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

S015 – Not meeting the needs of minorities and the disadvantaged – amend impact and effect of deliverables comment to read ‘Poor implementation of policies resulting in the threat of legal action if legislation not complied with, adverse publicity and minorities / disadvantaged not receiving the service to which they are entitled.

S023 – Adverse reports from quality organisations on corporate capability or whole services – remove reference to ‘loss of quality status’ and ‘best value auditor’.

S025 – Climate change – review following a check on any previous consideration of the ‘Ways to tackle climate change’ publication.

S028 – Failure to deliver long term vision and priorities – additional control measure – The Council to manage the agreed vision established through the emerging Corporate Plan.

S029 – Long term industrial action - reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

S038 – Industrial Tribunals – change risk to ‘Employment Tribunals’ and reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

S040 – Failure of the Council’s financial investments - reduce impact score from 3 to 1 subject to confirmation that the Council’s investments are guaranteed.

S043 – Incident or allegation of child abuse – change control to refer to safeguarding children rather than child protection.

(b) Review of the Operational Risk Registers

The Panel reviewed the operational risk registers which identified the risks faced by the Council in its service delivery and made the following risk scoring amendments comments:-

ALL002 – Lack of adequate insurances – reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

PA002 – Change risk to read ‘Lack of adequate insurances’ rather than ‘Provision of adequate insurances’.

PA008 – Play areas not inclusive – reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

MB004 – Inadequate budget provision – reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

OS001 – Failure to collect income – reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

OS009 – Poor maintenance regime – reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

CEM014 – Significant increase in grass cutting contract price – for this year reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

OTH001 – Failure to maintain/develop twinning links – reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

OTH006 – Failure to commemorate/organise civic events – reduce probability score from 2 to 1.

OTH009 – Failure of Decorate Dorchester to continue Christmas Decorations – Decorate Dorchester no longer exists, the Council is presently responsible for erecting Christmas lights in the town.

OTT010 – Major incident at Council run event – change risk to read ‘Serious incident at Council run event’.

ALL – Allotments      PA – Play Areas      MB – Municipal Buildings      OS – Open Spaces  
CEM – Cemeteries      OTH – Other Services

(c) Review of the Opportunities

The Panel reviewed the opportunities previously identified and were pleased to note that many of them had now been achieved resulting in both savings and improved working.

**Resolved**

That the strategic and operational risk registers, as amended, be approved.



## DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Policy Committee – 18 November 2014

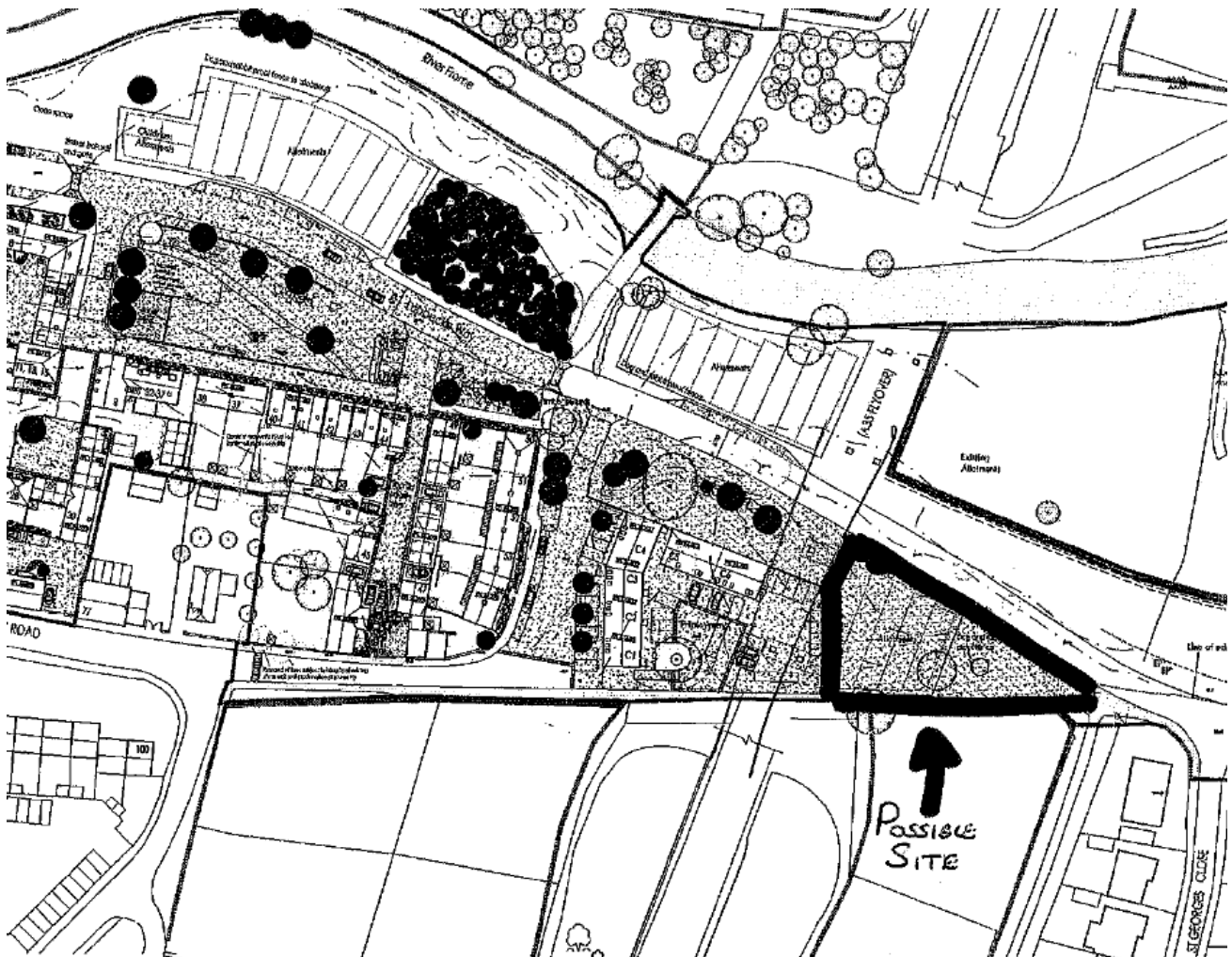
## Affordable Housing on site adjacent to Red Cow Farm

1. The Council's Corporate Plan identifies that one strategic aim is to focus on the provision of a housing mix that meets the needs of our residents, particularly the under 35's, and proposes that the Council will actively assist the process of identifying and bringing forward sites for new dwellings.
2. In May 2014 the Management Committee resolved (Minute 2013/63) "to consider whether the potential exists to develop the proposed eastern allotments plot for additional units of affordable housing instead of as allotments". This site is separated from the rest of the Red Cow Farm development by the bypass, and by commercial units.
3. Since May, with the assistance of Councillor Rennie, discussions have taken place with Hastoe Housing Association and West Dorset District Council's Affordable Housing Officer to develop a proposal that works in principle. The main components of the proposal are:-
  - a. A Charitable Trust be created to manage the development of 10 x 1 bed flats on land allocated for recreational purposes east of the bypass
  - b. The Duchy of Cornwall be approached with a request to release the land at nil cost to the Trust. The land was previously to be given to the Town Council at nil cost as part of the recreational planning gain on the Red Cow Farm and will be designated as amenity land, so undevelopable unless treated as an exception site
  - c. WDDC be approached with a request for a grant to fund pre-planning works to build on the site, approximately £5,000
  - d. Hastoe be commissioned to manage the development of the scheme to planning application stage
  - e. If successful Hastoe would then be commissioned to manage the construction of the scheme, cost of which is estimated to be c. £900,000
  - f. WDDC be approached to lend funding for construction and subsequently for any long term lending associated with tenanted property
  - g. Hastoe would also be commissioned to identify prospective tenants and purchasers, and manage any disposals (at c. £90 - 95,000 per unit, c. 70% of their market value) or ongoing tenancies (below the current affordable rent threshold), and also to act for the Trust when purchasers wish to resell their property
4. It has therefore been established that, in principle, provided the land was transferred at Nil cost, and subject to planning permission, it should be possible to build up to 10 units of 1 bed accommodation, which could be sold or rented out at an affordable rent.
5. The Council's Corporate Plan identifies the delivery of affordable housing for the under 35's as a key element of the vision for Dorchester. While there are a number of potential hurdles

that remain to be overcome, the site adjacent to Red Cow Farm proposal presents a first opportunity to try to turn that vision into reality. In the event that this site is delivered successfully it has the potential to create a blueprint that will allow more sites in public ownership to be used to deliver affordable housing as an alternative to their current uses.

6. If members wish to proceed with seeking to unlock this site the next steps laid out in points b – d above. It is **recommended that the Town Clerk progress these points, and provide a further report every four months on how they are progressing.**

Adrian Stuart  
Town Clerk



## DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

## Policy Committee – 18 November 2014

## Warding Arrangements for Dorchester Town Council

1. Council of 23 September resolved “That the Council urgently request West Dorset District Council to carry out a Community Governance Review” and “That the Council proposes to West Dorset District Council that 8 councillors should be elected for North Ward and 5 each for South, East and West Wards, a total of 23 councillors, with effect from May 2015”.
2. The debate which preceded the resolution considered the benefits of electoral fairness that would result from a review, versus the uncertainty in warding arrangements that would exist some weeks ahead of the election. The Governance review request was submitted with the aspiration that an outcome would be known on 10 February.
3. The Town Clerk wrote to WDDC on 25 September requesting that a review be expedited in time for the May 2015 elections. Unfortunately West Dorset District Council did not feel able to receive the report at their October Executive as the item had not previously been included on the Executive’s Forward Plan.
4. WDDC subsequently proposed to include it as an item on their November agenda, with a timetable that would identify a preferred option by late December, and a final outcome for the 10 March 2015 Executive meeting. This would achieve an outcome in advance of the elections, with some degree of certainty over the likelihood some months ahead of this date.
5. However WDDC would need consent from the LGBCE, who have to approve all warding changes made within 5 years of any outcome that they have previously resolved. They last resolved the Town Council’s arrangements in July 2014. **LGBCE have notified WDDC that they are unable to guarantee to consent to the arrangements before the May 2015 elections.**
6. Given that the LGBCE cannot guarantee that the outcome of the review will be implemented for the May 2015 elections I have written to the Chief Executive at WDDC withdrawing the request for a review at this time. I will invite Members to reconsider the issue mid-way through the period of office of the next Council.
7. This action means that the final recommendations of the LGBCE will be in place for the May 2015 elections, of 4 members in South, East and West wards, and 8 members in North ward. The Town Council will commence a process of planning for this structure as part of its preparations for the new Council in May 2015.
8. LGBCE have recently commenced a review of arrangements for Dorset CC, and are minded to recommend an increase in numbers from 45 to 46. The proposals should become clearer in May 2015.

Adrian Stuart  
Town Council