



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL



Town Clerk's Office, Church Lane, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 7AD

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Elections May 2019 - Become a Town Councillor for Blandford Forum

Blandford Forum Town Council is the parish authority for the town of Blandford Forum. The Town Council is made up of 16 Councillors who are voluntary, although they can choose to receive an allowance of £350 a year that is available to them to cover council-related costs such as stationery, telephone bills, travel, etc. Councillors represent four different wards of the Town: Blandford Central, Blandford Hilltop, Blandford Langton St Leonards and Blandford Old Town. Three Councillors will be elected to represent each ward with the exception of Blandford Central which will have seven.

In May, elections will take place for both the Town Council and the new Dorset Council. The next electoral term will be five years instead of the normal four to align with the new Dorset Council. If you are interested in standing for a position on the Council, you can find out more by chatting to an existing Councillor or you can contact the Town Clerk using the details above.



Am I eligible to become a Town Councillor?

To become a parish or town councillor, a person is qualified if: they are a British subject, a citizen of the Irish Republic or other Euro national and on the day on which they are nominated as a candidate, is over **18** and is an elector; and during the whole of the twelve months preceding their nomination day, or the day of election, resided or had their principal place of work in the parish or town, or within three miles of it.

What does it involve?

A councillor is a member of the Council and is normally elected for a term of four years (five year term in May 2019). Whilst councillors may have differing political views these do not normally extend into their town council work. What town councillors do all have in common is an active interest in their local community and a concern for it. Councillors take collective decisions which form the policy of the Council, which therefore reflects the views of the majority of the members.

Timetable to becoming a Councillor in May 2019

- Check www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk for nomination papers and information from mid-February
- Notice of Election will be published from Friday 15th March
- Nominations can be received from Monday 18th March to 4pm on Wednesday 3rd April
- Thursday 4th April, statement of persons nominated will be displayed
- Thursday 2nd May, polling day from 7:00am-10:00pm
- Saturday 4th May, count for parish and town councils takes place
- Tuesday 7th May, start office as a Town Councillor



Further guidance for prospective candidates can be found on

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/parish-and-community-council-elections-in-england-and-wales>

Please register to vote by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote> and exercise your right to vote at the elections on Thursday 2nd May 2019.



To be eligible, you must be:

- over 18, or reach the age of 18 during the period in which the register is in force - from 1 December to 30 November the following year
- a British, Irish, Commonwealth or European Union Citizen

If you do not get your name on the register you do not have a voice.



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The Freedom of the Town for Dr Michael Le Bas



Councillors have resolved to grant this highest honour they can bestow for the valuable and devoted service that Dr Michael Le Bas has rendered to the town as a citizen. Dr Le Bas (pictured) has been a Trustee and Curator of the Town Museum for 30 years. In that time he has created exhibitions, written publications, interpretive panels for both the museum and the town and replied to queries, from not only the Blandford area, but internationally as well. He has established himself as an authority on Blandford history and the surrounding area. He also worked on the 1914-1918 working group since its inception and has been associated with the Blandford & District Civic Society for over 20 years. The Freedom scroll will be presented to Dr Le Bas at the public Mayor Making Ceremony in the Corn Exchange on Friday 24th May 2019 by the outgoing Mayor, Cllr Roger Carter.

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT 2019/2020



When the Finance & Staffing Committee first considered the budget for 2019/2020 back in December 2018, they were looking at a possible increase between 4.13% and 6.84%. Further time was then spent by staff and Councillors reviewing budget lines and looking for savings where possible. After much discussion and debate at the council meeting held on 28th January 2019, the Town Council confirmed the precept for 2019/20 at £794,744 (2.21% increase), which amounts to £224.64 on the Band D figure (an increase of £4.85 over the year/0.09p a week). Excluding staffing costs, the largest expenditure within the Town Council is £50,000 a year to support the leisure centre, £26,000 for essential repairs and maintenance for the Corn Exchange, £25,318 for business rates currently payable to North Dorset District Council, £17,510 for insurance costs and £15,000 for the Blandford Youth & Community Centre. The Town Council holds a public consultation on its budget each September at the Community Expo and welcomes feedback throughout the year.

Come and see what your local council does and watch your current Councillors in action.

The Town Council meets on a Monday evening in the Corn Exchange at 7:00pm.

Please visit the link <https://blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk/town-council/meetingscommittees> to find out more about upcoming meetings and to read the agendas and minutes.



**Dorset
Council**

Local Government Reorganisation

From 1st April 2019, the District Councils in Dorset and the Dorset County Council will no longer exist and the new 'Dorset Council' will be formed and based in Dorchester (this excludes town and parish councils and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole councils). There are currently 217 District and County Councillors in Dorset, but this will reduce to just 82 in the new Dorset Council, after the May elections, and there will be two Dorset Council Councillors representing Blandford. For further information, please visit: <https://dorsetareacouncils.wordpress.com/>.