



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Town Councillors
Members of the Public & Press

Dorset Council Councillors

Dear Member

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Town Council which will be held **online** using Microsoft Teams on **Monday 8th June 2020 at 7.00 pm** to consider the following items.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
2nd June 2020

A G E N D A

This meeting will be held in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 ("the 2020 Regulations") which came in to force on 4th April 2020. The 2020 Regulations enable local councils to hold remote meetings (including by video and telephone conferencing) for a specified period until May 2021. The 2020 Regulations apply to local council meetings, committee and sub-committee meetings in England.

Members of the public are invited to join the meeting by [clicking here](#). If, as a member of the public, you wish to speak in the Public Session, please notify the Town Clerk prior to the meeting via admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk or 01258 489490.

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, belief or disability), Crime & Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights.

All in attendance should be aware that filming, recording, photography or otherwise may occur during the meeting.

1. Public Session
2. Report from Dorset Council Councillors
3. Apologies
4. To receive any Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
5. Minutes of the Town Council Meetings held on Monday 27th April 2020 ([accessible here](#) and to be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity)
6. Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence ([paper attached](#))
7. Recommendations and Receipt of Minutes
 - 7.1 Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 1st June 2020
 - 7.1.1 Recommendations ([paper attached](#))
 - 7.1.2 To RECEIVE the Minutes ([accessible here](#))
8. To approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the year ending 31st March 2020 ([paper attached](#))

9. To approve Section 2 Statement of Accounts of the Annual Return for the year ending 31st March 2020 ([paper attached](#))
10. To retrospectively confirm the continuing financial management of the Town Council's cricket pavilion ([paper attached](#))
11. To retrospectively approve expenditure for the renewal of the Office 365 subscription for all Councillors and staff ([paper attached](#))
12. Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford +
To review and approve amendments to the:
 - 12.1.1 Planning Remit in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan ([paper attached](#))
 - 12.1.2 Respective Roles & Responsibilities of Blandford + Councils, Steering Group & Co-ordinator ([paper attached](#))
 - 12.1.3 Memorandum of Understanding for the Blandford+ Steering Group ([paper attached](#))
13. To receive a report on the financial position of the Town Council to date ([paper attached](#))
14. To consider expenditure authority for the purchase of equipment for council meetings ([paper attached](#))
15. To consider forming a working group to focus on town centre recovery planning and support for the Town Team survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NQ8D2ZZ>

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

15 th June	Recreation & Amenities Committee
22 nd June	Planning
29 th June	Town & General Purposes

Minutes of the Town Council and Committee meetings will be available from Blandford Library and the Town Clerk's Office as soon as practically possible and at www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

Twinned with Preetz, Germany



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



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Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence

1. Thank You – David Rose has written to the Town Council to thank Councillors for awarding him with a Certificate of Appreciation.
2. Corn Exchange – The Operations Manager and I had been discussing what we can do in the Corn Exchange complex whilst it is closed. We have discussed painting the hall, etc. but part of that discussion was on the lobby glazing, which still needs replacing and is dangerous. Councillors will recall that we did apply for LBC but had various problems. Hence, we met recently with the architectural designer who worked with us on Woodhouse Gardens and he has quoted £900 for the following:

We need to proceed with a new application, and produce some suitably scaled and details drawings, along with a specification of the works giving precise details of what is proposed. I suggest I liaise with a couple of manufacturers who specialise in this type of work and obtain appropriate information from them to support our application. My fee for working with you on this, will include for me producing the scaled plans, sections and specification, along with liaising with the specialist manufacturers, preparing and submitting a planning application and monitoring through to a decision being issued. It will not include for any Building Regulation or detailed construction issue details, which we can look at separately once a planning approval is granted. I propose a lump sum fee of £900 excl VAT and local authority fees, but including for reasonable expenses. I would look to get onto the project fairly swiftly once you give me an instruction.

Although this is within my spending limits, we already have expenditure authority from the Town Council meeting held on Monday 23rd April 2018 (Minute 203.3.1) for £8665.70 in total, which included the supply and installation, and the architectural designer has been instructed to proceed, but this will come back to council should we require more funding once the final costs are known.

The above was written prior to the government announcement regarding the reopening of indoor markets but we will continue to work on the lobby glazing because it is a health and safety issue.

A Zoom meeting was held on Wednesday 27th May with the new consultants and they are producing a report with recommendations for the Town Council to consider.

3. FOI – A Freedom of Information Act request has been received from a resident, and responded to, asking what the Town Council is doing regarding the reopening of the markets. Councillors were informed of the actions being taken by email on 27th May 2020 following a meeting between the Market Manager, Operations Manager and the Town Clerk.
4. Park Road Gatherings – The Town Council was copied into an email to Dorset Police from a resident complaining about large number of youths gathering at Park Road recreation ground. Large amounts of litter were accumulating in and around the football dugouts and no social distancing was being observed. The Operations Manager responded to the resident and stated that the area was litter picked daily, including weekends and that Town Council staff would board up the dugouts to prevent them being used as a gathering point. It was further explained that we have no authority to enforce social distancing. The local PCSO was copied into the response.

**Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 1st June 2020
Recommendations**

MINUTE NO. 10 – REVIEW OF END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS 2019/20

The paper was noted (see Appendix H).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

The end of year accounts for 2019/2020 are approved.

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTE NO. 12 – TO CONSIDER GRANT APPLICATIONS – (CURRENT AVAILABLE BALANCE IS £10,000, WHICH INCLUDES £3,384.22 FROM 2019/20 UNDERSPEND)

12.1 Freedom Street Party – Justine Templeman (no previous applications)

The paper was noted (see Appendix I).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Mievil and AGREED (8 in favour, 1 abstention) that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full Council that**

The Town Council does not commit funds or resources to the event at this stage because, although it supports the principle behind it, following discussion Councillors were concerned that it is too early to plan such an event and, in addition, there are too many uncertainties over the full extent of the financial impact the pandemic has had on the Town Council budgets.

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

To approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the year ending 31st March 2020

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
	✓		
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

To approve Section 2 Statement of Accounts of the Annual Return for the year ending 31st March 2020

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	2,297,572	2,414,290	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	757,881	794,744	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	263,334	414,429	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	392,767	415,231	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	511,730	774,802	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	2,414,290	2,433,430	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	2,433,168	2,411,245	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	4,377,419	4,407,320	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
	✓		N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.
Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date

22/05/2020

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

To retrospectively approve the continuing financial management of the Town Council's cricket pavilion

Background

At the Town Council online meeting held on Monday 27th April 2020, Councillors made the following resolution:

The Town Council approves a loan of £20,000 to the Cricket Club over a period of ten years, with interest of 2.14%, to be included as part of the annual agreement with the Town Council.

At the Barnes for a Recreation Trust meeting held on 22nd May 2017, the following resolution was made:

The Town Council confirms that the allocated £45,000, along with the s106 monies from NDDC, will be financially managed by the Town Council on behalf of the cricket club, as the pavilion and recreation ground are within the ownership of the Trust. This method of operation will mirror that of the Bowls and Football Club project. (Budget Line: Capital Interest budget line 1010, and the Land North of the Bypass/Sports and Recreation budget line. Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011 s1-8.)

The RFO has therefore asked that the Town Council reaffirms its continuation of the financial management for this project beyond the original £45,000, to include the £20,000 loan and the Sport England funding.

The Town Council keeping hold of the funds, just making them available to the club, gives security over the money. This is also the expectation of the cricket club.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors retrospectively approve that the Town Council is continuing to financially manage the refurbishment of its cricket pavilion project, which includes the £20,000 loan and the Sport England funding, and associated expenditure authority (General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011 s1-8.)

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
6th May 2020

To retrospectively approve expenditure for the renewal of the Office 365 subscription for all Councillors and staff

Introduction

The subscriptions for Office 365 for all staff and Councillors require renewal on an annual basis.

Report

Previously the subscriptions for staff and Councillors were not in line and came in at different times throughout the year. Therefore, in the previous years, the Town Clerk was able to approve these within her expenditure authority.

To ensure we can keep track of these licenses they have now been brought in line and are all expiring at the same time.

The license for the Project Co-Ordinator will remain in place for the coming year and the e-mails will be monitored by the Assistant Town Clerk. The Parking Review e-mail has been discontinued and residents are requested to e-mail any issues to admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk.

Financial Impact

17x Office 365 Cloud Services at £60.00 each – Total £1,020.00

7x Office 355 Desktop Office with Cloud Services at £120.00 each – Total £840.00

Total: £1,860.00 plus VAT

This is for the period of 10th May 2020 to 9th May 2021.

Recommendation

Councillors are requested to retrospectively approve expenditure of £1,860.00 plus VAT for the Office 365 subscriptions, using budget line 4040 IT Maintenance/Software. (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

Sybille Maddock
Assistant Town Clerk
5th May 2020

Planning Remit in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan

REMIT AND DELEGATED POWERS - TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING

1. The General Terms of Reference will apply to all Committees and Town Council.
2. The Town Council Planning will meet on a monthly cycle (in line with the Dorset Council diary).
3. All Councillors are members of Town Council Planning. The quorum of Town Council Planning shall be 9.
4. There will be a 15 minute public session at the start of each meeting.
5. **Remit** – authority to discuss/debate and record Town Council observations on planning, tree applications and the Corn Exchange (as and when required). Planning matters are to be relayed to the appropriate Planning Authority in time for these to be taken into account by the Planning Authority in its decision-making process.
6. **Terms of Reference**
 - 6.1 **Development Management**
 - 6.1.1 To deal promptly with all planning functions of the Town Council and in particular to make representations to the Dorset Council and Planning Inspectorate as appropriate. When commenting upon applications from the Dorset Council to decide whether an application should be referred to the Development Management Committee for determination rather than being dealt with under officers' delegated powers.
 - 6.1.2 When the Blandford+ Neighbourhood plan is made, to respond to all planning applications in the Blandford Forum area considering:
 - The ways in which the application complies with NP policies, and where it doesn't.
 - If the application does not comply, what would need to be altered in the proposed development to make the application compliant. To request that the proposals are amended accordingly.
 - If the application cannot be made acceptable, to set out the reasons why the development is considered not to be compliant with B+NP2. To request that the application is refused on this basis.
 - 6.1.3 To comment on any development outside the town boundaries which, would have an impact on the town.
 - 6.1.4 To consult with individuals and interested organisations within Blandford as far as possible and to ensure that all legitimate concerns are taken into consideration.
 - 6.1.5 The Tree Warden (appointed at the Annual Meeting) will report as required to Town Council Planning on all matters relating to the preservation of trees in the environs of the town.
 - 6.1.6 When, due to timescale, planning applications have to be dealt with at the full Town Council meeting, the agenda item(s) will be chaired by the Chairman of Town Council Planning.

6.2 Planning Policy

- 6.2.1 To manage the Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan (when adopted). To raise awareness of the Plan and its policies. To use the Plan to take the lead in developing and managing the Town Council's overall strategy for the development and conservation of Blandford.
- 6.2.2 To proactively engage with planning officers to ensure they fully understand (and are applying) B+NP policies and aims.
- 6.2.3 To use the Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan (B+NP) to build a shared responsibility for new development with the Dorset Council planning team and with local contacts.
- 6.2.4 To set up a system whereby officers notify B+ Councils promptly of emerging applications as well as those submitted.
- 6.2.5 To develop local networks to find out about upcoming applications and, if required, ensure the potential applicant is complying with B+NP policies before the application is submitted.
- 6.2.6 To consider and respond to:
- The County Structure Plan
 - The emerging Dorset Council Local Plan
 - The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Local Plan
 - Any items specifically referred by full Town Council
- Where appropriate to appoint Working Groups to consider any of the above.

6.3 Monitoring and (if required) modifying the Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan

- 6.3.1 To review and approve modifications to policy and/or process as recommended by the Blandford+ Steering Group*.

*NOTE:

- If responses to planning applications are having to be repeated on a regular basis, then the policies may need to be strengthened or the terms of engagement with Dorset Council and/or Developers may need to be improved.
- The Plan will also need to be kept up to date with national and local planning policy, and emerging policies within the Dorset Council Local Plan.
- In the absence of a 5 Year Housing Land Supply, having a Neighbourhood Plan in place helps provide protection from speculative or predatory development for a period of 2 years from the date of adoption. Development of the Dorset County Local Plan is predicted to take 5 years, so plans to modify the Neighbourhood Plan (and therefore renew the protection for a further 2 years) will need to be initiated in 2022.

- 6.3.2 To review and approve the Memorandum of Understanding for the Blandford+ Steering Group (annually).

6.4 General

To host guest speakers with such speakers attending Planning Meetings at 7.00 pm and giving their presentation as agenda item 1 before Apologies and Declarations of Interest.

6.4 Enforcement Matters

To take the necessary action to refer enforcement matters to the Dorset Council when such matters are brought to the attention of the Town Council and to pursue such matters until a conclusion has been reached.

7. Referred Business

To consider such matters which due to the deadline response date are unable to be dealt with at the next full Council meeting.

REMIT AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PLANNING CHAIRMAN

8. General

A Chairman and a Vice-Chairman will be elected at the Statutory Annual Meeting who, together with the Town Clerk or other staff member will be responsible for presenting to Council Planning all planning applications received from the Dorset Council and will be responsible for the chairing and overall organisation of the Planning Meetings.

9. Particular Responsibilities

9.1 The Chairman will arrange with the Assistant Town Clerk, or other member of staff, a convenient regular meeting date (at least once per month and no later than the Agenda setting day) to review all applications received.

9.2 The Chairman will ensure that the following is dealt with:

- a) Videoing sites where considered necessary and presentation at the Planning Meeting
- b) Detailed examination of the plans before the meeting and presentation of the plans to the Planning Meeting.
- c) Pre-meeting site visits
- d) Attending Dorset Council site visits as necessary
- e) Liaison with Dorset Council Planning Department or other consultative groups and reporting back to the Planning Meeting
- f) Discussion with applicants and objectors if necessary and reporting back to the Planning Meeting
- g) Attend Dorset Council Planning Meetings if considered necessary

10. The cut off day for applications to be considered at the Monday Planning Meeting will be the previous Tuesday i.e. agenda setting day.

Respective Roles & Responsibilities of Blandford + Councils, Steering Group & Co-ordinator

Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2033 Key Roles & Responsibilities

Background & Context

Under COVID-19 regulations, the B+NP Referendum is currently postponed until May 2021, however this could be amended (to an earlier or later date) should the situation change.

In the interim, Planning Guidance has been amended so that as soon as Dorset Council issues its Decision Statement (as set out under Regulation 25 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012) detailing its intention to send Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan (B+NP) to referendum, B+NP can be given significant weight in decision-making, so far as the plan is material to the application.

Dorset Council are currently forecast to issue their Decision Statement in **late July / Early August**. The responsibilities and actions outlined below will be required from that point forwards.

Overarching Aim:	
To manage the Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan. To raise awareness of the Plan and its policies. To use the Plan to take the lead in developing and managing each Councils' overall strategy for the development and conservation of Blandford Forum, Blandford St. Mary and Bryanston.	
Roles & Responsibilities	Additional Items / Notes
Town & Parish Council Planning Committees:	
To become familiar with B+NP and able to apply its policies / aims with confidence.	Each Council will need to respond to all planning applications in their respective areas considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ways in which the application complies with B+NP policies, and where it does not. • If the application does not comply, detailing what would need to be altered in the proposed development to make the application compliant and requesting that the proposals are amended accordingly. • If the application cannot be made acceptable, setting out the reasons why the development is considered not to be compliant with B+NP and requesting that the application is refused on this basis.
To consider all future applications in the context of B+NP policies.	
For BFTC use: See S:\Town Council Meetings & Committees\TOWN COUNCIL\Town Council 2020-21\Reports for the	

	<p>updated Planning Committee remit.</p> <p>See S:\Sally\Neighbourhood Plan\2018 2019 2020\Implementation for a more detailed breakdown of the issues involved in managing the Plan (including what to watch out for in the Wyatt Homes application).</p>
<p>To record application details (scope, format and content to be agreed) for ongoing review and monitoring by the B+ Steering Group.</p>	<p>Each Council should keep a record of the number of applications received that are compliant with B+NP. In order to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of each policy within B+NP, each Council should also keep a detailed log of any application that does not comply. This log should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application summary (reference, location, type of app etc.) • Which elements of the proposed development do not comply (may be part of, or the whole application) • What (if any) amendments are suggested to make the application compliant • Whether the amendments are successfully incorporated into a revised application • The outcome of the decision.
<p>To review and approve the Memorandum of Understanding for the Blandford+ Steering Group (annually).</p>	
<p>Blandford+ Steering Group:</p>	
<p>To meet at agreed intervals to monitor the effectiveness of B+NP policies in the decision-making process.</p>	
<p>To monitor application compliance.</p>	
<p>If necessary, to investigate where the system is falling short and to understand why.</p>	
<p>To recommend and implement improvements.</p>	<p>This may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving understanding of B+NP / communication with the LPA. ACTION: Cllr. Carter to explore mechanisms for providing an automated link to B+NP from DC planning application portal. • Communicating with developers to ensure they are aware of B+NP policy requirements <u>before</u> they submit the application [Note: Actions above could be carried out by the Steering Group or by the Planning Committee Chair – to be agreed as required] • Strengthening the content / text within the policy itself (longer term) • The Plan will also need to be kept up to date with national and local planning policy, and

	<p>emerging policies within the Dorset Council Local Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the absence of a 5 Year Housing Land Supply, having a Neighbourhood Plan in place helps provide protection from speculative or predatory development for a period of 2 years from the date of adoption. Development of the Dorset County Local Plan is predicted to take 5 years, so plans to modify the Neighbourhood Plan (and therefore renew the protection for a further 2 years) will need to be initiated in 2022.
To plan for and achieve a successful referendum for B+NP (whenever this may be).	See Blandford+ Co-ordinator role (below) for more details.
Where applicable, to ensure future development projects (e.g. the Town Centre Improvement Project) are formally brought under the umbrella of B+NP as ‘Sub-Development Plans’.	The projects do not need to be managed by the Steering Group, but B+NP should be used as the overarching planning control.
To review and approve the Memorandum of Understanding for the Blandford+ Steering Group (annually).	
Blandford+ Co-ordinator (BFTC Assistant Town Clerk)	
To set up and organise Steering Group meetings as required.	
To compile records from the 3 Council planning committees on non-compliance ready for Steering Group review.	
To assist Steering Group members / Planning Committee Chair in implementing improvements.	
To plan for and support the Steering Group to achieve a successful referendum for B+NP (whenever this may be).	<p>See S:\Sally\Neighbourhood Plan\2018 2019 2020\Referendum for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed Action Plan • Referendum guidance and answers from Electoral Services • Referendum Leaflet (final version needs to be agreed by Steering Group) • Answers to ‘difficult questions’ (to be used as background script for Q&A sessions)

The Memorandum of Understanding for the Blandford+ Steering Group

(v5 14 May 2020)

Memorandum of Understanding between Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St Mary Parish Council and Bryanston Parish Council (hereafter referred to as “The Parishes”) which has been put in place to cover how Blandford + should act in the implementation and ongoing management of their joint Neighbourhood Plan for the approved Neighbourhood Plan Area (hereafter referred to as the “Blandford + area”).

1. The Aims

The aims of this memorandum are:

- a. To help The Parishes to work together on issues, projects of interest and concern to those living or working in the Blandford + area to ensure a coherent and consistent approach to the three communities within the Neighbourhood Plan.
- b. To put in place a process to facilitate this joint working approach.
- c. To ensure that equal weight is given to the wishes of each of the parishes in determining on going changes, additions or modifications to the (adopted) Neighbourhood Plan To identify a process for conflict resolution should it occur.

2. The Agreement

- a. The Parishes agree the need for all three parishes to work together to provide this coherent and consistent approach to the Blandford + area in their Neighbourhood Plan.
- b. To aid this process, a Steering Group has been formed, called Blandford +, to consider all issues relating to the Blandford + area which are relevant to the ongoing development and implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- c. Membership of the Blandford + shall remain unchanged until the Referendum has been passed i.e. it will be made up of the current representatives from each of the Parishes and those living or working within the Blandford + area. Post Referendum, and with agreement from the group, membership shall be reduced to two representatives from each Parish (these may be Councillors or residents).
- d. The representatives from The Parishes carry the right to veto any proposal in their respective parish and carry a right to vote for any proposals to be placed in front of The Parishes who will make the final decision.
- e. The representatives from The Parishes will report back to their relevant Councils and approval will be sought from the same to carry out the proposed actions agreed at the meeting, should it not be within the remit of Blandford + to make such decisions.
- f. Any matters of dispute, regarding the Neighbourhood Plan, between the members of Blandford + shall be referred to The Parishes for resolution.
- g. No expenditure shall be incurred by Blandford + without the prior agreement of all The Parishes, unless the Chairmen of The Parishes approve expenditure within their remit.
- h. The total amount of expenditure approved for any expenditure incurred will be paid as follows:

Blandford Forum Town Council	84% of the total cost
Blandford St Mary Parish Council	12% of the total cost
Bryanston Parish Council	4% of the total cost

i. S106 Allocations / Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

If DC give the B+NP Group the liberty & responsibility put forward specific projects for S106/CIL, then any project put forward should, in the first instance, be prioritised for the Parish or Town Council in whose area the development is taking place, regardless of the amount of the contribution for NP costs (staff etc).

Should no project be put forward by the council in whose area the development is taking place, then by agreement of the B+ NP Group, the monies should be allocated to an agreed project, with due regard to Blandford as the hub town for the area and guided by the B+NP policies.

The B+NP will work together as one unit, giving a greater voice and greater co-ordination with regards to the provision of infrastructure etc.

j. No amendment to this Memorandum of Understanding shall be made without prior consultation and agreement with The Parishes.

3. Working Relationships

The parties to this agreement seek:

- a. an open and constructive working relationship;
- b. to work closely together at all levels, both in policy, and in strategic issues of importance;
- c. to respect each other's views, and where different, after discussion to ensure proper understanding of the reasons for such differences;
- d. to have a 'no surprises' policy, based on notifying each other well in advance, where possible, of significant announcements and developments within the Blandford + area. For the purposes of this MoU, 'significant' may include:
 - Larger developments (i.e. more than 10 houses);
 - Infrastructure projects;
 - Developments that could potentially attract s106 contributions or CIL;
 - Opportunities to encourage larger business into the area;
 - Smaller applications that are likely to contravene B+ policies or become difficult;
 - Developments that extend across Parish boundaries or affect more than one B+ policy
- e. to minimise duplication of activity wherever possible; and
- f. to inform other stakeholders about the joint relationship so as to reduce uncertainty.

4. Responsibilities of The Parishes

- a. To ensure representation, commitment and adequate resources from each of The Parishes.
- b. To agree to uphold the terms of this document.
- c. To support the Neighbourhood Plan through to successful referendum by using a defined project management approach, work programme and timetable to delivery. To ensure referendum activities and Council conduct comply with Electoral Services guidance.
- d. To ensure reports back from the representatives of The Parishes are received by The Parishes; that Blandford + messages and information are communicated to their constituents, community and organisations and promoting interest in Blandford + work and any amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan throughout the plan period.
- e. Blandford Forum Town Council will be in charge of carrying out administration for Blandford +. Any expenditure incurred must follow the expenditure protocol set out above (see No. 2.g & h).

- f. Administration support for Blandford + will be carried out by the Assistant Town Clerk (ATC). The number of hours spent per month will be recorded, and the ATC hourly rate will be applied. Costs incurred will be invoiced as follows:

Blandford Forum Town Council	84% of the total cost
Blandford St Mary Parish Council	12% of the total cost
Bryanston Parish Council	4% of the total cost

- g. A copy of the minutes of The Parishes agreeing to this document and any other approval sought from Blandford + will be provided to Blandford Forum Town Council as the lead organisation for the administration of Blandford + to distribute to members of Blandford +.

5. Meetings

- a. Agendas for Blandford + meetings will be circulated to members of Blandford + 7 calendar days before the date of the next meeting, who will be expected to pass this information on to their respective councils.
- b. Draft minutes of Blandford + meetings will be distributed 14 calendar days after the meeting and will be received at the meeting, subject to officer availability. Representatives will be expected to pass this information on to their respective councils.
- c. Meetings will take place, dependent on availability, to ensure attendance of at least one representative from each of The Parishes.
- d. The quorum, for any proposal voted on to present to The Parishes for approval, will be 4, and must be at least one representative from Blandford St Mary Parish Council, one representative from Bryanston Parish Council, and two representatives from Blandford Forum Town Council.
- e. The Chairman of Blandford + is Roger Carter, and in his absence will nominate a Deputy from the Steering Group to chair or attend the meeting. The Deputy can be any member of the Steering Group.
- f. Meetings are public and anyone living or working in the Blandford + area can attend. Other stakeholders will be by invitation only.

6. Dispute settlement

- a. In the unlikely event of a dispute arising, it is expected that those involved will seek to resolve the issue by a process of consultation leading to the dispute being resolved at the working level at which it has arisen.
- b. If this is not possible then the relevant signatories to this agreement will discuss the matter and decide on the action to take.
- c. If any of the parties to this agreement have any issues, concerns or complaints about any matter in this agreement which cannot be resolved at a local level, they will notify the signatories to this agreement.

7. Date and duration of agreement

This agreement will commence once the document has been signed and dated by the selected representatives.

It is expected that this agreement will run for 12 months, or once the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted, whichever is sooner, at which point there will be a review by The Parishes with respect to its continuation.

Signed

Date

Print Name

Chairman, Blandford +

Signed
Date
Print Name
Chairman, Blandford Forum Town Council

Signed
Date
Print Name
Chairman, Blandford St Mary Parish Council

Signed
Date
Print Name
Chairman, Bryanston Parish Council

To receive a report on the financial position of the Town Council to date

At this stage, it is difficult to assess the full impact the pandemic has had on the Town Council's financial position. However, officers are keen to keep Councillors up to date and the RFO has therefore tabled the following:

Income Lost from 20/03/20 to 30/06/20 (estimated from 01/04/20 to 30/06/20 at previous year rates)		Additional Expenses from 20/03/2020 to 20/05/2020	
Shambles	£1,268	Grant for Age UK & Blandford Food Bank	£2,000
Indoor Market	£1,390	Banners	£105
Corn Exchange	£6,110	Additional Training for staff	£50
Community Room	£493	Advertising	£400
Rugby Club	£440		
Woodhouse Gardens	£1,303		
Public Liability for hirers	£700		
Refreshments/Hire of equip	£91		
Photocopying	£138		
Rental of Pavilions at Park Road Recreation Ground Including labour re-charge (current year rates)	£2,042		
Refunds given for bookings in March '20	£1,241		
TOTAL	£15,216	TOTAL	£2,555

These figures are for the first quarter of the financial year. The Town Council currently does not know when the public venues are allowed to open again. Therefore, we are expecting there to be further loss of income. Any shortfall in the budget at the end of the financial year will come from the reserves. As it is a legal requirement to hold between 25% and 100% of the precept in reserves, there is a strong possibility that this will need to be built up again through the precept. This will be looked at when setting next year's precept.

The RFO recently attended a SLCC webinar on "Coronavirus & Finance". It was strongly advised that when setting the precept for next year that it does not include any income generated through activities due to the possibility that there will be subsequent waves of the coronavirus. The total income that was generated through activities in the budget for 2020/21 included the Rugby Club, Corn Exchange & Community Room, Woodhouse Gardens Pavilion, Shambles & Indoor Market and the Street Market which totalled £48,429 (this includes £14,000 from the street market).

Additional Information

When asked by a clerk from another town about the funding from central government, the Dorset Council has said:... *in light of the work which we have been doing over the past few weeks and the information which has been collected I think it would be helpful if we had a further conversation particularly with those Councils which have incurred additional costs arising from the Covid-19 response. Although it is a difficult message, Government has been clear that the additional money provided is not to make up the shortfalls in lost income but to meet additional costs associated with dealing with the epidemic. Now that that information has been collated a discussion with those who have incurred additional costs would be timely. I am aware that NALC has been leading some work nationally on this matter and it might be useful if we can bring together our local information on the matter together with the work which NALC and LGA have been doing on additional funding for councils.*

Blandford Forum Town Council has had losses due to lack of income from its services such as venues and markets but hasn't experienced major costs from its response to the pandemic. This has been incorporated into staff time and volunteer support.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors note the contents of the report and the Town Council's position at this stage. Further action can be considered once the full impact is known.

Jenny Tempier
RFO
22nd May 2020

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk

To consider expenditure authority for the purchase of equipment for council meetings

Background

Councillors will be aware that the current method with use of the microphones in the Corn Exchange can be somewhat haphazard and not all Councillors choose to use them. There are not enough microphones for Councillors/staff to have one each, which would be ideal under the anticipated conditions in which we will return to meetings in person, and it can be hard to hear each other in the large hall.

A system has therefore been sourced, pictured and estimated overleaf, which would enable all present to have an individual microphone. The key features are detailed below:

- It is a conference audio system, which will be different to our in-house system and is self-contained, no speakers to setup.
- It includes a **system central controller**: allowing you to select up to 6 mics active at any time and a timeout switch in case people forget to turn off their microphone; a **chairman unit** with a priority talk button and nineteen **delegate units**.
- All desk-top units have an internal speaker with volume control and headphone ports.
- The system will daisy chain together, each unit has a 2m flex that plugs into the previous unit and extensions (2m or 10m) could be supplied if required.
- The **standard microphone** (368mm) has been included on the estimate but a **long microphone** (518mm) could be supplied if required, both options feature an In-Use light at the head of the microphone.

Financial Implications

This system would cost £5,810.42 from Company A and £5,580.85 from Company B and it has not been budgeted for.

It is therefore recommended that the General Reserves are used to cover the costs involved or, alternatively, the following budget lines which are linked:

4028 New Equipment £500
4097 Cllr Welfare/Meeting Expenses £528
5206 Building Maintenance & Materials £15,000

Additional Information

Unfortunately, it is not possible to trial this system and cheaper quotations have been sought but have not been provided, hence why two quotations were eventually sought for the same system. Company A have been used before and always go through the set up and operation of the system on delivery and have proved to have a good after sales service.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors consider the purchase of the conference system for council meetings.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
22nd May 2020

Company A

TOA TS770	Portable Conference System Central Controller		£528.23
TOA TS771	Portable Conference System Central Chairman Unit		£181.64
TOA TS772	Portable Conference System Central Delegate Unit x 19 @ £189.25		£3,595.75
TOA TS773	Standard Mic for Portable Conference Central Control x 20 @ £75.24		£1,504.80

Company B

QTY	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	TOTAL
1	TOA - TS770 Portable Conference System Central Control Unit	£507.35	£507.35
1	TOA - TS771 Portable Conference System Central Chairmans Unit (Base Only - No Microphone)	£174.47	£174.47
19	TOA - TS772 Portable Conference System Delegate Unit (Base Only - No Microphone)	£181.77	£3,453.63
20	TOA - TS773 Standard Microphone Assy for Portable Conference System Chairman/Delegate Unit (Mic Only - No Base Unit)	£72.27	£1,445.40
		Subtotal:	£7,645.00
		Discount:	£2,064.15
		Discounted Subtotal:	£5,580.85

Total before discount exc VAT:	£7,645.00
Discounted Total* exc VAT:	£5,580.85
Discounted Total* inc VAT:	£6,697.02