



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 22nd March 2021 at 7.00 pm** to consider the following items.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
16th March 2021

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 using [Microsoft Teams](#). 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 454500.

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 Meeting held on 22nd February 2021](#)
6. [Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence](#)
7. Civic Report

8. Recommendations and Receipt of Minutes
 - 8.1 Town & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Monday 8th March 2021
 - 8.1.1 No Recommendations
 - 8.1.2 To RECEIVE the Minutes
 - 8.2 Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 15th March 2021
 - 8.2.1 [Recommendations](#)
 - 8.2.2 To RECEIVE the Minutes
9. [To consider supporting and taking part in the NHS Social Care & Frontline Worker Day on 5th July 2021](#)
10. [To consider forming a working group to carry out a Community Governance Review](#)
11. [To consider expenditure authority for drainage works at Park Road car park](#)
12. IT Support
 - 12.1 [To consider entering into a hardware support contract for the Town Council's IT server](#)
 - 12.2 [To consider extending the current IT support contract](#)
13. To receive an update and consider any requests from the:
 - 13.1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford +
 - 13.2 BFTC Commemoration Group
 - 13.3 Climate Change & Biodiversity
 - 13.4 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project
 - 13.4.1 [To receive the Action Plan](#)
14. Reports from Community and Local Organisations (Councillors are requested to advise the Chairman of Council or the Town Clerk if they wish to make a report under this heading)

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

5 th April	Easter Monday
12 th April	Planning Meeting
26 th April	Annual Town Assembly at 6.00pm followed by Town Council Meeting

Minutes of the Town Council and Committee meetings are available from Blandford Library, the Town Clerk's Office 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

Online Meetings – Council meetings up to and including the statutory annual meeting scheduled for Tuesday 4th May 2021 have been set up online. We await further guidance from NALC/the government for meetings after that date.

FOI Act Request – Mr Saul Kelleher, Solicitor-Advocate (Higher Rights Civil Proceedings) & Director of Kernon Kelleher, has asked the council to provide the information, from 1 July 2015 to date, associated with proposals to pedestrianise part of Blandford Forum Town Centre. *From documents currently to hand it appears that the Council has been in discussions with third parties to close off all, or part of, Market Place and redirect traffic to adjoining roads since at least that date.*

The information requested includes, but is not limited to:

- (i) reports to Council committees;*
- (ii) internal Council records;*
- (iii) records of the Council's Working Groups;*
- (iv) exchanges recorded with third parties including correspondence, notes of meetings, and telephone attendance notes;*
- (v) surveys for the roads to be pedestrianised and affected by the consequential redirection of traffic.*

For the avoidance of doubt:

- (i) this Fol request applies to all the information held on the subject by working groups and the like that operate under the aegis the Town Council such as, but not limited to, the Market Place Infrastructure Working Group and Blandford+;*
- (ii) this Fol request applies to all the information held on the subject within the Town Council generated by groups in which it may participate such as, but not limited to, Blandford Forum High Streets Heritage Actions Zones Programme Project Board, the Town Team, DT11;*
- (iii) the requested information includes where pedestrianisation is part of wider proposals – as examples: the 2019 application for High Streets Heritage Action Zone funding and applications to apply s.106 monies held by Dorset Council that included enabling pedestrianisation.*

Allotment Relocation – An invoice has been received from Symonds and Sampson in relation to negotiations with landowners for Allotment relocation Heads of Terms, totalling £3,636 + VAT, and this has been paid in accordance with expenditure authority from minute 124 from the Town Council confidential allotment meeting held on 17th December 2018.

Façade Lighting – Significant progress has been made on the Façade lighting and works will hopefully start in the next month so that Listed Building Consent does not expire for this project. The contractor and architectural technician have agreed with the town clerk and operations manager to remove/postpone the up-lighting from the ground under the arches in the Shambles as it may not be required but could be added at a later date. This is the only change from the initial scheme, it has also reduced the cost.

ANPR Camera – The Dorset Police Alliance ANPR Office, who monitor the ANPR cameras reported that the Wimborne Road ANPR camera had a fault and needed repairing. The contractor, who supplied the cameras, has been asked to fix the camera at a cost of £675.52.

Mayoral Chains – The Mayor's Secretary has arranged for the Mayoral Chains to go to be inspected by a local jeweller, as now is the ideal time for them to be looked at whilst they are not in use and before the changeover.

**Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 15th March 2021
Recommendations**

MINUTE NO. 47.2 – OVERALL REVENUE BUDGET FOR THE YEAR TO 23RD FEBRUARY 2021

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

The council approves the virement of the underspend from the following budget headings to General Reserves (1500) and carries them forward to the 2021/2022 financial year:

- Civic Expenses (4802)
- Corn Exchange Project Manager / Consultant
- Grants (4400)
- Service Level Agreements
- Corn Exchange Building Maintenance (5206)

MINUTE NO. 51 – INSURANCE RISK ASSESMENT RELATING TO THE TOWN COUNCIL'S INSURANCE COVER AND APPROVAL OF INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR 2021/22

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

The Town Council:

- Approves the removal of business interruption cover.
- Confirms that there are no other aspects of insurance cover that they wish to amend.
- Approves expenditure authority to enter into a further 3 year long term agreement with Company A until 18th April 2024 at a cost of £13,803.52 for 2021/2022 (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).
- Approves expenditure of up to £1,750 for the awaited additional amount for the Railway Arches cover and the clerk will report the amount back to council.

MINUTE NO. 52 – REVIEW OF THE RISK ASSESMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY (INCLUDING FINANCIAL) ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2021/22

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION** is made to full council that

The Town Council approves the risk management policy (including financial) subject to the removal of business interruption cover, replacing it with 'prudent financial management'.

MINUTE NO. 55 – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REPORT ON THE CCLA PROPERTY FUND

The paper was noted (see Appendix M) and the Chairman commented that council resolved on 1st March to invest an additional £276,000.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION** is made to full council that

The Town Council wishes to keep all the units and continues to review the fund at future F & S Committee meetings.

To consider supporting and taking part in the NHS Social Care & Frontline Worker Day on 5th July 2021

Background

This content of this report was considered at the Planning meeting held on 1st February 2021 and it was agreed that:

The Town Council will consider this item at a future meeting, following discussions with other towns in the area at an online meeting late February, to be attended by the Chairman of Council and Town Clerk.

Discussions were held with chairmen and clerks from other towns in the northern area and there was consensus with the council's view and concerns. It was agreed that we would convey a joint response to the media closer to the time, if required. It is therefore recommended that Councillors approve this stance.

Detail of the Event

Lord Mayors, Lord Provosts, Mayors and Chairs of Councils in Local Authorities and Town Councils throughout the United Kingdom are being encouraged to play a leading role in NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers Day on 5th July 2021, a unique day of celebration and commemoration of those who work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week without any thought of their own safety. This special day is also being used to raise valuable funds for NHS Charities Together, the official organisation set up to support over 230 hospitals and their charitable trusts, with the money being equally divided to support the health and wellbeing of staff. The other charity to benefit is the National Care Association, which wishes to use this opportunity to raise £200,000 for the work they undertake in their care homes. The plan is to make this an annual event, growing in size and stature involving individuals, local communities and others to enable us all to pay 'tribute' to those who undertake so much for us all. The suggested events include:

10:00am - To raise the unique flag

11:00am - A Two-Minute Silence

1:00pm - The Nation's Toast to the Heroes of the NHS, Social Care and those that work so tirelessly on the frontline.

1:00pm – Street, garden, village green and hall parties

4:00pm – Afternoon tea

8:00pm – Clapping and ringing of the church bells

The activities for the day, along with the organisations and others supporting this unique initiative to date can be viewed at – www.nhsfrontlineday.org. To purchase a 230cm x 138cm flag would cost £49.31.

Recommendation

Following the resolution from 1st February 2021, and discussions with other councils in the northern area network, it is recommended that the council does not participate in this event at this time and a joint response is provided to the press, with the other councils, should it be required.

Sybille Maddock
Assistant Town Clerk
21st January 2021

To consider forming a working group to carry out a Community Governance Review

The following communication was received from the Dorset Council on 23rd February 2021 and distributed to Councillors:

Introduction

During the last few months, the Council has received a number of queries from parish councils asking how they can change their governance arrangements, all of which can be considered as part of a Community Governance Review (CGR).

The areas that CGRs cover are:

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes (grouping or de-grouping parishes)*
- Increasing or decreasing the number of Councillors*
- Creating ward boundaries or changing existing Warding arrangements*
- Changes to Parish names*
- Correcting minor boundary anomalies.*
- Changing a parish council into a parish meeting*

The Process

The responsibility of undertaking CGRs falls to the principal council (Dorset Council in this case) and can be triggered in a number of ways including a request from a parish, a community petition or, as in this case, at the principal council's volition. As a principal council, we are required to undertake a review of governance arrangements of all parishes every 10-15 years, and as a number of tentative enquiries have been made, now seems the right time to carry out a council-wide review. The various predecessor councils had undertaken reviews but, for some, this was many years ago so now seems the right time to undertake this piece of work.

The legislation that covers CGRs requires any Review to be completed within 12 months of Dorset Council publishing its Terms of Reference which is the document that sets the process running. It's a very tight timescale so we wanted to put you on notice that we propose to "formally" start this piece of work in July this year. Please note, any changes to governance arrangements agreed as part of the Review cannot take effect until the next scheduled elections in May 2024.

The process that Dorset Council will follow will be:

- Publication of Terms of reference that sets out what will be covered – in this case it will be a review of all parishes that sit within the Dorset Council area (July 2021).*
- Public consultation for 12 weeks seeking proposals/initial submissions.(5 August to 28 October 2021)*
- Consideration of consultation responses and preparation of draft recommendations. (to be agreed at Full Council - December 2021)*
- Public consultation on draft recommendations. (20 December 2021 – 28 February 2022)*
- Consideration of further responses and then publication of final recommendations. (to be agreed at Full Council – April 2022)*

Considerations

When preparing any submissions, we recommend that you take into account the considerations that Dorset Council will need to apply that are set out in the LGBCE Guidance - a link to the Guidance can be found [here](#). The considerations include:

- The need to secure that community governance within the area under review:
 - reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area.**

- is effective and convenient.
- The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion and the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.
- The impact on electorate size of future development within the next 5 years.

We will be able to assist by providing street lists with elector numbers and we will also be able to provide figures for projected future developments. We are currently looking at options for mapping facilities and will advise in due course if we are able to provide any assistance with this.

Any changes will be set out in a Reorganisation Order – the Order will include a detailed map of any boundary changes with any changes taking effect at the next scheduled elections ie May 2024.

Obviously, if your parish is content that the governance arrangements are working well then you do not need to make any submission.

What we are recommending to Parishes prior to the formal start of the process:

Whilst the process will not start formally until July, we recommend that parish councils start talking with their parish at an early stage. Whilst the 12 week consultation period may sounds like a long time, this will pass very quickly.

It is important that any submissions you make to the Council must achieve electoral equality – ie each Councillor will represent roughly the same number of electors.

If parishes are proposing changes, we will ask that you provide information about how this will ensure community cohesion eg what are the links within the community that leads you to recommend that certain areas should be linked together eg in the same ward or parish.

If parishes are seeking a change to the boundaries of the parish, we suggest that they start talking to the other parishes affected. Decisions are much more straight forward if there is community agreement.

I would ask that queries are kept to a minimum between March and 11 May as the Team will be busy administering the Police and Crime Commission election, and a number of parish by-elections and Neighbourhood Plan referenda, but will be happy to help outside of this period. If, in the unlikely event that the May election should be postponed, I will write to you all again with a revised timetable once we are in a position to produce this.

If you have any queries in respect of the proposal, please do not hesitate to contact the Team at the cgr@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk address.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors consider forming a working group to discuss options and report back to council with a recommendation in April/May.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
23rd February 2021

**To consider expenditure authority for drainage works
at Park Road car park**

Background

Expenditure has been approved for works to the Park Road recreation ground car park which includes the demolition of the old toilet block, the extension of the car park and the installation of EV charging points.

Report

Since the plans and expenditure were approved, I have been contacted by the DC highways officer stating that:

“I would like to advise that the two drains in the existing car park have issues, in the gully in front of the bowling club the water is running past by 2 to 2.5 metres away and not going in and the acco drain across the entrance is fully blocked. I suggest that the acco drain is cleaned out the gully moved or tarmac reshaped for the water to go in, plus a new soak away should be installed if the surface area is going to be extended. We have had a flooding to a property opposite and the run-off of from the car park is already helping to overpower our system”.

Since receiving this communication, I have instructed our grounds contractor to meet with the DC Highways Officer to discuss the issues and to prepare a quote on what he feels is required. Whilst I do not want to add to any issues with flooding problems, I also did not want to be recommending carrying out any works which should be the responsibility of DC.

Financial implications

The quote for the works is currently awaited. It was not thought appropriate to obtain further quotes as this work would be done by the same contractor carrying out the demolition of the old toilet block and the extension of the car park. As they are onsite they would carry out this work at the same time and it would not be logistically possible to involve a separate firm to be onsite at the same time.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Councillors approve expenditure using funds from general reserves, subject to receipt of a quote by 22nd March 2021.

Jon Goodenough
Operations Manager
3rd March 2021

To consider entering into a hardware support contract for the Town Council's IT server

Background

The Town Council's IT support provider has made us aware that the IT Server, installed in 2016, has no form of hardware support.

Information

Currently, if something would happen to the server, we would need to call our IT provider who would come and look at the server, using our prepaid engineering time, on top of paying for any parts that need replacing. They don't carry any spare server parts and some things are on a 2-3 day lead time, which would mean fixing the server would take longer.

The warranty includes all parts, except consumables, of which there is only a battery in the server for the array controller. These normally last 3 to 4 years before they need replacing at a cost of around £150 plus engineering time to install (1 to 2 hours).

The hardware support contract covers the replacement of failed server components and the time for the HP hardware engineer to swap out components but no software engineering time. It is a break/fix hardware only contract and therefore any work required to be completed by our IT Provider for software related work, including reinstallation of software or restoring of data, would not be covered. If something hardware-related goes wrong with the server, an HP Hardware only engineer will come to site and swap parts.

Financial Information

ML150 G9 Server Hardware Support – Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm, 8-hr response for 1 year
£365

ML150 G9 Server Hardware Support – Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm, 4-hr response for 1 year
£575

The hardware support company does not offer one off visits – we would have to enter into a yearly contract.

To replace the hardware, it would be about £3,500 plus the engineering time required to get everything built and installed.

Recommendation

Councillors should consider if they wish to take out the hardware support warranty for a year, and if so with which response time, taking funds from budget line 4040 IT

Maintenance/Software (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

Sybille Maddock
Assistant Town Clerk
11th March 2021

To consider extending the current IT support contract

Background

Since 2016 the Town Council has been working with the same IT Service Provider, who provide day to day support.

Additional Information

The Town Council agreed to a rolling contract and therefore there is no requirement for renewal, however we must still abide by our financial regulations. The current company is responsive and provides a very good service to the Town Council staff and Councillors. Any issues are dealt with promptly and there have been no major issues since moving to this company. Therefore, no other quotes have been sought.

Financial Implications

In April 2019 the Town Council purchased ten days of engineering time, which ran out in March 2021. Officers would like to save costs by opting for ten days of engineering again, priced below as Option 3:

Option 1 – One day cost is £600 + VAT.

Option 2 – Five days cost is £550 + VAT per day, total cost £2,750 + VAT.

Option 3 – Ten days of engineering time at a cost of £500.00 per day (7.5hrs), total cost £5,000.00 + VAT.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors approve expenditure of £5,000 + VAT from the IT Maintenance & Software budget line 4040 (being ten days of engineering time at a cost of £500.00 per day) (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

Sybille Maddock
Assistant Town Clerk
16th March 2021

Blandford town centre Market area, part–pedestrianisation trial

Factors to consider in planning this project:

1. Dorset Council’s position

Establish what the long term approach of Dorset Council will be given potentially conflicting strategic and operational issues if the trial proves to be successful, and partners wish to make it permanent. These issues include car parking, supporting local businesses and town centre regeneration, town centre Conservation Area enhancement, and Air Quality.

Prepare a briefing paper for Cllr Noc Lacey-Clarke which covers the background to the proposal, the issues as above and potential conflict, the trial and how that will be monitored & evaluated. And, if the trial demonstrates there are benefits, to ask whether DC can consider these benefits against the potential loss of car parking income, as part of the decision for a permanent pedestrianisation.

2. Planning the trial

Action	Timescales	Who	Comments /Progress
<p>Discuss with individual businesses that would be directly affected by the trial. Aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hear their views, both concerns & support • Work out what best part-pedestrianisation layout would work for each business, and so develop a plan which maximises potential benefit and minimises potential problems • Discuss some baseline data or info from which the impact of the trial can be measured (see Monitoring & Evaluation below) 	Need to decide when to do this, given within current Covid restrictions is not a good time.	To be decided (TBD)	
Discuss with market traders	As above	Markets Manager?	
Discuss with DC Parking Services & Highways re best part to part-pedestrianise from parking & traffic management perspective.		DC Highways	
<p>Permissions needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning permission? • Other Highway consents? • Agreement of DC Parking Services re the trial 	By end April 2021?	TBD	
<p>Current car parking use Simple monitoring or survey to get a much better understanding of how this parking is used.</p>	Post Covid restrictions	TBD	

	would be more sensible, but useful to have some early information?		
Anything else?			

3. Monitoring and evaluating impact

We will need to plan this well in advance, so all agree that it is sensible and useful, and so Baseline info can be gathered before the trial starts.

The factors that could be monitored & evaluated include the impact on Businesses, General footfall, views of people using the Town Centre, Air Quality, Townscape & Heritage, Car Parking. Are there others as well?

Action	Timescales	Who	Comments /Progress
<p>Businesses Suggestion from Brie Logan, Shaftesbury Town Council (see Appendix 1) Measure (ideally):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. footfall data for shops 2. transaction count - most shops will have access to transaction count via the till function and ask for the support of the shops to provide the 'start point' of information. 3. conversion data – the number of customers in the shop versus the actual spend <p>Set up a tracker/ database to record the base information. Ask the shops to track the information weekly and send in the weekly stats ideally for 6 weeks before the start of the pedestrianisation trial. The exercise can be repeated throughout the trial for say a further 6 weeks. After a 12 week period we will then have before and during stats.</p> <p>Also engage with the national retailers such as Morrison's, Boots, Clarks etc as relevant...as they will have footfall camera's and may be willing to share their data.</p> <p>Some businesses may not want to engage in this, e.g. because of commercial confidentiality, or because they do not support the trial. Another way may be to ask businesses before and during the trial about their view of the impact of the trial on their trade, positive, neutral or negative, and ask them to evidence this where possible in whichever way works best for them and with the business data they have, e.g. turnover.</p>		TBD	
<p>General Footfall. General footfall will provide an overall measure whether the area is busier during the trial or not.</p>	Test methods first, then	TBD	

Whilst it may not relate directly into increased turnover for businesses and car parking in Blandford, it is useful overall data, particularly if other data is difficult to collect/assess. There is good guidance from the High Streets Task Force on how to do manual footfall counts at https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/details/?id=5eb1fef5-78c7-4dbf-a177-d7955f089a99	monitor footfall for a period before and then during the trial		
People using the town centre. Simple straw poll survey asking people who walk through the market area what they think of the trial pedestrianisation. Could be done by the same people doing the Footfall survey?		TBD	
Air Quality Would any changes be attributable dt part pedestrianisation, and measurable? DC Environmental Health monitor Air Quality in town centres through a survey. Blandford High School could be interested (Nic Nicol)		HdeI is asking NN	
Townscape & Heritage, enhancement of the Conservation Area Better views of the heritage assets facing and close to the market area		TBD	
Car Parking. Daily counts available from ticket machines? In which case, look at ordinary weekdays and then market days before trial & before Covid, if possible. Is there displacement, i.e. when market is on, more people come into town, so income from other car parks rises?	Establish normal use data from DC Parking Services data	DC Parking Services	
Anything else?			

4. Operational

Timing. Already agreed that the trial will be implemented after the current Covid restrictions, so likely to be summer 2021 onwards. October onwards is probably too late in the year. All subject to Covid, restrictions, etc

Funding available. Lidl's town centre enhancement Sect 106 funding remaining, net of commitments, is currently £19,000

Action	Timescales	Who	Comments /Progress
Design. As only a temporary measure, it needs to be as simple as possible, with temporary barriers, and no changes to the surface. However, good to get the basics of design right. Historic England has useful guidance such as https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/streets-for-all/ . DC also has Landscaping specialists who may be able to advise.		TBD	

Barrier to fence off the area. Need to find a barrier type which is robust, and also reflects the heritage of the town centre location		TBD	
Draft Budget. To include Barrier and any other street furniture, reimbursement of lost car parking income, insurance, any publicity costs, any event support costs, and contingency. Anything else?	To develop budget and secure Sect 106 funding by ??	TBD	
Events & activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who organises/co-ordinates • Insurance • Risk Assessments • Any support costs, if needed? 		TBD	
Reimbursement of lost car parking fees to Dorset Council Parking Services. Say £138 per day, 6 days a week, so say 26 days in a 30 day (1 month) period. Cost per month, £3,588, say £3,600 pcm.		DC Parking Services	
Insurance If not covered elsewhere		TBD	
Publicity		TBD	
Anything else?			

Hugh de Iongh, Community led Development Officer, Dorset Council
V1 - 13/1/2021

Appendix 1

Email from Brie Logan, Shaftesbury Town Council

In terms of your trial in Blandford I have a couple of suggestions for you to consider. It is really important to gather qualitative data to provide the 'decision makers' with compelling evidence. If I was looking at this Project in Blandford I would be engaging with the shops in and around the Corn Exchange and understand the base information such as:

1. footfall data

2. transaction count - most shops will have access to transaction count via the till function and I would ask for the support of the shops to provide the 'start point' of information.
3. conversion data – the number of customers in the shop versus the actual spend

I would then set up a tracker/ database to record the base information. I would ask the shops to track the information weekly and send me the weekly stats ideally for 6 weeks before the start of the pedestrianisation trial. The exercise can be repeated throughout the trial for say a further 6 weeks. After a 12 week period you will then have compelling before and after stats.

I would also engage with the national retailers as they will have footfall camera's and may be willing to share their data. I would certainly be contacting Morrison's, Boots, Clarks etc...as this data will be hard evidence.