



# BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

To: Town & General Purposes Committee Members (Cllr A Cross, Cllr N Lacey-Clarke, Cllr C Stevens, Cllr H Miéville, Cllr R Holmes, Cllr K Herbert, Cllr B Quayle, Cllr P Clark and Cllr C Jacques)

All other members of the Town Council  
Members of the Public & the Press

Dorset Council Councillors

Dear Member

## **TOWN & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Town & General Purposes Committee which will be held in the **Corn Exchange**, Market Place, Blandford Forum on **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7:00 pm** to consider the following items. This meeting will also be available to view online using Microsoft Teams [using this link](#).

Linda Scott-Giles  
Town Clerk  
4<sup>th</sup> March 2024

## **A G E N D A**

Prior to consideration of the following Agenda, there will be a democratic quarter of an hour, which may be extended at the discretion of the Committee, during which time members of the public may speak. During the course of the meeting, members of the public and our elected representatives from the Dorset Council may indicate they wish to speak, and, at the discretion of the Chairman, and with the approval of the Members, they may be allowed to do so on points of information only. The Committee may on occasion invite members of the public to comment on specific issues where points of information or their particular knowledge on a subject might prove of benefit to the Committee.

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. Disabled access is available.

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

1. Public Session
2. Apologies
3. To receive any Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
4. [Minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023](#)
5. Committee Clerk's Report & Correspondence
6. General Updates from:
  - 6.1 Blandford Business Support Group
  - 6.2 Blandford Police
  - 6.3 Market Manager

7. DC Highways (no items)
8. Review of Town & General Purposes budgets to
  - 8.1 [Analytical Review of Revenue Budget 2023-24](#)
  - 8.2 [Review of Earmarked Reserves to 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024](#)
  - 8.3 [Reserve Accounts to 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024](#)
9. [To consider free parking days for all Dorset Council car parks in Blandford Forum](#)
10. [To consider a suggestion for Blandford Forum to become a croci town](#)
11. [To consider expenditure authority for the lighting up of Woodhouse Gardens for the month of December](#)

## **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Monday 18 March Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting

Monday 25 March Town Council Meeting

**Minutes of the Town Council and Committee meetings are available from Blandford Library, the Town Clerk's Office and online at [www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk](http://www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk).**

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



EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME  
BRONZE AWARD  
Proudly supporting those who serve.

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Tel: 01258 454500 • Fax: 01258 454432  
Email: [admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk)  
[www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk](http://www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk)

**Blandford Forum Market Update March 2024**

The Thursday trader numbers are almost the same as the same quarter in 2022. Saturday continues to get some enquiries, but the weather has been bad on many of them. We lost 15 Saturdays in 2023 due to high winds but we have not had to pay parking compensation on these days.

Average Weekly Pitches Let



Oct	2022	<b>28.9</b>	average pitches let.	Oct 2023	<b>28.75</b>	average pitches let.
Nov	2022	<b>32</b>	average pitches let.	Nov 2023	<b>31.5</b>	average pitches let.
Dec	2022	<b>30.65</b>	average pitches let.	Dec 2023	<b>30</b>	average pitches let.

Overall, the markets have stayed about the same for this quarter.

**Indoor Market**

The Indoor Market has suffered with the uncertainty surrounding the Corn Exchange being closed for renovations. I have now been able to give the traders a date for our transfer to Woodhouse Gardens pavilion and many of them have told me that they will either give up or stop and return when the Corn Exchange re-opens. Our use of Woodhouse Gardens will be beneficial because we won't incur any rental costs, but we will not be able to take as many traders. The café will be there, and I am hoping that we will have 5 other regular traders. I continue to follow up new enquiries but tell any potential new traders about the closure.

**Farmers & Makers Market**

The monthly Farmers & Makers Market will continue to operate from March until November this year on the last Sunday of the month. Beginning on 24<sup>th</sup> March. Since placing cones with notices on the Saturday before these markets we have not had any cars parked so we will continue with this. These markets will continue to use the area between Scrivens Opticians and the Corn Exchange. I will attend the NMTF (National Market Traders Federation) on 22nd & 23rd April. This will concentrate on the retention of market traders and attracting the traders of the future. It remains important that we try to attract young traders. The NMTF continue to provide an invaluable service and support markets nationally. Our relationship with this organisation is good and their rep for the southwest continues to offer regular advice.

The "National Market Traders Federation" are trying to recruit traders closer to us in Dorset and we will have continued access to their database of traders. This database continues to grow all the time.

Dorset council continue not to charge us for the parking when we have to cancel the Street Market.

Blandford Forum Market continues to compare well to other markets in terms of percentage occupancy.

Andy Reynolds  
Market Manager

Analytical Review of Revenue Budget 2023-24

TOWN & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE					
Revenue Expenditure against Budget 2023/2024					
As At 27.02.24					
N/L code		2023/2024			
		Annual Budget	Budget to date	Actual to Date	Budget Variance
<b>COSTS</b>					
4711	Vandalism - General	50	46	0	(46)
4782	Vandalism ( Tabernacle)	155	142	0	(142)
4785	Vandalism (M & H) Toilets	824	755	0	(755)
4786	Vandalism - Markets	0	0	0	0
5020	CCTV Maintenance	1,500	1,375	14,895	13,520
Installation of CCTV at Corn Exchange and bridge works to Police station £9,830.17 offset by reserve. £2,300 ANPR annual support fee. Completion of bridge works £1,140					
5050	CCTV Electric	309	283	102	(181)
5060	Grit Bin - Re-fill	536	491	0	(491)
5600	Street Market - Advertising	500	458	0	(458)
5601	Street Market - New Equipment	250	229	0	(229)
5602	Street Market - Equipment Maint	0	0	0	0
5603	Street Market - Health & Safety	0	0	0	0
5604	Markets - Telephone	124	114	100	(14)
5605	Street Market - DCC Parking Charges	11,787	10,805	7,572	(3,233)
5606	Street Markets - Rates	1,927	2,120	1,372	(747)
5607	Street Market -Printing & Stationery	0	0	0	0
6200	Planters (Planting & Signs)	6,000	5,500	5,165	(335)
Purchase of plants for planters & removal of hanging baskets					
6210	Xmas lights		0	535	535
Electricity charge for Xmas lights December 2022					
6211	Tourism		0	55	55
Community Expo fliers					
6214	Minor Town Improvements		0	750	750
Only Rain Down the Drain' materials £500; Sponsorship of Business Awards £250					
6630	Toilets ( Tabernacle)- Cleaning	258	237	0	(237)
6635	Toilets ( Tabernacle)- Blg/Ground	258	237	0	(237)
6641	Toilets (Tabernacle) -Electric	288	264	223	(41)
6642	Toilets (Tabernacle) -Equip Maint	52	48	220	172
Repair faulty ball valve £196					
6643	Toilets (Tabernacle) -Equip Purchased	52	48	0	(48)
6644	Toilets (Tabernacle) -Health & Safety	52	48	0	(48)
6645	Toilets (Tabernacle) -Water	371	340	0	(340)
6646	Toilets (Tabernacle)- Rates	0	0	0	0
6650	Toilets - (M & H) - Cleaning	9,222	8,454	7,314	(1,140)
6655	Toilets - (M & H) - Building Maint	824	755	856	101
Replace faulty hand drier £420, repair flush mechanism					
6656	TIC - Building Maint	515	472	479	7
New fire door in TIC					
6657	Toilets - (M & H) - Rates	0	0	0	0
6660	Toilets- (M & H) - Electricity	2,060	1,888	1,023	(866)
6661	Toilets - (M & H) Water	1,545	1,416	1,217	(199)
<b>Total Costs</b>		<b>39,459</b>	<b>36,524</b>	<b>41,878</b>	<b>5,354</b>
SEE OVER FOR INCOME					
<b>PTO</b>					
2023/24					
		Annual Budget	Budget to date	Actual to Date	Budget Variance
<b>INCOME</b>					
2900	Markets - Street Rent	15,000	13,750	11,747	(2,003)
2810	Shambles / Craft Market Rent	3,000	2,750	3,956	1,206
2820	Indoor Market Rent	2,500	2,292	3,557	1,265
3500	Toilet Income (M & H)		0	0	0
3550	Tabernacle - Toilets	0	0	0	0
3700	Parish Councils	515	472	847	375
3850	T & GP Income	0	0	162	162
3900	Planter Sponsorship	700	642	1,082	440
Planter sponsorships					
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>21,715</b>	<b>19,905</b>	<b>21,350</b>	<b>1,445</b>
<b>NET COST / (INCOME)</b>		<b>17,744</b>	<b>16,265</b>	<b>20,528</b>	<b>3,910</b>

Review of Earmarked Reserves to 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Nominal Code	Budget	Balance b/f	Transfer To/From General Reserves	Budget Approved 2023/24	Total Reserves	Spend YTD	Committed YTD	Current Balance	Proposed budget 2024/2025	
1020	Town Maps, Boards & Fingerposts	3,283		0	3,283	0	0	3,283		
1021	DCC Highways	86		0	86	0	0	86		
1025	Christmas Town Decorations*	-2,857	15,000	1	15,000.00	12,143	12,863	25 <sup>a</sup>	-745	15,000 Star, tree
1030	Tourism	3,950		0	3,950	395	0	3,555		
1035	Twinning	1,303		0	1,303	0	0	1,303		
1040	Town Improvements	12,190		0	12,190	0	7,000 <sup>b</sup>	5,190		
1042	New Benches	2,634		0	2,634	0	0	2,634		
1043	Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend**	-184	184	3	0	0	0	0		
1135	Railway Arches	4,126	500	2	500	4,626	880	0	3,746	500
1045	Contingency***	908		0	908	0	0	908		
		25,439	15,684		15,500	41,123	14,138	7,025	19,960	15,500

Income/Transfers From Reserves			Breakdown of Committed funds		
1	Precept Allocation 2023/24	15,000.00	a	Christmas windows not yet paid	25.00
2	Precept Allocation 2023/24	500.00			
3	Negative balance from Jubilee weekend offset against general reserve account 1500	184.07	b	Committed to Corn Exchange capital improvements	7000.00
TOTAL		15,684.07			7,025.00





## To consider free parking days for all Dorset Council car parks in Blandford Forum

### Free Parking Policy

To support local economy, Dorset Council will give a total of **6 free parking days** in Dorset Council car parks each year. This is made up of the following:

- At the request of the Town or Parish Council free parking in all Dorset Council car parks for **four** days each year, for events which generate valuable footfall for that town. These four days cannot be used in December
- At the request of the Town or Parish Council free parking in all Dorset Council Town Centre car parks for that town on **one** weekday in December
- Free parking in all Dorset Council Town Centre car parks on **Small Business Saturday** in December

No other days in December will be considered unless the Town Council or Local BID is willing to meet the cost of the lost income at an amount to be calculated by the Council's parking team based on average weekend costs for that time of year.

Any requests for free use of the six days will be compiled by the Parking Services Team and a record maintained. Requests for free parking days should be emailed to [parking@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:parking@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk) at least **six weeks** prior to the free parking date and you should expect a response within 5 working days.

#### Notes:

- i. It is the decision of Parking Services Manager whether to include free parking in all Dorset Council car parks in area or in specific car parks only.
- ii. It is the decision of the Town/Parish Council whether to include free parking in car parks that are owned by them but managed by Dorset Council.
- iii. It is the decision of the Town/Parish Council whether to use all 6 free parking days or not.
- iv. By 'year' the policy is referring to a calendar year.
- v. If an event is cancelled, the free parking day can be reallocated, but 5 days' notice must be given otherwise the day will be lost. Days cannot be reallocated in December. Cancellations should be emailed to [parking@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:parking@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)
- vi. Free days not taken in one calendar year **cannot** be carried over to the next calendar year with no exceptions.
- vii. It is the responsibility of the requester (Town/Parish Council, BID, other) to advertise free parking days, cover pay & display machines and put up free parking signs.
- viii. Dorset Council are not responsible for payments made in error.

### Recommendation

Councillors should decide which days in 2024 they would like to request for free parking from Dorset Council.

Julie Wigg  
Committee Clerk  
1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

## To consider a suggestion for Blandford Forum to become a croci town

Resident, Pat Patrick has written to the Town Clerk to suggest the planting of Croci in the BFPC churchyard, along the verges of roads leading into town and any other suitable locations. He feels that this would complement the "Shaftesbury Snowdrops" event which has proved to be very popular.

Mr Patrick was informed by the Town Clerk that the areas put forward are not within the Town Council's ownership or control. The verges come under Dorset Council. The churchyard belongs to the church, but the Town Council maintains it. Mr Patrick is going to approach the church so the council may be asked to fund/plant the bulbs.

The Town Council was involved in planting croci bulbs on the Wimborne Road with the Rotary over 10 years ago, but then the Diamond Way development included the introduction of the pavement there, so it was all dug up.



### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Committee considers the suggestion for Blandford Forum to become a croci town. If it supports the idea, it is recommended that a letter is sent to the Dorset Council Rangers and the Parish Church informing them of the council's support.

Linda Scott-Giles  
Town Clerk  
19<sup>th</sup> February 2024



**To consider expenditure authority for the lighting up of Woodhouse Gardens  
for the month of December**

**Introduction**

For the last four years, Councillors resolved to 'light up' Woodhouse Gardens for the month of December and feedback received has been very positive. This is reflected in social media activity and verbal feedback received by both the caretakers and the contractor.

The structure and layout of the gardens provide the ideal environment for creating an enchantingly festive atmosphere for residents of all ages to enjoy free of charge. Using a mixture of colourwash and fairy lights, the gardens are transformed into a magical space each evening as the light fades. The contractor has added to the display in the past and each year the Town Council add to this display with different inflatables, which are popular with children.

**Additional Information**

The gardens are illuminated between 4pm and 9pm every day apart from Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. The gates are then locked in order to secure equipment, and in consideration of neighbouring residents.

**Financial Implications**

The cost to light up the gardens was included in the T&GP Earmarked Reserves for the forthcoming financial year and the quote includes a discount of £338.56 shown at [Appendix A](#).

The Financial Regulations state at 11.1.i) '...where the expenditure is below £5,000 but above £1,500 officers shall where possible obtain 3 estimates.' Due to the nature of the works, only one quote has been sourced. If Councillors are aware of other local companies who provide professional outdoor lighting please do get in touch with officers. We have considered asking electricians or doing the work in-house, but it does require a professional lighting company to get the effects produced.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that Councillors approve the proposal to light up Woodhouse Gardens for the month of December at a cost of £2,367.62 + VAT (an increase of £3.25 from last year) using budget line 1025 Christmas Town Decorations (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

Linda Scott-Giles  
Town Clerk  
1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

## Christmas Lights at Woodhouse Gardens 2024

Hire Starts: **Sun 1 December 2024**

Hire Ends: **Thu 2 January 2025**

Transport: **Van Delivery / Van Collection**

### *Brief Overview*

**Lighting** | £750.31 ex VAT / £900.37 inc VAT

**Pavilion Icicles** | £53.04 ex VAT / £63.65 inc VAT

**Tree Wraps x3** | £262.48 ex VAT / £314.98 inc VAT

**Cables: Adaptors** | £65.28 ex VAT / £78.34 inc VAT

**Cables: Extensions** | £66.87 ex VAT / £80.24 inc VAT

**Stands & Rigging** | £39.44 ex VAT / £47.33 inc VAT

**Site & Access** | £375.70 ex VAT / £450.84 inc VAT

**Sales** | £12.00 ex VAT / £14.40 inc VAT

**Transport** | £22.50 ex VAT / £27.00 inc VAT

**Crew** | £720.00 ex VAT / £864.00 inc VAT

**Extras** | £0.00 ex VAT / £0.00 inc VAT

**Grand Total: £2,367.62** ex VAT / **£2,841.14** inc VAT

*A discount of **£338.56** ex VAT / **£406.27** inc VAT has been applied.*