



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 in **Woodhouse Gardens Pavilion, The Tabernacle**, Blandford Forum on **Monday 13th May 2024** after the annual meeting scheduled for 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
3rd May 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 Council, 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 Council 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 Council.

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. Report from Dorset Council Councillors
3. Apologies
4. To receive any Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
5. [Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence](#)
6. Civic Report
7. [To consider the co-option of Town Councillors](#)
8. [To consider producing a calendar for 2025 with proceeds going to the Mayor's charities](#)

9. [To seek retrospective expenditure for surfacing at Langton play area](#)
10. [To retrospectively approve expenditure for the restoration of the four large pictures in the Town Hall](#)
11. [To consider the display of a Medieval embroidery in the Town Hall/Corn Exchange](#)
12. To receive an update and consider any requests from the:
 - 12.1 Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Group
 - 12.2 BFTC Commemoration Group
 - 12.3 D-Day 80 Events
 - 12.4 Climate Change & Biodiversity
 - 12.5 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project
13. 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)
14. Confidential

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

 - 14.1 To consider nominations to present certificates to members of the community (sent to councillors separately)

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

20 th May	Planning meeting/Town Council Meeting (Corn Exchange)
24 th May	Mayor Making Ceremony
10 th June	Finance & Staffing committee meeting
17 th June	Recreation & Amenities committee meeting
24 th June	Town Council Meeting (including planning applications)

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



Twinned with Mortain, France



Tel: 01258 454500 • Fax: 01258 454432
Email: admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk
www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

Town Clerk's Report

Town Hall Benches and Tables – The Blandford Men's Shed has taken receipt of the Town Hall benches and tables and the volunteers are currently undertaking restoration work during the closure of the building.

Old Robes – Following on from the council meeting held on Monday 22nd April 2024, an email was sent to Bournemouth University, but no reply received. The robes were subsequently offered to Bath Theatrical Costume Hire, suggested by the Blandford Fashion Museum and they are very grateful for the offer. The robes have therefore been posted to Bath, adorned with a stitched label confirming that they are old Town Councillor robes, which were donated by Blandford Forum Town Council in May 2024. Councillors can [visit this page](#) to see the types of costumes they hire out.

Boarding in the Corn Exchange – As part of the value engineering works, the council staff are removing the boarding around the Corn Exchange to expose the tiles. This will save some costs involved in the light strip part of the project.

Registers of Interest – All Councillors are being sent the link to either update or create their Register of Interests online. This is then published on the Dorset Council and Town Council websites. This is a legal requirement and is the responsibility of the Councillor to complete.

To consider the co-option of Councillors

As a result of the local elections scheduled for Thursday 2nd May 2024, the Town Council has four vacancies. These can be filled by co-option without a statutory notice within 35 days of the election.

Councillors were informed of this on Monday 22nd April 2024 and agreed that the matter would be discussed at this full council meeting.

Information provided by the DAPTC can be found at Appendix A.

Councillors may resolve to:

- Do nothing at this time and review the situation in 3-6 months.

Or

- Advertise the vacancies and hold a co-option meeting;
 - o Prior to the Planning meeting on Monday 20th May 2024 at 6pm
or, to give more time to potential candidates
 - o Monday 3rd June 2024 at 7pm

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
24th April 2024

Appendix A

Co-option (casual vacancy)

Guidance and resources to help council co-opt new councillors. In the immediate period after an election some individuals elected may have a change of mind or their personal circumstances no longer work with being a councillor. Your council may have had an uncontested election too, with vacancies known before 2 May 2024. Find out what options council have to fill any casual vacancies.

Background:

Co-option is possible between election dates, but only after the statutory notice has been posted by you locally and Dorset Council on their website. At every other time in an election term other than within 35 days of an election day (2 May 2024 in the Dorset Council area) - the Clerk will need to notify Dorset Council Elections Team when a councillor resigns. This is simply done by email to elections@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk stating which councillor has resigned. This will trigger a casual vacancy notice which has to be displayed by your council and Dorset Council on their website. They have a dedicated page for this: [Parish & Town Council Vacancies](#). The statutory notice that is published will be emailed back to you.

What is the casual vacancy statutory notice trying to achieve?

By posting the statutory notice a question is being asked of the community served by the parish council if they wish there to be a by-election? They have 14 days to email or write to Dorset Council making this request. If 10 (ten) electors in the parish do so, an election will be called and the parish and town council will be required to fund the cost of the by-election. If the required number of electors do not come forward requesting an election, Dorset Council will email the Clerk confirming that council can now proceed to co-opt. It is at this point council can add an item to the next council meeting to consider and how they proceed with co-option.

The number of statutory notices that result in a by-election being called is very small. It tends to happen when either the community aren't 'pleased' with the parish or town council performance. This might be driven by existing councillors or members of the community.

What's different in an election year?

In an election year it is permissible to co-opt without the statutory notice as long as it is within 35 days of the election day. That means in reality, if a possible candidate (new or returning councillor) that missed the deadline of 5 April 2024 - they can be co-opted at the first meeting in May which should be your Annual Meeting of Council. If you only have the odd vacancy, there isn't the urgency to co-opt and council can decide when it will consider the vacancy and put together a plan for the next 2-4 months. *See 'Quorate Councils' below.* In the 6 months leading up to an election, council can advise Dorset Council elections team of a casual vacancy and they have the option to recruit or not. This is simply because an election is occurring in the immediate few months. Council can co-opt if they wish to if it helps the candidate become familiar with council and undertaken training.

Do we need to rush to co-opt?

Co-opting at any other point in the year or subsequent non-election years is best done in a structured and transparent way. There is often a notion that co-option has to be done quickly or by members of the public that the process is somehow skewed or not open. In some cases, co-option can be used by other councillors to get onboard individuals with similar views to their own. This is when having a clear policy and timeframe to co-opt means it is less open to abuse. So it isn't always the case that co-option has to be quick. Councils can take a reasonable period of time to ensure they have undertaken a fair and open process. That process often begins with a council resolution using the co-option policy to agree when co-option will be considered, i.e. a future ordinary council meeting date in the next 2-4

months. **The simple objective of the process to create a 'contested co-option' where councillors that will vote for the candidate will end up with a choice rather than be left with one candidate for one vacancy.**

Here are a few ideas and thoughts in different scenarios:

Barely Quorate Councils (3 or 4 councillors)

If you are struggling with councillor numbers, **co-option urgently will be a necessity.** Advertising for a period of time before co-opting will need to be sacrificed for a quick appointment or appointments depending on the number of vacancies.

Consider adopting some of these ideas:

- Take to social media to promote the role of councillors, asking for candidates to come forward
- Use flyers on noticeboards and in local shops to spread the word
- Use articles in newsletters to seek candidates
- Make approaches personally by the Clerk or councillors to residents in the community
- Make sure you have induction and training planned - as once recruited it will then be about retention

Quorate Councils (1 or 2 casual vacancies)

In these circumstances, council can often operate with one or two vacancies comfortably. This means that filling the casual vacancies can be done at a pace that works for council and allows time for a period of advertisement within the community.

Consider adopting some of these ideas:

- Take to social media to promote the role of councillors, asking for candidates to come forward
- Use flyers on noticeboards and in local shops to spread the word
- Use articles in newsletters to seek candidates
- Potential candidates can be invited to observe council meetings and get to meet councillors and their employee(s) to ask questions - this is an excellent way to develop knowledge and expectations ahead of any co-option
- Make sure you have induction and training planned - as once recruited it will then be about retention

To consider producing a calendar for 2025 with proceeds going to the Mayor's charities

Background

For the past few years, the Town Council produced and sold calendars with proceeds going to the Mayor's charities. This has been well received and residents have submitted photos to be included in the calendars.

Report

The calendars are sold for £5.00 each and feature a series of photos of the area. As this is a simple way of raising money for the Mayor's charities and engages residents it is suggested to produce these again for 2025. The Mayor and the Mayor's Charities should assist Officers to sell the calendars, who sell them in the office and at Town Council events (if applicable).

Councillors are asked to agree a theme. The previous years' themes have included historic buildings, wildlife and aerial photos of Blandford Forum. Once the theme is confirmed, we will advertise this via our social media channels for residents to submit photos for inclusion.

Quotes were sought from a local printer and an online company. The local company have previously produced calendars for the Town Council.

We have only sought quotes for the production of 100 calendars as we don't sell 200.

Company A:

- A4 landscape, full colour throughout
 - Cover on 300g silk, 28 pages inner on 170g silk
 - Saddle stitched & drilled at the foot
- 100 calendars = Cost £245 + VAT = £294 (£206 profit)

Company B:

- A4 landscape, 28 pages, full colour throughout
 - Wire stitched with a single drill hole at the foot
 - 300g cover and 150g-170g inner pages
- 100 calendars = Cost £291.14 + VAT = £349.37 (Profit £150.63)

Recommendation

Councillors are requested to consider if they would like to produce a calendar for 2025 and suggest a theme and if so, it is recommended that Company A is engaged, using funds from budget line 1030 Tourism (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

Julie Wigg
Committee Clerk
24th April 2024

To seek retrospective expenditure for surfacing at Langton play area

Report

The Town Council received a report from staff and a communication from a resident stating that the surfacing under the roundabout at Langton Play Area was in a bad state and was possibly presenting a Health and Safety risk.

Warning signs were placed, and a contractor called to look at the issue, a quote was received and permission was sought and received from the Charman of Council and Chairman of Finance and Staffing to go ahead with the work.

An order was placed, and rectification works carried out.

The purpose of this report is to seek retrospective expenditure approval as this work could clearly not wait until after a scheduled Town Council meeting.

Financial implications

The work to rectify the problem was:

- Supply and install 16m² at 40mm of bonded rubber mulch in green with the edges rolled into the ground
- Supply and install 6m² circular EPDM wear pad at 40mm in Forest green to match other areas.
- Provisions include HERAS fencing, some spoil disposal and return visit.
- A project report will be provided upon completion

Total Cost £2,810.00 + VAT

Recommendation

It is recommended that retrospective expenditure approval of £2,810.00 + VAT is given using funds from budget line 1310 play area accruals (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

Jon Goodenough
Operations Manager
25th April 2024

To retrospectively approve expenditure for the restoration of the four large pictures that are displayed in the Town Hall

At the meeting held on 22nd April 2024, it was agreed that the Woodhouse portrait – that is not in a grand frame like the others in the Town Hall – could be displayed at Woodhouse Gardens pavilion. The other four frames (pictured below) are in a state of disrepair. They have been displayed in the Town Hall for over a hundred years and will return once it is refurbished.

A quote has been sought from the local framing business, which totals £1,536 and consists of the following:

Frames to restore £240.00 each plus new glass

- ordinary glass £52.20 each (not recommended)
- art glass £144.00 each (recommended because art glass is anti-reflective, has UV protection and easy to clean. Basically looks like there's no glass on work.)

The Chairman of Council and Chairman of the Finance & Staffing Committee were asked for approval to proceed, so the items could be taken to the framers in April before the removal of the boarding works commences.

Recommendation

It is recommended that retrospective expenditure of £1,536 + VAT is approved using funds from the reserves committed for the relocation and storage relating to the Corn Exchange refurbishment (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
26th April 2024



To consider the display of a Medieval embroidery in the Town Hall / Corn Exchange

Joy Reynolds, Anne Quinney and Melanie Wyles requested a meeting with the Town Clerk to discuss a Blandford Town Museum project to create a large embroidery of the lives of medieval women in the Stour Valley, between Fiddleford and Shapwick. This project currently involves 15 women who are all contributing to the panel.

They have asked if it would be possible to have the panel displayed permanently in the refurbished Town Hall / Corn Exchange.

They are currently submitting a funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Arts Fund to buy a portable system for mounting the embroidery to take it round to community groups and schools to do talks about the history and the skill of embroidery.

If the Town Council is minded to provide a permanent home for the embroidery, they will include a request for funding the long-term mounting for the work and there is no cost to the Town Council. Hence the reason for the urgency of the request.

The embroidery is 2.20 meters wide x 1.30 meters high and examples of the work so far are shown below. The green border shown in the photos will be the darker blue shown second in from the right.

The architect has been asked for his view on space available within the newly redesigned lobby area.



Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors consider the request and decide if they wish to see the embroidery displayed in the Town Hall / Corn Exchange lobby when it is reopened in September 2025.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
2nd May 2024