



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Members of the Finance & Staffing Committee
(Cllr L Hitchings, Cllr C Stevens, Cllr H Miéville, Cllr R Holmes, Cllr S Hitchings, Cllr S Chapman, Cllr A Cross, Cllr M Putt and Cllr T Clarkson)

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

Dorset Council Councillors

Dear Member,

FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Finance & Staffing Committee to be held in the **Corn Exchange**, Market Place, Blandford Forum DT11 7AF on **Monday 8th December 2025 at 7:00pm** 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
1st December 2025

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 9th June 2025](#) (September meeting cancelled)
5. [Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence](#)
6. Analytical Review of Expenditure against Budget for the following:
 - 6.1 [Administration Budget for the year to 30th November 2025](#)
 - 6.2 [Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 30th November 2025](#)
 - 6.3 [Reserve Accounts as at 30th November 2025](#)

7. Review of Finance Documentation (sent to all Councillors prior to the meeting)
To receive and retrospectively approve the:
 - 7.1 Petty Cash Transfers 5-6 totalling £312.95.
 - 7.2 Direct debit payments for the period 1st September 2025 (sheet 224) totalling £98,073.00.
 - 7.3 Online Faster Payments FP 313 – FP 326 totalling £513,652.89 (including transfers of precept, and grants to other Town Council accounts)
 - 7.4 Online Corn Exchange Faster Payments CE065 – CE075 totalling £631,245.48.
 - 7.5 [Investment Account for the period to 31st October 2025](#)
 - 7.6 Report by Chairman on Bank Reconciliation and Petty Cash checks
 - 7.7 [Bank Reconciliation to 31st October 2025](#)
8. Internal Auditor
 - 8.1 [To receive the Internal Auditor's Report dated 26th November 2025 \(Visit 1 of 3\)](#)
 - 8.2 [To reaffirm the Internal Auditor's Contract](#)
9. To review the Finance & Staffing [Committee Remit](#) and the [Financial Regulations](#) (no proposed amendments from staff to either document – last reviewed by full council May 2025)
10. 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.
 - 10.1 To receive the Payroll budget (staff grading) for the year 2026/27 (to be tabled)
 - 10.2 To note the Town Clerk's Appraisal (in accordance with Standing Orders), carried out on 20th May 2025 with Cllr L Hitchings (outgoing Chairman/Vice Chairman of Council unable to attend)

The public and press will then be welcomed back into the meeting for the following items;
11. Consideration of the Town Council Budget for 2026/27
 - 11.1 [Consideration of the proposed revenue budget for Administration Costs for 2026/27](#)
 - 11.2 [Recommendations from Committees](#)
 - 11.3 [Consideration of the overall budget for the year 2025/26 and recommendation of the precept for 2026/27](#) (awaiting figures from Dorset Council by 5th December 2025)

Minutes of the Town Council and Committee meetings are available from 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
Email: admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk
www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

Administration Budget for the year to 30th November 2025

ADMINISTRATION COSTS 2025/2026		As at 30.11.25					
N/L code		Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Covered by Reserves	Revised Actual	Budget Variance
4010	Advertising	600	400	30		30	(370)
4012	Audit	4,635	3,090	3,769		3,769	679
4014	Bank Charges	1,142	761	142		142	(620)
4015	Property Fund Admin Charge / Exp	4,635	3,090	3,293		3,293	203
4016	PWLB Admin Fees					0	0
4018	Equipment Maintenance/Hire	500	333	567		567	234
4028	New Equipment	200	133	153		153	20
4039	IT New Equip	200	133	1,650	1,650	0	(133)
4040	IT Maintenance/Software	10,750	7,167	9,446		9,446	2,279
4041	IT Consumables	60	40	28		28	(12)
4042	Professional Services	18,567	12,378	13,059		13,059	681
4043	Office Rental	0	0	7,000	7,000	0	0
4050	Newsletter/Forum focus/publication	4,700	3,133	2,821		2,821	(312)
4053	Photocopier Charges	1,675	1,117	862		862	(255)
4054	Stationery & Printing	600	400	484		484	84
4057	Subscriptions	3,075	2,050	2,630		2,630	580
4060	Postage	800	533	507		507	(26)
4065	Telephones	5,000	3,333	1,559		1,559	(1,775)
4094	Staff Training & Travel Exps	4,000	2,667	2,853		2,853	187
4095	Staff Travel & Expenses	3,000	2,000	1,163		1,163	(837)
4096	Cllrs allow, Training & Travel Exps	5,000	3,333	2,682		2,682	(651)
4097	Cllrs Welfare / Meeting Exps	100	67	3		3	(63)
4099	Staff Welfare	400	267	287		287	20
4301	Health & Safety Staffing	3,000	2,000	1,080		1,080	(920)
5500	Grants S137	6,000	4,000	3,600	200	3,400	(600)
5505	Grants SLA	22,000	14,667	8,450		8,450	(6,217)
	<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>100,639</i>	<i>67,093</i>	<i>68,119</i>	<i>8,850</i>	<i>59,269</i>	<i>-7,824</i>
4701	Insurance	36,000	24,000	30,332		30,332	6,332
	<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>36,000</i>	<i>24,000</i>	<i>30,332</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>30,332</i>	<i>6,332</i>
4800	Mayoral Expenses	2,967	1,978	295		295	(1,683)
4802	Civic Expenses	5,500	3,667	5,012	609	4,403	736
4805	Civic Twinning	150	100			0	(100)
4806	Civic - Freedom	150	100			0	(100)
	Honorariums - Town Crier/Mace Bearer	1,400	933	400		400	(533)
4809	Membership to Guild of Mace Bearers and Town Criers	100	67	40		40	(27)
	<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>10,267</i>	<i>6,845</i>	<i>5,747</i>	<i>609</i>	<i>5,138</i>	<i>(1,707)</i>
	TOTAL EXPENSES	146,906	97,937	104,198	9,459	94,739	(3,198)
INCOME							
2025	Interest	2,500	1,667	54,593	39,145	15,448	13,781
2003	Property Fund Dividend	30,000	20,000	27,556	18,433	9,123	(10,877)
2030	Cricket Club Loan Interest			32		32	32
3890	Calendar sales			52		52	52
3894	Misc Income	1,000	667	526	215	312	(355)
3897	Overtime Charges	50	33	29		29	(5)
3899	Photocopying	150	100	132		132	32
3901	Proof of Life			127		127	127
3920	Admin Charge - Barnes for Rec	6,170	4,113	3,085		3,085	(1,028)
3925	Salary charge -out to Barnes for a Re	28,325	18,883	14,163		14,163	(4,721)
	TOTAL INCOME	68,195	45,463	100,294	57,792	42,502	(2,961)
	NET COST/ (INCOME)	78,711	52,474	3,903	(48,334)	52,237	(237)

Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 30th November 2025

	2025/26				
	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Budget Variance	Status
INCOME					
Admin	68,195	45,463	42,502	(2,961)	Under-budget
Admin Total	68,195	45,463	42,502	(2,961)	Under-budget
Corn Exchange	3,520	2,347	67,852	1,328	Over-Budget
Woodhouse Gardens	7,725	5,150	3,645	(1,505)	Under-budget
Larksmead	1,500	1,000	1,125	125	Over-Budget
Cemetery	12,000	8,000	10,805	2,805	Over-Budget
Sundries	3,807	2,538	7,294	4,756	Over-Budget
Skate park	0	0	0	0	Under-budget
R & A Income	28,552	19,035	90,722	7,509	Over-Budget
CCTV, Planters & Markets	19,000	12,667	8,490	(4,356)	Under-budget
Marsh & Ham Toilets	550	367	800	433	Over-Budget
Tabernacle Toilets	0	0	0	0	Under-budget
T & GP Totals	19,550	13,033	9,290	(3,923)	Under-budget
Total Income	116,297	77,531	142,514	625	On Target
EXPENDITURE					
Admin	146,906	97,937	94,739	(3,198)	Under-budget
Corn Exchange Project Officer / Consultant	0	0	0	0	Under-budget
Salaries	580,590	387,060	376,359	(10,701)	Under-budget
Admin & Payroll	727,496	484,997	471,099	(13,899)	Under-budget
Vehicles	13,230	8,820	7,218	(1,602)	Under-budget
Corn Exchange	92,485	61,657	5,269	(56,388)	Under-budget
Woodhouse Gardens	4,246	2,831	2,516	(314)	Under-budget
Larksmead	2,500	1,667	3,128	1,462	Over-Budget
Recreation Ground (Barnes Trust)	36,788	24,525	23,989	(536)	Under-budget
Glenmore Workshop	8,283	5,522	7,352	1,830	Over-Budget
Cemetery	7,062	5,292	6,402	1,110	Over-Budget
Park Road EVCPs	1,000	667	778	111	Over-Budget
Langton	241	161	337	176	Over-Budget
Skatepark	1,016	677	112	(566)	Under-budget
Sundries	18,420	12,280	9,505	(2,775)	Under-budget
R & A Totals	185,271	124,098	66,606	(57,492)	Under-budget
CCTV, Planters & Markets	23,620	15,747	6,399	(9,347)	Under-budget
Marsh & Ham Toilets	14,900	9,933	8,110	(1,823)	Under-budget
Tabernacle Toilets	13,636	9,091	10,439	1,348	Over-Budget
T & GP Totals	52,156	34,771	24,948	(9,822)	Under-budget
Total Expenditure	964,923	643,866	562,653	(81,213)	Under-budget
TOTAL (NET COST)	848,626	566,334	420,139	(81,838)	Within Budget
Note					
Over budget figure positive variance					
Under budget negative variance ()					

General Reserves

Nominal Code(s)	Standard Asset Replacement Accruals	Responsible Committee	Opening Balances	Adjustment to Opening Balance	Amended Opening Balance	In year movements	Current Balance as at	Sub Totals
			£					£
1300	IT	F & S	30,107.84		30,107.84	- 1,649.67	28,458.17	
1305	Skate park	R & A	8,147.68	52,427.72	60,575.40	3,205.91	63,781.31	
1310	General Play Equipment	R & A	94,932.84		94,932.84	5,592.00	100,524.84	
1315	Maintenance Equipment Replacement	R & A	18,122.23		18,122.23		18,122.23	
1320	Vehicle Replacement	R & A	22,454.50		22,454.50	6,300.00	28,754.50	
1325	Tractor Replacement	R & A	21,090.40		21,090.40		21,090.40	
1330	Mower Replacement	R & A	39,172.67		39,172.67	6,400.00	45,572.67	
1340	CCTV / ANPR	T & GP	44,479.18	2,451.23	46,930.41		46,930.41	
1345	Benches	T/C	62,427.72	- 52,427.72	10,000.00		10,000.00	
1350	Glenmore Depot	R & A	63,115.05		63,115.05	- 1,976.37	61,138.68	
1351	B/Heights Play Equipment	R & A	14,816.13		14,816.13		14,816.13	
1352	B/Heights Maintenance Equipment Replacement	R & A	24,039.09		24,039.09	- 4,120.40	19,918.69	
			442,905.33		445,356.56	13,751.47	459,108.03	459,108.03
	Earmarked Accounts		-		-		-	
1020	T & GP Town Maps	T&GP	3,282.77		3,282.77		3,282.77	
1021	T & GP DCC Highways	T&GP	86.25	- 86.25	-		-	
1025	T & GP Christmas Lights	T&GP	1,668.80		1,668.80	2,172.00	3,840.80	
1030	T & GP Tourism	T&GP	3,435.44		3,435.44	- 613.40	2,822.04	
1035	T & GP Twinning	T&GP	1,302.81		1,302.81		1,302.81	
1040	T & GP Town Improvements	T&GP	3,878.10	86.25	3,964.35	300.00	4,264.35	
1042	T & GP Seat Replacement	T&GP	2,633.81	- 2,633.81	-		-	
1045	T & GP Contingency	T&GP	908.33	- 908.33	-		-	
1135	Railway Arches	T & GP	2,157.06		2,157.06	500.00	2,657.06	
			19,353.37		15,811.23	2,358.60	18,169.83	18,169.83
10510	R & A B/Heights Phase 1 POS	R&A	49,298.50		49,298.50	- 6,443.95	42,854.55	
10520	R & A B/Heights Phase 2 POS	R&A	20,334.29		20,334.29	- 2,275.61	18,058.68	
10521	R & A B/Heights Phase 2 - Play area com Sums	R&A	2,257.43		2,257.43		2,257.43	
10530	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	12,108.55		12,108.55		12,108.55	
10531	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	50,966.32		50,966.32		50,966.32	
10532	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	57,442.93		57,442.93		57,442.93	
10533	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	24,483.78		24,483.78		24,483.78	
10534	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	34,900.27		34,900.27		34,900.27	
10535	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	172,440.51		172,440.51		172,440.51	
10536	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	113,457.57		113,457.57		113,457.57	
10537	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	9,978.26		9,978.26		9,978.26	
10538	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	52,801.28		52,801.28		52,801.28	
10539	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	116,943.53		116,943.53		116,943.53	
10540	R & A B/Heights Phase 3	R&A	13,011.55		13,011.55		13,011.55	
			730,424.77		730,424.77	- 8,719.56	721,705.21	721,705.21
1060	R & A Plan Preventative Maintenance	R & A	-		-	6,000.00	6,000.00	
1061	R & A Cemetery Chapel	R & A	9,420.00	1,000.00	10,420.00	1,000.00	11,420.00	
1062	R & A Cemetery Workshop	R & A	12,000.00		12,000.00	1,000.00	13,000.00	
1064	R & A Cemetery Wall	R & A	32,654.49		32,654.49		32,654.49	
1065	R & A DDA	R & A	-	2,633.81	2,633.81	500.00	3,133.81	
1067	R & A Play area fencing & surfacing	R & A	16,036.66		16,036.66		16,036.66	
1068	R & A Larksmead Outdoor fitness/equipment repairs and maintenance	R & A	2,000.00		2,000.00		2,000.00	
1070	R & A Seat Repairs and maintenance	R & A	1,695.85		1,695.85		1,695.85	
1071	R & A Skate Fest	R & A	319.34		319.34	130.31	449.65	
1072	R & A Community Fridge	R & A	1,072.00		1,072.00		1,072.00	
1075	R & A 5 Year Tree Survey	R & A	18,913.20		18,913.20		18,913.20	
1080	R & A H&S Mem Cemetery	R & A	1,263.00		1,263.00		1,263.00	
1090	R & A Woodhouse Garden Wall Repairs	R & A	22,005.00		22,005.00	500.00	22,505.00	
1096	R & A Contingency	R & A	1,000.00	- 1,000.00	-		-	
			118,379.54		121,013.35	9,130.31	130,143.66	130,143.66
	Other Earmarked Accounts							
1001	Earmarked Interest	F & S	4,356.99		4,356.99	438.41	4,795.40	
1002	Property Fund Dividend	F & S	49,725.62		49,725.62	9,072.87	58,798.49	
1003	Office relocation		10,668.84		10,668.84	5,870.00	16,538.84	
1005	Election Costs	T/C	8,266.95		8,266.95		8,266.95	
1006	Youth Services	T/C	10,726.03		10,726.03		10,726.03	
1009	BFTC Commemoration Group	T/C	614.67		614.67	- 260.04	354.63	
1010	Capital Interest	F & S	62,306.80		62,306.80	20,606.03	82,912.83	
1011	Cricket Club path/Land North of By pass	T/C	5,772.98		5,772.98	- 2,550.00	3,222.98	
1013	Neighbourhood Plan	T/C	4,676.44		4,676.44	- 200.00	4,476.44	
1015	Support for Essential Services (Earmarked)	T/C	49.00	- 49.00	-		-	
1017	Woodhouse Garden	T/C	19,981.67		19,981.67		19,981.67	
1019	St Peter & St Paul's Churchyard (Listed Wall & Town Pump)	T & GP	44,351.48		44,351.48	- 527.00	43,824.48	
1050	Allotments	R&A	4,317.46		4,317.46		4,317.46	
1335	Civic Regalia	F & S	12,337.82		12,337.82	- 412.50	11,925.32	
1195	Improvements to Market Area	T/C	69,000.00		69,000.00		69,000.00	
1125	Cemetery Field Project	R & A	1,000.00	- 1,000.00	-		-	
1175	CCTV / ANPR - repairs	T & GP	2,451.23	- 2,451.23	-		-	
1500	General Reserves	T/C	230,882.67	1,957.33	232,840.00	- 1,466.00	231,374.00	
			541,486.65		539,943.75	30,571.77	570,515.52	570,515.52
	Capital Projects							
1104	Corn Exchange S106 Funds	T/C	85,277.06		85,277.06	- 85,277.06	-	
1105	Corn Exchange	T/C	1,712,528.18		1,712,528.18	- 1,530,647.13	181,881.05	
1110	Corn Exchange Promotions Group	T/C	1,583.11		1,583.11	3,935.00	5,518.11	
1115	Corn Exchange Project Development	T/C	173,928.83		173,928.83	4,000.00	177,928.83	
1116	Corn Exchange HLF Stage 1 Matchfunding	T/C	182,379.97		182,379.97	- 182,379.97	-	
1117	PWL8 repayments		180,081.80		180,081.80	36,430.00	216,511.80	
1120	Corn Exchange & Venues Refurbishment Project	T/C	79,000.00		79,000.00	- 79,000.00	-	
1122	Corn Exchange Community Hall S106 Funds	T/C	103,292.81		103,292.81	- 103,292.81	-	
			- 2,518,071.76		2,518,071.76	- 1,936,231.97	581,839.79	581,839.79
								2,481,482.04
	Total Reserves		4,370,621.42	0.00	4,370,621.42	- 1,889,139.38	2,481,482.04	

Retrospective approval of the Investment Account for the period 1st September 2025 to 31st October 2025

In line with the Town Council's Investment Policy, the Chairman of Finance & Staffing, the RFO and the Town Clerk have made the following investments on behalf of the council, seeking the highest possible interest rates and financial security.

Amount £	Details (including period)	Interest Rate %	Bank
545,127.20	Public Sector Deposit Fund	4.01%	CCLA
665,280.68	2 Year Fixed Rate Bond – matures May 2025	4%	Cambridge & Counties Bank
294,626.79	Santander 95-day account	3.32%	Santander

CCLA / Public Sector Deposit Fund Information

The Local Authorities' Property Fund Prices and Dividend Yields



End of	Oct-25	Sep-25	Aug-25	Jul-25	Jun-25	May-25	Apr-25	Mar-25	Feb-25	Jan-25	Dec-24	Nov-24
Offer Price p	301.75	302.09	301.94	302.01	301.89	301.53	301.28	301.41	298.85	299.10	298.87	297.59
Net Asset Value p	282.67	282.99	282.85	282.91	282.80	282.47	282.23	282.35	279.95	280.19	279.97	278.77
Bid Price p	278.29	278.60	278.47	278.52	278.41	278.09	277.86	277.98	275.61	275.84	275.63	274.45
Dividend on XD Date p		3.17			3.15			3.28			3.45	
Dividend* - Last 12 Months p	13.04	13.04	13.32	13.32	13.32	13.90	13.90	13.89	14.24	14.24	14.24	14.39
Dividend Yield on NAV %	4.61	4.61	4.71	4.71	4.71	4.92	4.93	4.92	5.09	5.08	5.09	5.16
Fund Size £m	1042.8	1044.6	1044.1	1047.5	1047.1	1049.7	1048.9	1053.5	1044.6	1045.5	1044.8	1032.3

Risk Warning

Please remember that the value of units and the income from them can fall as well as rise and an investor may not get back the full amount invested. Past performance is no guarantee of future returns. The Property Fund's unit value will reflect fluctuations in property values and rents. The units are intended only for long-term investment and are not suitable for money liable to be required to be spent in the near term. They are realisable only on each month end valuation date and a period of notice may be imposed for the redemption of units.

Source: CCLA

CCLA Fund Managers Limited

One Angel Lane
London EC4R 3AB
Telephone: 0800 022 3505
www.ccla.co.uk

CCLA is Authorised & Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Bank Reconciliation to 31st October 2025

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

WHEN IN RED - NEEDS UPDATING

NOTES

R = RECONCILED

Bank Reconciliation as at 31st October 2025

<u>Bank Statement as at</u>	31st October 2025		
Current Account		£98,257.57 ✓	
Less Uncleared expenses		£0.00	
Plus uncleared receipts		£92.00	£98,349.57
<u>Santander 95 Day Notice A/C10555310</u>	31st October 2025	£294,626.79 ✓	£294,626.79 ✓
<u>Santander 31 Day Notice A/C10555349</u>	31st October 2025	£501,991.75 ✓	£501,991.75 ✓
<u>Santander Business Reserve A/c 10138119</u>	31st October 2025		
Statement balance		£234,325.72 ✓	
Less: interest not yet received			£234,325.72 ✓
<u>CCLA/PSDF</u>	31st October 2025		
0101190001PC PS3127267-001		£543,040.42 ✓	
Interest not yet added	04.11.25	£2,086.78	£545,127.20
Cambridge & Counties Bank	31st October 2025		
15043262 2 Year Bond - matures 10.05.2027		£369,643.41	
15043304 1 Year Bond - matures 11.05.2026		£350,000.00	
Annual Interest in May		£719,643.41	
Petty Cash as at	31st October 2025	£250.00	£250.00 ✓
			<u>£2,394,314.44</u>

Prepared by: A. Esol Date: 24.11.25
RFO

Checked by: [Signature] Date: 26/11/25.
Town Clerk

Checked by: Mr Hutchings approved by email
Chairman of Finance Committee
28/11/25

To receive the Internal Auditor's Report

DARKIN MILLER ~ CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Accountancy ~ Internal Audit ~ Taxation



FINAL

Internal audit report 2025/26

Visit 1 of 3

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: 26th November 2025

Report author: R Darkin-Miller
Email: r.darkin@darkinmiller.co.uk

Introduction

This report contains a note of the audit recommendations made to Blandford Forum Town Council following the carrying out of internal audit testing on site on 24th October 2025 with subsequent remote testing.

The audit work has been carried out in accordance with Appendix 9 of the 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioners' Guide', as amended by the additional requirements of the later AGARs.

An internal audit covers the review of the operation of the Council's internal control environment. It is not designed to review and give full assurance over every transaction carried out by the Council. Instead it enables the auditor, following the sample testing of a number of different types of transaction, to give an opinion as to whether or not the control objectives are being achieved across a range of financial and governance systems.

Audit Opinion

As this audit report is an interim one, no audit opinion is offered at this stage.

The report issued after the final visit for 2025/26 (which will be in May or June 2026) will contain the audit opinion.

The following areas were reviewed during this audit visit:

1. Bookkeeping
2. Risk Management
3. Income
4. Petty Cash
5. Exemption (confirm not covered)
6. Transparency (work in progress)
7. Public Rights
8. Publication

Audit Recommendations

Recommendations made during the audit are shown in appendix one to this report.

Recommendations are graded as follows:

Rating	Significance
High	Either a critical business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is substantial non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Medium	Either a key business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is a degree of non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Low	Either minor non-conformity with procedure or opportunity to improve working practices further.

The number of recommendations made at this audit visit and their priority are summarised in the following table:

Rating	Number
High	0
Medium	3
Low	6
Info	0
TOTAL	9

I would like to thank Linda Scott-Giles, Town Clerk; Jon Goodenough, Operations Manager; Amanda Crocker, Responsible Finance Officer for their assistance during this audit.

**INTERNAL AUDIT OF BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
FINAL REPORT VISIT 1 OF 3: 26th NOVEMBER 2025**

Appendix 1 – Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendation number	Detail	Priority (Low/Medium/High)	Management Response	Responsible Officer	Due Date
3.1 – Ensure minutes are signed and amend numbering error	<p>I reviewed the minutes to confirm that there had been no unusual financial activity. I found no such activity but did note that:</p> <p>1. The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 10/03/25 were unsigned at the audit date although they had been approved at the May meeting.</p> <p>2. The minute numbering of the Town & General Purpose meeting of 13/10/25 goes out of sequence after minute 18.3 This should be followed by 19 but the next minute number is 59.</p> <p>I recommend that the March Planning minutes are signed and that the numbering of the October T&GP minutes is amended. This will help to ensure that an agreed record of Council business and decisions is held.</p>	L	<p>1. These will be arranged to be signed by the Chairman at the time.</p> <p>2. This has been rectified.</p>	TC	Immediately
5.1 – Ensure Barnes Trust salary recharge is amended	<p>I reviewed income year on year to check that all income had been invoiced/collected. I noted that the income due in relation to the Council's recharge of staff salaries to the Barnes Trust was under the Trust's budgeted figure for the half year. The RFO confirmed that this error had been identified and would be corrected within the next week.</p>	L	<p>This error had been noted and has now been corrected. The adjusted invoice has been raised and the appropriate payment made.</p>	RFO	October 2025

	<p>I recommend that the correct recharge is made to the Barnes Trust for staff salaries in order to ensure that all income due is collected.</p>				
5.2 – Ensure older debts recovered	<p>I checked to see that income due to the Council is being collected. I noted that the total value of aged debt had fallen year on year as at 30th September (£11.5k at 30/05/25 compared to £24.9k at 30/09/24), and the age profile had improved, with 86% being current (compared to 53% in 2024). £99.70 of debt was showing as 120 days or over, comprising £317 of debt and £217 of overpayments. Of the debt, £278 related to debt that was shown as 'older' during the last audit, with £275 owed by Dorset Council (£197 of which has just been paid) and £3 owed by an allotments holder who has still not paid the amount due. The RFO noted that the Allotment Association chase allotment debts and that they are periodically provided with a list of outstanding debts for recovery. I also noted 2/14 samples were unpaid, with one invoice dating back to June 2025 (relating to a H&S inspection).</p> <p>I recommend that the debts are recovered as soon as possible in order to ensure that all income due is collected.</p>	L	<p>£275 of the £278 outstanding at the last audit has now been collected. The remaining £3 in respect of allotment rents is still outstanding and will be highlighted to the Allotments Committee.</p>	RFO	November 2025
5.3 – Ensure netted off income is grossed up at the year end	<p>I checked to see that a sample of income was properly recorded and promptly banked. I noted that the recharged utility income from the Rugby Club is coded against the original expenditure in order to ensure that all utility costs are properly</p>	M	<p>This is historic but will be rectified. At present, all transactions go via NL 9996, with the exception of the rental income, to ensure a nil balance at the end of each quarter. This</p>	RFO	Nov'25

	<p>recharged. However, this results in the income (£2.9k as at 24/10/25) being netted off against expenditure, meaning that income and expenditure on the AGAR is slightly understated each year.</p> <p>I recommend that a note is kept of this and any other netted off amounts in the accounts so that the figures can be grossed up at the year-end, in order to ensure that income and expenditure is correctly stated in the AGAR.</p>		<p>appears to have been set up in 2021 but, moving forward, the 9996 code can be discontinued and all utilities posted to the original 5815 and 5821 codes. A separate sheet will be set up recording the costs and backing up subsequent SL invoices raised. This can also be crosschecked using the budget monitoring sheets as neither NL code has a budget.</p>		
5.4 – Review and agree additional allotment charge	<p>I checked to see that a sample of prices charged agreed with those set by Council. I found that an additional charge is levied on allotments to cover the cost of in-year expenses such as skip hire. The allotment agreement notes this is £10, but the price has historically been pro-rated by plot size. It is not clear who set the price but there is no reference to it in recent Council minutes. The RFO noted that the associated costs of operating the allotments are being monitored this year in order to ensure that the contribution has been set at a sufficient rate to cover costs.</p> <p>I recommend that the Council reviews and agrees the additional charge when it sets the allotment rent annually and that it considers whether the additional charge should be pro-rated or not, and ensures that the allotment agreement accurately sets out the basis of charging.</p>	M	<p>The issue of the £10 ring-fenced charge will be raised with the Allotment Committee, as will the costs incurred during the current financial year. This is the first year such costs have been tracked</p>	RFO/Town Clerk	

5.5 – Ensure all receipts in advance are adjusted in the financial statements	<p>I found that £80.23 of income relating to two bookings in 25/26 was coded to the correct nominal codes, but that the income had been invoiced and received in 24/25 and not adjusted for at the year-end. As the bookings are for 25/26, the income should have been coded to receipts in advance in 24/25 (a creditor on the balance sheet) and then moved back out into income in 25/26 so that it was recognised in the correct year. Note that receipts in advance was £767 last year and other receipts was over £3m so the amount was not material to adjust.</p> <p>I recommend that a quick check is carried out of bookings income when the financial statements are being finalised in order to ensure that all receipts in advance are identified and adjusted.</p>	L	<p>The majority of income in advance is accounted for correctly but this item is noted. The fact that this is one entry in over £3m is also noted.</p>	RFO	
5.6 – Ensure deposits are correctly accounted for	<p>I found that the Council had invoiced for a £250 deposit for a 26/27 Corn Exchange booking. This has been coded to an income code. As the income is for a deposit rather than the provision of a service in 25/26, it should be shown on the balance sheet as a creditor. This will ensure that the deposit will remain on the Council's accounts as a separately identifiable item until the booking has taken place and the deposit either refunded or set against costs relating to the hiring.</p> <p>I recommend that the deposit is recoded to the balance sheet.</p>	L	<p>This is the first time that such deposits have been taken for many years and a suitable way of dealing with them is still in the process of being considered and will be taken to council for consideration on 24th November 2025. An additional code will be set up in the Balance Sheet section of the NL for Deposits Received and all such future entries will be posted there. At this point, this only affects one deposit and this has now been moved from the P&L.</p>	RFO	Nov'25

6.1 – Claim all VAT due on petty cash receipts	<p>I checked to see that a sample of petty cash spent was recorded and supported by VAT invoices/receipts. I found that all expenditure on one sample claim (16/16 payments) was supported by folios and receipts. I noted that most of the VAT had been reclaimed but that £2.17 of VAT on a refreshments receipt had been omitted in error.</p> <p>I recommend that this is claimed in the next VAT return in order to ensure that the Council recovers all monies due.</p>	L	This is noted and the petty cash sheet will be amended. The VAT will be adjusted in the next quarter.	RFO	Nov'25
12.1 – Update transparency information	<p>I checked to see that the Council was compliant with the best practice requirements of the Transparency Code 2015. I found that the majority of publications were in place, but noted that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The procurement information has not been updated since November 2024 2. The land and building information does not contain all of the information set out in the Code 3. The grants disclosure has not been updated to include any grants paid out in 25/26 4. The pay multiple is unchanged from the 24/25 disclosure. It was not clear whether or not the figure was current. <p>I recommend that the Council updates the information on its website in order to comply with the code.</p>	M	<p>This is noted and the work necessary to find and record all the information will be undertaken before the year end.</p> <p>3. Grants page of the website has been updated.</p>	RFO	By March'26

Agenda Item No. 8.2

To reaffirm the Internal Auditor's Contract

Background

The Town Council renewed the agreement with the existing Internal Auditor in 2024 for a further five years after seeking other quotations.

However, it is now a requirement of the External Auditor that the Town Council reviews this each year for the impartiality of the Internal Auditor.

Recommendation

The RFO and Town Clerk recommend that Councillors reaffirm the Internal Auditor's contract for the duration of the agreed term and confirm the individual continues to be independent and impartial.

Amanda Crocker
RFO
30th November 2025

Consideration of the proposed revenue budget for Administration Costs for 2026/27

ADMINISTRATION COSTS

* Non Inflated

N/L code	2024/25			2025/26			2026/27	
	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance	Annual Budget	Actual to 31.10.25	Forecast	Previous Year Plus Inflation @ 3%	Proposed Budget
4010 Advertising	600	400	200	600		600	618	600
4012 Audit	4500	3,675	825	4,635	3,298	4,500	4774	4,635
4014 Banking Charges	200	125	75	1,142	123	500	1176	1,000
4015 Property Fund Admin Charge / Exp	4500	5,433	(933)	4,635	3,293	4,500	4774	4,635
4018 Equipment Maintenance/Hire	500	445	55	500	77	500	515	500
4028 New Equipment	250	236	14	200	24	250	206	200
4039 IT New Equip	105	290.00	(185)	200	0	250	206	200
4040 IT Maintenance/Software	10435	8,223.40	2,212	10,750	8,496	12,000	11073	14,000
4041 IT Consumables	40	118.99	(79)	60	13	60	62	60
4042 Professional Services	10300	7,843.00	2,457	10,000	13,001	10,300	10300	10,000
4050 Newsletter/Around Blandford Guide	2500	3,126.07	(626)	4,500	2,701	4,450	4841	4,700
4053 Photocopier Charges	800	1,160.59	(361)	1,675	862	1,675	1725	2,000
4054 Stationery & Printing	1250	452.00	798	600	467	700	618	700
4057 Subscriptions	2500	2,661.00	(161)	3,075	2,630	3,075	3167	3,200
4060 Postage	450	842.00	(392)	800	308	800	824	800
4065 Telephones	8862	2,851.00	6,011	5,000	1,360	1,700	5150	1,700
4094 Staff Training & Travel Exps	4000	4,616.00	(616)	4,000	2,853	4,000	4120	4,000
4095 Staff Travel & Expenses	3000	1,841.00	1,159	3,000	1,021	3,000	3090	1,500
4096 Cllrs allow, Training & Travel Exps	5500	4,732.00	768	5,000	2,285	5,000	5150	5,000
4097 Cllrs Welfare / Meeting Exps	100	19.00	81	100	3	100	103	50
4099 Staff Welfare	400	404.00	(4)	400	233	300	412	450
4301 Health & Safety Staffing	150	34.00	116	3,000		100	3090	4,628
5500 S137 Grants	6000	(956.00)	6,956	6,000	3,300	6,000		6,000
5505 SLA & SPA Funding	23000	19,980.00	3,020	22,000	8,450	22,000		22,000
Sub Total	90,102	68,553	21549	92,072	54,798	86,360	65994	92,558
4701 Insurance	15,075	14,084	991	36,000	29,646	36,000	37080	25,000
Sub Total	15,075	14,084	991	36,000	29,646	36,000	37080	25,000
4800 Mayoral Expenses	2,881	-1,371	4,252	2,967	295	2,967	3056	2,500
4802 Civic Expenses	5,305	6,239	(934)	5,500	4,992	5,500	5665	6,000
4805 Civic Twinning	150		150	150		150	155	150
4806 Civic - Freedom	150		150	150		150	155	150
4803/4 Honorarium - Town Crier & Mace Bearer	1,400	1,100	300	1,400	400	1,400	1442	1,400
4809 Membership to GMB & Town Criers	100	40	60	100	30	100	103	100
Sub Total	9,986	6,008	3978	10,267	5,717	10,267	10575	10,300
TOTAL EXPENSES	115,163	88,645	26,518	138,339	90,162	132,627	113649	127,858
INCOME								
2025 Interest	2,000	3,176	(1,176)	2,500	1,972	2,500	2575	2,500
2003 Property Fund Dividend	30,000		30,000	30,000	27,556	30,000	30900	30,000
2030 Cricket Club loan interest		43	(43)		21	43		
3893 Grant Income	0		0	0			0	0
3894 Misc Income	500	2,760	(2,260)	1,000	515	1,000	1030	1,000
3897 Overtime Charges	50	367	(317)	50		255	52	250
3899 Photocopying	150	153	(3)	150	131	150	155	150
3901 Proof of Life		123	(123)		117	120		120
3920 Admin Charge - Barnes for Rec	5,990	5,990	0	6,170	3,085	6,170	6355	6,356
3925 Salary charge-out to Barnes for a Recreation	27,500	27,500	0	28,325	14,163	28,325	29175	29,176
TOTAL INCOME	66,190	40,112	26,078	68,195	47,559	68,563	70241	69,552
NET COST	48,973	48,533	440	70,144	42,603	64,064	43408	58,306

Recommendations from Committees

Recreation & Amenities Committee Budgets

Please note that this information is a result of officers' discussions and is merely intended to help the Committee reach its decisions. Please also refer to the right-hand column (in red) on the [Earmarked Reserves report](#).

1050 Allotment – £0

No budget required.

10510-10540 Badbury Heights – s106 monies

Councillors will note that there has been some expenditure, however it has been minimal this year.

The s106 monies for Persimmon POS phase 1 is to be spent over 20 years.

The s106 monies for POS phase 2 is to be spend over 10 years.

The s106 monies for Phase 2 commuted sum is to be spent over 10 years.

Persimmon s106 monies have their own budget and are not included in the precept monies.

Staff wages / SARA on equipment maintenance, SARA for Glenmore depot, POS and capital commuted sums for Phase 1 & Phase 2 are included in the Persimmon budget. The RFO calculates how much is required each year, so that the funds last the period that they are to be spent in. Once the period has exceeded as to when the s106 monies are due to be spent, the Town Council will have to fund all the costs through the precept. Councillors may therefore wish to replenish monies spent this financial year.

1060 Planned Preventative Maintenance – £10,000

It is recommended that £10,000 is added to the budget this year to replenish some of the costs being incurred on the Football Club soffits.

1061 Cemetery Chapel – £1,000 & 1062 Cemetery Workshop – £1,000

These budget lines were introduced ten years ago to gradually build up a sufficient budget for carrying out the repointing works raised by the PPM condition survey to the exterior of the Chapel and the Workshop. It is recommended that the budget is continued at £1,000 for each building, due to the nature of the buildings and especially now they have been listed.

1064 Cemetery Wall – £0

It is not recommended that additional funds are raised for this budget line, although this will need to be retained for future works as it is now listed, and this not only applies to the boundary wall with Davis Gardens but the whole of the wall enclosing the cemetery.

1065 DDA – £900

To continue to provide accessible venues and amenities.

1067 Play Area Fencing & Surfacing – £0

As no expenditure has been incurred this financial year, so far, it is recommended that the budget is not added to.

1068 Larksmead Outdoor Fitness – £0

It is suggested that the budget is not added to this year. There is a balance that should cover any repairs when they are required.

1070 Seat Replacement – £0

It is not recommended to increase this budget line.

1075 Tree Survey & Works – £0

It is recommended that the budget line is not increased this year.

1080 Health & Safety Memorials – £0

It is recommended that there is no increase this year.

1090 Woodhouse Gardens Wall Repairs – £0

It is recommended that this budget is gradually built back up again as there are still bays that have not yet been worked on, as well as the boundary wall at the back of the pavilion.

1096 Contingency – £0

It has been agreed that any remaining balance in the Contingency budget is held to avoid additional accruals. At this stage in the financial year the £500 has not been used so it is recommended that this line is not added to.

Additional Information

There have not been any requests or feedback because the consultation event was not held due to not having an Autumn Expo. However, Councillors expressed support for the suggestion from Offcamber for a pump track at Stour Meadows car park.

Recommendation

The above will give a draft Earmarked Reserves budget of £12,900 which is £1,400 more than last year's budget for Recreation & Amenities.

There are no other proposals for Capital Reserves other than the pump track.

The revenue budget will be considered at this Finance & Staffing Committee meeting as part of the overall budget.

R&A Earmarked Reserves

			Balance as at 31/3/25	Income & Transfer of funds	Budget 2025/26	Total Reserves	Spend YTD	Committed YTD	Current Balance	Proposed Budget 2025/26
1050		Allotment - ring fenced charges	4,317	0	0	4,317			4,317	
10510	2014	B/Heights Phase 1 - POS - \$106	49,299	0	0	49,299	6,444	4	42,855	
10520	Transfer from 2016	B/Heights Phase 2 - POS - \$106	20,334	0	0	20,334	2,277	5	18,058	
10521		B/Heights Phase 2 - Playarea Maint - \$106	2,257	0	0	2,257			2,257	
10530		B/Heights Phase 3A -POS - AREA 1 (20 years) - \$106	12,109	0	0	12,109			12,109	
10531		B/Heights Phase 3A -POS - AREA 2 (20 years) - \$106	50,966	0	0	50,966			50,966	
10532		B/Heights Phase 3A -POS - AREA 3 (20 years) - \$106	57,443	0	0	57,443			57,443	
10533		B/Heights Phase 3A -POS - AREA 4 (20 years) - \$106	24,484	0	0	24,484			24,484	
10534		B/Heights Phase 3A -COM SUM - LAP (20 years) - \$106	34,900	0	0	34,900			34,900	
10535		B/Heights Phase 3A -COM SUM - LEAP (20 years) - \$106	172,441	0	0	172,441			172,441	
10536		B/Heights Phase 3A -COM SUM - NEAP (20 years) - \$106	113,458	0	0	113,458			113,458	
10537		B/Heights Phase 3A -CAP SUM - LAP - \$106	9,978	0	0	9,978			9,978	
10538		B/Heights Phase 3A -CAP SUM - LEAP - \$106	52,801	0	0	52,801			52,801	
10539		B/Heights Phase 3A -CAP SUM - NEAP - \$106	116,944	0	0	116,944			116,944	
10540		B/Heights Public Arts - \$106	13,012	0	0	13,012			13,012	
1060		Planned Preventative Maint (PPM)	0	6,000	6,000	6,000			6,000	14000
1061		Cemetery Chapel (PPM)	9,420	2,000	1,000	11,420			11,420	1000
1062		Cemetery Workshop (PPM)	12,000	1,000	1,000	13,000			13,000	1000
1064		Cemetery Wall	32,654	0	0	32,654			32,654	
1065		Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)	0	3,134	2	500	3,134		3,134	900
1067		Play Area Fencing & Surfacing	16,037	0	0	16,037			16,037	
1068		Larksmead Outdoor Fitness	2,000	0	0	2,000			2,000	
1070		Seat Replacement	1,696	0	0	1,696			1,696	
1071		Skatefest	319	2,500	2,500	2,819	2,370	6	450	
1072		Community Fridge	1,072	0	0	1,072			1,072	
1075		Tree Survey & Works (5 Years)	18,913	0	0	18,913			18,913	
1080		H & S Works Memorials	1,263	0	0	1,263			1,263	
1090		Woodhouse Garden Wall Repairs	22,005	500	500	22,505			22,505	
1096		Contingency	1,000	-1,000	3	0			0	
			853,122	14,134	11,500	867,256	11,090	0	856,165	16900

Spend

- 1 NL 1125 Cemetery Field Project to NL1061 Cemetery Chapel
- 2 NL1042 T&GP Seat Replacement to NL1065 R&A DDA
- 3 NL1096 £1000 to NL1500 General Reserves

4,834

- 4 Salary transfer
- Waste bin empty contract for 2025/26

4,489

- 5 Salary transfer

614

- 6 Skatefest banner
- Kens Kabs sponsorship
- Banner and fliers
- St John Ambulance
- Meta advertising
- Toilet hire
- Meta advertising
- Organise event

2,542

172 St Johns Ambulance transfer

12,279

Town & General Purposes Committee Budgets

This information is a result of officers' discussions and is intended to help the Committee reach its decision. Please also refer to the right-hand column (in red) on the [Earmarked Reserves report](#).

Town Maps, Boards & Fingerposts – proposed budget £0

There is no further expenditure expected, beyond repairs. Therefore, it is recommended that the budget is not added to this year.

DC Highways – proposed budget £0

This budget line was created to set aside funds for necessary highway works above and beyond statutory requirements. It is recommended that it is not added to again this year due to pressures/priorities from other budget lines.

Christmas Town Decorations – proposed budget £15,000

This budget line is used for the annual Christmas window competition, the cherry picker and Christmas tree in the Market Place, as well as the installation and addition of lights in Woodhouse Gardens. It also includes the installation and removal of the 21 column lights throughout the town centre and installation and maintenance of the small Christmas trees by a contractor. It is recommended to include £15,000 for annual costs and further improvements (eg. replacements lights, repairs/works to street lights).

Tourism – proposed budget £0

Funds have previously been committed for the Out & About booklet and £250 for interpretation boards at Langton Road and Marsh & Ham car park. This budget line also covers the cost of the summer holiday event in Woodhouse Gardens, a Christmas entertainer event, Christmas and Summer promotion advert/printing and the printing of the yearly calendar. It is recommended that nothing is added to the current balance.

Twinning – proposed budget £0

This budget has only incurred minor expenditure since 2012/2013, for example the Mayor's calendar sent to the twin towns, along with a Christmas card. Therefore, it is suggested that nothing is added to the current balance again this year.

Town Improvements – proposed budget £500

The emptying of the dog bins at Elizabeth Road is charged to this budget line. This budget line always incurs unexpected expenditure as well.

New Benches – £0

Due to the high number of benches installed in the last few years, it is not recommended to add to this budget line.

Railway Arches – Recommended budget £500

This budget line will need building up should the Town Council wish to retain the lease, and therefore the responsibility for ongoing surveys and maintenance on this structure. This financial year, a structural survey has taken place.

Contingency – £0

It is not recommended to add to this budget line. Any remaining balance at the end of the financial year will roll over into the 25-26 financial year.

T&GP Capital Projects

Councillors have committed to the Marsh & Ham toilets/TIC block and it is recommended that a budget of £40,000 is allocated for the refurbishment of the unisex/accessible unit and other building works that will certainly be required.

T&GP Earmarked Reserves

Nominal Code	Budget	Balance b/f	Transfer To/From General Reserves		Budget Approved 2025/26	Total Reserves	Spend YTD	Committed YTD	Current Balance	Proposed budget 2026/27	
1020	Town Maps, Boards & Fingerposts	3,283			0	3,283	0	0	3,283		
1021	DCC Highways	86	-86		0	0	0	0	0		
1025	Christmas Town Decorations*	1,669	15,000		15,000.00	16,669	12,828	6	5,595	4	To be budgeted in main budget
1030	Tourism	3,435			0	3,435	960	3	275	7	
1035	Twinning	1,303			0	1,303	0	0	0	1,303	
1040	Town Improvements	3,878	586		500	4,464	835	5	0	3,629	1,000
1042	New Benches	2,634	-2,634	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
1135	Railway Arches	2,157	500		500	2,657	0	0	2,657	2,000	Bi-annual inspection
1045	Contingency***	908	-908	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		19,353	12,458		16,000	31,811	14,623		5,870	11,319	3,000

Income/Transfers From Reserves				Breakdown of Committed funds		
1	Transferred to DDA compliance	-	2,633.81	4	Installation & removal of trees & columns	2900.00
2	Transferred to General Reserve	-	908.33		TC 28.04.25 Item 199	
YTD Spends						
3	Printing photographs for competition		173.40		Xmas lights & Nutcracker tree	
	Jamie Jigsaw - 3 hours August 2025		410.00		TC 29.09.25 Item 67	1687.00
	Fliers for Window Competition		30.00			
	Newsletter		247.37			
	Photo competition expenses		33.71			
	Town Crier bags		13.48			
	Badges		51.57			
				959.53		
5	Sponsor Business Awards					
	Planning 08.09.25 item30		200.00			
	Bus shelter window repairs		485.00			
	Hire of Church 13.09.25		150.00	835.00		
6	Main Xmas tree - TC 28.07.25 Min.9			5,100.00		
	WHG Lights - TC 29.09.25			1,008.00		
	Festoon lights for WHG			720.00		
	Installation of Christmas lights			6,000.00		

Additional Information

There have not been any requests or feedback because the consultation event was not held due to not having an Autumn Expo.

Recommendation

This would give a total budget of £3,000 for T&GP Earmarked Reserves, which is considerably less than last year because the Christmas Lights budget line has been moved to the budgets.

The revenue budget will be considered at this Finance & Staffing Committee meeting as part of the overall budget.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
26th November 2025

Consideration of the overall budget for the year 2026/27 and recommendation of the precept for 2026/27

The Dorset Council has advised that the housing figures will be provided to town and parish councils by 5th December 2025, which will be shared with Councillors along with the draft budget.

To date, the Town Clerk, RFO and the Operations Manager have gone through each budget line and a budget workshop meeting with Councillors and staff has been set for 5:30pm, prior to this committee meeting on Monday 8th December 2025, which will include consideration of the precept.

Most budget lines have been increased by 3% despite this being under the current rate of inflation. However, some budget lines have been reduced or remain the same.

Some of the highlights of the budget have been explained/summarised below:

- Corn Exchange Maintenance
- Possibility of contributing to the proposed pump track
- Charge sports clubs closer to what is spent on them
- Replenishing Reserves
- Public Conveniences – Marsh & Ham refurbishments

All matters, and budget lines, can be discussed in full at the committee meeting, which all Councillors are encouraged to attend.

The budget can then be re-drafted accordingly and presented to full council on 15th December 2025 or at a meeting in January 2026.

The deadline for responding to the Dorset Council is 31st January 2026.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
28th November 2025