



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

To All Councillors; C Stevens (Chairman), Y Mièville (Vice Chairman), S Hitchings, H Mièville, L Hitchings, N Lacey-Clarke, B Quayle, A Cross, R Holmes, S Chapman, T Clarkson, M Putt, G Del-Pinto, S Morgan, M Spruce
All other recipients for information only.

Tuesday, 20 October 2026

Dear Member

Summons

You are summoned to a meeting of the **Town Council** of Blandford Forum for the transaction of the business shown on the agenda below. To be held at 7 pm on **Monday, 26 October 2026** in the Corn Exchange. The quorum for Full Council is 9.

Public Participation and Democratic Quarter Hour

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 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 invite members of the public to comment on specific issues where their particular knowledge on a subject might prove of benefit to the Committee.

Join: [Click on this link to join using Microsoft Teams](#)

General Duties of 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.

Recording of Meetings

All attendees should be aware that filming, recording, photography or similar activity may take place during the meeting.

Date of next Town Council Meeting: Monday, 30 November 2026

Yours sincerely

Claire Commons BA (Hons), Town Clerk

Twinned with Preetz, Germany



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



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Agenda

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Anticipated meeting end time 8:45 pm

TC6.1 Public Participation

(7:00 pm) To allow the public to make representations to the Council.

(up to 15 mins)

Receive and note

Report Author:

Background

The Standing Orders of the Council (specifically Standing Order 3) provide for a designated Public Participation session at each meeting of the Council and its Committees.

During Public Participation, members of the public are invited to address the meeting regarding matters on the published agenda or within the Council's powers.

Public Participation is distinct from the formal business of the meeting. Once the session concludes, the public are observers only and must not participate further unless invited by a resolution of the Council.

The Council's commitment to openness, transparency, and community engagement supports the inclusion of Public Participation within the formal structure of the meeting.

At the Annual Meeting of the Council, Public Participation shall only commence after the election of the Chair, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and Standing Orders.

Members of the public registered to speak

Conduct of Public Participation

Public Participation will occur at the start of the meeting.

Each speaker may address the meeting for a maximum of three minutes, subject to the Chair's discretion to extend or reduce this time if necessary.

The maximum total duration for Public Participation shall normally be 20 minutes unless the Council resolves otherwise.

Speakers are asked to address the meeting courteously, and must not make offensive, defamatory, or irrelevant comments. Speakers do not have a right to expect debate or immediate responses.

Recording of Public Participation

The minutes of the meeting shall record that Public Participation took place and will summarise the general topics raised, but shall not record the names of individual speakers.

Recommendation

That the public comments are received, and any points of note are identified for consideration at future meetings of the Council or its committees or for action by officers of the Council

Reason for Recommendation

To acknowledge public engagement in accordance with Standing Orders and ensure that matters raised are appropriately considered without committing the Council to immediate decisions.

TC6.2 **Apologies**

(7:20 pm) To receive and consider for acceptance, apologies for absence from Councillors summoned to attend (1 min)

Decision Item

Report Author: Town Clerk

Background

Councillors are holders of public office and are summoned to attend meetings of the Council and its committees.

In accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council must consider and decide whether to accept the reason for absence provided by any Councillor who is unable to attend a meeting.

If a councillor fails to attend any meeting of the Council (or its committees) for a period of six consecutive months, without having obtained formal acceptance of their apologies by the Council (or the relevant committee), they are automatically disqualified from office.

Apologies received and reason

Cllr Stevens due to a conflicting personal engagement.

Recommendation

That the Council considers and either accepts or rejects each apology for absence received.

Reason for Recommendation

Accepting apologies resets the six-month period for continuous attendance, ensuring compliance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

(End)

TC6.3 **Declarations of Interest**

(7:21 pm) To declare interests relating to the business of the meeting.

(2 min)

Receive and note

Report Author: Town Clerk

Background

All Councillors and Officers are reminded of their obligations under the Blandford Forum Town Council Code of Conduct to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests, or Non-Registerable Interests relating to matters on the agenda.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest, it is the individual Councillor's responsibility to declare that interest at the earliest opportunity in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

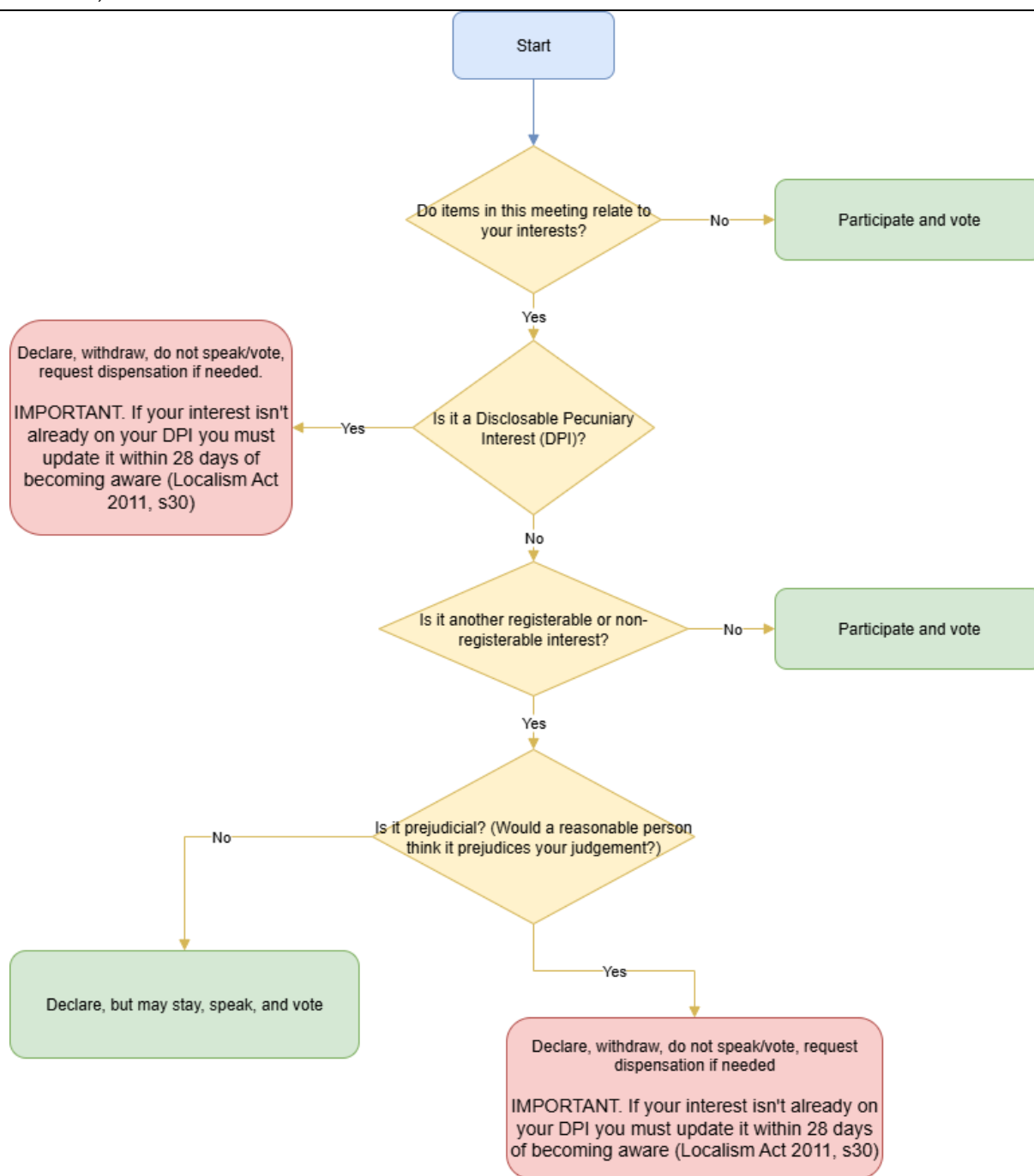
The Clerk will report any dispensations granted prior to the meeting.

Refer to Tables 1 and 2 in the [Code of Conduct](#) for further details about the types of interests which may apply.

If you think you need to request a dispensation, the process is included within the [Dispensation Request Form.docx](#).

The table below provides a summary of what your responsibilities are depending on the type of interest declared.

Type of Interest	Declare at Meeting?	Stay for Debate?	Vote?	Withdraw?	Notes
DPI (registered or not)	Yes	No	No	Yes	Must declare and withdraw, unless dispensation granted
Other/Non-Registerable (not prejudicial)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Declare, but may participate fully
Other/Non-Registerable (prejudicial)	Yes	No (except to speak if public can)	No	Yes	Declare, may speak if public can, then withdraw
With Dispensation	Yes	As specified	As specified	As specified	Dispensation may allow limited participation



Recommendation

That the Council notes the declarations made in relation to the business of the meeting.

Reason for Recommendation

Recording declarations at the meeting ensures transparency, compliance with the Council's adopted Code of Conduct, and adherence to statutory obligations.

(End)

TC6.4 Minutes

(7:23 pm) To receive the minutes of the previous meeting of the Town Council. (2 min)

Decision Item

Report Author: Town Clerk

Background

In approving draft minutes, the Council is concerned solely with whether the minutes accurately record the proceedings and resolutions of the relevant meeting.

It is immaterial whether individual Councillors were present at the meeting to which the minutes relate.

If any corrections are necessary due to inaccuracies, amendments must be approved by formal resolution before the minutes are signed.

Recommendation

That the minutes of [28th September 2026](#) be approved for signing as a true record of the decisions taken.

(End)

TC6.5 Report for Information to Full Council

(7:25 pm) To receive minutes and reports and consider recommendations from the Committees of the Council. (10 min)

Receive and note

Report Author: Town Clerk

Summary

Reports provided within this item are to be received, they provide updates on decisions already taken by the Council or its Committee and actions taken under the Scheme of Delegation (where not previously reported). Any actions marked as complete at the last point of reporting will be removed from the list for conciseness.

Updates and Actions from previous Council meetings

DATE	DECISION	STATUS	UPDATE
JULY 2026	Progress discussions regarding additional parish participation within Blandford+.	 In Progress	Blandford+ holds an annual Christmas get-together with all parishes. Other parishes will be invited to join again when the review takes place in 2028.
JULY 2026	Progress the 20mph working group.	 On Hold	Potential areas have been suggested. There are currently no requests from residents and Dorset Council will require supporting evidence, so the work is on hold pending evidence of local demand.
SEPTEMBER 2026	Invite neighbouring villages to participate in future neighbourhood plan discussions.	 In Progress	Neighbouring parishes will be invited to participate when the neighbourhood plan review takes place in 2028.

Town & General Purposes Committee 5/10/2026 – [click to view minutes](#). The Chair may provide a further update at this point.

DATE	DECISION	STATUS	UPDATE
JULY 2026	Request and follow up an Automatic Traffic Counter on Damory Street.	 In Progress	The request was made but was not actioned by Dorset Council. Following an officer reminder, Dorset Council apologised and advised that the counter would be installed during the week commencing 19 October 2026. Results are awaited.
JULY 2026	Request a free parking day from Dorset Council.	 Complete	The free parking day has been confirmed for 17 December 2026. The Committee was informed at its October meeting.
OCTOBER 2026	Follow up matters relating to Tin Pot Lane.	 In Progress	A site visit was arranged but cancelled by Dorset Council. The NOC has since met with Highways and requested signage. A response from Dorset Council is awaited.

OCTOBER 2026	Amend and issue the Christmas decoration sponsorship letter.	● In Progress	The letter has been amended and printed. Caretaking and Grounds staff will deliver it by the end of October.
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Planning Committee – 12/10/2026 – [Click to view minutes](#). The Chair may provide a further update at this point.

All actions complete.

Finance & Staffing Committee, there has been no meeting since the last Full Council, below is a status update on actions from the committee.

DATE	DECISION	STATUS	UPDATE
SEPTEMBER 2026	Circulate EV charging information to Members.	● In Progress	The report has been prepared. The RFO is checking several figures before it is issued.
SEPTEMBER 2026	Develop arrangements for Barnes charity income and expenditure to be managed directly through the charity from the next financial year.	● In Progress	From January, known contractors will be asked to amend their records so that invoices are made out to Barnes for Recreation with effect from 1 April 2027. Incorrectly addressed invoices will continue to be returned where necessary.
SEPTEMBER 2026	Apply for online banking and establish administrative arrangements for the Mayor's Charity Account.	● In Progress	Colin, as the current account-access holder, will be invited to the office to add the relevant officers to the account and complete the necessary changes. The intention is to secure officer access before the next mayoral handover so transactions can be administered correctly.

Recreation & Amenities Committee – There has been no committee meeting since the last Full Council. Below is an update of actions from the committee.

DATE	DECISION	STATUS	UPDATE
SEPTEMBER 2026	Complete the skate park repairs.	● In Progress	The work was expected to have been completed but has been delayed by other ongoing commitments and the weather. Completion is anticipated within the next few weeks.

Working Group and Representative Reports

No working group or representative reports were received in advance. Representatives will be invited to provide brief verbal updates at the meeting.

Civic Report 22 September – 19th October 2026

DATE	FUNCTION	COMMENTS
Sunday 4 th October	St Johns Ambulance Annual Awards Ceremony at Blandford Brewery	The awards were given for long service and recognition of achievements and also for the collective efforts of all the volunteers. We were made to feel very welcome and I had the honour of presenting some of the certificates to volunteers who have remarkably done a thousand hours of volunteering in one year. A very enjoyable afternoon.
Wednesday 7 th October	Bridport Civic Day	We started at Mountfield, the council officers with a presentation of the Millennium Green project. After refreshments we walked to the Lyric Theatre, one of the oldest theatres in England which is at present being renovated. From there we walked to the Bridport Art Centre where an exhibition on flax, which is used in rope making, was being set up. Our next stop was The Electric Palance cinema. We were given a guided tour around this lovely building with many beautiful art deco murals on the walls and were given the history of it. After a lovely lunch in the town hall we went to the museum. We saw a demonstration on ropemaking and also visited the archives storage building. We ended the day at the Youth & Community centre where a talk was given on the rewarding work being carried out by the volunteers. A very interesting day hearing about the history of the lovely buildings we visited.

Sunday 18 th October	Youth Forum Variety Performance at Coade Hall	Chris and I had the pleasure of attending the Youth Forum Variety Performance at the Coade Hall. It was a brilliant show organised by the Performing Arts Theatre Academy. It included performers from the Academy and from Dance Days Academy, Starlight Dance Academy, Stagecoach Blandford & Shaftesbury and Blandford Gymnastics, as well as independent solos and duets. The performances were outstanding. It was good to see so many talented local young people. A very enjoyable evening.
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Dorset Council Reports

Dorset Councillors will be invited to provide brief verbal reports at the meeting.

Recommendation

That the reports are received and any points of note are identified for future meetings of the Council or its committees or for action by officers of the Council.

Reason for Recommendation

To provide a minute record of information provided to members of the Council and to determine matters which fall within the committee scheme of delegation for debate but exceed the delegation for determination.

(End)

TC6.6 **Grant Application**

(7:30pm) To consider grant application for the Allotment Association, deferred from the Town Council meeting in July (15 mins)

Decision Item

Report Author: Town Clerk

Summary and Background information

The Council considered an application from Blandford Allotment Society at its meeting on 27 July 2026. The application followed the Council's earlier decision to invite the Society to apply for a grant equivalent to one year's rent while it adjusted to increased operating costs.

At the July meeting, Members deferred the application to allow time to review the Society's accounts. The accounts have been provided to members with the meeting papers, enabling Members to determine the application.

The application is for £650 to offset the cost of one year's rent. Members should consider the application and the accompanying accounts in accordance with the Council's grant arrangements and determine whether to award the grant.

Further Information Sources

- Grant application from Blandford Allotment Society (previously circulated, re-provided with these papers);
- Society accounts circulated with the meeting papers (circulated with these papers);
- Town Council minutes of 27 July 2026, minute TC4.8. (previously circulated)

Financial Implication

The requested grant is £650, to be met from the Council's grants budget. Approval would offset the Society's rent for one year as previously envisaged by the Council.

Recommendation

That the Council approves a grant of £650 to Blandford Allotment Society to offset the cost of one year's rent.

Reason for Recommendation

To provide one year of financial support while the Society adjusts to increased operating costs, following consideration of the accounts requested when the application was deferred.

(End)

TC6.7 **Town of Culture**

(7:45 pm) To consider next steps for Town of Culture

(10 mins)

Decision Item

Report Author: Town Clerk

Summary and Background information

At its meeting on 27 July 2026, the Council considered Blandford Forum's application for Dorset Town of Culture 2027. The application had been submitted before formal Council approval because the application deadline fell before the Council was able to meet.

The Council retrospectively approved the submission, agreed in principle to set aside up to £30,000 as match funding subject to a successful bid and final programme and budget approval, approved representation at the interview, and agreed that a working group would be created if the application succeeded.

Blandford Forum was placed second. Dorset Council advised that the application was strong and encouraged the Council to apply again if the programme is offered next year.

The July resolution did not set out a process to follow if the application was unsuccessful. Members also expressed concern that the 2027 application had been brought forward without prior consultation. If a similar opportunity is announced next year, the application period may again be too short to obtain approval through the ordinary meeting cycle. Council is therefore asked to agree in advance how members and partners should be consulted, and what authority officers should have to prepare and submit an application within the available timescale.

Financial Implication

There is no immediate financial commitment arising from this decision. Any future application involving match funding or expenditure would remain subject to specific Council approval unless a budget and delegation are agreed at that time.

Recommendation

That, if the Town of Culture programme is offered again, the Town Clerk consults Councillors and relevant partners and prepares an application for Council approval. If the deadline prevents this, the Town Clerk may submit an application in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman, provided no expenditure or match funding is committed without Council approval.

Reason for Recommendation

To ensure Councillors and community partners are consulted before any future application while retaining sufficient flexibility to meet a short external deadline. The proposed process enables an application to be submitted without committing Council funds in advance.

(End)

TC6.8 **Barnes**

(7:55 pm) To consider recommendation from the Finance and Staffing Committee regarding structure of accounts (10 mins)

Decision Item

Report Author: Town Clerk

Summary and Background information

Barnes for a Recreation Ground is a separate charity for which the Town Council is sole trustee. Although separate bank accounts are in place, the charity's income and expenditure is currently accounted for through the Town Council's accounts, which makes the respective financial positions less clear.

The Finance & Staffing Committee considered this arrangement on 21 September 2026 and recommended that, from the start of the next financial year, all Barnes income and expenditure is accounted for directly through the charity. The Town Council would provide an annual grant in support of the charity, while officers would continue to administer its finances.

This will provide a clearer audit trail and improve transparency over the charity's income, expenditure, reserves and cash position. It will also demonstrate independent financial activity, supporting future funding applications.

Further Information Sources

Finance & Staffing Committee agenda and minutes of 21 September 2026, item FS2.7.

Financial Implication

The annual grant will be considered through the Council's budget-setting process. The recommendation creates no immediate additional expenditure. Officer time will continue to be required to administer the charity's finances.

Recommendation

That all Barnes income and expenditure is accounted for directly through the charity from the start of the next financial year; that the Town Council provides an annual grant in support of the charity; and that officers continue to administer the charity's finances.

Reason for Recommendation

To improve financial clarity, accountability and administration, while evidencing Barnes' independent financial activity for future funding applications.

(End)

TC6.9 Blandford in Stitches Tapestry

(8:05 pm) To consider hosting tapestry on long term loan in the Corn Exchange

(10 mins)

Decision Item

Report Author: Town Clerk

Summary and Background information

Blandford Town Museum has approached the Council regarding a wall-hanging produced by its Blandford in Stitches group. Entitled *Medieval Women in the Dorset Stour Valley*, the work depicts life between Fiddleford and Shapwick and measures approximately 2.3 metres by 1.7 meters.

The wall-hanging is owned by Blandford Town Museum, which does not have suitable space to display it and has again enquired whether the Town Council would be willing to accommodate it.

The matter has been considered previously. Whilst Members were supportive of the work itself, a suitable location for its display proved difficult to identify. One location previously discussed was the Shambles; however, concerns were raised that exposure to weather, temperature fluctuations, moisture, dust and general environmental conditions could lead to deterioration of the textile over time.

The principal issue remains identifying an appropriate location that would both allow public viewing and provide suitable protection for the wall-hanging. If the Council is minded to accept it for display, a number of matters would need to be resolved, including:

- Where the wall-hanging would be displayed
- Whether any protective casing, specialist mounting, or environmental controls would be required
- The cost of any installation works or protective measures.
- Responsibility for cleaning, conservation and ongoing maintenance
- Insurance arrangements
- Whether the Council would become custodian of the wall-hanging and therefore assume responsibility for its care, or whether responsibility would remain with the Museum whilst the Council simply provides display space.
- Arrangements for any future removal, repair or return of the wall-hanging.

Members may wish to consider these matters before determining whether the Council wishes to pursue the proposal.



Financial Implication

The financial implications are currently unknown. Costs could arise from installation, specialist fixings, protective glazing or display cases, conservation requirements, insurance arrangements and ongoing maintenance. Depending upon the agreed arrangements, such costs may fall either to the Council or to the Museum.

Recommendation

That the Council considers whether it wishes to display the *Medieval Women in Dorset Stour Valley* wall hanging and, if so:

- Identifies a preferred location for its display;
- Indicates whether it would be willing to assume responsibility for the wall-hanging's care and maintenance or whether such responsibility should remain with Blandford Town Museum; and
- Authorises officers to investigate and report back on any installation, conservation, insurance and other costs before any final agreement is entered into.

Reason for Recommendation

To enable Members to consider the practical, financial and custodial implications of displaying the wall-hanging before deciding whether the Council should enter into any long-term display arrangements.

(End)

TC6.10 **B+ Voting Member**

(8:15 pm) To appoint replacement voting member to B+

(5 mins)

Decision Item

Report Author: Town Clerk

Summary and Background information

B+ allows each member council to appoint two voting members. Blandford Forum Town Council's voting members were Councillors Roger Holmes and Alan Cross. When Councillor Cross stepped down, the Council therefore lost one of its two votes on B+.

The Council previously resolved not to fill Councillor Cross's vacancies on outside organisations until the new councillor was in place. In the case of B+, however, this leaves the Council represented by only one voting member in the interim.

Councillors Maggie Putt and Sheila Chapman are also members of the B+ group, but do not currently hold voting rights.

The Council is therefore asked to appoint an additional councillor to exercise its second vote at B+ meetings until the vacancy arrangements are reviewed following the appointment of the new councillor.

Financial Implication

There are no direct financial implications arising from this appointment.

Recommendation

That Councillor Sheila Chapman is appointed as Blandford Forum Town Council's second voting member on B+.

Reason for Recommendation

To ensure that Blandford Forum Town Council can exercise both of its allocated votes at B+ meetings during the interim period.

(End)

TC6.11 Wyatt Phase 2

(8:20 pm) To consider reserved matters

(15 mins)

Decision Item

Report Author: Town Clerk

Summary and Background information

Wyatt Homes intends shortly to submit a reserved matters application for Phase 2 of the North East Blandford development under hybrid planning permission P/OUT/2020/00026. Phase 2 comprises 75 dwellings, of which 30% are proposed as affordable housing in accordance with policy, flexible Class E commercial space for a convenience store, the community hall, and the replacement allotments and allotment building.

As the phase includes the Allotment Land, the Option Agreement dated 25 November 2025 requires Wyatt Homes to provide the proposed submission pack to the Town Council for approval before the planning application is submitted. The Council's approval at this stage is limited to confirming that the application reflects and is consistent with the approved Replacement Allotment Land and Allotment Specification, together with the agreed obligations for access and services.

Wyatt Homes states that the proposed replacement allotments extend to 6.30 acres, exceeding the minimum requirement of 5.56 acres; are wholly within the area shaded yellow on Plan 5 and laid out in accordance with Plan 4; and include the required temporary and permanent accessways, shown on drawings 0728PHL-2101-B and 0728-PHL-2401-A.

The Council will therefore consider the proposals at two separate stages, but in different capacities and for different purposes. At this first stage, the Council is acting as a party to the Option Agreement. Its review is confined to deciding whether the proposed submission is consistent with the previously approved replacement allotment land, allotment specification, and arrangements for access and services. It is not being asked at this stage to determine the planning merits of the wider Phase 2 development.

After the reserved matters application is submitted, Dorset Council will be the local planning authority and decision-maker, and the Town Council will be consulted in its usual role as a planning consultee. At that later stage, Members may consider the planning merits of the application as a whole and agree whether to support, object to, or comment on it. Any response agreed under the Option Agreement is separate from, and does not predetermine, the Council's later planning consultation response.

The rights required at completion of the transfer are not matters for determination at the planning application stage and will need to be complied with when the Replacement Allotment Land is transferred. Following submission to Dorset Council, the Town Council will be formally consulted and will retain the opportunity to comment separately on the reserved matters application as a whole.

Further Information Sources

The submission pack can be downloaded from [this link](#).

Legal Authority and Implication

Paragraph 1.3 of Schedule 3 to the Option Agreement dated 25 November 2025 requires the Town Council to approve, or verify that the planning application reflects and is consistent with, the approved Replacement Allotment Land, the approved Allotment Specification, and the Grantee's obligations concerning access and services. Approval under the Option Agreement is distinct from the Council's later role as a consultee on the planning application.

Financial Implication

There are no direct financial implications arising from approval of the proposed submission under the Option Agreement.

Recommendation

That the Council reviews the proposed Phase 2 reserved matters submission against the requirements of paragraph 1.3 of Schedule 3 to the Option Agreement dated 25 November 2025; agrees the response to be made to Wyatt Homes; and authorises officers to communicate and take the administrative steps necessary to give effect to that response.

Reason for Recommendation

To enable Members to determine the Council's contractual response under the Option Agreement, with officers then implementing and communicating that decision, while preserving the Council's separate role and discretion when it is later consulted on the planning application by Dorset Council.

(End)

TC6.12 Market Enhancement

(8:35 pm) To consider delegation arrangements to progress the Market Enhancement project(10 mins)

Decision Item

Report Author: Town Clerk

The report for this item will follow a meeting of the working group and be circulated to councillors ahead of the meeting.