

**Finance & Governance Committee, Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

**Budget Setting 2023/24 – Timetable and Agreement of Budget Principles**

Over the next few months, the budget setting process for 2023/24 and forecast for the two financial years beyond will take place.

The final submission of Estimates will be made to full Council on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023, where the budget and precept for 2023/24 will be agreed.

Committee meetings will take place between now and the Estimates meeting where the fees and charges appropriate to that committee will be discussed, as well as discussion around the revenue and capital budgets. A draft budget is due to be discussed at the Finance & Governance Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022, combining the results of the discussions that have been held in the various committee meetings.

**Schedule of Meetings:**

- Finance & Governance Committee – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November
- Community Services Committee – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November
- Tourism & Local Economy Committee – Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November
- Environment Committee – Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November
- Personnel Committee – 23<sup>rd</sup> November (subject to change)
- Budget workshop – 2<sup>nd</sup> December (tbc)
- Finance & Governance Committee - Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December
- Council Meeting- 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Given the high level of uncertainty surrounding many budget figures this timetable may be subject to change.

In order to facilitate the initial submission of fees & charges and budgets, the main points to note are:

**Employee Costs:** Employee costs generally account for approx. 45%-50% of revenue expenditure. Final steps are being taken to implement the staffing review including job evaluation of remaining vacant posts. The draft staffing budget will be taken to the Personnel Committee in November.

**Salaries & Wages:** The 2022/23 pay settlement has just been agreed with negotiations for the next financial year due to start shortly. The 2022/23 settlement gave a flat rate to all employees with resulting percentage increases varying between 10.4% to 3.2%.

Assuming that next year's award would also be a flat rate, it is estimated that the pay award would look to increase the lowest scale point to the equivalent of £10.90 with all other scale points being estimated on this basis 1.3%-3.8%.

**Pension-Employers Contributions:** The employer contribution rate for the next three financial years will be known by 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022. It is currently 22%.

**National Insurance Contributions:** National Insurance contributions (NICs) were increased for the period April 2022 to October 2022 by 1.25%, dropping back to 13.8% in November. It is assumed that this rate will apply for 2023/24.

**Utilities:** The prices for gas and electricity are fixed until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023, an uplift on the current pricing will be applied for the second half of the year. However, an estimate of costs will be provided by the suppliers shortly. The installation of solar panels could see a reduction in electricity costs overall, however, this is unlikely to have a significant impact during 2023/24 as it still in the planning phase.

**Fees & Charges:** A general inflationary increase is usually applied to the Council's fees and charges. Those that have the most significant impact upon the council's income are:

- Car parks
- Beach huts
- Boat Park
- Cemeteries

One of the key matters for members to determine is whether council should implement a uniform increase across the scale of fees and charges to keep pace with inflation. As reported elsewhere on this agenda it was anticipated at budget setting for 2022/23 that beach hut charges would remain at 2022/23 levels for the next financial year. There is an opportunity for discussion regarding this matter at the relevant committee meetings.

A general increase of 10%, or rounded to an appropriate amount has been included in the initial draft scale of charges prepared for the Community Services Committee.

**Precept:** It is currently envisaged that a Precept increase of 2% per annum will be included in the first draft of Estimates for 2023/24 in accordance with the agreed budget book. The tax base, provided by Dorset Council, is not known at this point but it is anticipated that this figure will be given before the provisional Estimates are reviewed on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

Martin Ayres-Town Clerk & RFO  
Alison Spencer – Finance Manager  
November 2022



Priorities Spring/Summer 2022 - Outturn Report

Item 8 (a)

Project	Urgency	What does success look like @ 1st October 2022?	% Complete			
			<25%	25%<50%	50%<75%	>75%
<b>Good Governance</b>						
Complete staffing review and undertake recruitment	H	Future staffing structure agreed; job descriptions agreed; salary structure review completed; recruitment completed for priority posts.				
Financial Planning	H	Council has agreed sustainable spending objectives for medium term.				
Corporate Plan 2022-25	H	Corporate priorities agreed and plan being prepared for adoption in autumn.				
Off-Street Parking Places Order	H	Draft order completed and timescale agreed for adoption.				
Review Committee Structure	H	Revised committee structure agreed and implemented.				
Charitable Trust Review	H	Governance arrangements reviewed and action plan identified.				
Lease and licence renewals & rent reviews	H	Rent reviews completed and new licences/leases in place.				
Finalise Operation London Bridge Plan	H	Plan agreed and all materials acquired.				
Review Member and Officer Protocol	H	Protocol reviewed and revised document adopted.				
Seek to improve IT for remote meetings	H	Potential improvements for remote meetings held at the Town Hall identified and implemented.				
Improve access to Transparency Code Data and Revise Asset Register	H	All relevant data accessible via a single webpage.				
Finalise lease/licence agreements North Beach and Pevelil Point	M	Finalise outstanding lease/licence agreements.				
Develop Communications Plan	M	Draft communications plan in preparation for presentation to Council.				
Tender new Council website	L	Tender process for website fully compliant with accessibility regs at an advanced stage.				
<b>Local Economy and Tourism</b>						
Develop Seafront Enhancement Scheme Phase 2	H	Outcomes of feasibility report agreed in advance of budget setting for 2023/24.				
Develop Seafront Master Plan	H	External facilitation engaged and draft plan prepared.				
Finalise timescale for closure of southern section of Shore Road	H	Timescale, procedure and budget agreed for closure of southern section of Shore Road.				
Agree public realm improvements for Lower High Street	M	Format of public realm improvements in lower High Street agreed.				
Review Boat Park Operation and Procedures	M	Decision taken regarding future operation.				
Develop Marketing Strategy	L	Progress made towards completing series of meetings, reviewing findings and drafting strategy ready for adoption.				
<b>Community Services, Health and Wellbeing</b>						
Investigate options for footpath linking Washpond Lane and Northbrook Road	H	Discussions concluded with stakeholders and outcome determined.				
Progress Football Club redevelopment proposals	H	Clear progress being made in implementing Phase One of redevelopment proposals.				
Public Conveniences - Determine future of Burlington Chine WCs	H	Discussions held with north beach owners and Council considered options for future operation.				
Pevelil Point Road stabilisation/improvements	H	Specification of works agreed.				
Town Hall services review	M	Operation of Town Hall/Police help desk reviewed and new opening hours in place; future operation of CAB/Registration agreed.				
Beach Gardens future plan	M	Meetings held with Bowls and Tennis Clubs and outline plan agreed for way ahead, together with financial contributions.				
<b>Planning &amp; Heritage</b>						
Agree way ahead on planning policy (Neighbourhood Plan + Dorset Plan)	H	Consultant appointed and steering group established.				
Station Approach Improvements	H	Specification for improvement works agreed.				
<b>Environment &amp; Climate Crisis</b>						
Implement next stage of Environmental Action Plan	H	Action plan developed and priorities identified.				
Downs LNR - Complete designation	M	Downs LNR legal designation secured.				

Summary - High Urgency Items

Green - largely completed	8
Amber - significant progress	13
Red - Little or no progress	0

Proposed STC Priorities Winter/Spring 2022/23				Item 8 (b)
Project	Urgency - H/M/L	What does success look like @ 1st May 2023?	Immediate Next Steps	
<b>Good Governance</b>				
Complete staffing review and undertake recruitment	H	Finalise recruitment to vacant posts.	Final job descriptions to be drafted and job evaluated prior to consideration by Personnel Committee.	
Financial Planning	H	Council has agreed sustainable spending objectives for medium term.	Councillor budget workshop(s) Nov/Dec 2022, and complete estimates process Jan 2023.	
Corporate Plan 2022-25	H	Plan adopted.	Council to consider potential amendments to plan in light of public consultation and adopt final version in Dec 22/Jan 23.	
Off-Street Parking Places Order	H	Draft order completed and timescale agreed for adoption.	Organise CPWP meeting to determine schedules required and finalise draft order.	
Charitable Trust Review	H	Governance arrangements reviewed and action plan identified.	Report to F&G Committee Nov 2022.	
Lease and licence renewals & rent reviews	H	Rent reviews completed and new licences/leases in place.	Valuer recommendations to be presented to Council; solicitors to be instructed.	
Improve access to Transparency Code Data and Revise Asset Register	H	All relevant data accessible via a single webpage.	Information to be saved into a single location.	
Produce Community Emergency Plan	H	Partners engaged and plan produced to co-ordinate community response to local emergencies.	Meeting of Steering Group Nov 2022 and desk-based emergency scenario planning to be arranged.	
Finalise lease/licence agreements North Beach and Peveril Point	M	Finalise outstanding lease/licence agreements.	Meet with third parties and follow up legal advice.	
Develop Communications Plan	M	Draft communications plan in preparation for presentation to Council.	Draft plan to be presented to working party.	
Tender new Council website	M	Tender process for website fully compliant with accessibility regs at an advanced stage.	Develop brief for tender process in consultation with working party.	
<b>Local Economy and Tourism</b>				
Develop Seafront Enhancement Scheme Phase 2	H	Preferred option identified and public consultation underway.	Consider next steps following receipt of options report.	
Develop Seafront Master Plan	H	Draft plan prepared and public consultation underway.	DCF to complete analysis of response to first stage public consultation.	
Agree public realm improvements for Lower High Street	M	Format of public realm improvements in lower High Street agreed.	Continue to participate in Dorset Council project meetings.	
Review Boat Park Operation and Procedures	M	Improvements in operation implemented.	Implement improvements regarding customer service, signage, water points etc.	
Develop Marketing Strategy	L	Progress made towards completing series of meetings, reviewing findings and drafting strategy ready for adoption.	Continue meetings with partner organisations and report to future Tourism & Local Economy Committee meetings.	
<b>Community Services, Health and Wellbeing</b>				
Investigate options for footpath linking Washpond Lane and Northbrook Road	H	Discussions concluded with stakeholders and outcome determined.	Once received, consider advice from Dorset Council.	
Washpond Lane/Ulwell Road land	H	Progress made towards asset transfer.	Lodge formal application for asset transfer.	
Progress Football Club redevelopment proposals	H	Clear progress being made in planning redevelopment proposals.	Continue regular meetings with S&PDT/S&HFC.	
Public Conveniences - Determine future of Burlington Chine WCs	H	Council considered options for future operation and sustainable course of action identified.	Working Party to complete options appraisal and report to future Community Services Meeting.	
Peveril Point Road stabilisation/improvements	H	Specification of works agreed.	Consultants' report to be considered.	
Town Hall services review	M	Operation of Town Hall/Police help desk reviewed and new opening hours in place; future operation of CAB/Registration agreed.	Liaise with partners and develop timetable for reopening.	
Beach Gardens future plan	M	Meetings held with Bowls and Tennis Clubs and outline plan agreed for way ahead, together with financial contributions.	Continue to meet with sports clubs.	
<b>Planning &amp; Heritage</b>				
Produce Neighbourhood Plan	H	Task Groups appointed and draft Plan under development.	Task Groups to be recruited and first meeting held Nov/Dec 2022.	
Station Approach Improvements	H	Specification for improvement works agreed.	Consider report from consultants at meeting of TMAC Nov 2022.	
<b>Environment &amp; Climate Crisis</b>				
Implement next stage of Environmental Action Plan	H	Action plan developed and priorities identified.	Consider outcome of SALIX grant process and implement plan based on consultant's report.	

<p>Continue to support partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dorset Council Flood Defence Scheme</li> <li>CLT provision of local social housing</li> <li>S&amp;PDT football club proposals</li> <li>Willdoes proposals</li> <li>Museum re. extension/relocation plans</li> <li>Dorset Council parking review</li> </ul>
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