



Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 20th January 2026 in the Cowie Room, Public Hall commencing at 7.00pm.

3240 Members present – Cllr Gunning (Chairman), Cllr Anderton, Cllr Corbett and Cllr Gillings; also Christine Bright (Town Clerk), Sara Cradock, Dorset Councillor Monks and the leader of Dorset Council, Cllr Ireland.

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Ireland to the meeting who addressed the Council with regard to the following issues:

- **Budget process** – the budget had been presented to Council on 10th February 2026 and it had been resolved to raise the council tax by the maximum 4.99%. The budget had not included any real cuts to services however staff numbers would be reduced. Cllr Ireland stressed that 70% of the Councils budget had been allocated to adult and children social care.
- **Local Plan** – 10,000 responses had been received as a result of the site allocation consultation. The Draft Local Plan containing final allocation sites and policies would go to public consultation in July/August 2026.
- **Devolution** – unfortunately the proposals for a new ‘Wessex’ authority had not made it onto the Governments priority programme.

3241 Dorset Police – in the absence of a police representative the Town Clerk advised PCSO Alex Bishop had no issues to report.

3242 Dorset Councillor – Cllr Monks added to Cllr Ireland’s update to confirm the new 20mph speed limit for Beaminster would come into force early April.

3243 Enforcement Officer – In the absence of the Enforcement Officer the Town Clerk read a report on his behalf advising of the issues he had dealt with since the last meeting:

- Further reports of young people kicking front doors in various locations within the town, a group of teenagers had been spoken to; also incidents of a small group causing anti social behaviour in Clay Lane, again they had been spoken and these activities had ceased
- Continued reports of dogs not on leads around livestock
- Complaints regarding footpaths that had not been gritted during recent cold conditions had been reported to Dorset Council.

3244 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Benton, Cllr Biggs, Cllr Dawkins, Cllr Tuff and Cllr Watts.

3245 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25TH NOVEMBER 2025

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 25th November 2025 having previously been circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3246 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS

The Town Clerk confirmed that dispensations had previously been granted to all members present to enable them to take part in discussions on any matters pertaining to the setting of the parish precept.

3247 PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS

Members were circulated with details of the payments made in January 2026 including cheque numbers 106263 - 106274, direct debits, credit card and bank payments totalling £32,754.86; also receipts totalling £5,749.23 (copy attached). Members **RESOLVED** adoption as presented.

3248 RESOLVE MINUTES OF FOLLOWING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(a) Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 16th December 2025

The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 16th December 2025 having previously been circulated were **NOTED**.

There being no items raised for discussion, members **RESOLVED** adoption.

(b) CB3 Management Committee meeting held on 12th January 2026

The minutes of the CB3 Management Committee meeting held on 12th January 2026 having previously been circulated were **NOTED**.

There being no items raised for discussion, members **RESOLVED** adoption.

(c) Town Amenities Committee meeting held on 13th January 2026

The minutes of the Town Amenities Committee meeting held on 13th January 2026 having previously been circulated were **NOTED**.

There being no items raised for discussion, members **RESOLVED** adoption.

3249 APPOINTMENT OF TOWN CLERK

Members **RESOLVED** the appointment of Mrs Sara Cradock to the position of Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer with effect from Monday 2nd February 2026 and welcomed her to the meeting.

3250 FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION – PURCHASE FRIDGE & FREEZER

Hirers and users of the Pavilion had submitted a request to the Council to consider the purchase of a large fridge and freezer, facilities that would be particularly beneficial to the Community Larder. Discussion had taken place during the Town Amenities Committee during which Cllr Biggs had confirmed that 75% of the total cost would be met from Community Fridge/Larder funds, he had also sought a contribution from the Cricket and Football Clubs. Members **RESOLVED** to make a contribution in the sum of £150.

3251 BUDGET FRAMEWORK 2026/2027

Members were circulated with a copy of the budget framework for 2026/2027 together with a copy of the Town Clerk's report.

The Chairman took members through the budget, Cllr Gillings considered the budget provision for the Neighbourhood Plan to be insufficient and suggested an additional £12,000 be allocated to see the Plan through to adoption. **AGREED.**

Cllr Anderton felt, that while it was the intention for future fundraising events to be self funding she considered that, as a contingency a small budget for fundraising events should be included to meet any up front expenses should the need arise. **AGREED** to include a break even budget provision of £3,000.

No further amendments were raised, subject to those amendments members **RESOLVED** to adopt the budget framework for 2026/2027.

3252 PRECEPT LEVY 2026/2027

Based on the agreed amended budget framework (attached to the minutes of this meeting) and the content of the Town Clerks report members **RESOLVED** to **LEVY** a precept of £339,901 representing a 12% increase on 2025/2026 precept.

3253 CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

No consultation documents had been received.

3254 CORRESPONDENCE

No significant items of correspondence had been received.

3255 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled Council meeting will take place on Tuesday 24th March 2026. **NOTED.**

3256 MEETING

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and closed at 8.10pm.

Chairman
24th March 2026

