



# Christchurch Town Council

Old Town Hall  
30 High Street  
Christchurch  
Dorset, BH23 1EA

## Full Council Agenda

**Friday, 17 January 2020, 6.00pm**

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the **Christchurch Town Council** to be held at Druitt Hall, High Street, Christchurch BH23 1AJ **on Friday, 17 January 2020 at 6.00pm.**

### **Membership:**

**Mayor:** Cllr L Dedman

**Deputy Mayor:** Cllr Mrs S Bungey

Cllr J A Abbott

Hon Freeman Cllr C R Bungey

Cllr A E Coulton

Cllr F J M Cox

Cllr M Cox

Cllr S Fotheringham

Cllr C A Gardiner

Cllr W Grace

Cllr P Hilliard

Cllr G R Jarvis

Cllr D C Jones

Cllr T Lane

Cllr S J McCormack

Cllr F F T Neale

Cllr G E E Polson

Cllr Mrs S Spittle

Cllr M J Tarling

The business to be transacted is set out overleaf

Daniel Lucas

**Town Clerk**

13 January 2020

# Agenda

**1. Prayers**

Prayers will be said by the Mayor's Chaplain, the Reverend Canon Charles Stewart.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence

**3. Declaration of Interests**

Members are reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests must be declared including any issues which may arise through predetermination of bias.

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 November 2019.

6 – 10

**5. Announcements**

To receive a schedule of Civic functions attended by the Mayor since the last meeting and any announcements from the Mayor or Town Clerk.

11

**6. Public Participation**

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders the period of time designated for Public Participation cannot exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting and a member of the public shall not speak for more than 5 minutes.

Mrs Maureen King – Ducking Stool Boardwalk Following Minute number 168 (Community Committee 18 December 2019)

**7. Public Questions**

Members of the public who wish to ask a question at the meeting shall give notice to the Town Clerk of the question no later than 12 noon on the working day before the meeting is on. The question stated in the notice shall be the question asked at the meeting. The Mayor will call on those wishing to speak in turn, each questioner being allowed to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes. Those wishing to speak shall state their name and address

**8. Questions/Motions from Councillors**

**9. To Receive any verbal reports from Partner Organisations**

**10. Committee Minutes**

12-31

To receive the Committee Minutes for the last cycle of meetings and to consider any recommendations arising from these meetings as follows:

**Planning Committee 3 December 2019**

To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2019

**Resources Committee, 10 December 2019**

To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2019

**Community Committee, 18 December 2019**

To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2019 and to consider the recommendation arising therefrom: -

Minute No. 171 **Social Media Creation and Policy**

RECOMMENDATION: the attached Social Media and Online Presence Policy be adopted.

Minute No. 173 **Meritorious Awards Consideration (Exempt)**

RECOMMENDATION: nomination made by Cllr Coulton for an individual to be granted a Meritorious Award by the Council.

**Resources Committee, 14 January 2019**

To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2019.

**11. Deputy Mayor Elect - 2020/21**

The Mayor to announce the nomination of Councillor A E Coulton as Deputy Mayor for 2020/21 (and subsequently Mayor in 2021/22).

The current Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs S Bungey, will become the Mayor- Designate for 2020/21.

- |            |   |                              |
|------------|---|------------------------------|
| <b>12.</b> | <b>Schedule of Meetings – Remainder of 2019/2020 and the new Civic Year of 2020/2021</b>  | 32-35                        |
|            | <p>RECOMMENDATION A: To approve the attached Schedule of Meeting for the <u>remainder</u> of the Civic Year for 2019/2020 to accommodate back-office and Officer move due to impending Town Hall Cupola Works,</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION B: To approve the attached Schedule of Meetings for the <u>forthcoming</u> Civic Year and to note the venue change as being the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Christchurch.</p> |                              |
| <b>13.</b> | <b>Budget and Precept Setting 2020/2021</b>   | 36-43                        |
|            | <p>RECOMMENDATION: As per the attached report.</p>  |                              |
| <b>14.</b> | <b>Internal Audit – Auditor Appointment</b>   | 44-46                        |
|            | <p>RECOMMENDATION: To appoint “Do the Numbers Ltd” to act as the Council’s internal auditor for 2019/2020</p>   |                              |
| <b>15.</b> | <b>Planning Application</b>   |                              |
|            | <p>Application: <a href="#">8/19/1296/FUL</a> to form terrace at first floor level. At Avon Beach Café, Avon Beach, Mundeford. BH23 4AN.</p>  |                              |
| <b>16.</b> | <b>Publication Scheme</b>   | 47 - 60                      |
| <b>17.</b> | <b>Resident’s Survey Results.</b>   | 61 - 64                      |
| <b>18.</b> | <b>Exempt Business</b>  |                              |
|            | <p>To consider passing a resolution to exclude the press and public pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the following matters relating to the business and contractual affairs still subject to negotiation of this authority and another; matters pertaining to the prevention and detection of crime and personal information of an individual.</p>  |                              |
| <b>19.</b> | <b>Request to allow access onto Council property.</b>   | Oral Report                  |
| <b>20.</b> | <b>Service Level Agreement – Grounds Maintenance/Events Management</b>  | Oral Report.<br>Oral Report. |
| <b>21.</b> | <b>Meritous Award Proposal</b>  |                              |

Cllr Avril Coulton to propose.



No other items of business can be considered unless the Chairman decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.

## **CHRISTCHURCH TOWN COUNCIL**

### **FULL COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 November 2019 at 6.00pm at the Druitt Hall, High Street, Christchurch BH23 1AJ

Present:-

Cllr Mrs L Dedman – Mayor

Present: Cllr J Abbott, Cllr Mrs F Cox, Cllr S Fotheringham, Cllr C A Gardiner, Cllr P Hilliard, Cllr G R Jarvis, Cllr D C Jones, Cllr T Lane, Cllr S J McCormack, Cllr F F T Neale, Cllr G E E Polson, Cllr Mrs S Spittle and Cllr M J Tarling.

Apologies: Hon Freeman Cllr C R Bungey, Cllr Mrs S Bungey, Cllr A E Coulton and Cllr W Grace.

Officers Daniel Lucas, Town Clerk

Present:

#### **141. Prayers**

The Mayor's Chaplain, the Reverend Canon Charles Stewart opened the proceedings with prayers.

#### **142. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

#### **143. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2019 were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

#### **144. Announcements**

##### **1. The Mayor**

The Mayor announced that, since the last meeting of the council, she had been privileged to attend some wonderful engagements.

The full schedule of events had been circulated to each Member, a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

**2. The Town Clerk**

There were no announcements from the Town Clerk.

- 3. Cllr Sue Spittle** – With leave of the Mayor updated Members about her attendance at the Christchurch BID meetings and that a consultant had now been appointed and confirmed the timetable regarding the referendum which is projected to be held in the summer of 2020.

**145. Public Participation**

The Mayor reported that no Members of the Public had been registered to speak in accordance with the Council's Standing orders.

**146. Public Questions**

The Mayor reported that no questions had been submitted to the Town Clerk in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

**147. Questions from Councillors**

The Mayor reported that no questions had been submitted to the Town Clerk in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

**Cllr David Jones** – With leave of the Mayor asked about the civic timetable for the appointment and selection of the 2020/2021 Deputy Mayor given that the old Christchurch Borough Council would at this time be working towards the appointment to this office.

**The Town Clerk** – Thanked Cllr Jones for his timely query and that the Civic Working Group had considered this and that the policy in the old Christchurch Borough Council Civic Handbook was being looked at concurrently with the timing of Full Council. Secondly, that an announcement about the selection of the Deputy Mayor would be made imminently and that this had indeed not been overlooked.

**148. Verbal Reports from Partner Organisations**

There were no verbal reports from Partner Organisations on this occasion.

**149. Committee Minutes**

The Committee Minutes for the last cycle of meetings were received as follows:

### **Planning Committee 1 October 2019**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2019 were received and approved.

The recommendation arising from the meeting was then considered and approved:

Minute No. 109. Appointment of Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd Relating to Initiation of Neighbourhood Plan.

Voting: Unanimous

### **Resources Committee, 8 October 2019**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2019 were received and approved.

Voting: Unanimous

### **Community Committee, 29 October 2019**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2019 were received and approved.

Voting: Unanimous

### **Resources Committee, 5 November 2019**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2019 were received and approved.

The recommendation arising from the meeting of was then considered and noted:

Minute No. 134. Draft Budget Report

Voting: Unanimous

### **Planning Committee, 12 November 2019**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were received and following updates to the minutes to be amended at the next meeting of the Planning Committee were approved.

Voting: Unanimous

### **173. Lone Working Policy**

A report was submitted, a copy of which had been circulated to each member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Members were asked to consider the report to adopt of the Lone Working Policy and accompanying risk assessment.

**Cllr Tom Lane** enquired about car insurance and the requirement to inform an officers' insurance company about business use of a vehicle.

The Town Clerk advised this should ordinarily be declared by an officer as it may render any claims whilst commuting as excluded if its failed to be declared at policy inception. The Town Clerk advised that this was more of a "job description" employment contractual matter.

**Cllr Mike Cox** disagreed with the assessment of "High Risk" being attributed to the use of public transport by officers to commute/attend business meetings of the Council.

The Town Clerk advised this was a fair comment and acknowledged his own personal experiences of using public transport. The Town Clerk agreed to re-visit this item of risk and to reduce it to "Medium" in the schedule.

**RESOLVED that the Lone Working Policy and risk assessment be adopted as set out in appendix '1' and '2'.**

Voting: Unanimous.

**174. Druitt Gardens – Geophysical Survey (Part 2)**

A report was submitted, a copy of which had been circulated to each member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Members were asked to consider the request to conduct a geophysical survey of Druitt Gardens and whether to delegate to the Town Clerk the function of preparing the licence and funding of the survey.

**Cllr Fred Neale** provided amplified the report of the Town Clerk and remarked that he had helped in the most recent survey; that no digging was involved; that all matters of due-diligence had been observed by The Christchurch Antiquarians and that the day was both personally interesting and seemed also to attract public interest,

**RESOLVED that the Town Council:**

- a) Agreed to grant a licence for the proposed further survey;**
- b) Delegate to the Town Clerk all necessary actions to complete the licence and funding of the survey; and**
- c) The Town Clerk reports any finding to the Community Committee of the Survey.**

Voting: Unanimous

**152 Other Business** – The Reverend Canon Charles Steward with leave of the Mayor given this was the last Full Council meeting of the calendar year before Christmas.

**The Reverend** – Expressed sadness about having learned that the “Carols with the Mayor” event had been cancelled by BCP Council without consultation with the Priory or the Town Council. He explained that this event had previously been run by Ms Stella Smith but had unfortunately been unable to continue with the organisation and facilitation. The Reverend explained that the first rehearsal for the successor event took place last night with approximately 50-55 singers and that the Priory in dialogue with the Town Council were looking to hold the event on Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**Cllr Spittle** – Asked whether and when tickets would be on sale.

**The Reverend** – Explained that the event would not be ticketed and would be on a first-come-first-served basis and anticipated that hopefully it would be well attended.

The meeting ended at 6:50pm

CHAIRMAN

<b>Mayor's Engagements 23 November 2019 to 17 January 2020</b>		
23 November 2019	Christmas Lights Switch on	Old Town Hall
28 November 2019	Dorset Equality Group Meeting	St Mark's Church Hall, Talbot Village
29 November 2019	Christchurch Sports Awards	East Dorset Indoor Bowls Club, Christchurch
30 November 2019	Avon View's Christmas Fayre	Avon View, Loring Road, Christchurch
01 December 2019	Verwood TC Christmas reception	Verwood Town Council, 28 Vicarage Rd, Verwood BH31 6DR
02 December 2019	Diverse Abilities' Splash Appeal Admiralty Service  Christmas Lights switch on at Fairmile Grange Care Home Attended by Deputy Mayor	Houses of Parliament  St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London.  Fairmile Grange Care Home
03 December 2019	Autism Wessex Christmas Concert Attended by Deputy Mayor	Christchurch Priory
07 December 2019	Open Day at Christchurch Station  SAMA Christmas Lunch	Christchurch Station, Platform 2  Captains Club, Christchurch
09 December 2019	Age Concern Xmas Party & Dinner	Kings Arms Hotel, 18 Castle St, Christchurch
10 December 2019	Avon Reach Gala Lunch	Avon Reach Nursing & Residential Care, Farm Rd, Mudeford, Christchurch
19 December 2019	Christmas Lunch at Homelands Hall  Christchurch Day Hospital Christmas Tea Dance Attended by Deputy Mayor  Christchurch Festival of Carols	Homelands Hall, King's Ave, Christchurch  Christchurch Day Hospital, Fairmile Rd, Christchurch BH232JX  Christchurch Priory
24 December 2019	Priory Carol Service	Christchurch Priory

**CHRISTCHURCH TOWN COUNCIL**

**PLANNING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 December 2019 at 6.00pm at the Druitt Hall, High Street, Christchurch BH23 1AJ

Present:-

Vice-Chairman: Cllr F F T Neale (in the Chair)

Present: Cllr J A Abbott, Cllr T Lane, and Cllr M J Tarling.

Apologies: Cllr M Cox and Cllr L Dedman.

Officers present: Daniel Lucas, Town Clerk

Susan Roxby, Administrative Support Officer

**152. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Neale declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 156 (Planning Application 8/18/352/OUT as he knew someone who had a factory which adjoined the application site. Cllr Neale had also appeared in the literature which the applicant prepared concerning a Public Forum where other councillors were also present and remained present for the discussion and voting thereon.

**153. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were agreed and signed as an accurate record subject to the following amendments:

1. Minute no. 139 page 6, the first paragraph amended to *read: The proposition fell on being put to the vote with voting: 3: 3: (1 Abstention) (The Chairman used his casting vote)*
2. Minute no. 139 page 6, the third paragraph amended to read: *Cllr Jones proposed that the application be rejected, the motion was seconded by Cllr Neale due to it being detrimental to the amenities of the neighbours and lack of parking in the Town; and*
3. Minute no. 139 page 6, the voting for application 8/18/3263/FUL amended to 4:3.

Voting: unanimous

#### **154. Public Participation**

Mr Peter Fenning spoke in objection to Planning Application 8/19/1376/FUL.

#### **155. Public Questions**

There were no questions from the public on this occasion.

Cllr Abbott joined the meeting at 6.12pm.

#### **156. Planning Applications:**

Members were asked to consider the applications listed below and that the following comments be forwarded to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council:

##### **1. Application: 8/18/3532/OUT**

Demolition of existing Industrial Building and residential development of up to 167 units (mix of 2 & 3 bed houses and 1 & 2 bed flats) with associated access and car parking (amended)

At John Reid and Sons Ltd, Reid Steel, Structsteel House, 3 Reid Street, Christchurch BH23 2BT.

Following comprehensive debate Members raised the following concerns:

- Concerns about the impact of the development upon the Town Common SPA and the lack of clarity over the proposed SANG;
- Massing of flats was too high and not in keeping within the area;
- Density of the site was over developed;
- Concerns about minimal, if any affordable housing being provided;
- Loss of employment land and the impact upon the area; and
- Highways concerns due to the access road being too narrow and additional traffic from the proposed housing and crossing.

**RESOLVED that the Town Council RAISE OBJECTION for the following reasons:**

- a) **The proposal represents a likelihood and risk of harm to the integrity of the Dorset Heathlands designated sites due to the proposed SANG being further away from, or at least equidistant from Town Common (a designated European site). Without an analysis by way of a comprehensive methodology via survey data of the visitor capacity of the proposed SANG and given the potential attractiveness of both Town Common and the proposed SANG there**

is a very real risk of harm to the integrity of the SPA. Therefore the proposed development does not accord with the Habitats Directive Article 6(3) and that any Appropriate Assessment conducted given the risk that both sites shall remain attractive does not meet the threshold required of Article 6(3) in satisfying the competent authority that there is no real scientific doubt as to the potential for adverse effects from the project on the protected site. Adopting the precautionary principle following *Waddenzee* [2004] EUECJ C-127/02 and *Commission v Spain* [2011] EUCJ C-404/09 given the doubt about visitor capacity of the proposed SANG and that the SANG is equidistant or further away suggests that the proposal does not accord with policy ME1 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan -Part 1 Core Strategy and the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2015-2020 SPD ;

- b) The proposal has not identified any substantiated commitment to minimum affordable housing provision. Without further information concerning the outstanding viability issues the scheme is currently contrary to policies LN1 and LN3 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan - Part 1 Core Strategy;
  
- c) The site is in a sustainable location well served by the infrastructure present. The proposal has not demonstrated the evidence required to illustrate the lack of market demand over the plan period. The policy sets a high evidential threshold where strong evidence must overcome the policy of preserving existing employment sites given the shortage of available employment land in the sub region. The scheme is therefore contrary to PC2 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan - Part 1 Core Strategy

The Town Council noted further concerns relating to traffic backing up due to the proposed crossing required by section 278/38 Highways Act 1980 works.

Voting: unanimous

Cllr Neale declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item and remained present for the discussion and voting thereon.

### **Application: 8/19/1372/OUT**

Demolish existing buildings and erect a block of 6 no 1bedroom flats with parking, bin and cycle storage.

At 40 Darwin Avenue, Christchurch. BH23 2JB.

**RAISE NO OBJECTION** although the Town Council passed comment that it would rather the application was pushed back by 1 metre to be in line with the existing

**footprint of the existing building to respect the line of built form prevalent in the street-scene.**

Voting: 3: 0 (1 Abstention)

**2. Application: 8/19/1376/FUL**

Formation of pedestrian access from classified public highway; installation of surfaced pathway, gate and handrails.

At Land north of A35 and south of Milhams Common.

Mr Peter Fenning spoke in objection to this application and raised concerns that the common should be accessible for all and that the kissing gate did not consider the less mobile and disabled as it was stepped. Further concerns were expressed regarding the water meadows on the common which flooded and that SANG stated that a path must be dry.

**OBJECTION RAISED due to:**

- 1. The kissing gate design and stepped access does not allow for wheelchair users to gain access to the site. Planning permission would allow the public sector equality duty at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to be breached and as such equates to a material consideration of such weight which must be considered in the planning balance to outweigh the development plan considerations;**
- 2. The proposed scheme does not accord with policy ME1 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan -Part 1 Core Strategy and the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2015-2020 SPD – as the site is not suitable in principle for Heathland Infrastructure Provision given that the site floods frequently and is rendered unusable for a proportion of the year which has not been accounted for.**

Voting: unanimous

The meeting ended at 7.55pm

CHAIRMAN

## **CHRISTCHURCH TOWN COUNCIL**

### **RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 December 2019 at 6.00pm at the Druitt Hall, High Street, Christchurch BH23 1AJ

#### **Present:-**

Chairman: Cllr P Hilliard

Vice-Chairman: Cllr A Coulton

Present: Cllr Honorary Freeman Cllr C Bungey, Cllr Mrs S Bungey, Cllr A E Coulton, Cllr C A Gardiner, Cllr W Grace, and Cllr F F T Neale.

Apologies: Cllr Mrs S Spittle

Officers present: Daniel Lucas, Town Clerk  
Susan Roxby, Administrative Support Officer

#### **158. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

#### **159. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2019 were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

Voting: unanimous

#### **160. Public Participation**

Cllr Coulton updated Members on the Christchurch Christmas Lights Switch On event. Members were informed that the Chairman of the Christchurch Lights event was stepping down and that the Council should start thinking about funding possibilities for the Christmas lights next year.

Cllr W Grace joined the meeting at 6.11pm.

Cllr Grace advised that she had been involved in the Christmas Light Switch On event during the last seven years as a volunteer and that there were various funding issues for this event.

The Town clerk advised Members that he would investigate the funding position with BCP Council for Christchurch Christmas Lights and the contract terms and report back to this committee.

**161. Public Questions**

There were no questions from the public on this occasion.

**162. Town Clerk's Report**

An updated schedule of payments for November 2019 were circulated at the meeting and were approved and signed, which appears as Appendix 'A' to these minutes in the minute book.

The monthly accounts for the period to the end of November 2019 was submitted, a copy of which had been circulated to each member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

**RESOLVED that:**

- a) the schedule of payments for November 2019 be approved: and
- b) the monthly accounts for the period to the end of November 2019 be noted.

Voting: nem.com.

**163. RESOLVED to exclude the press and public pursuant to Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1969 due to the following matters relating to the personal information of an employee/individual.**

Voting: unanimous

**164. Macebearer Contract (Exempt)**

A report was submitted, a copy of which had been circulated to each member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Members considered the report on the Job Role and Person Specification for the addition to the Council's staff.

**165. Overtime authorisation (Exempt)**

A report was submitted, a copy of which had been circulated to each member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'D' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Members noted the report on overtime for one of the Council's member of staff.

Cllr F F T Neale joined the meeting at 6.30pm.

**166. Urgent Item- Tree Remedial Works**

With the approval by the Chairman this urgent item was added to the agenda following an email request received after the agenda had been published from the BCP Council's Tree & Landscape Officer for remedial tree work to be carried out following storm damage

The meeting ended at 7.57pm

CHAIRMAN

## **CHRISTCHURCH TOWN COUNCIL**

### **COMMUNITY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 December 2019 at 6.00pm at the Druitt Hall, High Street, Christchurch BH23 1AJ

Present:-

- Chairman: Honorary Freeman Cllr C Bungey
- Present: Cllr Mrs S Bungey, Cllr C A Gardiner, and Cllr Mrs S Spittle.
- Apologies: Cllr A E Coulton, Cllr W Grace, Cllr G R Jarvis, Cllr S J McCormack and Cllr G E E Polson.
- Officers present: Daniel Lucas, Town Clerk  
Susan Roxby, Administrative Support Officer

#### **167. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

#### **168. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2019 were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

Voting: unanimous

#### **169. Public Participation**

Mrs Maureen King provided the committee with an updated statement regarding the Ducking Stool Boardwalk by Mill Stream in Christchurch, a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Mrs King informed the committee that she had a meeting with the Chief Executive of BCP Council on 16 Dec 2019, where the proposal was put forward that BCP Council adopt the boardwalk and that this was being considered and asked that the Town Council also support this proposal.

The Chairman advised that the proposal for BCP Council to adopt the boardwalk and whether the Town Council would support the proposal would be considered at the next Full Council meeting.

Cllr Mrs Spittle joined the meeting at 6.05pm.

#### **170. Public Questions**

Cllr Mrs S Bungey informed Members that Christchurch could lose many local events such as the Mudeford Fun Day, Stomping on the Quomps, Christchurch Food Festival and other events due to written bureaucracy which organisers had to follow by BCP Council which were making these events virtually impossible to run. The local events had been running for many years and residents were wondering why since the councils' reorganisation that Christchurch was having to follow such overkill regulations.

Cllr Mrs Bungey was interested to hear other members views on the situation.

The Chairman advised that the same amount of paper work was undertaken for not for profit organisations' events as for commercial events and this proved too onerous for volunteers to comply with for not for profit events.

The Town Clerk advised that all the events' regulatory provision was undertaken by BCP Council which included Trading Standards and licencing of events. This involved risk management with the Safety Advisory Group taking account of the due diligence for all safety certificates and additional paperwork required for events.

The Town Clerk further advised that for clarification to event organisers that BCP officers should draft a policy for events to be adopted by the Council. A Member questioned whether the Town Council could lobby BCP Council to draft a policy for events.

**RESOLVED that a motion be drafted regarding Events Policy to be considered by Full Council.**

Voting: unanimous

#### **171. Green Flag Award – Christchurch Quay**

The Town Clerk provided Members with a verbal update on the Green Flag Award in Christchurch and advised that this had slipped through the net on transfer to the Council in shadow stage.

BCP Council informed the Town Council that the Green Flag Award was not on BCP land, but on Christchurch Town Council land. The Town Clerk had enquired with BCP officers what administration was required for the Green Flag Award submission. It was agreed that

BCP officers would undertake the administration and that the Town Clerk would shadow the BCP Parks Team for the first year to get up to speed with the Green Flag award's submission.

Members were further informed that a Green Flag juggling event would be held this year with a walk around which the Town Clerk would attend as BCP Council officers were unable to support this.

**Member noted the verbal update on the Green Flag Award.**

Voting: Nem. Com.

172. **Social Media Creation and Policy**

A report was submitted, a copy of which had been circulated to each member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Members were asked to consider the report on the creation of social media accounts and the adoption of a Social Media Policy.

A member suggested Instagram also, but members felt that for the first year Facebook and Twitter accounts should be created only.

**RESOLVED that the Town Council:**

- (a) creates Social Media Accounts on Facebook and Twitter;**
- (b) delegates to the Town Clerk the monitoring and maintenance of these accounts; and**
- (c) recommends to Full Council the attached Social Media and Online Presence Policy be adopted.**

Voting: unanimous

173. **Exempt Business**

RESOLVED to exclude the press and public pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the following matters relating to the personal information of an individual and the confidential business affair of a third-party business.

Voting: unanimous

174. **Exempt – Meritorious Awards Consideration**

The Town Clerk informed the committee on a nomination made by Cllr Coulton for an individual to be granted a Meritorious Award by the Council.

175. **Exempt Circus Request – Christchurch Quay**

Members were informed on a request received to hold a circus event at Christchurch Quay.

The meeting ended at 7.24pm

**CHAIRMAN**

**Social Media Account Creation and Policy**

<b>Report Type:</b>	Public Report for Decision
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To recommend the creation of social media accounts and to recommend the adoption by Full Council of a Social Media Policy
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>It is RECOMMENDED that: The Town Council:  Creates Social Media Accounts on Facebook and Twitter; Delegates to the Town Clerk the monitoring and maintenance of these accounts; Recommends to Full Council the attached Social Media and Online Presence Policy;</b>
<b>Wards:</b>	All Wards
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Daniel Lucas – Town Clerk

**1.0 1BACKGROUND**

**Social Media and Council Online Presence**

- 1.1 The Council is now in a good position to create and open online social media accounts. Attached to this report as an Appendix is an accompanying Social Media and Online Presence Policy which aims to provide some guidelines and best practice considerations for Members to consider when engaging with social media.
- 1.2 This report recommends that two social media platforms be considered in the first instance: Facebook and Twitter. These are quick and simple to open. The Town Clerk shall hold the passwords and shall deal with the day-to-day management, monitoring and maintenance of these accounts. The attached policy provides for the passwords to be shared with other members of staff if the Clerk must delegate such matters.
- 1.3 Members may wish to consider this policy and tweak where necessary. For example, the day-to-day function is given to the Town Clerk, but Members may wish to propose that a nominated councillor also has access to the password and capability to post and moderate. Within the policy is also delegated the ability for the Clerk to have the “final say” in any proposed comments/posts which may be unsuitable. Again, Members may have different views. The policy has been drafted as a final version, but of course it is open to Members to tweak, comment and amend where necessary.

## **2.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **Legal**

- 2.1 There are numerous legal ramifications when posting matters and comments online. Not least Members must abide by the Criminal Law and the Code of Conduct which governs the public office held by those elected. Members' attention is also drawn to the law of defamation and libel as well as numerous copyright and trademark matters (intellectual property law). If at any time, there is doubt about the legality of any post it is always best to seek advice from the Town Clerk. The policy sets out a framework for what may be good practice, however it cannot cover every single eventuality or provide a mandate to act just because something has not been considered by it.

### **Environmental**

- 2.2 None directly from this report.

### **Financial and Risk**

- 2.3 None.

### **Equalities**

- 2.4 None directly from this report.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

- 2.5 No consultation required as the decision does not impact upon the running of services to the public at large.

## **3.0 CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider the report and to approve the recommendations outlined.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Social Media and Online Presence Policy.



# Christchurch Town Council

## Social Media and Online Presence Policy

Policy name	Version	Owner	Date Adopted	Review Date
Social Media & Online Presence Policy	V1.0	Clerk	December 2019	December 2020

## **1.0 Town Council Social Media Policy**

The aim of this policy is to set out a guidelines and principles to provide guidance to Town councillors, council staff and others who engage with the council using online communications, collectively referred to as social media.

Social media is a collective term used to describe methods of publishing on the internet via use of: applications; software and hardware including smart-phones, tablets laptops and so on.

This policy covers all forms of social media and social networking sites which include (but are not limited to):

- Town Council Website
- Facebook and other social networking sites
- Twitter and other micro blogging sites
- Youtube and other video clips and podcast sites
- LinkedIn
- Blogs and discussion forums
- Email

The use of social media does not replace existing forms of communication.

## **2.0 Principles Guiding Use of Social Media**

The principles of this policy apply to Town councillors and council staff and applies to others communicating with the Town Council. Social Media shall be used to:

- a) To publish, promote and preserve the work of Christchurch Town Council to a wider audience;
- b) To advertise and promote engagement in the democratic process and to widen participation across the community in the affairs of the Town Council and the community it represents;
- c) To advertise and promote work of its partner agencies such as the Police, Fire and ambulance services, BCP Council and other town/parish councils;
- d) To disseminate community news of interest such as road closures, planning and licensing applications, events and so on.

Social Media Shall NOT be used for:

- e) Entering online debates or arguments about the Town Council's work;
- f) Recruitment process for employees or councillors – other than for the placing of Vacancy Advertisements – as this could lead to potential discrimination and privacy claims;
- g) Canvassing, promoting or advertising any political ideological policy or decision of a councillor or political party.
- h) The promotion or advertising of any individual business or going concern.

## **3.0 Approved Social Media**

- a) Town Council website
- b) Facebook page
- c) Twitter Account

The Clerk shall be the nominated social media officer with the delegated authority to issue official postings via the approved social media accounts. No other member of staff/councillor; other than the Administration Support Officer when directed to do so by the Clerk, has the authority to issue public statements on social media on behalf of the Council.

All public statements must be vetted by the Clerk before being posted to a social media account. If in the opinion of the Clerk the post is unsuitable for dissemination it must NOT be posted to any of the approved social media accounts. The Clerk shall have the final say in deciding the suitability of public postings to approved social media accounts.

#### **4.0 Guidelines**

Social Media is a fantastic tool in sharing the way we work with the wider community and world. However, social networking has its pitfalls and can attract negative comments or have an adverse impact upon the individual or Town council's reputation. Staff must be aware that they act as ambassadors of the Council and that Councillors must also be mindful of their obligations under the adopted Code of Conduct and law. These guidelines are not definitive and do not provide an exhaustive list of all the considerations to consider before using social media, however they aim to give a framework for pausing and reflecting before posting:

- Stop and think before posting and "sense-check" whether the content is informative, objective and impartial. The post may well be "shared", "liked" or "retweeted" around the region, nation or world;
- Irony, Sarcasm and Comedy are all subjective notions. People may not perceive what you perhaps see as funny or ironic. Be mindful of being misinterpreted, misquoted or quoted out of context;
- Abide by the terms and conditions of the platform you are using and respect the community guidelines for each;
- Monitor and be prepared to remove posts from platforms/pages which do not adhere to this policy or meet a threshold of behaviour which is deemed acceptable;
- Do use privacy settings where necessary;
- Protect passwords and change regularly where necessary. Town Council; passwords shall only be in the knowledge of the Clerk and those authorised by the Clerk to post on his/her behalf;
- Always seek written permission when using any photos of individuals at community events or functions and be mindful of background identifiers such as faces and/or car registration plates etc;
- Be especially mindful of posting photographs of children or those who are vulnerable and seek explicit written consent of any parent/guardian who has responsibility. If in doubt always seek advice first before posting;
- Do not post or tweet comments when your judgment is impaired due to bias, or pre-disposition or pre-determination, or even when tired or otherwise;

Town councillors and council staff must not:

- hide their identity using false names or pseudonyms;
- present personal opinions as that of the council;
- present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment to the council;
- post content that is contrary to the democratic decisions of the council;
- post controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks;
- engage in personal attacks, online fights and hostile communications;
- use an individual's name unless given written permission to do so;
- publish photographs or videos of minors without parental permission;
- post any information that infringes copyright of others;
- post any information that may be deemed libel;
- post online activity that constitutes bullying or harassment;
- bring the council into disrepute, including through content posted in a personal capacity;
- post offensive language relating to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age, religion or belief or other relevant protected characteristics;
- conduct any online activity that violates laws, regulations or that constitutes a criminal offence;

Members have been provided with a separate email address which is only used for Council business and correspondence. The nominated account will be subject to any request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and/or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The policy sits alongside relevant existing policies which need to be taken into consideration.

The current Code of Conduct applies to online activity in the same way it does to other written or verbal communication.

Individual Town councillors and council staff are responsible for what they post in a council and personal capacity.

In the main, councillors and council staff have the same legal duties online as anyone else, but failure to comply with the law may have more serious consequences.

Social media may be used to:

- Distribute agendas, post minutes and dates of meetings;
- Advertise events and activities;
- Good news stories linked website or press page;
- Vacancies;
- Re-tweet or share information from partner agencies such as Principal Authorities, Police, Library, Health etc;
- Announcing new information;
- Post or Share information from other Town related community groups such as schools, sports clubs, community groups and charities;
- Refer resident queries to the clerk and all other councillors.

## **5.0 Code of Practice**

When using social media (including email) Town councillors and council staff must be mindful of the information they post in both a personal and council capacity and keep the tone of any comments respectful and informative.

Online content should be accurate, objective, balanced and informative.

Publishing untrue statements about a person which is damaging to their reputation is libel and can result in a court action and fine for damages.

This also applies if someone else publishes something libellous on your social media site. A successful libel claim will result in an award of damages against you.

Posting copyright images or text on social media sites is an offence. Breach of copyright will result in an award of damages against you.

Publishing personal data of individuals without permission is a breach of Data Protection legislation is an offence.

Publication of obscene material is a criminal offence and is subject to a custodial sentence.

Councillors views posted in any capacity in advance of matters to be debated by the council at a council or committee meeting may constitute Pre-disposition, Pre-determination or Bias and may require the individual to declare an interest at council meetings.

Anyone with concerns regarding content placed on social media sites that denigrate Town councillors, council staff or residents should report them to the Clerk of the Council.

Misuse of social media content that is contrary to this and other policies could result in action being taken.

The moderator will have authority to remove any posts made by third parties from council social media pages which are deemed to be of a defamatory or libellous nature. Where appropriate the moderator will have the authority to report any such posting to any other appropriate agency including the Police and BCP Council's Safeguarding Unit.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

## **CHRISTCHURCH TOWN COUNCIL**

### **RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2020 at 6.00pm at the Druitt Hall, High Street,  
Christchurch BH23 1AJ

#### **Present:-**

Chairman: Cllr P Hilliard

Present: Cllr W Grace, Cllr F F T Neale, Cllr M J Tarling.

Apologies: Cllr Honorary Freeman Cllr C Bungey, Cllr Mrs S Bungey, Cllr A E  
Coulton, and Cllr C A Gardiner.

Officers  
present: Daniel Lucas, Town Clerk  
Susan Roxby, Administrative Support Officer

#### **176. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

#### **177. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2019 were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

Voting: unanimous

#### **178. Public Participation**

There was no public participation on this occasion.

#### **179. Public Questions**

There were no questions from the public on this occasion.

#### **180. Town Clerk's Report**

The schedule of payments for the period 01.11.2019 to 07.01.2020 was submitted and approved and signed, a copy of which had been circulated to each member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these minutes in the minute book.

The monthly accounts for the period to the end of December 2019 was submitted, a copy of which had been circulated to each member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Town Clerk advised that invoice number Tel6111 for phone charges should read £74.35 and not £75.35 and this had been updated on the schedule of payments for approval. Members requested that phone charges be reviewed at the end of the current contract.

**RESOLVED that**

**a) the schedule of payments for the period 01.12.2019 to 07.01.2020 be approved; and**

**b) the monthly accounts for the period to the end of December 2019 be noted.**

Voting: unanimous

**181. Budget Monitoring Report**

A report was submitted, a copy of which had been circulated to each member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Town Clerk provided an overview of the Quarterly report of the Town Council's financial position against the approved Annual Budget.

The Town Clerk reported that the budget was performing well and it was anticipated that funds would be vired to reserves at the end of the 2019/20 civic year.

Members were further informed that there was an underspend this quarter for the ICT budget.

Members questioned what the Public Relations figure was in respect of in the budget totals and were informed that this was the Monkey Survey costs.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

Voting: unanimous

The meeting ended at 6.35pm

CHAIRMAN

**ITEM 12A**

**Christchurch Town Council**

**Schedule of Meetings – 2019/2020**

<b>Date</b>	<b>New Date at Civic Offices</b>	<b>Meeting – 6pm</b>
<b>15 May 2019</b>		<b>Annual Council</b>
7 June 2019		Planning Committee
11 June 2019		Resources Committee
<del>25 June 2019</del>		<del>Planning Committee</del> Cancelled
2 July 2019		Community Committee
9 July 2019		Resources Committee
<b>19 July 2019</b>		<b>Council</b>
23 July 2019		Planning Committee
6 August 2019		Resources Committee
21 August 2019		Planning Committee
27 August 2019		Community Committee cancelled Extraordinary Full Council
3 September 2019		<del>Resources Committee</del> cancelled
10 September 2019		<del>Planning Committee</del> cancelled
<b>20 September 2019</b>		<b>Council</b>
1 October 2019		Planning Committee
8 October 2019		Resources
22 October 2019		Planning Committee
29 October 2019		Community Committee
5 November 2019		Resources Committee
12 November 2019		Planning Committee
<b>22 November 2019</b>		<b>Council</b>
3 December 2019		Planning Committee
10 December 2019		Resources Committee
18 December 2019		Community Committee
7 January 2020		Planning Committee
14 January 2020		Resources Committee
<b>17 January 2020</b>		<b>Council</b>
28 January 2020	Stet- 28 January 2020	Planning Committee
<del>11 February 2020</del>	Thursday, 13 February 2020	Resources Committee
<del>21 February 2020</del>	Monday, 17 February 2020	Community
<del>25 February 2020</del>	Wednesday, 26 February 2020	Planning Committee
40 March 2020	Monday, 9 March 2020	Resources Committee
<del>20 March 2020</del>	<b>Wednesday, 18 March 2020</b>	<b>Council</b>
<del>24 March 2020</del>	Thursday, 26 March 2020	Planning Committee

<del>7 April 2020</del>	Thursday, 9 April 2020	Resources Committee
<del>14 April 2020</del>	Thursday, 16 April 2020	Community Committee
<del>28 April 2020</del>	Wednesday, 29 April 2020	Planning Committee
<del>5 May 2020</del>	Wednesday, 6 May 2020	Resources Committee
<b>15 May 2020</b>	<b>Tuesday, 12 May 2020</b>	<b>Annual Council</b>

## ITEM 12B

## Christchurch Town Council

## Schedule of Meetings – 2020/2021

Date 2020/21	Meeting – 6pm
Tuesday, 2 June 2020	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 9 June 2020	Resources Committee
Tuesday, 23 June 2020	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 30 June 2020	Community Committee
Tuesday, 7 July 2020	Resources Committee
<b>Monday, 13 July 2020</b>	<b>Council</b>
Tuesday, 21 July 2020	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 4 August 2020	Resources Committee
Tuesday, 18 August 2020	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 1 September 2020	Community Committee
Tuesday, 8 September 2020	Resources Committee
Tuesday, 15 September 2020	Planning Committee
<b>Monday, 21 September 2020</b>	<b>Council</b>
Tuesday, 29 September 2020	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 6 October 2020	Resources
Tuesday, 20 October 2020	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 27 October 2020	Community Committee
Tuesday, 3 November 2020	Resources Committee
Tuesday, 10 November 2020	Planning Committee
<b>Monday, 23 November 2020</b>	<b>Council</b>
Tuesday, 1 December 2020	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 8 December 2020	Resources Committee
Tuesday, 15 December 2020	Community Committee
Tuesday, 5 January 2021	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 12 January 2021	Resources Committee
<b>Monday, 18 January 2021</b>	<b>Council</b>
Tuesday, 26 January 2021	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 9 February 2021	Resources Committee
Tuesday, 16 February 2021	Community
Tuesday, 23 February 2021	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 9 March 2021	Resources Committee
<b>Monday, 15 March 2021</b>	<b>Council</b>

Tuesday, 23 March 2021	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 6 April 2021	Resources Committee
Tuesday, 13 April 2021	Community Committee
Tuesday, 27 April 2021	Planning Committee
Tuesday, 4 May 2021	Resources Committee
<b>Monday, 10 May 2021</b>	<b>Annual Council</b>

**Full Council****Agenda Item 13****Budget and Precept for 2020/2021**

<b>Report Type:</b>	Public Report for Information
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To approve Christchurch Town Council's revenue budget and precept for 2020/2021.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b>  <b>(a) Members consider the report and the attached revenue budgets and precept for 2020/2021;</b>
<b>Wards:</b>	All Wards
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Daniel Lucas – Town Clerk

**BACKGROUND****Size of precept and comparators**

- 1.1 The Town Council has been operating for over half a year and is due to set a budget for the next financial year. To date as the budget monitoring reports to Resources Committee illustrates the finances of the council are performing well against the inherited budget for this current financial year. Nevertheless, the extremely low precept for the size of the council tax base is evidently a crippling factor in allowing the council to develop and progress. The purpose of this report is to prepare budgets that provide for the effective management and oversight of the delivery of current services; whilst allowing for stability in the event of unforeseeable stresses upon the Council's resources.
- 1.2 Attached is the draft budget which Resources Committee recommended to Full Council at Appendix 1. This was prior to being notified by the Principal Council – BCP Council – of the Council Tax Base for the forthcoming financial year. Attached at Appendix 2 is an adjusted budget to account in the small decrease of the notified Council Tax Base.
- 1.3 This budget is the result of Members being consulted and those with accounting expertise assisting in shaping the principles which informed the resultant budget.
- 1.4 By way of introduction, Members should understand that the Town Council in terms of the Dorset area local council context is operating currently on one of the lowest precepts for its geographical size and financial council tax base. The table below illustrates by way of comparison the local picture in terms of the Principal Authority BCP Council:

<b>Council name</b>	<b>Principal Council</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Amount Precepted</b>	<b>Ctax base</b>	<b>Band D Ctax</b>
Bournemouth Charter Trustee	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	Charter Trustee	0	63,673. 0	0.00
Burton	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	Preceptin g parish	20,806	1,604.0	12.9 7
Hurn	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	Preceptin g parish	6,578	231.0	28.4 8
Christchurch Town Council	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	Preceptin g parish	342,00 9	12,263. 0	27.8 9
Highcliffe And Walkford Neighbourhood Council	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	Preceptin g parish	175,89 2	6,375.0	27.5 9

This table illustrates that when compared to its immediate neighbours the Band D precept figure for a Band D property is comparable to Hurn and Highcliffe and Walkford Council. Strikingly however, Christchurch has one of the largest council tax bases almost double that of Highcliffe. The Town Council's immediate neighbours do not fully illustrate the point and the second table amplifies the position when comparisons are made with local councils in Dorset/Hampshire of similar size in terms of council tax base:

<b>Council name</b>	<b>Principal Council</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Amount Precepted</b>	<b>Ctax Base</b>	<b>Band D Ctax</b>
Dorchester	Dorset	Precepting	1,463,971	7,594.9	192.76
New Milton	New Forest	Precepting	994,529	10,486.4	94.84
Ferndown	Dorset	Precepting	653,480	7,407.4	88.24
Wimborne	Dorset	Precepting	387,300	2,951.9	131.20
Weymouth	Dorset	Precepting	3,370,661	18,152.1	185.69

As the tables illustrate the Town Council has one of the lowest precepts in the area given the size of the town. It is against this context that Members appreciate that the main principle informing 2020/2021 annual budget is the overwhelming need to raise the precept to develop and move the Town Council forwards to deliver community-led services rather than simply existing for the sake of having a council.

## **Challenges faced by the Town Council**

- 1.3 The Town Council only has 2 full-time members of staff. Currently these are the Town Clerk and the Mayor's Secretary/Administration Officer. Notably the role of Mayor's Secretary is only 0.5 FTE as is the Administration Officer post. The difficulty faced by Officers is being able to support the Town Council across many differing areas which sometimes fall outside the job descriptions of those currently employed. Such tasks include book-keeping and financial administration, the updating of the website and general back-office functions such as printing, correspondence, invoicing and so on. The administration of the Town Council is becoming quite clearly onerous and placing stress upon the 0.5 FTE administration role.
- 1.4 Secondly, this year has been about installing solid governance for the Town Council such as Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, creation of committees, the development of the new Office of the Mayor and attending the numerous regulatory requirements such as data-protection registration with the ICO and taking custody of the precept with solid banking mandates and procedures put in place. The Town Clerk can report that the council is in a good position to take on board more services and facilities which shall exponentially allow the Town Council to drive forwards in delivering cost-effective results for the community.
- 1.5 However, without the necessary staffing the council shall remain locked into a position of being unable to grow without the necessary Officers in place to deliver such services. The clear objective of this council should be the tangible, visible real-world results which the community can be proud of. As such the Town Clerk recommends the creation of a further financial administration/general administration role to assist the Town Clerk and current administration Officer.
- 1.6 The results of Resident's Survey and the emerging strategic plan suggests a need for further community engagement, especially with Christchurch's younger generations. This Council also has a firm commitment to producing a Neighbourhood Plan this forthcoming financial year; as well as developing a Grant Awards policy. This council therefore has a clearly justified need to be able to additionally recruit where required to accommodate the exponentially increasing administrative burdens these identified services shall place upon Officers. This is further amplified in anticipation of taking full custody and control of the maintenance of its open spaces and recreational grounds as well as event management which is currently being serviced by a service level agreement with BCP Council.

## **Reserves**

- 1.7 Good public finance accounting practice dictates that local authorities should hold reserves for numerous reasons. These Reserves can be "earmarked" for specific purposes to help the Council save up each year towards the cost of capital projects, such as replacing equipment, modernising council buildings and so on. This practice suggests that Council's should also have a "General Reserve" to provide for reasonable working capital and that careful consideration should be given to setting the level of reserves.
- 1.8 The law requires a Town Council to have regard to reserves when calculating its precept (s49A(2)(d) & (c) Local Government Finance Act 1992). Full Council understood this commitment to mean £86,000 to £171,000 to be held in reserve, but that it was impossible to achieve this in year 1. It was agreed that a 4 year plan of setting aside £21,500 into general reserves. The attached budget proposal

honours that commitment and the Town council should be halfway to meeting its Reserves commitment by the end of 2020/2021.

### **Proposed Revenue Budget 2020/2021**

- 1.9 The principles directing the budget for the 2020/2021 financial year are as follows:
- Continue service-delivery and business as usual without impact upon continuity of provision;
  - To deliver focussed Member initiatives bearing in mind the current Officer level support;
  - To provide value for money.
  - To develop the Council so that it can operate independently of the Principal Authority.
- 1.10 Officers therefore support the attached budget which necessitates an increase in the precept to £514,416.50 an increase on a Band D equivalent of £14.33 per annum, or £1.19 per month.
- 1.11 If Members decide that a lower precept should be set the Council shall have to identify significant savings and/or other sources of income such as property/asset sale, and savings in the reciprocal cessation and/or diminution of services.
- 1.12 Members should note that this budget differs slightly to that which was recommended to Full Council by Resources Committee. This is because since Resources Committee this Council has been notified that the Council Tax Base for a Band D equivalent for the forthcoming financial year of 2020/2021 decreased from 12,263 properties to 12,184. The budget has been revised to account for this small decrease.

### **Exceptional Class**

- 1.9 Attached as Appendix 1 is the proposed draft budget for Members to consider. Initially the budget suggests a raise on the precept to accommodate and provide resources to finance the projects Members have previously resolved to commit to. This includes importantly the Neighbourhood Plan. Alongside this the budget has also provided for the forthcoming Britain in Bloom competition. Members can see in the “exceptional class” the proposed figures for each accordingly.
- 1.10 The Neighbourhood Plan is anticipated to be a 3-year project and grants from central government are available. Members have previously intimated that the Plan should include housing allocations and as such the costs for the Plan shall need to be increased to reflect the further consultant’s work required here. Benchmarking with other Town Councils, and when considering the work required, suggests a figure of approximately £100k to £150k complete the Plan.

### **Assets and Overheads Class**

- 1.11 Members shall also see a 5% increase across the board in the “Asset Class” and “Overheads” categories. This shall offset any increases that may be unforeseen due to inflation changes, or indeed increased costs of grounds maintenance that BCP Council may consider when negotiating any further additional year to the current service-level agreement.

Whilst considering the “Assets Class” the Town Clerk has also included at C21 a budget for “Assets Damage Contingency”. This reflects the recent incidences that have occurred concerning vandalism and alleged criminal damage at Mudeford Recreation Ground at the cricket pavilion and the recent water ingress at the Old Town Hall. The introduction of this budget line makes sense to prevent unnecessary use of the Council’s reserves.

- 1.12 The Town Clerk has kept the “election” expenses intact in that although the Town Council now has a full council of elected Members, in the unforeseen eventually of a disqualification, or retirement or vacation of seat, or death the budget can absorb the cost of an election. Members should note the budget here is conservative and Members may wish to consider increasing to £12k as this seems a more reasonable reflection of election costs, noting that savings would need to be made elsewhere to accommodate this increase.

### **Grant Class**

- 1.13 Also included is the introduction of a “Grant Class”. This creates a budget for the Town Council to develop its Grant Award policy. Although modest at £10k when compared with other councils, the Town Clerk is mindful of the administration this causes in the first year of running which shall inevitably create its own challenges. Going forwards Members may wish to increase this budget if proved successful. Included in this class is also a budget entry for the Remembrance Parade road closures. This year after lobbying by Members and the Town Clerk, BCP Council met the costs as a one-off; however, the Town Council shall be responsible in 2020 for this and in the further years. The creation of this budget secures the road closures required to serve this crucial civic event.

### **Salary Budget**

- 1.14 Members shall acknowledge that the salary budget has been increased from £75k to £104k. This provides headroom to create the identified Officer support required to accommodate the creation of further projects in the Exceptional Class and the Grants Class. It is anticipated that the post shall be in the region of £15-20k with the extra to accommodate taxation and superannuation. Members should be mindful also that it is anticipated that the Town Clerk may complete the CILCA qualification in the 2020 which triggers an increase in salary also. Without being presumptuous the Town Clerk proposes that this small salary increase could be met by the contingency at the necessary time if it decides to award the increase.
- 1.15 Members also need to appreciate that the National Joint Council is due to revisit the two year pay offer which runs from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2020 and a 2% increase should be anticipated for those salaries which fall in the correct spinal column/grade. At this stage it is difficult to anticipate this award as no firm announcements have been made. This can be monitored in the 2020/2021 financial year and any increase above 2% can be reported to Resources Committee to evaluate the impact.

### **Summary**

- 1.16 The proposed draft budget captures the intent of the Town Council to move forwards in delivering those projects it has already committed to such as the Neighbourhood Plan. It also provides for Britain in Bloom which shall be a great asset for the community to help and take pride in shaping and designing the offering drawing from numerous community interests, expertise and organisations. It also provides for the development and award of grants and protects those assets we are ultimately

responsible for. The budget further relieves some of the stress from the bare minimal Officer support it currently has.

- 1.17 Although the precept is increasing a large amount (51.39%), it cannot be stressed enough that the precept was set at a crippling low when compared to similar councils in the immediate environs. The proposed precept increase creates an additional £172,407.50.
- 1.18 Crucially, this figure is still half the cost of those Town Councils with a similar council tax base as Christchurch, if not a quarter of the cost when the comparison is made across Dorset. It is hoped that this budget illustrates that the Town Council is now ready to begin to make changes and enhancements to the community

## **2.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **Legal**

- 2.1 The Town Council has a legal duty to set an annual budget. This report formulates the first step in adopting a budget for 2020/2021. It shall be for Full Council to agree the budget and set the precept for the next financial year and at this stage in January the income streams for the Town Council should be known.

### **Environmental**

- 2.2 None

### **Financial and Risk**

- 2.3 As per the report.

### **Equalities**

- 2.4 No direct impact from this report

### **Consultation and Engagement**

- 2.5 This concludes the budget setting process following the recommendations from Resources Committee.

## **3.0 CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider the report and to approve the recommendations outlined.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Draft Budget 2020/2021 as Recommended by Resources Committee.

Appendix 2 – Draft Budget 2020/2021 to account for notification of Council Tax Base.

Christchurch Town Council									
Budget									
2020/21			2019/20	2019/20	2020/21				
Description			Budget	Estimate	Budget				
<b>Asset Class</b>									
C1	C1 - Douglas Avenue	Allotments	860.00		1,000.00				
C2	C2 - Rutland Road	Allotments	10,115.00		12,000.00				
C3	C3 - Southey Road	Allotments	1,635.00		2,000.00				
C4	C4 - Arena Wheel Park	Play Facilities	4,820.00		6,000.00				
C5	C5 - Barrack Road Recreation Ground	Recreation Grounds	20,285.00		25,000.00				
C6	C6 - Druitt Gardens	Druitt Gardens & Hall	9,735.00		12,000.00				
C7	C7 - Druitt Hall	Druitt Gardens & Hall	7,880.00		25,000.00				
C9	C9 - Enfield Road Play Areas Jumpers Common	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C9	C9 - Knapp Mill Open Space	Recreation Grounds	6,025.00		7,500.00				
C10	C10 - Knapp Mill Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C11	C11 - Mudeford Quay Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C12	C12 - Mudeford Recreation Ground Play Area	Play Facilities	8,088.00		10,000.00				
C13	C13 - Office of the Mayor	Office of the Mayor	24,210.00		27,000.00				
C14	C14 - Old Town Hall	Old Town Hall	20,000.00		22,000.00				
C15	C15 - Quomps Open Space	Recreation Grounds	15,965.00		17,500.00				
C16	C16 - River Way Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C17	C17 - Rutland Road Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C18	C18 - Tuttons Well and Guide Hut	Recreation Grounds	935.00		1,250.00				
C19	C19 - Waterman's Park Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C20	C20 - Waterman's Park Wheel Park	Play Facilities	14,700.00		17,500.00				
C21	C21 - Assets Damage Contingency				8,000.00				
C6	Christchurch Cemetry	Cemetry	26,570.00		26,570.00				
C29	Stanpit Rec	Recreation Ground	6,650.00		6,650.00				
	Funded by BCP		(33,220.00)		(33,220.00)				
	<b>Asset Class</b>		156,779.00		208,750.00				
C7	Christmas Lighting	December	13,600.00		13,600.00				
	Funded by BCP		(13,600.00)		(13,600.00)				
<b>Grant Class</b>									
	Remembrance Parade Road Closures				2,000.00				
	Introduction of Grants Aid Policy				10,000.00				
C23	Red House Museum	Museum Grant	51,550.00		51,550.00				
	Funded by BCP		(51,550.00)		(51,550.00)				
	<b>Grant Class</b>		0.00		12,000.00				
			156,779.00	46%	220,750.00	43%			
<b>Overheads Class</b>									
	Salaries		75,000.00		104,000.00				
	Telephone		1,000.00		1,050.00				
	Office General		2,500.00		2,625.00				
	Training		2,000.00		2,100.00				
	Postage		350.00		367.50				
	Photocopying		1,250.00		1,312.50				
	Insurance		12,000.00		12,600.00				
	Legal		10,000.00		10,500.00				
	Election		8,000.00		8,400.00				
	Office Equipment		500.00		525.00				
	Refreshments		500.00		525.00				
	Travel		280.00		294.00				
	Advertising		600.00		630.00				
	Bin Liners		50.00		52.50				
	Membership Subs		2,000.00		2,100.00				
	Newsletter		1,000.00		1,050.00				
	PR		1,000.00		1,050.00				
	Professional fees		700.00		735.00				
	Audit fees		2,000.00		2,100.00				
	IT & Web Site		10,000.00		10,500.00				
	Rent		10,000.00		10,500.00				
	Rates		4,500.00		4,725.00				
	Contingency		18,500.00		19,425.00				
			163,730.00	48%	197,166.50	38%			
<b>Exceptional Class</b>									
	Britain in Bloom				25,000.00				
	Neighbourhood plan				50,000.00				
	Reserves		21,500.00	6%	21,500.00				
	<b>Exceptions &amp; Reserve Class</b>		21,500.00		96,500.00	19%			
	<b>Total Budget</b>		342,009.00		514,416.50				
	No of Properties		12,263.00		12,263.00				
	Precept per Property		27.89		41.95	- 14.06			-50.41%
	BCP Council Tax		1,903.75		1,818.65	85.10			4.47%
						71.04			3.68%

Christchurch Town Council									
Budget									
2020/21			2019/20	2019/20	2020/21				
Description			Budget	Estimate	Budget				
<b>Asset Class</b>									
C1	C1 - Douglas Avenue	Allotments	860.00		1,000.00				
C2	C2 - Rutland Road	Allotments	10,115.00		12,000.00				
C3	C3 - Southey Road	Allotments	1,635.00		2,000.00				
C4	C4 - Arena Wheel Park	Play Facilities	4,820.00		6,000.00				
C5	C5 - Barrack Road Recreation Ground	Recreation Grounds	20,285.00		25,000.00				
C6	C6 - Druitt Gardens	Druitt Gardens & Hall	9,735.00		12,000.00				
C7	C7 - Druitt Hall	Druitt Gardens & Hall	7,880.00		25,000.00				
C9	C9 - Enfield Road Play Areas Jumpers Common	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C9	C9 - Knapp Mill Open Space	Recreation Grounds	6,025.00		7,500.00				
C10	C10 - Knapp Mill Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C11	C11 - Mudeford Quay Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C12	C12 - Mudeford Recreation Ground Play Area	Play Facilities	8,088.00		10,000.00				
C13	C13 - Office of the Mayor	Office of the Mayor	24,210.00		27,000.00				
C14	C14 - Old Town Hall	Old Town Hall	20,000.00		22,000.00				
C15	C15 - Quomps Open Space	Recreation Grounds	15,965.00		17,500.00				
C16	C16 - River Way Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C17	C17 - Rutland Road Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C18	C18 - Tuttons Well and Guide Hut	Recreation Grounds	935.00		1,250.00				
C19	C19 - Waterman's Park Play Area	Play Facilities	1,921.00		2,500.00				
C20	C20 - Waterman's Park Wheel Park	Play Facilities	14,700.00		17,500.00				
C21	C21 - Assets Damage Contingency				8,000.00				
C6	Christchurch Cemetry	Cemetery	26,570.00		26,570.00				
C29	Stanpit Rec	Recreation Ground	6,650.00		6,650.00				
	Funded by BCP		(33,220.00)		(33,220.00)				
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C7	Christmas Lighting	December	13,600.00		13,600.00				
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<b>Grant Class</b>									
	Remembrance Parade Road Closures				2,000.00				
	Introduction of Grants Aid Policy				10,000.00				
C23	Red House Museum	Museum Grant	51,550.00		51,550.00				
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	<b>Grant Class</b>		0.00		12,000.00				
			156,779.00	46%	220,750.00		43%		
<b>Overheads Class</b>									
	Salaries		75,000.00		104,000.00				
	Telephone		1,000.00		1,050.00				
	Office General		2,500.00		2,625.00				
	Training		2,000.00		2,100.00				
	Postage		350.00		367.50				
	Photocopying		1,250.00		1,312.50				
	Insurance		12,000.00		12,600.00				
	Legal		10,000.00		10,500.00				
	Election		8,000.00		8,400.00				
	Office Equipment		500.00		525.00				
	Refreshments		500.00		525.00				
	Travel		280.00		294.00				
	Advertising		600.00		630.00				
	Bin Liners		50.00		52.50				
	Membership Subs		2,000.00		2,100.00				
	Newsletter		1,000.00		1,050.00				
	PR		1,000.00		1,050.00				
	Professional fees		700.00		735.00				
	Audit fees		2,000.00		2,100.00				
	IT & Web Site		10,000.00		10,500.00				
	Rent		10,000.00		10,500.00				
	Rates		4,500.00		4,725.00				
	Contingency		18,500.00		19,425.00				
			163,730.00	48%	197,166.50		38%		
<b>Exceptional Class</b>									
	Britain in Bloom				25,000.00				
	Neighbourhood plan				50,000.00				
	Reserves		21,500.00	6%	21,500.00				
	<b>Exceptions &amp; Reserve Class</b>		21,500.00		96,500.00		19%		
	<b>Total Budget</b>		342,009.00		514,416.50				
	No of Properties		12,263.00		12,184.00				
	Precept per Property		27.89		42.22	14.33	-51.39%		
	BCP Council Tax		1,903.75		1,818.65	85.10	4.47%		
					70.77	3.66%			

## **Appointment of Internal Auditor**

<b>Report Type:</b>	Public Report for Decision
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To recommend the appointment of an internal auditor for the year 2019/2020
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b> <b>The Town Council:</b> <b>(a) Appoints “Do the Numbers Ltd” as the internal auditor for the year 2019/2020.</b> <b>(b) Authorises the payment of the auditor’s fees as stipulated.</b>
<b>Wards:</b>	All Wards
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Daniel Lucas – Town Clerk

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

1.1 Local authorities are accountable to the public and must ensure value for money. Local Councils operate within legal and accounting frameworks to ensure that decisions are lawful, informed and based upon objective and transparent processes.

1.2 Sound governance means providing deliverable and costly services within the parameters set by the Council’s precept, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Financial sustainability is fundamental to the performance of a council. Such aspects of sustainability include:

- A statutory requirement for a balanced annual budget;
- A statutory requirement for there to be a finance officer (section 151 officer)
- Regard for the adequacy of the reserves accounted for, which members must consider as they take the budget decision;
- Legal requirements for councils to have a sound system of internal control, proper arrangements for managing their financial affairs and to have their statement of accounts and arrangements for value for money subject to external audit annually.

(National Audit Office, January 2019: Comptroller and Auditor General)

1.3 Internal audit is a key part of a local council’s internal controls. Indeed, a smaller authority is obligated by regulation 5(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to *“undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance”*.

- 1.4 The purpose of internal audit is to scrutinise and report to the authority on whether the systems of financial and other controls over activities are effective (Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, March 2019: JPAG).
- 1.5 The Non-Statutory Guidance for internal audit recommends two principles when sourcing internal audit providers: Independence and Competence. So Members must be suitably appraised of the auditor to be appointed and must satisfy themselves that there is a degree of independence and competence.
- 1.6 The scope of the internal audit is also within the gift of this Council. Again the Non-Statutory Guidance describes as follows:

*“Scope of internal audit*

*4.14. It is a matter for the authority and its internal auditor to determine the necessary scope and extent of its internal audit. When securing an internal audit service, the authority should make sure that it is proportionate to the needs, size and the circumstances of the authority.” (ibid at page 35).*

- 1.7 However the Town Clerk and RFO recommends a full account of the internal systems of control given that the Town Council is newly established, and it would assist in the forthcoming Civic Year ahead an indication of where work is required, or indeed if the Council has in place the core controls required.
- 1.8 The Town Clerk approached auditors who seemed upon first reading interested. However, once the size of the Council in terms of its precept and budget was explained an extremely lukewarm reception was received. So much so that the Town Clerk sent polite chase emails to no real avail. As such in dialogue with Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council the Town Clerk was recommended an auditor who is familiar with parish/town council practices and who has an esteemed career in the sector.
- 1.9 Do the Numbers Ltd are recommended to Members for this current financial year 2019/2020 to conduct the internal audit. Attached at Appendix 1 is the company information and at Appendix 2 the Appointment letter for Members’ information. In dialogue with the Company’s Principal it is anticipated the audit shall comprise the following:

*“On the basis that your income for the 2019/20 year will be below £400k, my fee would be £850*

*The audit process would comprise two full days and possibly a part day on site.*

*The interim audit would be as soon as possible - so that any matters arising can be addressed before the year end.*

*The final audit would be some time in May (to meet the deadlines) and if needs be an extra part day in March.”*

## **2.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **Legal**

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty as explained in the report to consider an effective internal audit process.

### **Environmental**

- 2.2 Not applicable.

### **Financial and Risk**

- 2.3 Internal audit is a crucial component to submitting and completing the annual return (AGAR) by the 30<sup>th</sup> June. As such this Council is obligated to consider and appoint an auditor as it sees fit. The cost is based upon the scale of fees and as the Council's precept for the current financial year is below £400,000 the fee shall be £850 (excluding VAT).

### **Equalities**

- 2.4 Not applicable

### **Consultation and Engagement**

- 2.5 Not applicable.

### **3.0 CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider the report and to approve the recommendations outlined.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Do the Numbers Ltd Company Information

Appendix 2 – Appointment Letter

**Publication Scheme**

<b>Report Type:</b>	Public Report for Decision
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To recommend the Council adopts the appended Publication Scheme
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>It is RECOMMENDED that: The Town Council: (a) Adopts the appended Publication Scheme at Appendix 1</b>
<b>Wards:</b>	All Wards
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Daniel Lucas – Town Clerk

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 makes it a duty to maintain a scheme which relates to the specific type of information held by a public authority. The Information Commissioner (“ICO”) approves the specific types of information from time to time. So, Members are fully familiar with the duty and Act in full the section provides as follows:

**“9 Publication schemes.**

*(1)It shall be the duty of every public authority—*

*(a)to adopt and maintain a scheme which relates to the publication of information by the authority and is approved by the Commissioner (in this Act referred to as a “publication scheme”),*

*(b)to publish information in accordance with its publication scheme, and*

*(c)from time to time to review its publication scheme.*

*(2)A publication scheme must—*

*(a)specify classes of information which the public authority publishes or intends to publish,*

*(b)specify the manner in which information of each class is, or is intended to be, published, and*

*(c)specify whether the material is, or is intended to be, available to the public free of charge or on payment.”*

1.2 The Town Clerk has drafted this Council’s Publication Scheme and is attached at Appendix 1. Most of the scheme is based on the ICO’s model publication scheme.

- 1.3 In terms of its purposes and why do we need one; essentially the scheme sets out the Council's commitment to make certain classes of information routinely available such as policies, procedures, agenda and minutes, annual budget reports etc... The Publication Scheme is designed as a minimum commitment as to what this Council shall routinely disclose. It remains within the gift of a member of public to request other information via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 1.4 The duty in law requires the Council to maintain and regularly review the Publication Scheme so that any newly created information on this scheme must be made available promptly and the need to replace or update information which has been superseded. The Council shall use its website to update any matters identified on this scheme.
- 1.5 Members shall see that the cost for providing "hard-copies" has been analysed so that there is no impact upon officer-time/resources here.
- 1.6 Alongside the Publication Scheme is also the "*Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities*" (2014, DCLG). This also sets out standards for publication and this is attached at Appendix 2. This ties-in with The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. Under the new audit framework smaller authorities, including parish councils, internal drainage boards, charter trustees and port health authorities, with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000 will be exempt from routine external audit. In place of routine audit, smaller authorities will be subject to the new transparency requirements laid out in this Code. This will enable local electors and ratepayers to access relevant information about the authorities' accounts and governance. The Code does not replace the duties in law under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 but provides another regulatory framework to be mindful of.

## **2.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **Legal**

- 2.1 As per report.

### **Environmental**

- 2.2 Not applicable.

### **Financial and Risk**

- 2.3 The Publication Scheme picks up most of what is engaged in the Transparency Code. Moreover, internal audit shall provide some useful feedback in terms of this Council's governance and publication commitments. However, to discharge the legal duty under the FOIA 2000, the Publication Scheme must be adopted by Council in the first instance.

### **Equalities**

- 2.4 Not applicable.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

- 2.5 Not applicable.

### **3.0 CONCLUSION**

3.1 Members are asked to consider the report and to approve the recommendations outlined.

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Publication Scheme  
Appendix 2 – Transparency Code.



## Information available from Christchurch Town Council under the model publication scheme

This guidance gives examples of the kinds of information that Christchurch Town Council will provide in order to meet their commitments under the model publication scheme.

The Town Council will make the information in this definition document available unless:

- it does not hold the information;
- the information is exempt under one of the FOIA exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations exceptions, or its release is prohibited by another statute;
- the information is readily and publicly available from an external website; such information may have been provided by the public authority or on its behalf. The authority must provide a direct link to that information;
- the information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or,
- it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

The guidance is not meant to give an exhaustive list of everything that the Town Council may be willing to disclose. The legal commitment is to the model publication scheme, and the Town Council will look to provide as much information as possible on a routine basis.

### **Publishing datasets for re-use**

Public authorities must publish under their publication scheme any dataset they hold that has been requested, together with any updated versions, unless they are satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so. So far as reasonably practicable, they must publish it in an electronic form that is capable of re-use.

If the dataset or any part of it is a relevant copyright work and the public authority is the only owner, the public authority must make it available for re-use under the terms of a specified licence. Datasets in which the Crown owns the copyright or the database rights are not relevant copyright works.

The Datasets Code of Practice recommends that public authorities make datasets available for re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#).

The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of FOIA. The terms 'relevant copyright work' and 'specified licence' are defined in section 19(8) of FOIA. The ICO has published [guidance](#) on the dataset provisions in FOIA. This explains what is meant by "not appropriate" and "capable of re-use".

<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<p><b>Class1 - Who we are and what we do</b></p> <p>(Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)</p> <p>This will be current information only.</p>	(hard copy or website)	Copying, Postage, Officer Time.
Who's who on the Council and its Committees		
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))		
Location of main Council office and accessibility details		
Staffing structure		
<p><b>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it</b></p> <p>(Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)</p> <p>Current and previous financial year as a minimum</p>	(hard copy or website)	Copying, Postage, Officer Time
Annual return form and report by auditor		

Finalised budget		
Precept		
Borrowing Approval letter		

Financial Standing Orders and Regulations		
Grants given and received		
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract		
Members' allowances and expenses		
<b>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing</b> (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)  Current and previous year as a minimum	(hard copy or website)	Copying, Postage, Officer Time.
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum)		
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)		
Quality status		
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines		

<p><b>Class 4 – How we make decisions</b> (Decision making processes and records of decisions)</p> <p>Current and previous council year as a minimum</p>	(hard copy or website)	Copying, Postage, Officer Time.
Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)		
Agendas of meetings (as above)		
Minutes of meetings (as above) – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.		
Reports presented to council meetings – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.		
Responses to consultation papers		
Responses to planning applications		
Bye-laws		
<p><b>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures</b> (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)</p> <p>Current information only</p>	(hard copy or website)	Copying. Postage, Officer Time.

<p>Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business:</p> <p>Procedural standing orders  Committee and sub-committee terms of reference  Delegated authority in respect of officers  Code of Conduct  Policy statements</p>		
<p>Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:</p> <p>Internal instructions to staff and policies relating to the delivery of services  Equality and diversity policy</p>		
<p>Health and safety policy  Recruitment policies (including current vacancies)  Policies and procedures for handling requests for information  Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)</p>		
<p>Information security policy</p>		
<p>Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)</p>		
<p>Data protection policies</p>		
<p>Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)</p>		

<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</b> Currently maintained lists and registers only	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)	Copying, Postage, Officer Time.
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)		
Assets register		
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish councils)		
Register of members' interests		
Register of gifts and hospitality		
<b>Class 7 – The services we offer</b> (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by	Copying, Postage, Officer
Current information only	inspection)	Time
Allotments		
Burial grounds and closed churchyards		
Community centres and village halls		
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities		
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting		
Bus shelters		
Markets		

Public conveniences		
Agency agreements		
Services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)		
<b>Additional Information</b> This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised in the lists above		

**Contact details:**

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

<b>TYPE OF CHARGE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>BASIS OF CHARGE</b>
<b>Disbursement cost</b>	Photocopying @ 0.0021p per sheet (black & white) + Paper @ 1.66p per sheet	Actual cost * Based on photocopying fee per sheet for MFD Lease and cost of paper at £3.00 per ream of 500 sheets of A4
	Photocopying @ 0.0211p per sheet (colour) + Paper @ 1.66p per sheet	Actual cost Based on photocopying fee per sheet for MFD Lease and cost of paper at £3.00 per ream of 500 sheets of A4
	Officer Time – @ £8.21per hour prorata for time photocopying request.	Actual Cost – Current Statutory Minimum wage for over 25's taken for hourly rate.
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Annex A: Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities**

Parish councils, internal drainage boards, charter trustees and port health authorities with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000 should publish:

#### **All items of expenditure**

above £100 Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish details of each individual item of expenditure. Copies of all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other related documents do not need to be published but should remain available for inspection. For each individual item of expenditure the following information must be published: a. date the expenditure was incurred, b. summary of the purpose of the expenditure, c. amount, and d. Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered.

#### **End of year accounts**

Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish signed statement of accounts according to the format included in the Annual Return form. It should be accompanied by: a. a copy of the bank reconciliation for the relevant financial year, b. an explanation of any significant variances (e.g. more than 10-15 percent) in the statement of accounts for the relevant year and previous year, and c. an explanation of any differences between 'balances carried forward' and 'total cash and short term investments', if applicable.

#### **Annual governance statement**

Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish signed annual governance statement according to the format included in the Annual Return form. Explain any negative responses to governance statements, including how any weaknesses will be addressed.

Internal audit report Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish signed internal audit report according to the format included in the Annual Return form. Explain any negative response to the internal controls objectives, including how any weaknesses will be addressed. Explain any 'not covered' responses to internal controls objectives.

#### **List of councillor or member responsibilities**

Annual publication of councillor or member responsibilities no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates, including: a) names of all councillors or members, b) committee or board membership and function (if Chairman or Vice-Chairman), and c) representation on external local public bodies (if nominated to represent the authority or board).

#### **Location of public land and building assets**

Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Parish councils and port health authorities to publish details of all public land and building assets – either in its full asset and liabilities register or as an edited version. Internal drainage boards to only publish details of registered land and buildings that have a market value and appear in Fixed Assets Register. The following information must be published: a) description (what it is, including size/acreage), b) location (address or description of location), c) owner / custodian, e.g. the authority manages the land or asset on behalf of a local charity, d) date of acquisition (if known), e) cost of acquisition (or proxy value), and f) present use.

#### **Minutes, agendas and papers of formal meetings**

Publication of draft minutes from all formal meetings not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.

Publication of meeting agendas and associated meeting papers not later than three clear days before the meeting to which they relate is taking place.

## **Resident's Survey Results**

<b>Report Type:</b>	Public Report for Decision
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To recommend that Council acknowledges the survey responses and notes the observations therein.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>It is RECOMMENDED that: The Town Council:</b>  <b>(a) Notes the Survey Responses;</b> <b>(b) Delegates to the Town Clerk to produce a Strategic Plan for the next 5 years concentrating on the areas identified by Members;</b> <b>(c) Re-convenes the Resident's Survey Working Group to help produce concrete aims and objectives being those Members originally identified as forming this group.</b>
<b>Wards:</b>	All Wards
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Daniel Lucas – Town Clerk

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Community Committee initially recommended to Full Council the creation of a Resident's Survey Working Group and ultimately the creation of a survey. The primary objective of this survey was to understand matters of interest and or concern to the community. Full Council agreed this programme of work.
- 1.2 As such the survey went live on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2019 and remained open until the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019.
- 1.3 The Council received an overwhelming response with 579 responses received via the use of the weblink, 86 responses received in paper format, and 10 responses received via invitation email. A total of 675 responses.
- 1.4 The survey took a thematic approach and identified the following "indicators" of sentiment across the town:  
Parks and Open Spaces  
Tourism and Economy  
Highways and Transport

## Social and Environmental.

- 1.5 The survey was designed predominantly as a Likert Scale<sup>1</sup> which avoids question/respondent bias to simple “yes” or “no” questions where respondents tend to be biased towards “yes” answers<sup>2</sup>. The scale is simply a measurement of a respondent’s feelings or attitudes to the stimuli/question presented. This approach provides a quick way to administer the survey and can be analysed swiftly by those conducting the research. Importantly, however, it avoids the simple critique levelled by most surveys that the questions were “leading” in any way, in that a respondent can agree or disagree along a spectrum of choices available.
- 1.6 Further, the survey also provides for a “snapshot” of commonly identified issues/problems which the survey questions do not address to further account for an unbiased or directed outcome. These “snapshot” questions aim to capture a sense of where our residents’ priorities rest so that this Council can plan for, accommodate and address such issues in any forward plans. Of course, the design of any survey instrument is a rather blunt tool, but without consideration of the design, sample size and analytical methods a survey can be quite easily critiqued.

## Results and Analysis

- 1.7 The results of the survey are produced in a data-pack at Appendix 1. In summary and to assist Members the “weighted average” that appears on those questions with an “agreement” variable (Strongly Agree through to Strongly Disagree) gives an indication of the degree of agreement or disagreement. Strongly Agree receives a +2 weighting, Agree +1, Neither Agree or Disagree = 0, Disagree -1 and Strongly Disagree – 2. Therefore, a weighted average of 0 would indicate a neutral feeling whereas any result pushing strongly towards +2 or -2 would illustrate an attitude of agreeability of disagreeability.
- 1.8 In summary those which suggest strong feeling are as follows:  
Q1(Agreement) – parks and open spaces, Q2 (Agreement) - Events, Q13 (Agreement) - heritage, Q15 (Agreement) places to stay/visit, Q16 (Agreement) - Market, Q24 (Agreement) -Taxis, Q25 (Disagreement) - roads, Q33 (Disagreement) – Affordable Homes, Q36 (Disagreement) Youth facilities, Q37 (Agreement) – Safety.
- 1.9 The survey was also designed to look at areas of “concern” to members of the public given the four indicators of community sentiment. The “weighted average” here again also helps to identify those areas of concern. The scale here ranked from “extremely concerned” through to “not at all concerned”. However, the scoring of the scale works differently here. Extremely concerned receives +4, Very concerned +3, Moderately Concerned +2, Slightly concerned +1 and Not at All Concerned = 0.

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<sup>1</sup> After the inventor Renis Likert (1932) “*A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes*”. Archives of Psychology. **140** 1-55

<sup>2</sup> Commonly known as “Acquiescence Bias” (Watson, D. (1992) “*Correcting for Acquiescence Response Bias in the Absence of a Balanced Scale: An Application to Class Consciousness*”. Sociological Methods and Research **21**: 52-58.

- 1.10 Those areas of concern identified scoring a weighted average of greater than 2 are as follows:

Q5 – Litter, Q7 – Paving and Footpaths, Q10 – Dog Fouling, Q11 – Anti-Social Behaviour, Q17 – Shops and High Street Offering, Q30 – Traffic Congestion.

### **Demographics of Respondents**

- 1.11 Overwhelmingly those aged over 60 were the main respondents of the survey accounting for 53.74% of responses. There were only 8 responses from young adults below the age of 20, accounting for less than 1.5% of the returns. It follows therefore that the main respondents were also retired (48.17%). More females also completed the survey (58.95%)

### **Areas for Strategic Emphasis**

- 1.12 There is a clearly conveyed sentiment about the roads into and out of Christchurch and the congestion that follows. This would seem to be a strategic priority that Members may wish to consider emphasising in a corporate plan. Although not the Highway Authority there are still aims and objectives that could be delivered at this Council's level which Members may wish to think about. For example: clean-air initiatives, moving towards carbon neutrality, working closer with public transport providers, cycle to work initiatives, working with schools to increase awareness of traffic congestion/road safety and linking this with greener climate goals etc...
- 1.13 Secondly, there is expressed dissatisfaction with affordable homes provision within the town. Work could be prioritised here, and Members may wish to consider this. Notably the High Street offering was an area of concern. The provision of homes and the adequacy or otherwise of the retail offering would suggest some degree of correlation. Without detailed statistical analysis this hypothesis may not be correct; however principles of good planning which seek to deliver sustainable communities develop the social, environmental and economic interplays within towns and communities. With more affordable homes, and a wider demographic concerning age and social mobility in terms of employment; retailers would adjust their retail offering accordingly. Although conjecture this maybe something Members may wish to develop and prioritise.
- 1.14 Finally, the "streetscene" was an area of concern: litter, paving, dog fouling were all identified as being an issue for our residents.
- 1.15 The Town Clerk recommends that three strategic Goals are identified. With the assistance of the Resident's Survey Working Group some concrete aims and objectives which produces specific and measurable results can then be incorporated into the Strategic Plan.

## **2.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **Legal**

- 2.1 No implications here.

### **Environmental**

- 2.2 Not applicable.

### **Financial and Risk**

2.3 Not applicable.

### **Equalities**

2.4 Not applicable.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

2.5 The survey went “live” for a 2-month period and attracted a large response. More could be done here to engage with young adults/children. However, at this stage the survey illustrates a concern with the lack of youth provision in the area.

## **3.0 CONCLUSION**

3.1 Members are asked to consider the report and to approve the recommendations outlined.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Survey Data Pack.