



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR
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Minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on **Monday, 26th February 2018** in the Jubilee Room at the Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr Mrs B Ridout (Mayor),
Cllr Mrs S Hunt (Deputy Mayor),
Cllr Mrs A Beckley, Cllr Mrs S Cullingford,
Cllr R Evill, Cllr A Frith, Cllr P Harris, Cllr M Hill,
Cllr Monksummers, Cllr Mrs V Potheary,
Cllr Mrs D Toye, and Cllr B Von Clemens.

Members of the Public There was one member of the public present.

Members of the Press: There was one member of the Press present.

In attendance: Town Clerk, Mrs S Dobie.
Assistant Town Clerk, Mrs C Ratcliffe.

Apologies: Cllr M Gould, Cllr S Joyce, Cllr Miss N Purkis,
Cllr J Robinson and Cllr D Walsh.

Prior to the meeting, the Mayor, Cllr Mrs Ridout, announced the sad news that the Town Crier, Mr David Wathen, had passed away on Friday, 23rd February 2018 at his home in Gillingham and read out a short statement. A period of one minute's silence was kept afterwards as a mark of respect.

475. To approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday, 22nd January 2018.

Cllr Mrs Potheary proposed that “**the minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on Monday, 22nd January 2018 were approved as a correct record of that meeting**”. Cllr Evill seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.** The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

476. Questions. There were no questions.

Full Council Meeting – Monday 26th February 2018 (continued):

477. Declarations of Interest: Members are required to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, section 27 disclosable pecuniary interests.

Cllr Von Clemens declared an interest in Agenda Item 7 - Service Level Agreements between Gillingham Town Council, Three Rivers Partnership and Gillingham Community and Leisure Trust Limited.

Cllr Von Clemens is a Director/Trustee of the Three Rivers Partnership – the umbrella organisation for Gillingham Community and Leisure Trust Limited (GC<) and Trustee of Gillingham Open Spaces Trust (GOST).

478. To receive written reports from outside bodies, if available, for consideration and approval:

a) Three Rivers Partnership (3RP) and Three Rivers Community Partnership Board of Trustees, the Gillingham Community Leisure Trust (GCLT)

Cllr Von Clemens reported that no formal meeting had taken place this month but there had been discussion and an unanimously endorsed final agreement was reached by all members regarding agenda item no. 7.

b) Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan Group

Cllr Mrs Pothercary reported that the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan Group had not met this month.

The Town Clerk informed members that completion of regulation 16 consultation of the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan finished on Thursday, 15th February at 5pm. There has been 21 representations which has been received and placed on the District Council's website www.dorset4you.gov.uk/Proposed-Gillingham-Plan and they have been passed to the examiner, Mr. David Kaiserman, who will hopefully start work on the examination shortly.

c) Town Meadow Group

Cllr Joyce was not present at the meeting and there was no report. Cllr Monksummers commented that the newly installed lighting along the path was a great improvement.

d) Gillingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Cllr Von Clemens reported that the Gillingham Chamber of Commerce had convened on Tuesday, 20th February 2018 and discussed arrangements for another Skills Fest to promote local apprenticeships. The Chamber is also busy raising awareness of the new GDPR regulations that will apply from May onwards.

e) Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils

Cllr Mrs Beckley reported that she was unable to attend the recent meeting of the DAPTC larger towns but would circulate the minutes when available.

Cllr Mrs Hunt reported that no meeting of the DAPTC smaller towns had taken place this month and there was no report.

f) Health Forum

Cllr Mrs Beckley reported that the Health Forum no longer exists but may reform in the future.

Full Council Meeting – Monday 26th February 2018 (continued):

478. To receive written reports from outside bodies (continued):

g) Transport Forum

Cllr Mrs Ridout referred to a report that had been circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting regarding the South Western Community Rail Conference that she had attended on 13th February 2018 in Southampton. Please refer to Appendix A. The report was for information only and did not contain any recommendations.

Cllr Monksummers commented that the car park at Gillingham railway station is full by 7.30am during the week.

479. To receive the following Committee reports for consideration and adoption:

a) General Purposes meeting held on Monday 5th February 2018

Cllr Von Clemens proposed that **“the report of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday, 5th February 2018 should be agreed and adopted”**. Cllr Mrs Toye seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

b) Planning Committee interim meeting held on Monday, 22nd January 2018 and the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday, 12th February 2018.

Cllr Mrs Potheary proposed that **“the report of the Planning Committee interim meeting held on Monday, 22nd January 2018 and Planning Committee meeting held on Monday, 12th February 2018 should be agreed and adopted”**. Cllr Beckley seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

c) Staff and Salaries Committee meeting held on Monday, 19th February 2018.

Cllr Frith proposed that **“the report of the Staff and Salaries Committee meeting held on Monday, 19th February 2018 should be agreed and adopted”**. Cllr Harris seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

d) Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on Monday, 19th February 2018.

Cllr Mrs Hunt proposed that **“the report of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on Monday, 19th February 2018 should be agreed and adopted”**. Cllr Harris seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

480. To receive and approve the Service Level Agreements between Gillingham Town Council, Three Rivers Partnership and Gillingham Community and Leisure Trust Limited.

The Town Clerk referred to the recently drafted Service Level Agreement (SLA) made between Gillingham Town Council, the Three Rivers Partnership and Gillingham Community and Leisure Trust Limited (GC< Ltd). A copy of which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Harris explained that there were two Service Level Agreements. One was for the proposed works depot facility and the other was for the use of the car parks. Note: There is a currently no SLA in place for use of the car park, maintenance of the car park and the car park extension.

Cllr Monksummers queried why the phrase ‘in perpetuity’ had been used in paragraph 4 of the SLA for the works depot.

Cllr Harris explained that there has been a lot of discussion about the agreement. The working party did not want the works depot to be in jeopardy after the 30-year lease expires, especially when a considerable amount of investment would have been made. The phrase ‘in perpetuity’ applies to the proposed works depot and to the proposed sports hall extension. Both parcels of land are the same size and this arrangement gives GC< Ltd more time to raise funds to extend their current facility.

Full Council Meeting – Monday 26th February 2018 (continued):

480. To receive and approve the Service Level Agreements between Gillingham Town Council, Three Rivers Partnership and Gillingham Community and Leisure Trust Limited (continued):

If at any time the Three Rivers Partnership and GC< Ltd no longer exist, the land will belong to the Trustees of the Gillingham Open Spaces Trust (GOST).

Cllr Monksummers was happy with the explanation given by Cllr Harris.

Cllr Harris proposed that **“the Service Level Agreements prepared for the proposed works depot and use of the car parks at Hardings Park were adopted and agreed for signature by the Mayor”**. Cllr Monksummers seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED**. Cllr Von Clemens abstained from voting as he had previously declared an interest.

The Mayor, Cllr Mrs Ridout duly signed both Service Level Agreements.

Cllr Harris referred to the £10,000 annual recompense payment to Gillingham Community and Leisure Trust Ltd that is part of the Service Level Agreement, and now the agreement is signed, is due for payment.

Cllr Harris proposed that **“as per the Service Level Agreement with between Gillingham Town Council, Three Rivers Partnership and Gillingham Community and Leisure Trust Limited, the first payment of £10,000 is released to Gillingham Community and Leisure Trust Limited”**. Cllr Mrs Hunt seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED**. Cllr Von Clemens abstained from voting as he had previously declared an interest.

481. To consider a request from therendezvous for the Town Council to support ‘in principle’ a future crowdfunding campaign.

A Private and Confidential report had been circulated prior to the meeting regarding the activities of therendezvous.

Cllr Von Clemens explained that due to the nature of the work undertaken by therendezvous in Gillingham the report issued was marked as ‘confidential’. There is a definite need for outreach youth work in the town especially for those young people who do not engage with other provisions for young people. These are often vulnerable young people who need our support and protection. For the outreach work to continue beyond August, further funding will need to be sourced and this is why support for a ‘crowd funding’ initiative would be appreciated.

Cllr Monksummers asked for more information about therendezvous organisation.

Cllr Von Clemens replied that therendezvous is a very well-respected organisation based in Sherborne and has full charitable status.

Cllr Von Clemens proposed that **“Gillingham Town Council support ‘in principle’ therendezvous team with their future crowdfunding campaign”**. Cllr Mrs Hunt seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED**.

482. To receive and consider a request for recognition by the Town Council for young people to receive Youth Volunteer Awards.

Cllr Von Clemens explained that the proposed Gillingham Town Council Youth Volunteers Awards would be a certificate of recognition by the Town Council for young people aged between 13 and 21 years, who have provided a high level of service to the community. This could include working with local community groups or charities in the town, working with school based groups (not in curriculum time) or projects and individual efforts with the town such as GTC volunteer days. Working voluntarily for a profit-making business cannot be included. Each young person would be given a record sheet that will need to be signed and dated by those who have overseen voluntary activity undertaken by the young person.

Full Council Meeting – Monday 26th February 2018 (continued):

482. To receive and consider a request for recognition by the Town Council for young people to receive Youth Volunteer Awards (continued):

The record sheets will need to be handed into the Town Council who will monitor the young people through a nominated councillor during the year. Four awards are proposed:

- The Bronze Award will require the young person to complete 30 hours of community service.
- The Silver Award will require the young person to complete 50 hours of community service.
- The Gold Award will require the young person to complete 100 hours of community service.
- In addition to the above there will be a GTC Young Volunteer of the Year Award which will require the young person to complete 200 hours of community service.

It is proposed that those who qualify for a community award will be presented a certificate from the Mayor at the Annual Town Meeting in April.

Cllr Harris queried what activities the young people could do, especially given the wide age group.

Cllr Monksummers agreed with the proposed Youth Volunteer Awards and asked whether the awards could include those up to 25 years, which is the age limit on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Many youth organisations would support this initiative. Some youngsters already volunteer as part of their involvement with Scouts, Girl Guiding or Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, etc.

Cllr Mrs Cullingford also asked if consideration could be made to include those up to 25 years old and suggested that the proposed award was similar to the volunteering award scheme already sponsored by the Lions Club.

Cllr Von Clemens replied that the proposed award scheme was, indeed similar to the awards presented by the Lions Club; however, the proposed GTC Youth Volunteering Award would help endorse the benefits of volunteering to the younger generation and provide recognition for their efforts. The proposed award would not clash or detract from any other form of volunteering award.

Cllr Mrs Potheary and Cllr Mrs Ridout were very much in favour of the proposed GTC Youth Volunteering Award and fully supported the recognition of volunteers.

Cllr Von Clemens said he would be more than happy to organise the Youth Volunteering Award Scheme.

Cllr Von Clemens proposed that **“Gillingham Town Council sets up a Youth Volunteering Award scheme to recognise young people who volunteer in our community”**. Cllr Mrs Hunt seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

483. Motion: Proposed by Cllr Mrs Ridout, seconded by Cllr Mrs Hunt.

- “that Gillingham Town Council confirms that the required criteria requested by the Quality Gold Local Council Award Scheme has been published on the Gillingham Town Council web site”.**
- “that Gillingham Town Council confirms that the five prepared statements requested by the Quality Gold Local Council Award Scheme has been completed”.**

Cllr Mrs Ridout proposed that **“Gillingham Town Council confirms that the required criteria requested by the Quality Gold Local Council Award Scheme has been published on the Gillingham Town Council web site”**. Cllr Mrs Hunt seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

Cllr Mrs Ridout proposed that **Gillingham Town Council confirms that the five prepared statements requested by the Quality Gold Local Council Award Scheme has been completed”**. Cllr Mrs Hunt seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

Full Council Meeting – Monday 26th February 2018 (continued):

484. To receive a report on the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor's activities for the last month.

Cllr Mrs Ridout referred to the Mayor's Report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix B. Cllr Mrs Ridout read out a 'thank you' note from Mr and Mrs Robson for the flower bouquet they had received for their 50th wedding anniversary and another 'thank you' from the Weldmar Hospice thanking the Mayor for her kind words at the 'Light up a Life' service held at Orchard Park.

485. Matters Pertinent

- a) Cllr Mrs Ridout referred to the statement issued by Debbie Ward, CEO, Dorset Councils Partnership following the decision by the Secretary of State, the RT Hon Sajid Javid MP to replace the nine existing council's with two new authorities :

"... the parliamentary process will now begin to establish the new authorities. The Joint Committees will be leading the development of the new authorities before the Shadow Authorities come into place. The timetable we can anticipate will be the legal orders concluded by June 2018 and the Shadow Authorities formed. Each Shadow Authority will include all councillors from within the areas covered by the new authority, each will elect an Executive responsible for making decisions until the first direct elections for the new councils take place in May 2019."

Cllr Von Clemens commented that this was good news but urged fellow members to keep up to date with the devolution process.

- b) Cllr Von Clemens referred to another good news item regarding the CCG workshop that he had attended last week. The workshop was very informative with some positive outcomes. A copy of the notes from the workshop will be made available to all members shortly.
- c) Cllr Mrs Beckley informed members that she had been invited to attend the CCG meeting regarding mental health on 7th March.

The meeting closed at 8.17 pm.

1. County Councillors' Reports, as follows:

a) County Councillor, Mr Andrew Cattaway

Cllr Cattaway did not attend the meeting; no report was submitted.

b) County Councillor, Mr David Walsh

Cllr Walsh did not attend the meeting. A report had been submitted prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix C.

2. District Councillors' Reports, as follows:

a) District Councillor, Alexander Chase

Cllr Chase was not present at the meeting; no report had been submitted.

b) District Councillor, Mr Michael Gould

Cllr Gould was not present at the meeting; no report was submitted.

Full Council Meeting – Monday 26th February 2018 (continued):

2. District Councillors' Reports (continued):

c) District Councillor, Mrs Valerie Potheary

Cllr Mrs Potheary was present at the meeting; no report had been submitted.

d) District Councillor, Mrs Belinda Ridout

Cllr Mrs Ridout was present at the meeting. A report was submitted prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix D.

e) District Councillor, Mr David Walsh (Deputy Leader of NDDC and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development)

Cllr Walsh did not attend the meeting. A report had been submitted prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix E.

3. Public Questions.

There were no public questions.

Agenda item no. 478 (g)

Gillingham Town Council

**South Western Railway Community Rail Conference
Tuesday, 13th February 2018, Southampton**

Author: Cllr Belinda Ridout

The following are my notes made at the first meeting with the new franchise, South Western Railway. An interesting meeting with lots of promises and hopefully some outcomes, particularly for the six stations of the Blackmore Vale Community Partnership from Tisbury to Crewkerne.

1. Introduction by Andy Mellors, Managing Director SWT

- New franchise period - August 2017 to 2024.
- Significant growth in passenger volume.
- 1700 services per day
- SWT operate services to 213 stations and manage 185 stations.
- Aim to increase capacity by 30% (22,000 more seats) at peak times into Waterloo by Dec 2020.
- Delivering £1.26b investment in the railway.
- £90m investment in station facilities and carriages with air conditioning, toilets, more capacity.
- More user friendly – introducing the new Smart Card (part-time season tickets still available via the Smart Card)
- £2.6m investment in customer/communities with Improvement Fund.
- Committed to working with NR.

£90m Station Investment programme– including:

- At least 1500 new parking spaces across the network.
- 60 electric vehicle charging points at stations.
- Installing new gate lines.
- Launch of Social Development Fund to transform un-used station space for community use.
- Launch of Rail Operator Apprenticeship Scheme.

Over the last 6 months:

- December 18 timetable consultation – 7000 responses. Final proposal (bid) to be submitted to Network Rail by March 18. Confirmation of new timetable from Network Rail – late summer 2018.
- All Class 707's now in regular passenger service, longer trains, more seats. (Total of 1597 vehicles in service)
- Ordered new Aventura trains.
- Compensation entitlement for delays reduced from 20 to 15 +mins, with easier claim process via Smart Card.
- Refurbishment of Class 444/450 fleet has begun.
- Re-engineering/refurbishment of 90 as new Class 442 vehicles has begun.
- Performance not as good as could have been with industrial action, Waterloo works, derailments/fire at Waterloo and storms.

The future:

- With Dec 18 timetable and all new trains in place, the aim is to reverse the decline in performance over the last 7/8 years and concentrate on the continued growth in passenger volume
- Continue to roster a guard on every service – with over 250 contingency guard arrangements.

2. SWR Community Rail Update, Richard Kempton, Community Rail Manager

- 3 Regional Development Managers giving support to CRP's. This area: Phil Dominey.
- Committed core funding for all CRP's (30k pa)
- To hold an Annual Conference (as just held)
- Give assistance to CRP's on marketing, training and promotions to increase passenger numbers.
- Customer and Community Improvement Fund – mainland – several £million's.
- Station adoption funding through ACORP (Association of Community Rail Partnerships) for 50 stations
- Funding a part time ACORP stations officer with the role of bringing vacant station space back into use.
- Richard reported on the many seasonal activities held at stations throughout all CRP's. Information banners were a great success at stations as well as vinyl wrapping on shelters and tourism hubs.

3. General Topics from questions asked

- **Integration of public transport** — bus-rail integration at stations. 30 Station Travel Plans are being looked at with local authorities. DCC Transport representative Kelly Flynn confirmed that she is pursuing an integrated travel plan with NR/SWR for Gillingham Station.
- **Electrification** process is a national challenge due to cost and delivery. No plans for proliferation on the network because diesels on lease to 2024. There is a commitment to explore diesels being converted to some sort of hybrid to be easily converted to electric.
- **Dementia Awareness** - something ACORP (Association of Community Rail Partnerships) is progressing through CRP's.
- **Samaritans** – SWT/NR work closely with local Samaritan groups.

4. Department for Transport, Kul Bassi – responsible for franchising and CRP's in England

Praised the positive and significant effect that 'station friends groups' have had on the social aspect of rail travel and confirmed DfT's continued support of CRP's.

5. Paul Webster, Operations Manager, south, ACORP, (Association of Community Rail Partnerships)

- 59 CRP's
- 86 community rail routes.
- 1300 stations have been adopted by friends' groups, 20% of network.
- DfT requirement for CRP's to be included in any new franchise agreement
- Community Rail lines demonstrate a rate of growth of 2.8%
- Member survey revealed the top % topics: accessibility, volunteering, young people involvement/social inclusion
- All network rail employees are allocated 5 volunteering days per annum.
- Can help put empty spaces/stations back into community uses – library, café, museum, start-up offices, etc.
- Station groups should register with ACORP, membership fee paid (with CRP help), which gives access to 2 small grant funds – ACORP small grant and SWR small grant.

- Dedicated support with marketing via a Partnership Events Manager. Funds available to assist with promotion of services, i.e. new lines guides, marketing leaflets, etc.
- Customer and Communication Improvement Fund (CCiF) - mainland fund opens 2020. Advised to work up projects now so they are ready to go in 2020.

**6. Station Property - Steve Smith, Social and Community Development Manager
£90m fund to invest. Overview (10 yr plan, albeit 7-year franchise agreement)**

- 1500 car parking spaces and minor alterations to existing station car parks. Parking audit undertaken. Apparently, Gillingham very much on their radar.
- 6 virtual gate lines with Oyster card readers.
- 13 new gate-lines – locations to be finalised
- 40 waiting shelters
- 60 benches
- Toilets out of hours
- Waiting room improvements
- Bridges audit undertaken.
- 2 retail schemes
- 6 ramped accesses
- Minor improvements budget for baby changing facilities, induction loops.
- Disabled parking accreditation.
- ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition)
- Over 60 electrical charging points
- New LED lighting – public areas.
- Reduce water consumption
- Reduce waste
- Reduce power consumption
- Vacant station space survey
- Give tenants funds to help reduce power consumption
- Photovoltaic panels
- CCTV security improved.
- Tactile buttons/forecourt improvements, cycle facilities.
- Opportunity to bid for another £4m to make further improvements.

Key aspirations:

- Customer focus
- Improved technology
- Seamless journeys
- Flexibility
- Share best practice
- Optimise opportunities.
- 30 new integrated travel plans
- Consult with community

Gillingham was mentioned a few times and we left Steve Smith, Station Property, with a list for Gillingham station, including additional car parking, Booking Hall and toilets refurbishment, disabled and baby changing facilities, disabled access to/from platforms and larger downside shelter.

Gillingham Town Council**Mayor's Report
16th January – 19th February 2018**

Date	Event	Comments
24 th Jan	Golden Wedding Anniversary	I was both delighted and honoured to visit Janet and Philip Robson on their 50 th wedding anniversary with a bouquet of flowers and card from the Town Council. Janet was a Town Councillor for 20+ years, Mayor in 2000-1 and made a Freeman of the town, nominated by fellow councillors, for her work for the community.
26 th Jan	Great Gatsby Soiree, at the Guildhall, Shaftesbury	Organised by the Mayor of Shaftesbury, to raise awareness and funds for Dementia Charities in Shaftesbury. Great to be able to dress up! With our flapper dresses, head-dress and beads, Wendy and I headed out to a fun evening where we had the chance to learn the Charleston.
3 rd Feb	Weldmar Snowdrop Service at Gillingham's Garden of Remembrance	A very special service to reflect upon life's journey and to remember all those who have shared that journey with us. Well supported, a cold and wet day but after we were thoroughly spoilt with hot drinks and wonderful cake at St Mary's church.
7 th Feb	Citizens Advice Bureau, Gillingham. To award ICEP Domestic Abuse Awareness Course certificates.	I was very pleased to be given the opportunity to award certificates to the volunteers as part of the Isolated Communities Engagement Project. Unfortunately, domestic abuse cases are growing. I thanked them all on behalf of the community for their hard work and dedication to service.
10 th Feb	Bourton's WW1 Project	A very interesting evening with a talk by Major Nick Speakman (from The Keep, Dorchester) on the Dorsetshire Regiment's successes and failures in WW1 followed by 20 th century poems performed by Bonny Sartin, founder member of the Yetties.

County Councillor's Report - Cllr David Walsh, Chairman of People and Communities
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Full Council (Budget) 15th February

Dorset County Council will invest more money into social care, early help and prevention in 2018/19. Members of Dorset County Council met today (Thursday, 15 February) to set the council's budget and share of council tax for the next financial year.

At the meeting of the full council, members agreed to increase council tax by 5.99 per cent to help deal with inflation and bridge the funding gap in adult social care.

Council tax for 2018/19

Members agreed to raise council tax by 2.99 per cent (the maximum without triggering a local referendum), plus a further 3 per cent to fund adult social care – which is in line with the Government's 6 per cent levy (over a total three-year period).

The increase in the county council's share of council tax means a Band D household will pay £79.47 more a year, or £1.53 a week.

The 3 per cent social care precept will raise an additional £6.6m this year for the council to invest in adult social care.

Leader of Dorset County Council Rebecca Knox said that around two thirds of the budget would go towards children's and adult social care – including offering help early on, providing services in places where people go and helping people to stay independent. She said:

"The way people lead their lives is constantly changing – particularly with the use of technology – so this means we need to adapt and be flexible in the way we deliver services.

"We must make the most of every pound to provide more personalised and community-based services that focus on prevention, early help and empowering people to live independently.

"Working with our partners, we all have a collective responsibility to make the most of every pound that Dorset has. We all face financial constraints, but this should not stop us listening to residents and making sure we are delivering services that make a positive difference to people's lives."

Cllr Tony Ferrari, Cabinet member for community and resources, said:

"Although we are facing increasing demand for both children's and adult's social care, there's also a lot of investment being made across Dorset – including our multi-million school improvement programmes to deliver more school places and recruiting more children's social workers and foster carers to improve the lives of our most vulnerable children."

Alongside a significant investment programme, the council has also set a target of saving of around £18.3M in 2018/19.

Executive Advisory Panel (EAP) Pathways to Independence 19th February

I am Chairman of this Panel which advises Cabinet with regards fairer funding in Adult Social Care, which was the main reason that I wanted to become a County Council. From this position and with Director's I am able to steer the Work Programmes for these Committees. I work with North Dorset Stroke Club and others to keep abreast of current Social Care issues facing our residents. If you have issues that you would like to raise on behalf of residents, please talk to me about them and I will look at adding them to the work programme.

One of the most satisfying pieces of work that we are looking into at present is Isolation and Loneliness which has been quite enlightening to some who thought it an issue only occurring in rural areas, in small villages, however I am always kept on my toes by something someone said to me once about living in London, where they felt lonely and isolated and I keep in mind that she said: "you can be lonely in a room full of people".

All agendas and minutes can be found on the www.dorsetforyou.com website

30th January, Planning Committee at Durweston

Application 2/2017/1244/FUL, Madjeston Farm House, Bleet Lane to New Road, Madjeston SP8 5JH, change of use of part paddock/agricultural land to domestic garden and erect a tennis court, fencing and associated screen planting. This was refused on the following grounds: the tennis court by reason of its siting, would constitute an inappropriate form of development outside of the domestic curtilage of the dwelling house. Furthermore, the proximity of the proposed tennis court to Old Farm Cottage would result in private amenity area of the neighbour being adversely affected by noise and general disturbance. The proposal is contrary to policies 20, 25 and 28 of the ND Local Plan part 1.

Monday, 19th, Customer Digital Access update (Dorsetforyou)

Interesting briefing by Penny Mell, Head of Service, DCP. With the increasing shift to online services, the DCP is very much aware of the importance of 'face to face' interface with members of the public, which is still possible at Blandford, Bridport, Dorchester and Weymouth (Weymouth & Dorchester being the highest numbers) with one team covering all sites. Web chat is a growing service by demand and customers who phone in are encouraged (if possible) to use email/on line and help is given to talk customers through how to do this. Customers of the Housing service particularly benefit from digitalization because it significantly speeds up the service with regards to submission of the necessary documents. Complaints handling has been changed from a 3 to 2 stage process to simplify and improve service. Online shopper's parking permit are increasingly popular (219 issued in last quarter).

Over 304,000 Dfu users were recorded in November plus 8386 clicks through from social media and 1600 online users to all departments (27000 DfU users in one day in January 18!). The communications Team work with designated service managers to specialize and improve communications within their department. Environmental Services recently digitized their service to speed up reporting. There is now a digital News Room on the website to publish news and journalist links to audio. New website to Go Live in March this year is using the GOV.UK tried and tested model and the aim is to reduce 'click fatigue'. Designed around user needs with the most popular services on a modern and more engaging home page with large search box and filtered search (e.g. for finding car parks, social care, etc). 50% of old/outdated information has been removed. 'My local' will still be on every page i.e. local councillor/MP details, schools etc. Third party apps i.e. HomeChoice (housing), planning search (Idox) – will not be matched in straight away because these are on contract and have to wait for renewal.

Tuesday, 20th February, NDDC Full Council, Durweston – Budget

Matt Prosser, Chief Executive, DCP, confirmed that there will not be a 'Unitary' announcement (expected 21st February) from the government until after 28th, which is disappointing, particularly for Weymouth & Portland with impending elections to organize.

Members were asked to agree the Budget for 2018/19 and Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19, both unanimously agreed with a recorded vote and the Pay Policy Statement 2018/19 for the Dorset Councils Partnership (DCP), which was also unanimously approved. Full details can be found on dorsetforyou.

Changes in how councils are funded have been significantly quicker and larger than expected, including the significant reduction in the Revenue Support Grant and the New Homes Bonus Scheme amended from 6 to 4 years.

The return of Business Rates funding through the 50% business rates retention schemes doesn't mean that the council retains 50% of what it actually collects. The 2018/19 budget strategy has been based upon producing a balanced budget for the year with no new reductions to services. The partnership between the 3 councils has enabled significant savings to be achieved and front line services protected.

The potential of LGR could mean that the 2018/19 budget is the last budget for NDDC. However, if LGR doesn't happen, balancing the budget going forward for NDDC will be a difficult/impossible task. The budget gap of 968,000 for 2018/19 has been balanced through savings already agreed, the base budget review, running costs of Nordon, funding Blandford Leisure Centre from once off sources, reduction in the contribution to the Dorset Waste Partnership, further increases to Treasury Management income (increased by £200,000 to £400,000 per annum through investment opportunities) and increasing the council tax by £5. The council does not expect to need to borrow in 2018/19.

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District Councillor's Report - Cllr David Walsh, Deputy Leader NDDC and Portfolio Holder - Planning and Economic Development Strategy

Dorset Strategic Planning Forum 12th February

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As with everything at present; the impact of Unitary was questioned and whether we should wait for any form of LGR to be implemented before going forward but it was unanimously agreed, that the Forum has to continue its work regardless of LGR because we are well ahead of it and as Local Plans are being reviewed and adopted at present, it would be detrimental to all areas if this did not continue at pace. As you will all remember from the Forums Terms of Reference all Local Authorities must Evidence the "Duty to Cooperate" to be compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework and so by its own definition: if one Plan fails: they all fail.

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Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership, have a non-voting position on the Forum and I was able to thank its Director Lorna Carver for their support in our bids which released 7 and a half Million pounds to kick start the development of Gillingham's Southern Extension. No more can it be shouted that all money and support go to the Conurbation, leaving Rural Dorset with nothing.

All member briefing: Dorsetforyou update

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Full Council (Budget) 20th February

The budget was agreed unanimously by all members but as always happens, even though our percentage of Council Tax is small we are thought to be wholly responsible by members of the public because the Council Tax Bills have the North Dorset District Council letterhead as it is the collecting body.

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Full Council (Budget) 15th February

Dorset County Council will invest more money into social care, early help and prevention in 2018/19. Members of Dorset County Council met today (Thursday, 15 February) to set the council's budget and share of council tax for the next financial year.

At the meeting of the full council, members agreed to increase council tax by 5.99 per cent to help deal with inflation and bridge the funding gap in adult social care.

Council tax for 2018/19

Members agreed to raise council tax by 2.99 per cent (the maximum without triggering a local referendum), plus a further 3 per cent to fund adult social care – which is in line with the Government's 6 per cent levy (over a total three-year period).

The increase in the county council's share of council tax means a Band D household will pay £79.47 more a year, or £1.53 a week.

The 3 per cent social care precept will raise an additional £6.6m this year for the council to invest in adult social care.

Leader of Dorset County Council Rebecca Knox said that around two thirds of the budget would go towards children's and adult social care – including offering help early on, providing services in places where people go and helping people to stay independent. She said:

"The way people lead their lives is constantly changing – particularly with the use of technology – so this means we need to adapt and be flexible in the way we deliver services.

"We must make the most of every pound to provide more personalised and community-based services that focus on prevention, early help and empowering people to live independently.

"Working with our partners, we all have a collective responsibility to make the most of every pound that Dorset has. We all face financial constraints, but this should not stop us listening to residents and making sure we are delivering services that make a positive difference to people's lives."

Cllr Tony Ferrari, Cabinet member for community and resources, said:

"Although we are facing increasing demand for both children's and adult's social care, there's also a lot of investment being made across Dorset – including our multi-million school improvement programmes to deliver more school places and recruiting more children's social workers and foster carers to improve the lives of our most vulnerable children."

Alongside a significant investment programme, the council has also set a target of saving of around £18.3M in 2018/19.

Executive Advisory Panel (EAP) Pathways to Independence 19th February

I am Chairman of this Panel which advises Cabinet with regards fairer funding in Adult Social Care, which was the main reason that I wanted to become a County Council. From this position and with Director's I am able to steer the Work Programmes for these Committees. I work with North Dorset Stroke Club and others to keep abreast of current Social Care issues facing our residents. If you have issues that you would like to raise on behalf of residents, please talk to me about them and I will look at adding them to the work programme.

One of the most satisfying pieces of work that we are looking into at present is Isolation and Loneliness which has been quite enlightening to some who thought it an issue only occurring in rural areas, in small villages, however I am always kept on my toes by something someone said to me once about living in London, where they felt lonely and isolated and I keep in mind that she said: "you can be lonely in a room full of people".

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30th January, Planning Committee at Durweston

Application 2/2017/1244/FUL, Madjeston Farm House, Bleet Lane to New Road, Madjeston SP8 5JH, change of use of part paddock/agricultural land to domestic garden and erect a tennis court, fencing and associated screen planting. This was refused on the following grounds: the tennis court by reason of its siting, would constitute an inappropriate form of development outside of the domestic curtilage of the dwelling house. Furthermore, the proximity of the proposed tennis court to Old Farm Cottage would result in private amenity area of the neighbour being adversely affected by noise and general disturbance. The proposal is contrary to policies 20, 25 and 28 of the ND Local Plan part 1.

Monday, 19th, Customer Digital Access update (Dorsetforyou)

Interesting briefing by Penny Mell, Head of Service, DCP. With the increasing shift to online services, the DCP is very much aware of the importance of 'face to face' interface with members of the public, which is still possible at Blandford, Bridport, Dorchester and Weymouth (Weymouth & Dorchester being the highest numbers) with one team covering all sites. Web chat is a growing service by demand and customers who phone in are encouraged (if possible) to use email/on line and help is given to talk customers through how to do this. Customers of the Housing service particularly benefit from digitalization because it significantly speeds up the service with regards to submission of the necessary documents. Complaints handling has been changed from a 3 to 2 stage process to simplify and improve service. Online shopper's parking permit are increasingly popular (219 issued in last quarter).

Over 304,000 Dfu users were recorded in November plus 8386_clicks through from social media and 1600 online users to all departments (27000 DfU users in one day in January 18!). The communications Team work with designated service managers to specialize and improve communications within their department. Environmental Services recently digitized their service to speed up reporting. There is now a digital News Room on the website to publish news and journalist links to audio. New website to Go Live in March this year is using the GOV.UK tried and tested model and the aim is to reduce 'click fatigue'. Designed around user needs with the most popular services on a modern and more engaging home page with large search box and filtered search (e.g. for finding car parks, social care, etc). 50% of old/outdated information has been removed. 'My local' will still be on every page i.e. local councillor/MP details, schools etc. Third party apps i.e. HomeChoice (housing), planning search (Idox) – will not be matched in straight away because these are on contract and have to wait for renewal.

Tuesday, 20th February, NDDC Full Council, Durweston – Budget

Matt Prosser, Chief Executive, DCP, confirmed that there will not be a 'Unitary' announcement (expected 21st February) from the government until after 28th, which is disappointing, particularly for Weymouth & Portland with impending elections to organize.

Members were asked to agree the Budget for 2018/19 and Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19, both unanimously agreed with a recorded vote and the Pay Policy Statement 2018/19 for the Dorset Councils Partnership (DCP), which was also unanimously approved. Full details can be found on dorsetforyou.

Changes in how councils are funded have been significantly quicker and larger than expected, including the significant reduction in the Revenue Support Grant and the New Homes Bonus Scheme amended from 6 to 4 years.

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