



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR

FULL COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on **Monday 25th September 2023** at The Town Hall, Gillingham, commencing at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllr Barry von Clemens, Mayor
Cllr Roger Weeks, Deputy Mayor
Cllr Graham Bashford
Cllr Fiona Cullen
Cllr Sharon Cullingford
Cllr Rupert Evill
Cllr Alan Frith
Cllr Paul Harris

Cllr Mick Hill
Cllr John Kilcourse
Cllr Val Potheary
Cllr Donna Toye
Cllr A von Clemens
Cllr Mark Walden
Cllr David Walsh

In attendance:

Town Clerk, Julie Hawkins
Assistant Town Clerk, Jill Ezzard
2 members of the public

Via MS Teams:

Michael Streeter, Gillingham and Shaftesbury News

Prior to the start of the meeting, there was a presentation by Helen Reed, General Manager, North Dorset Community Accessible Transport (NORDCAT).

1127. Public Participation. Please note: a period up to a maximum of fifteen minutes will be allowed for public comments and questions restricted to items listed on the following agenda

There was no public participation.

1128. To receive apologies for absence

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies for absence from Cllr Poulter and Cllr Snook, who were unable to join the meeting for personal reasons.

1129. Declarations of Interest: Members are required to comply with the requirements of Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 disclosable pecuniary interests

Cllr Cullingford declared an interest in Agenda Item no. 11 as a Trustee of Duke of Edinburgh Open Award Centre and as a Vice President of North Dorset Rugby Football Club.

Cllr B von Clemens declared an interest in Agenda Item no. 11 as a Trustee of Duke of Edinburgh Open Award Centre.

Cllr Pothecary declared an interest in Agenda item no. 11 as a Vice President of North Dorset Rugby Football Club.

Cllr Bashford declared an interest in Agenda item no. 11 as a member of the Gillingham Carnival Committee.

1130. To receive questions pertaining to the previous minutes

There were no questions.

1131. To approve the minutes as a true and accurate record of the Full Council held on 29th August 2023

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 29th August 2023 as a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

1132. To approve payments of £10,000 and over

There were no payments of £10,000 and over.

1133. To receive and consider a Health and Safety Report

A report was received prior to the meeting. The Chairman congratulated the members of staff who had recently completed their fire-fighting training. The report was noted.

1134. To receive, consider and adopt the draft minutes of the following standing committees:

a) General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 4th September 2023

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the General Purposes meeting held on Monday 4th September 2023 are approved and adopted.

b) Planning Committee meetings held on Monday 4th September 2023 and Monday 11th September 2023

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on Monday 4th September 2023 and Monday 11th September 2023 are approved and adopted.

c) Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on Monday 18th September 2023

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on Monday 18th September 2023 are approved and adopted.

1135. To receive and consider reports from Sub-committees and Task and Finish groups, as follows:

a) Five Year Action Plan Sub-committee

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix A](#).

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Town Clerk are delegated the authority to engage with any landowner regarding the possible purchase of land not exceeding £150K to be funded from the general reserve, for the purposes of a cemetery.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that a virement of £3,000 is made from line 5203 rain water harvesting to line 7211 Roman Court refurbishment.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that a virement of £24,255 is made from line 7609 general insurance to line 7211 Roman Court refurbishment.

Cllr Harris, lead member, reminded members that in August, Full Council resolved that Committees/subcommittees should review the 5 year plan and submit amendments/updates to the lead member of the Five Year Action Plan sub-committee by 30 September in order that the updated plan is submitted to Full Council on 23 October 2023, ahead of the Budget workshop. Cllr Harris stated that to date he has not received any information from committees or sub-committees and reminded members that information is required by 30 September.

b) Sports and Leisure Panel

There has been no meeting.

1136. To receive and consider reports from outside bodies, if available:

a) Town Meadow Group (Cllr Toye)

Cllr Toye informed members that there is a meeting scheduled for 27 September.

b) Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Cllr B von Clemens)

There was no report.

c) Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) Larger Town meetings (Cllr B von Clemens)

There has been no meeting.

d) Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) Northern Area meetings (Cllr Cullingford)

There has been no meeting.

e) Gillingham Transport Forum (Cllr B von Clemens)

There has been no meeting.

f) Gillingham Youth Centre Management Committee (Cllr B von Clemens)

There has been no meeting.

g) Blackmore Vale Community Rail Partnership (Cllr Walden)

Cllr Walden, reported that a Stations in Bloom Awards Ceremony will take place later this month and he will be attending with members of the Blackmore Vale Community Rail Partnership.

Cllr Walden reported that the consultation for the proposed ticket office closures has now closed.

1137. To receive and consider recommendations from the Finance and Policy Committee regarding grant applications for FY2023/24.

Please note: As Gillingham Town Council does not have the General Power of Competence, the legal powers to allow the council to facilitate its function are:

- The Local Government Act 1972, section 137 as amended by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Section 36 enables Councils to incur expenditure for certain purposes, not otherwise authorised, which in their opinion is in the interest of, and will bring direct benefit to, their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants. The benefit must be commensurate with the expenditure incurred.*
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 section 19. Councils may contribute by way of grant towards the expenses incurred or to be incurred by any voluntary organisation in providing any recreational facilities which the authority has power to provide.*

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix B](#).

a) Citizens Advice Central Dorset

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that no grant is awarded to Citizens Advice Central Dorset this year.

Thirteen voting members voted in favour of the proposal. Cllr Pothecary and Cllr A von Clemens voted against the proposal.

b) Gillingham Carnival Committee

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that a grant of £1,456.00 is awarded to Gillingham Carnival Committee.

Thirteen voting members voted in favour of the proposal. Cllr Kilcourse and Cllr Bashford abstained from voting.

c) Gillingham DoFEOAC (Duke of Edinburgh Open Award Centre)

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that a grant of £683.50 is awarded to Gillingham DoFEOAC (Duke of Edinburgh Open Award Centre).

Thirteen voting members voted in favour of the proposal. Cllr Cullingford and Cllr B von Clemens abstained from voting.

d) Gillingham Town Youth Football Club

It was unanimously agreed and **RESOLVED** that no grant is awarded to Gillingham Town Youth Football Club.

e) Gillingham Youth Club

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that a grant of £683.50 is awarded to Gillingham Youth Club.

f) Hope for Tomorrow

It was unanimously agreed and **RESOLVED** that a grant of £848.00 is awarded to Hope for Tomorrow.

g) North Dorset Rugby Football Club

It was unanimously agreed and **RESOLVED** that no grant is awarded to North Dorset Rugby Football Club.

Thirteen voting members voted in favour of the proposal. Cllr Cullingford and Cllr Pothecary abstained from voting.

h) Read Easy Blackmore Vale North

It was unanimously agreed and **RESOLVED** that no grant is awarded to Read Easy Blackmore Vale.

i) Shaftesbury Refugee Group

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that no grant is awarded to Shaftesbury Refugee Group.

Fourteen voting members voted in favour of the proposal. Cllr A von Clemens voted against the proposal.

j) The Blackmore Vale Charity – The Vale Pantry

It was unanimously agreed and **RESOLVED** that a grant of £329.00 is awarded to The Blackmore Vale Charity- The Vale Pantry.

1138. To receive and consider a Data Protection Compliance Report.

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The report was noted.

1139. To review and update the Record of Processing Activities (RoPA).

A Record of Processing Activities (RoPA) had been circulated prior to the meeting.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that the Record of Processing Activities (RoPA), as presented, is approved and adopted.

1140. To receive and consider a Health and Safety Audit Report.

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The report was noted.

1141. To receive and consider a report regarding the Town Council's HR and Health and Safety contract.

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix C](#). It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that a 5 year contract is taken out with Company B at a cost of £4,298.40 per annum to be funded from Budget Code 7605 – HR & Health and Safety Consultancy.

1142. To receive and consider a report regarding the purchase of horticultural vehicles.

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix D](#).

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that a John Deere 3046R Compact Tractor, is purchased from dealer 1 and the John Deere 4410 is part exchanged, at a cost after Part Exchange of £33,000.00 +VAT funded from budget number 7360 Replacement Horticultural Vehicles.

1143. To consider and approve a draft lease between Gillingham Town Council and Gillingham Community Leisure Trust for Hardings Lane car park.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that this agenda item is deferred until the next available Full Council meeting.

1144. To receive the External Auditor's report and certificate, section 3 (Part 3 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)) for the year end 31st March 2023 and agree to carry out the following: prepare a "Notice of Conclusion of Audit" which details the rights of inspection in line with the statutory requirements. Publish the "Notice" along with the certified AGAR (sections 1, 2 and 3) before 30th September 2023 which must include publication on the Town Council's website.

The External Auditor's report was circulated prior to the meeting and is available to view on the Town Council's website, [here](#)

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** to prepare a 'Notice of Conclusion of Audit' detailing the rights of inspection, in line with the statutory requirements.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** to publish the 'Notice' along with the certified AGAR (sections 1, 2 and 3) before 30th September 2023.

1145. To consider and approve the purchase of the Town's Christmas trees:

- a) **To purchase 100 small Christmas trees at a cost of £1,200 +VAT to be taken from the Festive Lights Budget no 5407.**

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that 100 small Christmas trees are purchased at a cost of £1,200 +VAT to be funded from the Festive Lights Budget no 5407.

- b) **To purchase one large Christmas tree to be sited on the Town Meadow at a cost of £1,310.00 inclusive of delivery and erection + VAT to be taken from the Festive Lights Budget no 5407.**

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** that one large Christmas tree to be sited on the Town Meadow is purchased at a cost of £1,310.00 inclusive of delivery and erection + VAT to be funded from the Festive Lights Budget no 5407.

1146. To receive, consider and approve the draft Quarterly Newsletter (Autumn Edition) prior to circulation.

A draft newsletter had been circulated prior to the meeting.

It was agreed and **RESOLVED** to approve the draft quarterly newsletter.

The Autumn Newsletter can be viewed [here](#).

1147. To receive a report on the Mayor and Deputy Mayor’s civic activities

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix E](#)

The report was noted.

1148. To receive and note reports from Dorset Councillors, if available

A report from Cllr Belinda Ridout was circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to [Appendix F](#).

The report was noted.

1149. To receive matters pertinent to this meeting

Cllr B von Clemens thanked the Assistant Town Clerk for covering for the Town Clerk while she was on leave.

Cllr B von Clemens wished Cllr Cullingford a Happy Birthday on behalf of the Council.

The meeting closed at 7.57 pm.

Full Council – 25 September 2023

Minute no. 1135a

Gillingham Town Council

5 Year Action Plan Sub-committee

Author: Cllr Harris

Meeting of the 5 year action plan subcommittee held on Wednesday 2nd August 2023 at Gillingham Town Hall.

Members present: Cllr Harris, Cllr Kilcourse, Cllr B von Clemens, Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk, Works Manager, RFO.

1. Apologies.

There were no apologies.

2. Matters arising from the last meeting.

This was the first meeting of this Council year.

3. Election of a lead member.

Cllr Harris was elected as the lead member.

4. 5 Year Plan Review.

There are a number of high value projects coming forward. Sequencing and timing is important as some are reliant on completion of other projects. Whilst the projects are individually managed by subcommittees, the overview is provided by full council through its 5 year plan. The projects are not competing with each other for funding provided there is a consensus on a long term overview. Four major projects were reviewed:

Line 1.1 Purchase of new burial ground (cemetery) and line 1.2 creation of new burial ground/cemetery.

- The current cemetery is almost at capacity. It is clear that a new cemetery for Gillingham is required in the next 24 months. This is a key project in the 5 year plan and local land purchase was due to be completed in FY 22/23.
- The project can be funded from S106 contributions, accruals and general reserves.
 - Current s106 contribution funding from St Martins £45,025
 - Accruals £20,000
 - General Reserve £150,000. ¹

¹ minimum general reserve required as per General & Earmarked Reserves Policy (section 7.1) is 3-6 months reserves (£255,140 for 3 months reserves/£510,280 for 6 months reserves). At the end

- This project can be overseen by the Allotments and Burials subcommittee or a separate T&F group authorised by Full Council. In the meantime, in order to ensure that the Council can move quickly once land becomes available, it is recommended that the Mayor and Town Clerk are delegated the authority to engage with any landowner regarding the possible purchase of land to the value of £150K.

Line 6.09 Hardings Park, creation of pump track.

- The 5 year plan has the working assumption that this is required during FY 25/26.
- The project currently has S106 funding from Lodden Lakes Part 1 of £70,000 and
- Barnaby Mead of £38,900
- The working assumption cost is £170,00.
- This project can be overseen by the Estate Management subcommittee or a
- separate T&F group authorised by Full Council.

Line 10.12 Roman Court workshop add solar panels and line 10.13 Roman Court workshop replace roof.

- This project has been reviewed by the property subcommittee and was recently reported to the General Purposes committee (7th August 2023) which agreed and RESOLVED that Gillingham Town Council agree in principle, subject to clarification regarding funding, to install a new roof and solar panels at Roman Court Workshops in summer 2024.
- Current funding available is £24,542 in line 7211 Roman Court refurbishment (earmarked)
- There is currently £3,000 in line 5203 rain water harvesting. This has been carried forward in the budget for a few years. The works manager has stated that this could be released for other Roman Court works. It is recommended that this is transferred to Roman Court refurbishment.
- There is currently £24,255 remaining in line 7609 general insurance following the reduced insurance premiums. It is recommended that this is transferred to Roman Court refurbishment.

Replacement of Peugeot van,

- The van is due replacement within the next 12 months.
- The works staff require a larger van than the current Peugeot for the future
- The 5 year plan has this vehicle being replaced with an electric vehicle.
- Replacement with an electric vehicle is contingent upon GTC generating its own power from solar panels at Roman Court.

of Q1 2023-24, General Reserve is £678,232.75, allowing £150K to be used for cemetery land purchase with the balance to be used for land preparation.

- The project currently has £19,178 in a combination of accruals (£3,795) and earmarked funds (£15,383)
- The works manager is currently investigating purchase and leasing costs for an electric van of the size required.

It is noted that a S106 subcommittee meeting is to be held on 27th October 2023 and a Budget workshop is to be held on 1 November 2023.

5. Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- **The Mayor and Town Clerk are delegated the authority to engage with any landowner regarding the possible purchase of land not exceeding £150K to be funded from the general reserve, for the purposes of a cemetery.**
- **A virement of £3,000 is made from line 5203 rain water harvesting to line 7211 Roman Court refurbishment.**
- **A virement of £24,255 is made from line 7609 general insurance to line 7211 Roman Court refurbishment.**
- **Committees/subcommittees should review the 5 year action plan and submit amendments/updates to the Lead member of the Five Year Action Plan sub-committee by 30 September in order that the updated plan is submitted to Full Council on 23 October 2023, ahead of the Budget workshop.**

Full Council – 25 September 2023

Minute no. 1137

Gillingham Town Council

Recommendations from the Finance and Policy Committee regarding grant applications for FY2023/24

Author: Assistant Town Clerk

Grant applications for FY2023/24 were considered by the Finance and Policy Committee on Monday 18th September 2023. Please refer to Minute no. 590 and the following recommendations are made to Full Council:

1. The total amount available £4,000.00

- a)** Citizens Advice Central Dorset - £0.00
- b)** Gillingham Carnival Committee - £1,456.00
- c)** Gillingham DOFEOAC (Duke of Edinburgh Open Award Centre) - £683.50
- d)** Gillingham Town Youth Football Club - £0.00
- e)** Gillingham Youth Club - £683.50
- f)** Hope for Tomorrow – 848.00
- g)** North Dorset Rugby Football Club - £0.00
- h)** Read Easy Blackmore Vale North - £0.00
- i)** Shaftesbury Refugee Group - £0.00
- j)** The Blackmore Vale Charity – The Vale Pantry - £329.00

Recommendations:

- **That the grant recommendations of the Finance and Policy Committee, as detailed in this report are approved.**

Full Council – 25 September 2023

Minute no. 1141

Gillingham Town Council

HR and Health & Safety Consultancy Services

**Author: Julie Hawkins, Town Clerk and
Serena Burgess, HR Administration Officer**

Background

A contract for the provision of HR and Health & Safety services was taken out with Company A in October 2018 for 5 years - this contract is now due for renewal.

Quotes

In line with Financial Regulations, 3 quotes have been sought for a 5 year contract:

| | Company A | Company B | Company C |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| Price per annum (excluding VAT) | £4,330 | £4,298.40 | Unable to quote |

Service Provision

Both companies provide similar services relating to HR and Health & Safety support. However, Company B also provides the following within the price quoted:

Management System

A management system that:

- Manages staff data, leave, absence and working hours
- Records and tracks machinery service schedules

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

An EAP provides mental health and wellbeing support for staff by providing:

- A confidential telephone helpline - 24/7, 365 days a year, offering practical information and emotional support
- Up to 6 sessions of telephone, online and face to face counselling
- Support for their partner/spouse and dependants
- Online portal and 'My Healthy Advantage' mobile app providing a wealth of tools and resources

RECOMMENDATION

- That a 5 year contract is taken out with Company B at a cost of £4,298.40 per annum to be funded from Budget Code 7605 – HR & Health and Safety Consultancy

Gillingham Town Council
Replacement Tractor / additional vehicle report
Author: Simon Dobie, Works Manager

1. Existing Tractor History – John Deere 4410 33hp.

The John Deere 4410 has come to the end of its useful life. The vehicle was purchased in August 2004 and was fitted with a grass cutting deck as at the time the tractors were used for all tasks and all grass cutting activities.

For 6 years the tractor was used for grass cutting until summer 2010 when the council purchased its first dedicated OutFront grass cutting machines. These types of machines are now used to mow all the grass areas in the town. The decision was taken to not trade in the 4410 tractor, but to remove the cutting deck and continue to use the machine for pulling trailers and water bowsers etc. The tractor has served the council well, but is now showing signs of age and wear, and has clocked 3381.8 hrs. Following the purchase of a larger trailer and our large flail collector a replacement compact tractor with more horsepower is required to power and pull these attachments. The increased power will also ensure adequate power for any future attachments that may be required as the Councils workload increases.

The replacement of this machine was identified and included in the Town Councils 5-year action plan for Year 1 2022/23

Funds have been allocated in the accruals for this purpose – **7360 Replacement Horticultural Vehicles - balance = £58,002.00**

2. Replacement Options

The Works Manager, Deputy Works Manager and all the grounds team have looked at several replacement options for the 4410 and have considered the tractor size, engine size, horsepower, future attachments, and possible work area increases. Due the way horticultural vehicles are supplied it is hard to get several quotations for the same machine, so quotations have been supplied by tractor and engine power ranges that meet our requirements.

These are as follows: -

1. John Deere 3046R 45hp
2. Kubota L2452 45hp
3. Kubota LX401 40hp

3. Quotations with discounts and Part exchange.

Option 1 Dealer 1. John Deere 3046R Compact Tractor - 45hp, Hydro Transmission, Deluxe Cab, and Turf Tyres.

The John Deere 3046R is a slightly bigger than our 4410 and an extremely good all-round machine. It is the last model in the John Deere 3 series compact range, so benefits from 45hp in a compact unit. It will power all our attachments and can receive a front loader in the future.

Retail Price £46,530.00
Less Discount £8,000.00
Balance to pay £38,530.00 +VAT.
Part exchange offer John Deere 4410 = £5530.00
Price after Part Exchange £33,000.00 +VAT

Option 2 Dealer 2. Kubota L2452 Premium Tractor - 45hp, Hydro Transmission, Deluxe Cab, and Turf Tyres.

The Kubota L2452 is the first model in the L2 series which starts at 45hp, the tractor is just out of the compact range and into the small tractors category, it is a much larger looking unit. I believe we may struggle to access some of our sites with this machine and could hinder some tasks.

Retail Price £39,523.00
Less Discount £6,755.00
Balance to pay £32,768.00 + VAT.
Part exchange offer John Deere 4410 = £7,500.00
Price after Part Exchange £25,268.00 +VAT

Option 3 Dealer 3. Kubota LX401 Compact tractor - 40hp, Hydro Transmission, Deluxe Cab, and Turf Tyres.

The Kubota LX401 is the last model in the Kubota compact range but is only 40hp and very similar to our current size Kubota units. this was thought to be a little underpowered as our flail collector requires 38hp to run effectively.

Retail Price £37,394.00
Less Discount £8,256.00
Balance to Pay £29,138.00 +VAT.
Part Exchange offer John Deere 4410 = £5530.00
Price after Part Exchange £23,608.00 + VAT

Following careful consideration and looking at the requirements of the grounds department now and in the coming years, I would like to recommend that option 1 is purchased by the Town Council and funded from budget number 7360 replacement horticultural machinery. The John Deere 4410 has served us very well over the last 19 years and has been very robust and reliable. Service and repairs are also familiar to the team who have maintained the current model for several years. The Kubota

options are extremely competitive but the size comparisons to the John Deere with the same power make them unfortunately the wrong machine choice at the present time. The team have tried out the above three machines and talked with both dealers and owners, and all agree that the John Deere, best suits our requirements.

4. Recommendation

- **That a John Deere 3046R Compact Tractor, is purchased from dealer 1 and the John Deere 4410 is part exchanged, at a cost after Part Exchange of £33,000.00 +VAT funded from budget number 7360 Replacement Horticultural Vehicles.**

Full Council – 25 September 2023

Minute no. 1147

Mayor's Report**09 Aug 2023 – 17 Sept 2023**

| Date | Event | Comments |
|--------------|---|---|
| 19 August | Mayor of Wilton's Soiree | A lovely evening at Wilton house gardens. There were loads to keep us all amused include axe throwing camels and a magician. |
| 22 August | NORDCAT AGM | A very interesting meeting to hear the plans for the future and also the many great achievements of the past year. |
| 26 August | Gillingham Craft Market | The fabulous ladies of the Craft Market were back with us in August with another wonderful market on the meadow. Despite a few showers there was a good turnout of traders and customers. Looking forward to the Christmas market on the last weekend in Nov at Riversmeet. |
| 1 September | Wareham Civic Day | Great to meet up with the chain gang again to enjoy the court leat as it carried out their work in the town. In the morning we had a very interesting talk about the town followed by a visit to the community cinema. |
| 2 September | Gillingham Walking Festival | Perfect weather to launch the Gillingham walking festival which goes from strength to strength every year. A great turn out for the first walk of the festival. Massive well done to the organisers. . |
| 8 September | 200 th Anniversary of Constables Visit to Gillingham | I was very lucky to be asked to unveil the information board at the town bridge to tell the history of Constables visit to the town and the two paints he did of the town brings and Purns Mill. We were very lucky to be joined by two of Constables descendants. |
| 13 September | Christchurch Civic Day | On a perfect morning it was great to be invited to the Christchurch Civic Day. We were treated to a guided walk through the town to the priory giving us some interesting history facts. Then a really informative tour of the Priory |
| 15 September | Present Flowers (Deputy Mayor & Consort) | It was a great pleasure and privilege to present Mr & Mrs E Hunt with a bouquet of flowers on behalf of the town, to mark the occasion of their 50 th wedding anniversary. |

| | | |
|--------------|------------------------|---|
| 15 September | Fernbrook Lodge | A fabulous visit to Fernbrook Lodge to visit the ladies who have knitted a blanket that they presented to Weldmar hospice. |
| 15 September | Men's Health Event | It was a great afternoon spent at the Men's Health Event talking to all the many groups and organisation who attended. It was really well attended by both men and women and I am sure everyone left with loads of valuable information. |
| 16 September | Ferndown Civic Service | A lovely service followed by the local scout group telling us how they have build a school in Uganda and how they continue to support it and the pupils who attend. |

Full Council – 25 September 2023

Minute no. 1148

Dorset Councillor Ward Report

Cllr Belinda Ridout – September 2023

Hard to believe we are in September already. I hope everyone had a good summer break, despite the appalling weather! Now back to busy times!

Housing Strategy Consultation – it is important to have your say about the future of housing in the Dorset Council area.

It's quick and easy to take part. There is an evidence-based document alongside the questions, which provides a picture of the current housing climate in Dorset. Good, safe, environmentally sustainable and affordable housing is important. It leads to healthier more independent lives.

Dorset Council has a statutory duty to operate and manage the housing register and operates a choice-based scheme, with four different bands of prioritisation with flexibility to temporarily prioritise homeless households, keyworkers, fosterers and those needing supported housing. Key issues such as housing need, supply and standards are some of the issues highlighted.

Housing affects everyone and all of us have different experiences and that's why Dorset Council is looking for a wide variety of views to help shape the Council's approach to housing over the next five years.

The consultation is open to everyone including individuals, families, businesses and organisations. It can be found on the Dorset Council website, or if you require a paper copy or alternative format, please call 01305 221066. The consultation **closes on 2nd October 2023.**

Household Support Fund – round 4 of this fund reopened on 7th September for low income households in the Dorset Council area. The support is in the form of supermarket vouchers.

Citizens Advice will be allocating this fund on behalf of Dorset Council and issue vouchers to residents who meet the eligibility criteria within 6-8 weeks. The criteria is an annual household net income of less than £30,000, savings of less than £16,000 and not applied for a previous HSF payment within the last 6 months. Residents can apply online or if you need help filling in the form, call Customer Services on 01305 221000.

BBC “Dry Spills” Report – councillors have been informed that, following the BBC report on sewage being dumped by Wessex Water in our waterways and the sea during dry spells, Dorset Council are having constructive meetings with Wessex Water to try and resolve any potential overflow issues. One way in which we can all help the situation is by increasing the use of Rain Water soakaways or use of Water Butts.

Disposable BBQ’s – Litter Free Dorset have been campaigning on the issue of disposable barbecues for several years now and currently asking customers to stop using them and for retailers to stop selling them altogether. There has been considerable success in the last 18 months with Southern Co-op, Waitrose, Aldi and M&S permanently removing disposable BBQ’s from their shelves, as well as some Tesco and Morrisons stores in close proximity to national parks or heathland. Many local retailers, caravan parks, and garden centres have removed disposable BBQ’s from sale, all helping to spread the message.

Belinda Ridout, Councillor for the Gillingham Ward
Cllrbelinda.ridout@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Tel: 07496 413114

For those residents not on line, who have important questions or concerns, call Dorset Council on 01305 221000, 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week or email: communityresponse@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk