Council Offices, Commercial Road, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 8NG

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Councillors nominated to the Finance & Governance Committee are hereby summonsed to attend the following meeting. Please inform the Clerk if you are unable to attend.

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

**MEETING:**  Finance and Governance Committee

**DATE & TIME**: Wednesday 15th December 2021 at 7.00pm

**PLACE:**  Council Chamber, Council Offices, Commercial Road, Weymouth,

DT4 8NG

This is a meeting in public, not a public meeting.

Anyone wishing to attend or ask a public question should do so by email to office@weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk by 9am on the day prior to the meeting if possible.

Agenda and papers are available at [www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk)

All attendees are asked to wear a mask whilst moving around the building and Council Chamber. Masks may be removed when sitting. Please observe social distancing. Please take a Covid lateral flow test in the 24 hours prior to the meeting. Attendees will be asked to sign in to assist with track and trace.

J L Biscombe, FSLCC, CiLCA

Town Clerk 9 December 2021 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Agenda

1. Welcome by the Chair
2. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the last meeting
5. Councillor questions
6. Public questions
7. Future meeting arrangements
8. Draft Budget & Precept
9. Arrangements for seafront cleansing and waste and recycling collection
10. Consultations Policy
11. Petitions Policy
12. Member attendance and absence recording
13. Grant Applications
14. Information items
* Policy reviews
* Actions from the last meeting
* Forward Plan

## Welcome by the Chair

## Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

To approve any apologies received.

## Declarations of Interest

To receive Councillor Declarations of Interest in matters on the agenda.

## Minutes of the last meeting

To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 3rd November 2021 as a true and accurate record, and that they be duly signed as such.

### Recommendation:

Members are asked to agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 3 November 2021 as a true and accurate record.

## Councillor’s Question Time

No questions have been received to be included with the agenda despatch.

## Public Question Time

Questions referring to the work of Dorset Council or other partner agencies will not be taken at this meeting.

No questions have been received to be included with the agenda despatch. Members of the public are able to ask a public question up until 9am on the day before the meeting date by emailing office@weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk .

The length of time available for public questions will be determined by the Chairman.

## Future Meeting arrangements

Pending a wider discussion at Full Council in January, Councillors are invited to discuss future meeting arrangements regarding face-to-face or virtual meetings.

The Plan B restrictions brought in by the Government on 08 December 2021 do not preclude the Council from meeting in person. No legal mechanisms have been enacted to allow virtual meetings to again make formal decisions in England. There is a delegation to the Town Clerk in place until 05 March 2022. Some decision may not be delegated to the Town Clerk and one of these is the decision on the precept and this is detailed in Item 8 on this agenda.

### Recommendation:

That Councillors agree a recommendation to Full Council regarding the location and mode of future meetings.

## Draft Budget and Precept

**Purpose of Report**

This report seeks approval for Weymouth Town Council’s proposed budgets and precept for 2022/23, to be recommended to Full Council in January 2022 for adoption.

The budgets have been prepared in liaison with budget holders and the Budget Working Group and ensure that funds facilitate the delivery of council services as well as providing stability against unforeseeable demands and enabling the maintenance of capital assets.

**Policy Considerations**

The Council must set a balanced budget and comply with all statutory requirements pertaining to the setting of its budgets as set out in the Local Government Act 2003, Part 2, Section 25 and 26, which holds under clause 25 (1) that the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) must report on the robustness of the estimates and on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

To satisfy the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, Councillors must approve a precept which meets the Council’s objectives and service level responsibilities, maintains an appropriate level of reserves, and provides stability in the event of any unforeseeable demands.

### Background Information

To best support management in the delivery of services, some budget headings, ledger codes and subjective lines have been reviewed and updated. Such a review facilitates the ongoing management and monitoring of income and expenditure, by profiling budgets in line with authorities and responsibilities.

The Council’s budgets are financed through a combination of trading income, service fees and charges, and the precept. The former is substantially derived from income in respect of beach concessions, cemeteries, events, allotments, rental of properties and income from catering kiosks. The parish precept is the most local element of the council tax levied by Dorset Council on properties within the parish of Weymouth.

At the time of agenda dispatch, the Council had not received from Dorset Council its Band D equivalent properties for 2022/23. This should be available by the date of the meeting on 15th December 2022 and will be reported along with the impact on the budget that this will have.

### General Reserve

In accordance with paragraph 3.5 of the Council’s Financial Regulations, the RFO shall maintain a minimum reserve amount equivalent to an agreed proportion of gross expenditure. As a new Council it was recognised that this level of reserve could not be precepted for in a single year and as previously agreed the general reserve was to be built up over three years. The minimum level of the general reserve will be achieved during the current financial year and will stand at £900k on 1 April 2022.

The generally accepted recommendation with regards to the appropriate minimum level of a Local Council’s Reserve (as opposed to its Earmarked Reserves), is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months Net Revenue Expenditure. For Weymouth Town Council this equates to approximately £850,000 to £3,355,000 worth of general reserves

Net Revenue Expenditure for Weymouth Town Council is effectively the Precept.

The reason for the wide range (3 to 12 months) is to cater for the large variation in sizes of individual Councils. The smaller the Council, the closer the figure should be to 12 months Net Revenue Expenditure, the larger the Council the nearer to 3 months.

As Weymouth Town Council is a large Council with a large precept, it should be aiming to maintain a General Reserve closer to 3 months Net Revenue Expenditure. This budget proposal will see £900k in the reserve maintained.

**Budget Working Group**

A Councillor working group made up of members from the Finance and Governance Committee was established to critically review the base budget. The working group have met with members of the Senior Management Team to scrutinise each individual budget and challenge officers on the resources needed to provide services in 2022/23.

As a result of this scrutiny process, £167,800 has been removed from service budget lines. However, the Budget Working Group have concluded that these budget reductions will not impact on the current level of services being delivered.

**Draft Revenue Budget 2022/23**

The draft revenue budget for 2022/23, attached at Appendix A, is presented by service function in line with senior management authorities and responsibilities. The draft budget, as shown within Appendix A, reflects the changes made as a result of the Budget Working Group savings highlighted above.

HR Committee Recommendations

At its meeting on 24 November 2021, the HR Committee agreed the establishment for 2022/23 and the overall staffing budget of £2,130,234 with a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee that these be incorporated as part of the draft budgets.

No allowance for a pay award was added to the salary budget lines during the 2021/22 budget setting process. However, pay awards, which are developed nationally through Government negotiations with the trade unions, have been ongoing and it is now accepted that a pay award will be agreed for the 2021/22 financial year. Although these negotiations are yet to be completed it is estimated that the pay award for 2021/22 will be 1.75%. Therefore, the staffing budgets for 2022/23 have been adjusted to include the anticipated pay award of 1.75% for 2021/22 and an indicative pay award of 2% for 2022/23. These amount to £37k and £43k respectively.

Fees and Charges

The Council’s fees and charges, attached at Appendix B, have been reviewed as part of the budget setting process and the Committee is asked to recommend these to Full Council.

Councillors will note that the majority of fees and charges have been increased by a rate of inflation of 4.8% as per the existing policy. However, it is proposed that fees and charges continue to be constantly reviewed by the Services Committee throughout the year to ensure that they continue to provide best value for the Council.

### Proposed Precept Levels

The precept set by the Council must enable it to continue its ‘business as usual’ functions at current service levels, fund members’ chosen service enhancements, and undertake committed asset maintenance and improvement.

The table below illustrates the proposed precept levels that could be raised if the current amount paid by a Band D equivalent property is reduced by the following percentages:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| % reduction on the amount paid for a Band D property in Weymouth | Amount paid on a Band D property in Weymouth as a result of (a) | Savings Required to facilitate the reduction in the amount paid for a Band D property | Precept |
| **(a)** | **(b)** | **(c)** | **(d)** |
|  |  |  |  |
| 0% | 185.69 | 0 | 3,354,060 |
| 1% | 183.83 | 33,640 | 3,320,420 |
| 2% | 181.97 | 67,180 | 3,286,880 |
| 3% | 180.11 | 100,720 | 3,253,340 |
| 4% | 178.26 | 134,260 | 3,219,800 |
| 5% | 176.40 | 167,800 | 3,186,260 |

A 0% percent reduction would allow all the savings identified by the Budget Working Group of £167,800 to be transferred to reserves to fund future projects and priorities.

A 5% reduction would require all the savings identified to reduce the precept in order to produce a balanced budget.

Members of this committee are asked to consider the level of precept that they wish to recommend to Full Council.

### Full Council - 12 January 2022

The 2022/23 precept is required to be agreed by a Full Council meeting and cannot be delegated to officers. Under current legislation this requires a face-to-face meeting.

The Full Council meeting to be held virtually on 12 January 2022 will go ahead and all Councillors will be able to debate the budget and precept. This meeting will agree a figure for the precept.

There will be a face-to-face Full Council meeting at 11am on Monday 17 January 2022. This will be attended by a pre-agreed quorum to limit risk. This will be a single-issue meeting, to ratify the decisions taken at the virtual Full Council meeting on 12 January 2022. This meeting will not include further debate on the precept.

### Impact Assessment:

**Equalities** – None directly from this report

**Environmental, climate change and ecology** - None directly from this report

**Crime and Disorder** - None directly from this report

**Financial** – As set out in the report

**Resources** – As set out in the report.

**Economic** - None directly from this report

**Risk Management** – Members should ensure that budgets are sufficient to continue its ‘business as usual’ functions at current service levels, fund members’ chosen service enhancements, and undertake committed asset maintenance and improvement. Any reduction in current levels of funding may provide a risk should major unforeseen works be needed on the council’s assets.

**Corporate Priorities -** The Annual Governance Statement supports the following corporate priority.

* Manage the Council’s assets and resources responsibly and transparently.

**Recommendations:**

The Finance and Governance Committee is asked to:

1. Approve and recommend to Full Council the proposed fees and charges for 2022/23.
2. Approve and recommend to Full Council the proposed budgets for 2022/23
3. Agree a precept amount to recommend to Full Council on 12 January 2022.

## Arrangements for seafront cleansing and waste and recycling collection

**Purpose of Report:**

To seek member agreement to a one-year extension to the contract with Dorset Council for the provision of seafront cleaning and waste collection services.

### Background:

The town council has a cleansing and waste contract with Dorset Council. This operates under a delegation of Service from the town council to Dorset Council and is, therefore, exempt from tendering.

The initial term was for two years – 1st April 2019 until 31st March 2021 but was extended until 31st March 2022. It is now proposed that the contract is extended for an additional year to enable a member-led review of the service to be conducted and, if necessary, alternative options to be implemented.

The current specification and the delivery of this by Dorset Council maintains the standards expected and required of a Blue Flag and Seaside Award beach; and meets the requirements as detailed in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (a duty on local authorities to keep specified land and public highways clear of litter and refuse).

The scope of the service provided by Dorset Council is:

* **Beach raking** – this involves a tractor pulling the rake which smooths the sand also picks up litter/detritus. This service starts from just before or at Easter (depending on its date) and then continues daily from 1st May until 2nd week in September.
* **Litter picking** – a team of operatives working everyday picking up litter on the beach and Promenade. Dorset Council’s Beach Cleansing Team begin at 6.00am. Early in the season the team work until 4.00 pm, gradually increasing their hours and, from start of July, there are 4 staff working daily 6.00am – 7.00pm.
* **Sweeping of Promenade** – this is carried out by a small sweeping machine every day all year round – it typically takes place early in the morning during the holiday season.
* **Emptying of 240 litre litter bins** (the smaller bins in blue metal housing) – there are about 60 bins along the Prom from Pavilion to Overcombe. These are emptied daily all year round (7 days per week) or twice daily during the peak summer holiday period. Due to the increased number of visitors to the resort in 2021, Dorset Council carried out an additional emptying at lunchtime. Dorset Council consider that this was extremely beneficial for litter control as the crew undertaking the late afternoon emptying only encountered the occasional overflowing bin. As this worked so well, Dorset Council plan to implement this again in 2022, so that there will be three empties per day during peak summer season.
* **Emptying of 1,100 litre wheelie bins** (large bins owned by WTC and stored during the winter at the Overcombe car park compound). These are moved to the Promenade by Dorset Council on behalf of WTC from just before Easter until 1st week in October. These are emptied on a daily basis and twice daily during the 6-week summer holidays.
* **Emptying of the 3 recycling stations** on the Prom – these are emptied 3 times a week October until April and 5 times a week May to September.
* **Removal of large items** washed up on beach (e.g. tree trunks and dead animals). This is requested by WTC when needed and Dorset Council are available to be contacted 7 days a week.

The total cost for 2021-22 financial year is £229,581 and Dorset Council has now informed the town council that the cost of the service for 2022-23 will be £231,647.

### Extension of contract and review process

To extend the contract, a request needs to be submitted by the town council and accepted by Dorset Council. The town council has already received confirmation from the Head of Waste Operations that Dorset Council would be willing to extend the agreement until 2023.

The proposed extension from the 1st April 2022 until 31st March 2023 will provide the Council with sufficient time to consider the future of its waste collection and seafront cleansing arrangements and undertake a member-led contract review from January 2022. Previously, Cllrs Lambert, Nickinson and Barrow were nominated to take part in this review.

The member-led review of the service will consider its environmental and operational performance and be informed by a waste analysis that he been commissioned from a specialist consultancy. This analysis will consider the composition of waste and recycling and aim to identify the amount of contamination.

If the member-led review concludes by Spring 2022, this will leave sufficient time for the Council to pursue other options such as the procurement of alternative service providers.

### Impact Assessment:

**Equalities –** None identified.

**Environmental, climate change and ecology –** The indirect (Scope 3) emissions arising from contracts held by the council account for an estimated 906 tCO2e. Waste and remediation services account for 58.6% of all contractual emissions. This includes waste collection, beach cleansing and beach levelling activities. As part of the annual Blue Flag and Seaside Award criteria the Town Council is required to maintain high standards of cleanliness.

**Crime and Disorder –** None identified.

**Financial –** The contract value for 2022-23 will be £231,647. This will need to be included as part of the 2022-23 budget setting process.

**Resources –** Officer time to extend the agreement.

**Economic –** The cleanliness of Weymouth seafront is of significant importance to the community and tourism offer of Weymouth. A reduction of standards and quality of the Beach Environment would adversely impact on the economy of Weymouth.

**Risk Management –** Dorset Council waste services has a proven track record of being able to deliver on the standards expected at one of the UK’s premier coastal resorts.

**Corporate Priorities:**

* Improve the wellbeing of the people of Weymouth.
* Manage the Council’s assets and resources responsibly and transparently.
* Manage the Council’s services effectively to meet the needs of the communities we serve.
* Promote opportunities for economic success of the area.
* Work with partners to deliver our core values and strategy.

### Recommendation:

That the committee recommends to Full Council a one-year extension to the contract with Dorset Council for seafront cleansing and waste collection and that the cost of the contract is included within the council’s budget for 2022-23.

## Consultations Policy

Recommended to the Committee by the Governance Working Group.

Consultations are a valuable means by which the Council can take a steer from the wider public. It should be noted that a consultation is not legally binding and does not constitute a “vote”. There may be times when the Council is unable to enact the outcome of a consultation due to cost, policy, legal issues, or conflict with other areas of work.

Care is needed to ensure that the process is transparent, non-leading and streamlined. The process also needs to allow for best practise in question formulation by officers, whilst allowing Councillors and Officers to get the answers they need. The attached policy (Appendix C) will give both the Council and the public a clear process and confidence.

### Impact Assessment:

**Equalities –** Care should be taken to ensure that all members of the community can access consultations – this includes the use of paper copies, social media and promotion at events where appropriate. The Council is able to provide consultations in different languages and in braille.

**Environment, ecology and climate change –** Whilst the use of online consultation methods should be maximised to reduce paper use, paper copies will still need to be provided to ensure those who are digitally excluded are still able to have their voices heard.

**Crime and Disorder –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Financial –** There may be minimal costs in terms of printing paper copies. Translation services will add additional costs to consultations if required.

**Resources –** Staff time will be needed to formulate and analyse consultations. Translation is outsourced from the Council.

**Economic –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Risk Management –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Corporate Priorities:**

* Manage the Council’s assets and resources responsibly and transparently.
* Manage the Council’s services effectively to meet the needs of the communities we serve.
* Work to become greener and cleaner in our activities as well as supporting our communities and partners to be as green as possible.
* Strive for continuous improvement and service development.

### Recommendation:

That Councillors agree to recommend the policy to Full Council for adoption.

## Petitions Policy

Recommended to the Committee by the Governance Working Group.

Whilst there is no legal requirement for the Town Council to accept petitions, they can be a valuable way of enabling the public to raise issues to the Council and see their concerns addressed. The attached policy (Appendix D) has been drafted by the Governance Working Group as an appropriate process for a Council of our size. This policy will give both the Council and the public confidence in a clear and open procedure.

### Impact Assessment:

**Equalities –** Consideration must be equally given to paper and online petitions to allow for the different needs of communities.

**Environment, ecology and climate change –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Crime and Disorder –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Financial –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Resources –** There may be a small impact on staff time to check petitions and formulate Committee reports.

**Economic –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Risk Management –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Corporate Priorities:**

* Manage the Council’s assets and resources responsibly and transparently.
* Manage the Council’s services effectively to meet the needs of the communities we serve.
* Strive for continuous improvement and service development.

### Recommendation:

That Councillors agree to recommend the policy to Full Council for adoption.

## Member’s Attendance & Absences

Recommended to the Committee by the Governance Working Group

The council publishes member attendance records for Full Council and Standing Committees, as is standard good practice. These are currently published twice a year. For Full Council and Standing Committees, the Council publishes total counts for:

* Present
* Apologies Received & Accepted
* Absent” (without Apologies)
* Attended as Substitute
* Attended as a Member of the Public
* Attended on-line

Under the Local Government Act members automatically cease to be a Councillor if they do not attend a formal council meeting or have their apologies accepted, for a period of six months. Residents, the Press and other interested parties may interpret these statistics, as representing all that Councillors do. Many residents will be unaware of how many member briefings, other meetings and working groups their Councillors also attend.

### Impact Assessment:

**Equalities –** Care should be taken to avoid Councillors feeling excluded or targeted for reasons of disability, sickness, caring responsibility etc. Both Councillors and Staff should not feel obliged to attend face-to-face meetings when sick which could risk spreading infection.

**Environment, ecology and climate change –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Crime and Disorder –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Financial –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Resources –** Chairs will need to ensure that attendance statistics are sent to the office after each meeting to reduce the impact on staff time. The anticipated staff time required is minimal.

**Economic –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Risk Management –** There are no direct impacts from this report.

**Corporate Priorities:**

* Manage the Council’s assets and resources responsibly and transparently.
* Strive for continuous improvement and service development.

### Recommendations:

That Councillors agreed to recommend to Full Council that:

1. Member attendance for Member Briefings, Working Groups are also recorded. In these cases, the Chairman of that meeting should ensure that a record of attendance is kept and sent to the democratic officer following the meeting.
2. That WTC also publishes statistics (not combined with, but on the same interval as for other attendance records) for Member Briefings and Working Groups. As these meetings are voluntary, there should be no “Absent (without Apologies)” The attendances collected are:
* Present
* Apologies Received & Accepted
1. When sending apologies, best practice is that members sending apologies provide a brief reason for the apology, such as “Illness”, “Pre-Booked annual Leave”, “Parental Leave”, “Other Council commitment”, “Pre-standing personal commitment that cannot be moved”

## Grant Applications

The following applications have been received and are attached to this agenda at Appendix E.

**Weymouth & Portland Marine Litter Project CIC**

To situate five crab line bins around Weymouth harbour to hold used crab lines which usually go into general waste as litter. Successful schemes already run in Looe and Brixham and on Chesil beach. These single use plastics would then be dismantled and recycled, avoiding landfill or incinerations. This project will:

* Support Weymouth in reducing the impact of single use plastics
* Introduce an interactive QR Code promoting the Crabbing code and incorporate fun family activities, taking crab welfare into account.
* Promote the harbour as an eco-friendly, family destination.
* Promote wooden crab lines to retailers and cut down on single use plastics.

Permission has been gained from Dorset Council. Cllr Roos supports this application.

**Project cost:** £2,000.00

**Application amount:** £2,000.00

**Recommendation:** to allocate £2,000.00

### Recommendation:

That Councillors discuss the grant detailed above and agree any allocation.

Summary of grant allocations in 21/22:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant | Project | AgreedAllocation | Date agreed |
| Activate | Finale Performance of Inside Out Dorset 2021 Festival | £5,000.00 | 12/05/21 |
| Littlemoor Community Safety Group | Promotion of the group - advertising, hall hire for meetings and events, refreshments for events such as litter picks etc plus general stationary, telephone bills and on-going general expenses. | £1,040.00 | 16/06/21 |
| Friends of the Marsh | Launch of PlayPark, supporting first year of Park Leader to be replaced with volunteers going forward. | £2,000.00 | 21/07/21 |
| The Lantern Trust (Weymouth) | Essential Items Project | £2,000.00 | 22/09/21 |
| The Lantern Trust (Weymouth) | Safe Sleep 21/22 | £5,000.00 | 03/11/21 |
| The Veteran’s Hub | Expansion of premises | £1,800.00 | 03/11/21 |
| W&P Marine Litter Project | Crab line recycling | £2,000.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | Total previously AGREED | £16,840.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | Remaining Budget prior to this meeting | £33,160.00 |  |

## Information Items

### Policy reviews

The following policies have been reviewed against legal changes and new best practice. No updates are recommended at this time.

* Complaints Policy
* Gifts and Hospitality Policy
* Customer Service Standards
* Vexatious complainants

### Actions from the last meeting

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Who | Action | Status |
| 12/05/21 | TH | Undertake investigations regarding bringing forward a proposal to the Town Centre Management Group regarding the funding of the Activate event in September 2021.  | To be raised at the next Group meeting |
| 16/12/20 | TH | Explore Cllr Taylor’s query regarding the increase in fees for charity events. | Ongoing |
| 11/11/20 | JB/IM | Councillor briefing to be organised in the New Year to discuss the future of the town centre. | In progress |

### Finance and Governance Forward Plan

The forward plan is as below. Please note that this plan is subject to regular amendments and is only intended as a guide.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Meeting | Venue | Items for consideration |
| 12/01/22 | Full Council | Virtual | Draft budget and preceptCommittee dates to 2024 (information)PSPO reviewConsultations PolicyMember attendance recordingPetitions PolicySingle-use plastics policy |
| 17/01/22 | Full Council  | Council Chamber | To ratify decisions made at previous online Full Council meetings, to include the precept amount. |
| 19/01/22 | Services | Council Chamber | Nursery Relocation Business PlanProvision of Public Litter Bins PolicyCommunications Team update |
| 02/02/22 | F&G | Council Chamber | Recommended policy updates to Full Council |
| 16/02/22 | Full Council | Council Chamber | Risk Management and internal controls Recommended policy updatesProvision of Public Litter Bins Policy |
| 23/02/22 | HR | Council Chamber | Staffing updatesUnion recognition agreement |
| 02/03/22 | Services | Council Chamber |  |
| 16/03/22 | F&G | Council Chamber | Community Governance consultation from DC |
| 30/03/22 | Full Council |  | Community Governance consultation from DC |

### Recommendation:

That Members note the information items.