



**Supporting our communities to be the best they can be**

## **CORPORATE STRATEGY 2024 – 2029**





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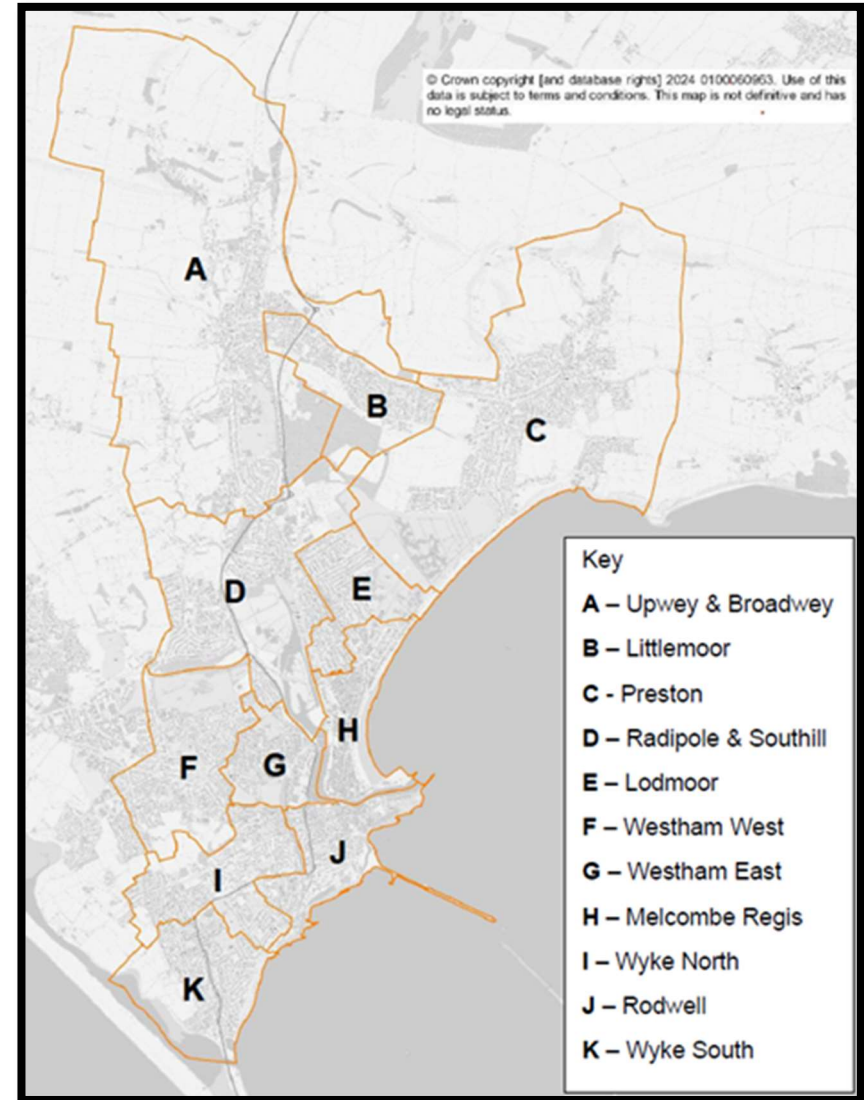
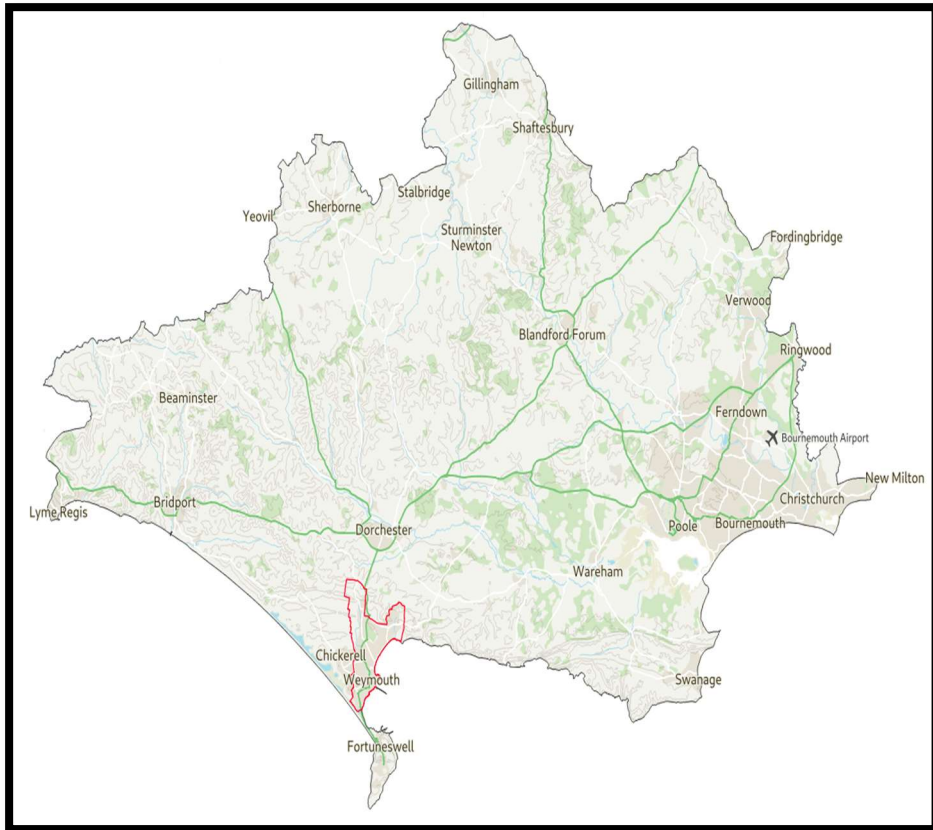
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**Weymouth – Regional Location**

**Weymouth Area Map**



I feel lucky to live in Weymouth and represent you as the Town's Mayor. Since becoming Mayor I have met some wonderful people and visited some inspiring projects, which makes me so proud of our town and the diverse range of groups which operate here for the benefit of our residents.

Weymouth Town Council shares these values; it is very much a community-minded Council supporting a range of voluntary and community groups to thrive in our town. From providing

opportunities to some of our most marginalised and inactive people to lead fuller lives at facilities like Tumbledown Farm in Southill to our proud tradition of hosting a varied events programme, Weymouth is also full of hope. And I'm looking forward to exciting events and conversations that will go on next year as we join Portland as Dorset Towns of Culture 2025.

Like everywhere, we also have our challenges. Alongside the natural beauty there are pockets of deprivation where too many families are living in poverty. A growing population means owning your own home may not be an option and Weymouth has its own share of homelessness. The Lantern Trust has shone a light of hope in the darkness for many years. It has brought together services around housing and helps people into safe homes. That's why I chose to make it my special charity for the year.

We declared a climate and ecological emergency back in 2019 and remain committed to working with partners to do all that we can to reduce impacts on our coastal town. This could even be an area where opportunities for new employment and business can be developed, such as onshore and offshore renewables using tidal, wind and wave energy.

In this strategy, we set out our hopes and aspirations for the town over the next five years, with the need to keep delivering good quality services at the forefront of our thinking. And we want you to be part of it. Our committee meetings are open to everyone to attend, or you can watch online. It's your town, so please be part of the conversation over the coming years.

Cllr Jon Orrell, Mayor of Weymouth 2024/25



Since Weymouth Town Council was established just five years ago we have achieved so much. From day one we took over and successfully ran: 3.5 miles of beach and the Promenade, 18 play areas, 33 open spaces and amenity areas, 9 cemeteries, 358 allotments, 10 public toilet buildings, 30 properties and assets, memorials, statues and monuments, 150 events and festivals, community development as well as all the back office work required to make all of that a success.

Since then, we have delivered a £1.4m project to redevelop Radipole Park and Gardens, given hundreds of thousands of pounds to local groups to support their projects, planted over 5,000 trees, launched an ambitious project to make Tumbledown Farm (adjacent to Radipole Bridge) a hub of support for our vulnerable residents in particular but not exclusively. A new building is being completed this Autumn at Tumbledown which includes a classroom, kitchen and new toilets making it much more accessible. We have also carried out climate change work to reduce our carbon footprint and address the ecological emergency we declared in 2019.

As a Council we consistently provide high quality services and amenities like; the multi award winning, Blue-Flag central beach, Green Flag winning parks, highly valued new play areas and skate parks, and major events like the Coronation concert on the beach and Armed Forces weekend. We do all this with top rated and sound financial and business management to ensure we are a lean and efficient team focussed on making Weymouth the best it can be. We recognise that we can't do that alone and so we are always encouraging working with our partners to support them in their work e.g. Dorset Council, Dorset Police, We Are Weymouth, and the hundreds of voluntary groups across the town – from Wyke Regis to Sutton Poyntz, and from Melcombe Regis to Upwey.

I feel incredibly lucky to represent such diverse and energetic communities. There is always something happening and someone who wants to work with us. From those of you who run local groups or want to stand for election, to those of you who help run our major attractions like the Nothe Fort and recreational facilities, and of course those who keep our communities thriving – from bus drivers to refuse collectors, from healthcare professionals to teachers, from shop workers to artists – everyone in our community has a part they can play and Councillors are honoured to be a part of that. We are also delighted to have such a committed and enthusiastic set of staff working with us in support of our fantastic town.

Cllr David Harris, Leader of Weymouth Town Council 2020-2025

**Our priorities are to make Weymouth:**

- A town to be proud of, that looks clean and attractive and has something for everyone
- An aspirational town where people have the opportunities to improve, learn, and earn
- An accessible town where you can access services and amenities regardless of ability, age, or need
- A prosperous town where year round events and activities bring in visitors and increase economic opportunities
- A green town that reduces its carbon footprint year on year and seeks to protect nature

**We will achieve the priorities above by:**

- Increasing promotion and information sharing
- Innovating and being brave in developing our services and new projects
- Being open to taking on new services and joint working opportunities
- Encouraging our partners to support our goals where we are not the delivery organisation.
- Managing our staff, resources, finances, and assets responsibly and transparently

We want you to have a clear understanding of what we are trying to achieve, how we intend to do that, and how you can speak to us about our work.

This Strategy sets out what the Council can achieve rather than seeks to influence others on issues that are not directly under our control. This document will be reviewed on an annual basis and updates on achievements will be reported through the Council’s reporting process, and also annually at the Council’s Annual Town Assembly held in the spring each year.

This Strategy sets the scene and over-arching priorities for our service strategies, plans, and policies. These include our Greenspaces Strategy, Seafront Strategy, Asset Management Plan, Biodiversity Policy, and Consultation and Engagement Policy. You can find our key documents here:

<https://www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk/key-documents>



## **Weymouth Town Council – our story so far:**

Weymouth Town Council was founded on 1 April 2019 as part of the local government reorganisation process that also created Dorset Council from the numerous Boroughs and District Councils, and Dorset County Council.

Weymouth Town Council provides its residents and visitors with a wide range of services including play areas, public toilets, the beach and beach attractions, allotments, cemeteries, gardens, events, support for voluntary groups, and community grants.

The Council's budget in 24/25 is £4.2m with £3.2 million coming from the precept. The precept is the proportion of your Council Tax that comes to the Town Council. This is about £141 a year for the average house in Weymouth. Weymouth Town Council is proud to have reduced its portion of the Council Tax over the last five years, without reducing services. We've done this through reviewing how we work, being more efficient, and concentrating on our core services.

This corporate strategy is not set in stone and will change and evolve to meet the town's changing and evolving needs.

### **Our Highlights last year include:**

- ✓ A £1.4m revamp of Radipole Park and Gardens
- ✓ Impressive events programme including a free Coronation concert on the beach, fireworks, funfairs, sports, environmental, and community events.
- ✓ £70,000 improving our town's play areas
- ✓ Granted over £50,000 in community grants, plus £10,000 in "Green" grants
- ✓ Planted over 1,458 trees and hedging across the town, plus 1,300 at Tumbledown
- ✓ Gained a £100,000 grant to develop work at Tumbledown Farm
- ✓ Ran the first "Love Your Weymouth" Festival
- ✓ Gained a clear internal and external audit for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row so you can be confident we are well run
- ✓ Provided Christmas lights and trees in the town centre and along the Promenade

- ✓ Gained two green flags for our parks
- ✓ So many awards for the beach that we can't keep track of them all – blue flag, Seaside award, best beach in Britain (Sunday Times), 19<sup>th</sup> best beach in Europe (Trip Advisor)
- ✓ Launched the "Weymouth Trails" website for local walks
- ✓ Published the new Seafront Strategy after lots of public consultation
- ✓ Expanded the toy library and accessible matting at the beach
- ✓ Added two more electric vehicles to our fleet to reduce our fossil fuel usage
- ✓ Agreed the "Motion for the Ocean" adding ocean recovery to our Climate and Ecological Emergency Plan
- ✓ Supported over 30 community groups to develop their skills with our free community networking sessions
- ✓ Grew 52,000 shrubs and flowers ourselves reducing money spent on keeping our town beautiful, we even supplied other Councils with our healthy plants
- ✓ Worked with our wonderful partners on projects to make the most of our town – Dorset Council, Dorset Police, Community Groups, Portland Town Council, We Are Weymouth, etc like Christmas celebrations, Community safety, road crossings, and events in our parks and gardens.

These are just some of the highlights of what the Council has achieved over the past year alone. The result of these achievements is that the residents of Weymouth are benefiting from the provision of quality-of-life services that no other organisation would provide for them if Weymouth Town Council did not exist. The business communities (and so job and local prosperity) also benefit as we work with our partners to bring people into Weymouth to visit our wonderful and vibrant town.

This Corporate Strategy for 2024 to 2029 will help to ensure the continuation of this stunning track record of achievement and service delivery that contributes to making our communities the very best they can be for all residents, businesses and visitors to the town.

# Welcome to Wonderful Weymouth

Weymouth was first mentioned in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and by 1252 was a thriving seaport and Charter Town. However, archaeological digs and research have shown the area was busy even during Roman times and the local hillforts point to a history stretching as far back as the Iron Age, about 1,000 BC. Weymouth (south harbour) and the neighbouring town of Melcombe Regis (north harbour) were united in 1571 by Queen Elizabeth I into the Weymouth area we know and love today. Now, about 54,000 people live in the area covered by Weymouth Town Council which stretches from Wyke in the south to Sutton Poyntz in the north, and from Preston in the east to Upwey in the west.

Weymouth was a popular seaside destination whose reputation and fame was catapulted across Europe by George III's regular stays in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. With the advent of the railways in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, it became a destination of choice for families, groups, couples and monarchs alike! Our history and recognition continued to develop in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as we played our part in WW1 as a convalescence base for over 120,000 ANZAC troops and in WW2 where over 500,000 troops passed through the port, including those on their way to the D-Day landings. We have more listed buildings than any other town in our iconic Georgian seafront, an impressive Victorian Fort, a beautiful, safe beach, indoor skate park, restaurants for all tastes and budgets, countryside walks, an internationally renowned RSPB reserve, a Roman villa, a working harbour, theatres, events and festivals all year, and some of the most stunning views along the whole of the south coast.

We were proud to showcase the town across the world in 2012 when the Olympics recognised Weymouth & Portland as the best place in the UK to hold its sailing events. The tradition of a safe, welcoming and quality venue is a tradition we are proud to uphold. Weymouth is consistently recognised as one of the top seaside destinations in the UK, for both holidays and quality of life for residents. We are committed to retaining our blue and green flags which prove the quality of our beaches and greenspaces.

Weymouth has excellent transport links with direct train access to London and Bristol in under three hours. There are also road links that offer beautiful coastal drives, as well as quick access to Poole, Bournemouth and Exeter. Nearby airports include Bristol, Bournemouth, Exeter and Southampton. In an average year tourism in Weymouth generates 1.6 million staying visitor nights and 2.1 million day visits, adding millions of pounds to the local economy. As well as tourism, Weymouth is an important business hub for wholesale, retail, wellbeing, public administration, construction and entertainment.





# How Weymouth Town Council works for you

Weymouth Town Council was established in April 2019 following the re-organisation of Local Government arrangements for Dorset. When it was created it became one of the largest Town Councils in the country.

Originally set up with 29 Councillors and 35 staff, The Council now comprises 25 Councillors and up to 80 staff in the summer months.

Councillors are elected representatives that are democratically voted for by residents (typically) every four years. The next elections are due in May 2029. For the Town Council Weymouth is divided into 11 wards that have the following numbers of elected representatives:

Littlemoor	2 Councillors
Lodmoor	2 Councillors
Melcombe Regis	2 Councillors
Preston	3 Councillors
Radipole and Southill	2 Councillors
Rodwell	2 Councillors
Upwey & Broadwey	3 Councillors
Westham East	2 Councillors
Westham West	3 Councillors
Wyke North	2 Councillors
Wyke South	2 Councillors

The Council has a busy Youth Council who carry out projects in the town. If you'd like to join them please let us know! Our contact details are on the last page of this document.

The elected Council is the body that makes decisions, and they do this at open public meetings of the Full Council and Committees. Committees are set up to share the workload and have delegated authority from the Full Council to make decisions on specific areas.

The Council itself is chaired by the Town Mayor who typically serves one year of office and is elected from the Council itself and a Leader of the Council who co-ordinates the strategic direction and supports the Town Clerk in their leadership role.

The Council has four main Committees that look after the Council's services, projects, and much of the day to day business of the Council. These are Finance and Governance, Environment and Services, Planning and Licensing (Advisory), and Human Resources.

The Council is funded by income it generates and by the residents of Weymouth through what is known as a precept on the council tax charge. The 2024/25 budget set a total precept of £3.2m which is just £11.78 a month for the average home in Weymouth. There are eight Town Councils that charge more than this in Dorset.

The Council's total expenditure for 2024/25 is budgeted to be £4.2m. The Council also has an allocated capital reserve to undertake agreed projects and improvements, and a general

reserve in line with Government guidelines. Further information is available via the Council's website at [www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk).

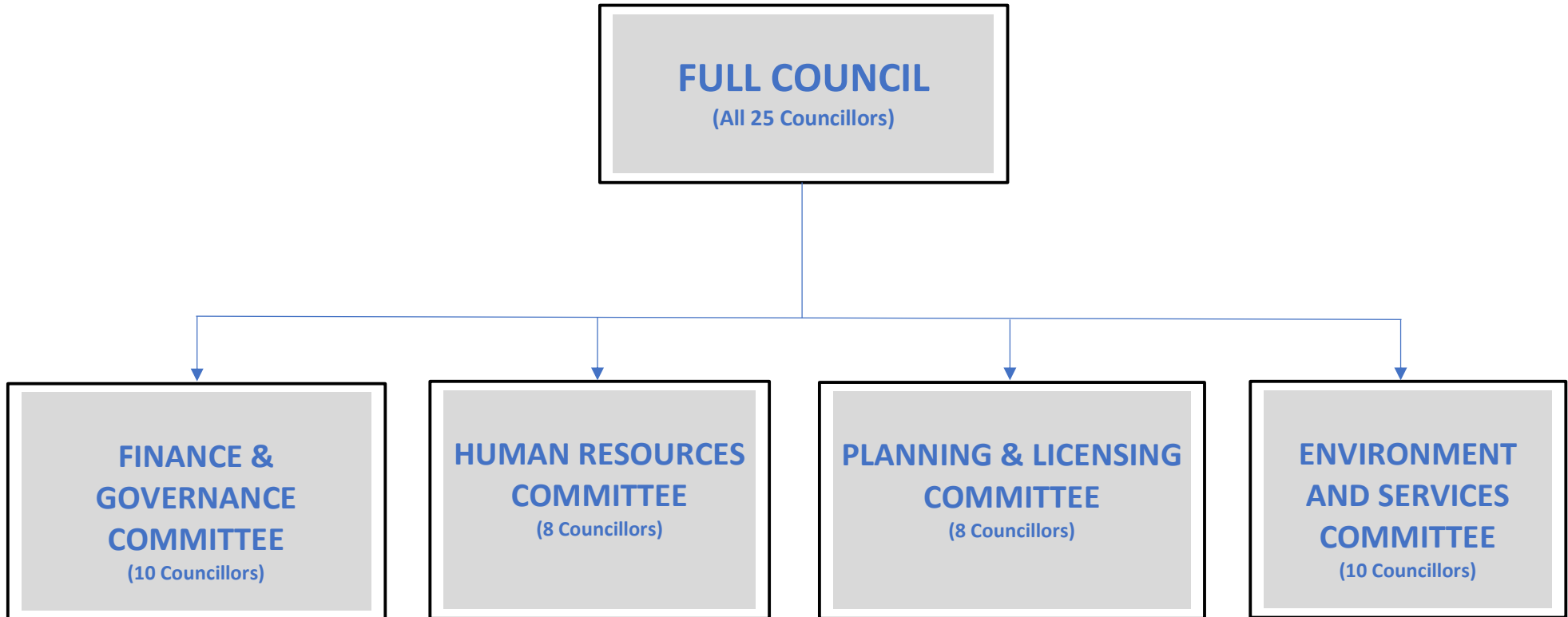
The Council generates about £1m each year itself to help pay for services for resident and visitors, and to help keep the precept as low as it can. The majority of income comes from the beach (deckchairs, windbreaks, sunbeds etc) the two cafes that the Council runs, and various leases and licenses such as other cafes in the town, garages, and attractions on the beach.

Supporting the Council is a workforce of approximately 50 permanent members of staff with additional staff in the summer months. Our staff are employed to deliver services and ensure that the Council runs smoothly and legally. Additionally, the Council employs a range of external support services including legal and HR.

The Town Clerk is supported by a Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) who is responsible for business support, finance and communications, and an Assistant Town Clerk who is responsible for operations, the resort and greenspaces (including allotments, cemeteries, parks, gardens, and play areas.)

A copy of the Council's departmental service and functions as well as Committee and staffing structures are set in the following pages.

## Weymouth Town Council – Committee Structure:



Members of the public are welcome to attend any of the Full Council or Committees meetings to ask questions or just watch.

You can also watch our meeting on our YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/@WeymouthWTC](https://www.youtube.com/@WeymouthWTC)

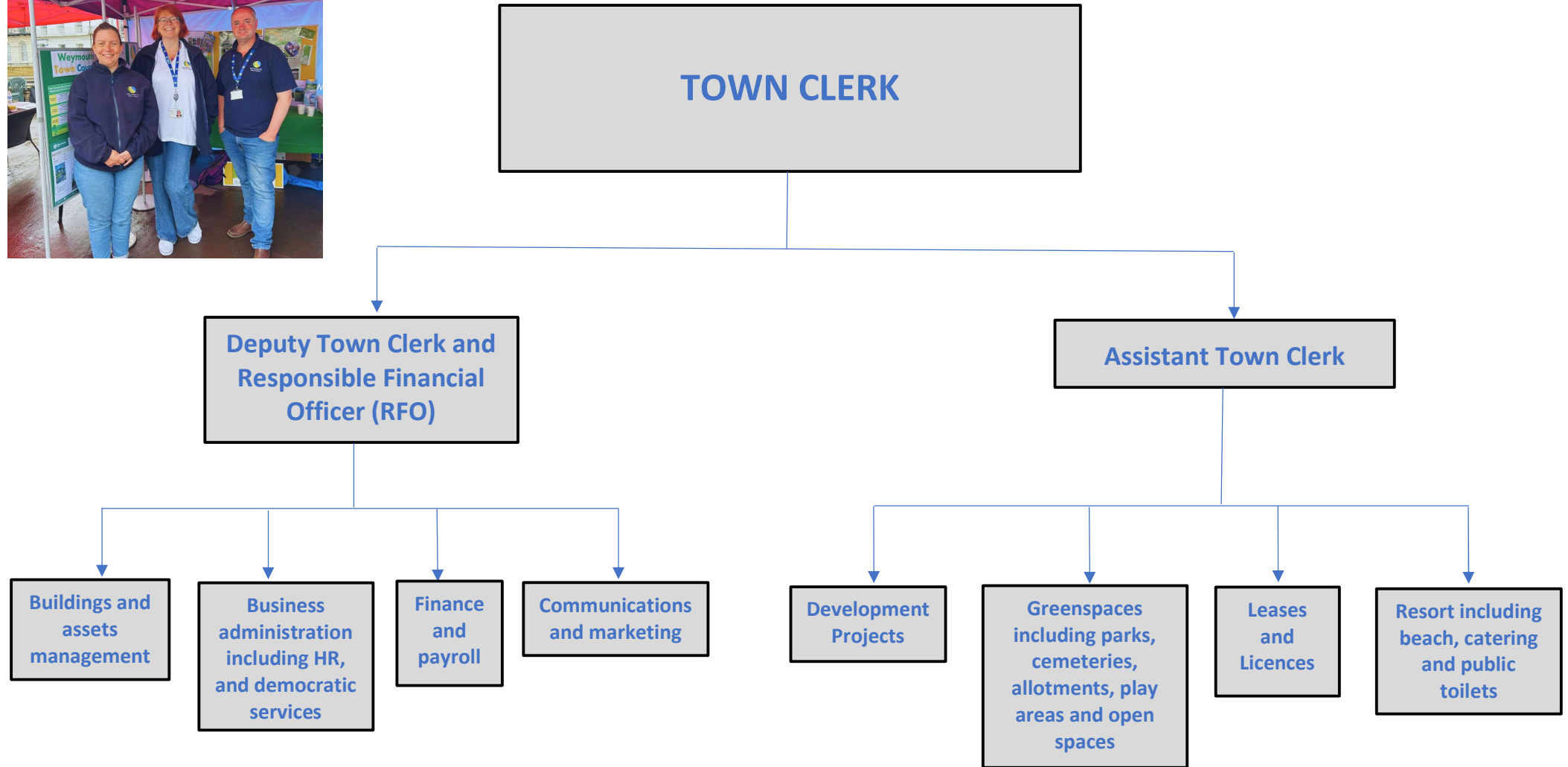
Full details of upcoming meetings can be found at [www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk/committees](http://www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk/committees)

# Weymouth Town Council Functions, Services & Responsibilities:

<b>Finance &amp; Business Support</b>	<b>Operations</b>	<b>Parks &amp; Open Spaces</b>
Mayoral Enquiries and Diary	The Beach & Promenade	Allotments
Civic events	Public toilets	Cemetery & Bereavement Services
Councillor support	Beach hires – deckchairs etc	Children’s Play Areas
Democratic and Committee Management	Beach taps and showers	Outdoor gyms, Parkour, and skate parks
Council Finances	Supporting beach concessions	Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds
Internal and External Audit	Catering	Open Spaces & Woodlands
HR support for staff	Events and festivals	Volunteers, Friends Groups & Events
Recruitment	Leases and Licences	Tree care
Data protection	Community Development	Plant Nursery and propagation
Information requests	Statues, Monuments & Memorials	
Communications and Media		
Marketing and promotions		
Customer Service		
Community Grants		
Property & Assets		

NOTE: This is an overview only, please contact the Council should you have any queries regarding the detailed areas of responsibility.

# Weymouth Town Council – Senior Leadership Team



# Weymouth Town Council's Strategy 2024 - 2029



# How to comment on this document and contact the Council:

**Weymouth Town Council welcomes feedback on its Corporate Strategy from all sections of the community.**

Views about the work of the Council are welcomed as are suggestions for further service developments and other issues that are important for the town that the Council can have an impact on. Comments can be made by writing to:

Weymouth Town Council  
The New Town Hall,  
Commercial Road,  
Weymouth,  
Dorset,  
DT4 8NG

Or by emailing: [office@weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:office@weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk)

Or by telephoning: 01305 239839

Or by visiting the Council's Facebook page and Twitter accounts

Or by using the contact form on the Council's website

A full copy of this document can be downloaded from the Council's website: [www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk)

