

TOWN COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2019-24

11 November 2019

1. VISION

- The Town Council will, working with other authorities and organisations, provide, invest in and improve services and facilities for residents and visitors in order to support and improve the economic, environmental, health and social wellbeing of the town.

2. CORE VALUES

- Ferndown Town Council will endeavour to:
- Deliver services to the highest quality in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and value for money.
- Conduct business openly and democratically consulting widely with parishioners and interested parties.
- Comply with its Code of Conduct and the Nolan Principles in public life.
- Obtain from contractors and partners the best possible service value whether from statutory bodies or sub-contracted services.
- Consult with local people regarding the provision of new services and facilities.
- Act in the best interests of local people in making representations to:
 - Dorset Council.
 - Outside Agencies.
 - Central Government.
 - Other appropriate private or public sector groups.
- Operate to the letter and in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 and in the exercise of all its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.

3. EFFICIENCY AND VALUE FOR MONEY

- In order to ensure value for money is achieved from expenditure:
- The Town Council will keep all Town Council services under review.

- The Town Council will compare its services with similar organisations.
- Services and facilities will be provided by the most efficient and effective methods.
- Public buildings within Ferndown will be assessed under the Localism Act to ascertain which authority or body should manage them to the best advantage of the ratepayer.

4. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- The Town Council will:
- Regularly review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- Keep its staffing structure under review to meet business needs.
- Work to an appropriate complaints' procedure for use by the public.
- Work to and regularly review an appropriate Health and Safety Policy that complies with the relevant legislation.
- Preference will be given to procurement of goods and services from locally based suppliers subject to best value principles.

- The Town Council will endeavour at all times to enhance the economic wellbeing of the town and its inhabitants and to support the local economy.

- The Town Council will work to the letter and in the spirit of the Freedom of Information Act and conduct business in public, except where there are genuine reasons where confidentiality is in the public interest.

- The Town Council will consult with residents and businesses in the town on its services.

- The Town Council will aim to feed into strategies prepared Dorset Council and other partner organisations.

- The Town Council will seek to establish positive partnerships with public, private and voluntary bodies to provide the best outcomes for the town.

5. RESOURCES

- The Town Council will:
- Seek, subject to agreed budgets, to maximise income derived from all sources.
- Annually review its precept and adjust according to the town's needs.

- Prepare its accounts to comply with Local Government and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 taking guidance and advice from the appointed internal and external auditor.
- Regularly review public liability and indemnity insurance values.
- Ensure best value is obtained from contracts.
- The Town Council will aim to maintain at least three months of financial reserves as recommended. In the event that reserves are required for a compelling reason the Town Council will replenish those reserves in subsequent years.
- The Town Council recognises that excellent staff are its greatest asset and will endeavour to attract and retain staff of a high calibre.
- The Town Council is committed to only putting in place facilities which it can afford to maintain. A percentage of revenue funding will be placed in the budget each year for planned maintenance of Town Council premises and facilities.

6. GRANTS

- The Town Council will, subject to budget being available, support local voluntary organisations where deemed appropriate via the grant system.
- Grant application forms will be made continually available throughout the year with decisions normally made at Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings.
- The Town Council will seek to raise public awareness of the availability of grants.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES

- The Town Council will be a good employer and all employees of the Town Council are entitled to:
 - Equal Opportunities.
 - A Contract of Employment and Job Description, each subject to terms and conditions as determined by current employment legislation.
 - Training and development within staff development plans to meet business requirements.
 - Recognition in respect of staff pay and grades with reference to the annual review process.
- The Town Council will maintain an Employee Handbook which will be

provided to each employee clearly setting out terms and conditions of employment.

- Maintain grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- The Town Council will work to the letter and in the spirit of equality and health and safety legislation. It will strive to ensure good safety practices at all its locations.

8. OPENNESS AND COMMUNICATION

- The Town Council will:
- Encourage public participation and make known the availability of a public speaking session prior to all Town Council and committee meetings.
- Hold an Annual Town Meeting in April / May each year enabling an open forum for residents to voice any concerns or raise any subject affecting Ferndown.
- Use all appropriate means including an annual report / newsletter, website and noticeboards to inform residents of the Town Council's activities.
- Ensure openness and consultation on any significant issues affecting the social or economic wellbeing of its inhabitants.

9. PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- **Allotments**

The Town Council will maintain allotments in Ferndown in partnership with the Allotments Association.

- **Bus Shelters**

The Town Council will maintain and improve its bus shelters.

- **Notice Boards**

The Town Council will maintain and provide community notice boards in key locations throughout the town as a means for publicising Town Council and community facilities and activities.

- **Play Areas and Recreation Grounds**

The Town Council will maintain to a high standard existing play areas. A programme of replacement of equipment will be developed to ensure play areas are updated to meet community needs.

- **Wheelpark**

The Town Council will continue to maintain and develop the Wheelpark to meet the needs of its users.

- **Website**

The Town Council will maintain its website www.ferndown.gov.uk.

10. LAW AND ORDER

- The Town Council will work closely with the police, resident groups, the business community and other bodies to improve community safety throughout the town (Crime and Disorder Act s.17).

11. HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE

- The Town Council will seek to protect the heritage assets of the town
- The Town Council will continue to support and encourage the provision of facilities for arts and culture.
- The Town Council will continue to provide a display of Christmas lights in the town to assist the economic health of the town centre and appropriate areas.

12. PLANNING

- The Town Council will fully consider local opinion when presenting recommendations to Dorset Council regarding planning and applications and consultations. Key considerations when responding to planning consultations will normally include:
 - To encourage local shopping areas to become vibrant retail sites.
 - To oppose additional care homes.
 - To request that, when a tree is felled, a replacement is planted.
 - To support the redevelopment of the town centre in line with the Town Centre Strategy
 - To support any improvement to the visual impact of access routes into town.
 - To ensure that any new development is supported by adequate

infrastructure.

- The Town Council will aim to develop a neighbourhood plan under the Localism Act 2011 for all or part of the town in order to support its strategic aims and objectives once the position of the Dorset Council Local Plan has been realised. The required resources will be provided to achieve this.
- **Town Centre and Retail**
- The Town Council believes that the future of the town centre is as a retail and leisure destination. The Town Council will support a regular market.
- Working with local organisations, the Town Council will seek to support and encourage local people into the town centre and to more closely link town centre shopping with leisure.
- To actively prioritise and drive forward the town centre regeneration program.
- To investigate with a view to provide electric vehicle charging points.
- To provide adequate facilities for non-motorised transport.

13. CIVIC AND CEREMONIAL

- The Town Council will maintain the civic traditions of the Mayoralty. The Town Mayor will chair meetings of the Town Council and act as the town's ceremonial head.

14. YOUTH PROVISION

- The Town Council will maintain and support the Youth Centre in partnership with the various organisations to support the provision of necessary youth services in the town.

15. ENVIRONMENT

- The Town Council will minimize its own carbon footprint and meet the biodiversity duty of public authorities under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

16. KING GEORGES FIELDS CHARITY

- The Town Council will continue to act as Sole Trustee to King Georges Fields Charity ensuring that the Charity meets its aims and is managed efficiently and effectively.
- Support the plastic free initiative.

- To promote a greater commitment to recycling in Ferndown.
- To reduce litter to enable a cleaner environment.
- To continue to work with other councils and agencies to reduce speed limits through the Town, reduce the volume of traffic and reduce the number of Heavy Goods Vehicles using Ringwood Road and the surrounding roads.