

Dorset Council, West Purbeck, February 2020 Report

Second Homes

I understand the article last month may not have been clear enough. Apologies if that was the case. Laura and I have pushed for the adoption of an overarching policy in our new local plan which prevents housing in new developments being used as second homes. Laura and I have recently managed to persuade the Planning Committee to overturn the Officers recommendations to get rid of this requirement to prevent new houses being used as second homes for a development in Lulworth. We now await the results of the Inspectors review of our Local Plan to see whether he will support this being a key policy in our Local Plan for all new developments.

Budget

Each year, the Council and other local authorities - such as the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service and Dorset Police - review their financial plans and budget assumptions and plan by how much they need to increase their council tax. There are many factors involved in building the budgets for these organisations – including increases in prices for the services they buy-in, pay inflation, cost of delivering any new requirements driven by Government and increases in the fees and charges they earn.

In balancing their budgets (a legal requirement that expenditure must broadly balance with annual income) these authorities will set a budget for income from council tax. However, council tax isn't simply "the balancing figure" in the authority's budget, there are rules set out in each Local Government Finance Settlement covering maximum allowable increases in council tax.

Local authorities cannot increase their council tax by more than a set amount without triggering the need for a local referendum of council tax payers to see if they are in favour of it. For 2020/21, this referendum limit is 2% and Government is also enabling Councils to charge a further 2% for the Adult Social Care Precept. For Dorset Council, the proposal Cabinet is therefore currently considering is an annual increase for a Band D property from £1,629.75 to £1,694.79, the equivalent of £1.25 per week. Thus, the overall increase is planned to be around 4%, although this will be the subject of a formal vote at full Council on February 18th.

As well as increasing council tax, the council has also made significant efficiencies and cost reductions in other areas of its business. All of these are set out in the Cabinet and Council reports which are available at Dorset 4 You website. I will issue a fuller report in the next months article subject to the outcome of the forthcoming Council meeting.

Minerals

Dorset Council and BCP Council as Mineral and Waste Planning Authorities adopted the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Mineral Sites Plan 2019 and the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019 on 31st December 2019.

Both the Waste Plan and the Mineral Sites Plan were examined by independent Planning Inspectors and both were found sound, subject to a number of modifications being made. The adopted Mineral Sites Plan

and Waste Plan incorporate the Inspectors' recommended modifications. The Schedules of Modifications along with the Inspectors' reports can be seen at: www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/waste-plan or at: www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/mineral-sites-plan

We are now in a six-week challenge period, which began at the time of adoption, during which anyone who considers they have been aggrieved by the adoption of the Plan may seek to mount a legal challenge, on specific grounds, in the High Court. This will finish mid-February.

The Mineral Sites Plan (along with the Minerals Strategy 2014) and the Waste Plan now form part of the statutory Development Plan for Dorset Council and BCP Council. The Dorset Minerals Plan 1999 and the Waste Plan 2006 are now replaced. The Plans identify sites for new quarries and waste management facilities to meet the needs of both authorities up to 2033 and, together with the Minerals Strategy, which will provide the policy basis for dealing with minerals and waste applications.

Copies of the Mineral Sites Plan and the Waste Plan, along with the relevant Adoption Statements and the Sustainability Appraisal reports, can be seen on the Dorset Council website at: www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/mineral-sites-plan or www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/waste-plan

For any further information please contact the Dorset Council Minerals and Waste Policy Team:

by email at: mwdf@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

or by telephone at: 01305 224675

Website: www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/waste-plan or www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/mineral-sites-plan

Surgery

We frequently and happily hold meetings with our constituents at a time and place that is mutually convenient to one or other of us. We will respond to any email or telephone request to meet which we will hold either at a local village hall, hostelry or at your home to suit you. Please ring or email us with the subject matter so that we can prepare ourselves. Peter's email address is peterwharf@hotmail.com telephone 07986600799 and Laura's is clrlaura.miller@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk telephone 07814 569563.

Peter Wharf & Laura Miller, Dorset Councillors for West Purbeck