



Shaftesbury Town Council



Annual Report 2016/17



Table of Contents

MAYOR'S REPORT – COUNCILLOR JOHN LEWER.....	3
GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN: COUNCILLOR LESTER TAYLOR.....	4
PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN: COUNCILLOR PIERS BROWN.....	5
RECREATION, OPEN SPACES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN: COUNCILLOR GEORGE HALL.....	7
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN: COUNCILLOR ANDY PERKINS.....	8
COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE.....	10
2017/18 BUDGET.....	11
CALENDAR OF MEETINGS.....	12
YOUR TOWN COUNCILLORS.....	13

Shaftesbury Town Council will work conscientiously with the community to define and provide best value, high quality services and facilities, ensuring that Shaftesbury is a 21st Century Town that respects its heritage and upholds its value making it a great place to live, work, plan and visit

COPIES OF MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE BY REQUEST FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES OR CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEBSITE AT: shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk

Office opening hours are Monday–Thursday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm; Friday 9:00am to 1:00pm.

MAYOR'S REPORT – COUNCILLOR JOHN LEWER

This has been a busy and important year for the Town Mayor. Councillor Richard Tippins held the position until January 2017, when Councillor John Lewer was elected for the remainder of the Municipal Year. As our First Citizen, the Mayor's civic duties, which total around 40, have been welcome and wide-ranging with many visits to the town's community, voluntary and charity groups, shops and businesses as well invitations to represent Shaftesbury at various events across Dorset and beyond.



The Town Mayor is also Chairman of the Council and responsible for chairing the Full Town Council which has met twelve times during the year.

John writes;

We started the Municipal Year with Cllr Richard Tippins as Mayor. Regrettably, by November, the majority of the Council had lost confidence in his commitment to the Town's best interests, and in January he resigned from the Council, together with Cllrs Karen Tippins and Jo Francis. On behalf of the present Council I would like to thank all three for their efforts since 2015.

I was honoured to be elected Mayor for the remainder of the year. It has been a busy time for all of us, with a number of major issues to attend to.

The ongoing consultation about the future of the Westminster Memorial Hospital was the first. We supported SoBs (Save Our Beds) in their campaign to get as many questionnaires returned as possible. The final number from Shaftesbury was well over 5000, about a third of the total for the whole of Dorset. We now await the analysis of the responses.

We have also begun a consultation of our own, to determine the public's aspirations for a substantial Open Space near Mampitts Square in the Maltings, which will be delivered as part of the final phase of the Persimmon development. For the next 3 months we will be seeking suggestions (not just from the Maltings, but from anyone in Shaftesbury), and in August we will begin analysing the information in readiness for the next stage.

Our time of uncertainty regarding the Town Clerk came to an end on 7th March, when Mrs Claire Commons was promoted to that role. Then, after the election on 9th March, we welcomed three new Councillors, Jeanne Loader, Luke Kirton and Tim Cook (Tim has previously been a Shaftesbury Councillor and Mayor).

Meanwhile, we are planning our strategy for the future, and have adopted (in principle) a Strategic Five-Year Plan. At the time of writing, we are finalising the priority we attach to our various major projects, including such items as improvements to the Swimming Pool, and various aspects of the Town Centre, such as parking and traffic management. We are also preparing for the likely conversion of Dorset to a Unitary Authority, and the consequent opportunities and threats it may bring. In particular, we are seeking to re-patriate assets which belonged to the Town before the advent of the District Council. Chief among these is the Cattle Market.

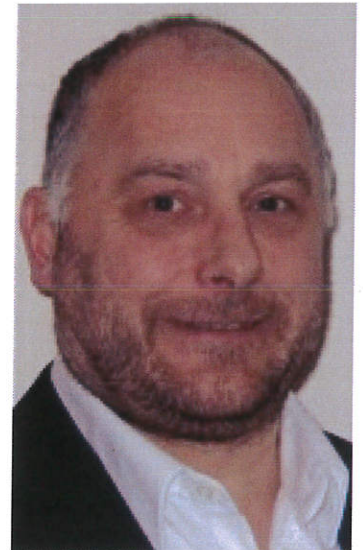
I would like to take this opportunity to thank the office staff for their unstinting efforts in what have been difficult times, and also my fellow 11 Councillors for their loyalty and hard work. We are all determined to do our utmost to deliver the best facilities and services for the Town. Equally important for us, is to remind or encourage the other tiers of local government to honour their commitments to Shaftesbury.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN: COUNCILLOR LESTER TAYLOR

The General Management Committee members are:

Councillor Lester Taylor [Chair]; Councillor Andy Perkins [Vice Chair]; Councillors Anthony Austin, Piers Brown, George Hall, Mark Jackson and Philip Proctor.

The General Management Committee advises the Council on its corporate policies, strategies and level of resources and to ensure that the financial status of the Council is maintained within agreed budgets having due regard to both revenue and capital expenditure. It holds authority for the financial planning of the Town Council and monitors performance of the Council's Committees and services. It gives careful consideration to present and future tax payers.



Lester writes;

The Council Tax you pay helps towards a variety of services. The largest proportion is for those provided by Dorset County Council - education, roads, car parks, bin collections, social services and planning right across the county. Then comes your contribution towards Dorset Police Authority and Devon & Dorset Fire & Rescue Services. A small proportion of your Council Tax, is for the running of your own Town Council which provides your most local services. The Town Council receives no direct grant from central government and no share of business rates.

During a tumultuous municipal year, the General Management Committee of the Town Council has seen many changes to the Full Council and senior staff. But the Committee has continued, unhindered, its work of

advising the Council on its corporate policies, strategies and level of resources and to ensure that the financial status of the Council is maintained within agreed budgets having due regard to both revenue and capital expenditure.

This means that much of the committee's work involves delving into the nitty-gritty of council finance and policy to ensure that the budget is spent on behalf of the taxpayers in the most effective and proper manner. It is this committee that scrutinises and approves many of the Town Council's payments.

In this last year, the GEM Committee has successfully steered many new policies through to adoption by the Full Council as well as recommending a whole raft of grants to help local organisations, which this year totalled some £33,500.

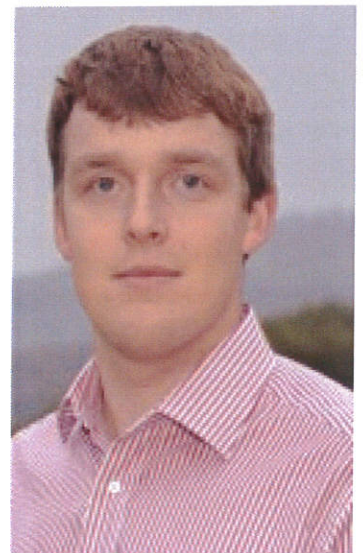
It was also the GEM Committee that recommended to Full Council that the precept be raised for 2017/18 year by three percent and that the community grant pot be reduced to £30,000 in order that the Council could meet its future obligations.

The Committee is now looking forward to working on its share of the Town Council's new five year strategic plan during this formative stage, as well as looking at how to more fully engage with the other local government tiers in Dorset, whether or not the new unitary authorities materialise.

PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN: COUNCILLOR PIERS BROWN

The Planning and Highways Committee members are:
Councillor Piers Brown [Chair]; Councillor George Hall [Vice Chair];
Councillors Anthony Austin, John Lewer, Philip Proctor and Lester Taylor

The Planning and Highways Committee is mindful of the historic nature of the town and the natural beauty of its surroundings. It seeks to preserve the heritage that has been entrusted to the people of Shaftesbury for the benefit of future generations. It gives careful consideration to all planning applications received in consultation with local planning and government guidance so that it might give a well informed and considered opinion to the Planning Authority. The Committee seeks to promote the conservation of the best of the historic built environment and the best possible design for any new development, including means of integration with the old town.



It's important to remember that the Town Council is a consultee on planning issues – decisions are made by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) – North Dorset District Council.

Piers writes;

Over the last 12 months Planning & Highways have been working to ensure that Shaftesbury Town Council has a productive working relationship with the local planning authority. We have commented on over 75 applications ensuring that a local voice is heard on every planning application in Shaftesbury. A big thank you to all the residents who came to see us when they felt strongly about an application.

Dorset County Council have conducted a lot of work on the major roads going through the town, such as Ivy Cross roundabout and Christy's Lane. The Town Council has started commissioning a road safety audit for the major roads to help the neighbourhood planning group to have the evidence to start planning for any future increases in traffic flow. There are a number of potholes around the town which the Town Council is working hard on trying to get DCC to repair as well as help them identify new ones as they appear.

Shaftesbury Town Council's long running project working with SSE to ensure that St James & Gold Hill has attractive street lights, has now been agreed and granted planning approval. The replacement street lights should be appearing in the near future. Shaftesbury is a beautiful old town that people come from far and wide to visit. Protecting and enhancing the history and character of the town is something The Town Council will continue to do.

Shaftesbury Town Council is working on a feasibility study to try and create a cycle path from Shaftesbury to Gillingham via Motcombe (Gillingham Town Council is working on the Gillingham end of this). A group of keen cyclists are advising the Council on this project. We have identified our preferred route and are currently working with landowners to gain permission to convert existing footpaths and bridleways. If you are interested in helping, please contact Barbara at the Town Council.

The Shaftesbury, Melbury Abbas & Cann Neighbourhood Development Plan is moving ahead quickly due to the fantastic energy and expertise of the numerous volunteers who are giving up their time to shape the future of Shaftesbury. Please see the separate report for more information. If you are interested in lending a hand, I know it will be more than welcome. Please contact Barbara at the Town Council.

I would like to take a moment to thank both Claire Commons, Town Clerk and Barbara Carter (who has just taken over as the Clerk for Planning and Highways Committee and is fitting into the role like a 'duck to water') for their help and tireless work - thank you both

RECREATION, OPEN SPACES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN: COUNCILLOR GEORGE HALL

The Recreation, Open Spaces & Environment Committee members are: Councillor George Hall [Chair]; Councillor Philip Proctor [Vice Chair]; Councillors Piers Brown, Mark Jackson, Lester Taylor and Lauren Todd



The Recreation, Open Spaces and Environment Committee is committed to the sensitive and careful management, maintenance and improvement of the town's open spaces, recreation and amenity areas and seeks to conserve the environmental heritage entrusted to the people of Shaftesbury for the benefit of future generations. It gives careful consideration to the strategic plans for the town's recreation, environment and amenities and is mindful of and will discharge its role with due consideration to operate within its budget and be financially accountable.

George writes;

I was voted in as ROSE Chairperson in January of this year, after the committee was successfully led by Karen Tippins before her resignation. I have been helped by Phil Proctor as my vice chairperson as I have commitments throughout the country with work.

It has been a busy year within the ROSE committee with a number of successful project completed and others well underway. At the moment our focus is on the Mampitts Square on the Eastern Development and asking what the residents of the area want with that space – is it a sensory garden, a playground, a football field or a maze? By the end of the consultation we will know!

The Swimming Pool was a huge success last year with record takings and record numbers of people enjoying the open air swimming pool and the new inflatable run. The recently installed Solar Panels have exceeded their predictions in the first year and this all goes to help keep our running costs down. I like to thank the Pool Manager Ryan ***** and his team for doing such a great job over the summer. Remember everyone that the pool opens again at the end of May.

Shaftesbury Town Council has been working towards being a bee-friendly town over the past 18 months by not using pesticides and encouraging the wild flowers and verges to grow in certain areas. We have taken over cutting most of the grass verges in the town and this has been so successful that the County Council have asked us to take on more of their verges next year. Recently we purchased a new mower for the grounds team and this will enable them to cut more grass quicker and with a better finish. The grounds staff have been understaffed this year and they have undertaken some great projects such as the Jubilee Steps, Tout Hill and

the works at Castle Hill, which have all improved the area substantially. A prime example of this work is the entrance to Tesco's from the Post Office area on Coppice Street which has been transformed this year.

The Ash Close Playground was recently commissioned and from what I hear it is extremely well used. The allotments have experienced a significant change around in numbers over the past 12 months with better management, as we have encouraged people to use their plots or leave them for others on the waiting list and this has improved the number of plots being used. We also found an ideal home for the Rifles Monument within the grounds of the Cemetery on Mampitts Lane.

Outside our internal team we have worked closely with a number of external organisations to improve the Recreation, Open Spaces and Environment in Shaftesbury. The Snowdrop Festival is now so successful that a world famous snow drop expert has described the Shaftesbury Snowdrop Festival as the best in the UK. We are working closely with the Tree Group and enabling them to have more say and impact on our decisions going forward. The Open Spaces Group in Shaftesbury are working closely with Heritage England on a long-term management plan of the Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Town.

All in all it has been a very busy and successful year for the Committee, but the work never stops and we have set ourselves some pretty challenging tasks over the next couple of years as part of our 5 year plan.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN: COUNCILLOR ANDY PERKINS

The Human Resources Committee members are:

Councillor Andy Perkins [Chair]; Councillor Anthony Austin [Vice Chair];
Councillors Philip Proctor, Lester Taylor and Lauren Todd

The Human Resources Committee will advise the Council on all human resources matters relating to the Council and its staff team. The Town Council employs eight staff who are all based in Shaftesbury. The staff are divided into three departments – office, grounds and swimming pool. The office staff are based in the Town Hall in Shaftesbury and consist of a Town Clerk, two full time and one part-time member of staff. The grounds team are based at Wincombe Business Park and consist of a Head groundsman, Senior Groundsman and 2 groundsmen. The swimming pool staff member is the Pool Manager and seasonal staff are engaged for the pool season from May to September each year.



Andy writes;

The last municipal year has been a very difficult year for the HR Committee.

- We have had a significant staffing issue to deal with, which we did with grace and professionalism.
- We instigated various recruitment processes to appoint a community focussed town clerk within a commercially challenging economic environment and some internal headwinds, which have been distracting and energy sapping for a group of committed volunteers.
- We have had significant changes within the committee – sadly Mr Tippins and Mrs Francis decided to seek fulfilment outside the HR committee and the Full Council – the HR Committee wishes them both every happiness.

So that is the down-side.

The upside is that we now have a great committee of committed and dedicated people; Shaftesbury-centric, driven, fair and community minded.

Harmony, rigor and focus now exist on the committee and I would like to thank the Committee members very much for all their work, patience, tolerance and hard work this year.

So, what have we achieved?

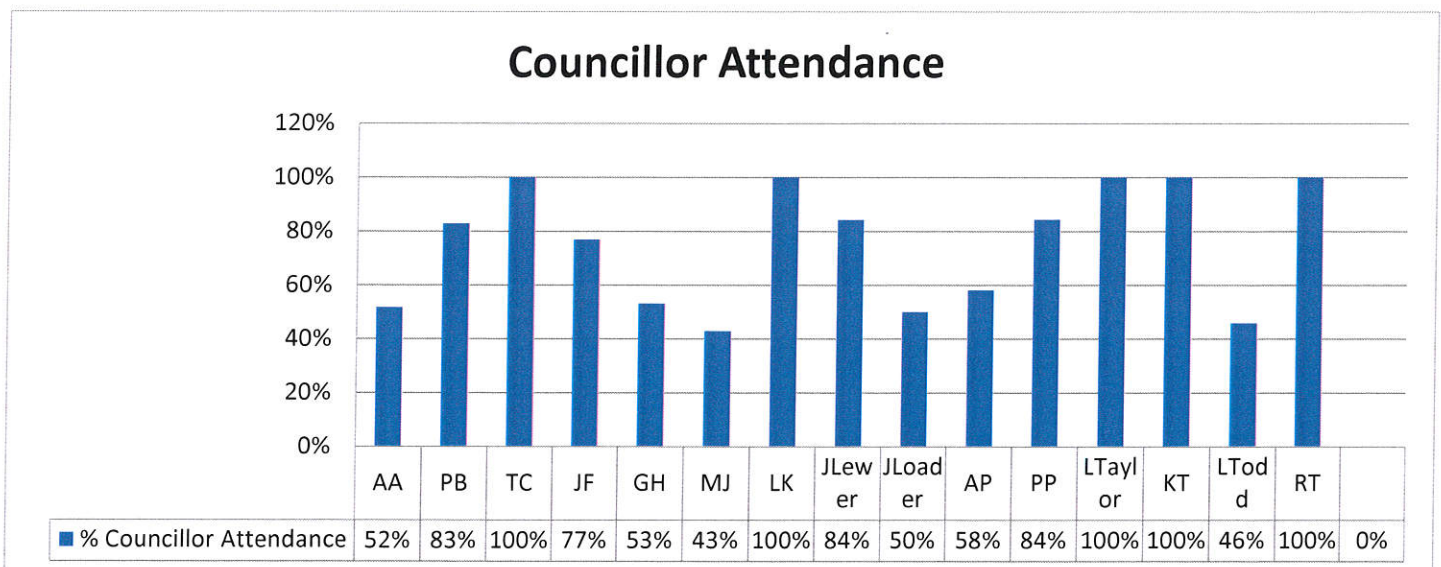
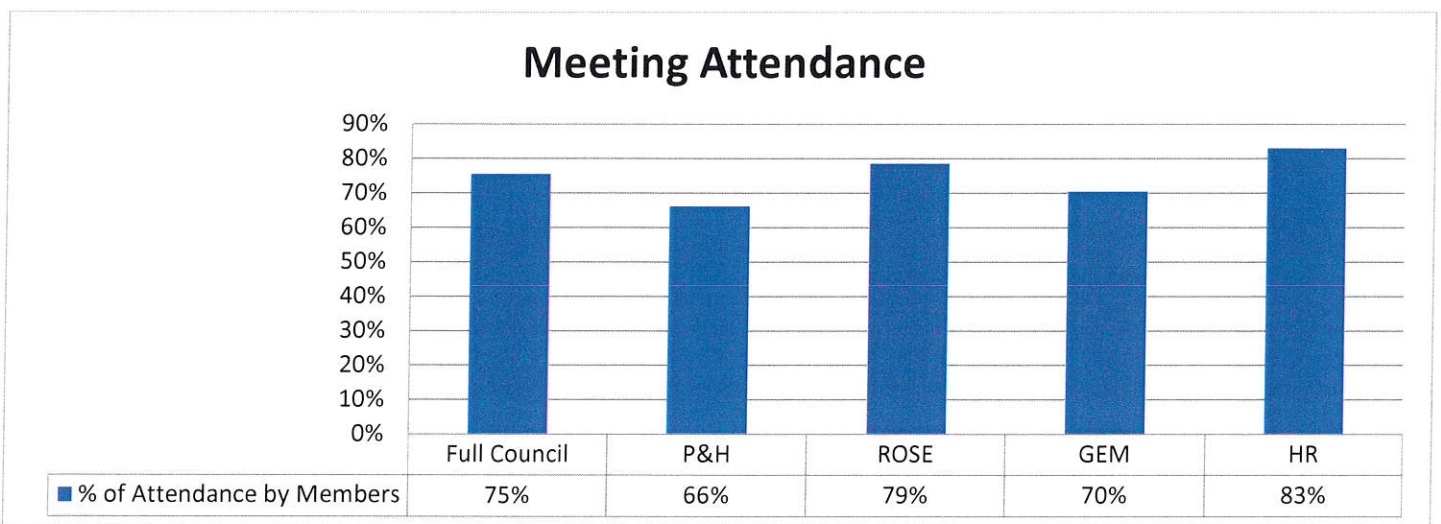
- Clear and transparent processes – on going but speedily in the right direction
- A highly enthusiastic and empowered administration team, effective and always willing to go the extra mile
- Very good and hardworking grounds staff who we value greatly
- And probably the 'best thing' a fantastic Town Clerk. Claire Commons has worked tirelessly for Shaftesbury Town Council for many years in often difficult and unnecessary circumstances. She has had to calmly handle situations which have surprised and disappointed me. Every time she has been professional and has focussed on the issue rather than the personalities. She has been a tribute to Shaftesbury Town Council and her selection as our new Town Clerk was the high spot of my year and I believe also the HR Committee and the wider Council.

So the year that started hard, ended very bright.

COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE

A councillor agrees to attend all meetings (reasonably possible) that he or she is summoned to. This may only require one meeting of full council a month. However, along with full council meetings, there are further committee meetings or working groups. Most meetings are held at 7pm in the evening but some committees and group representation may be during the day.

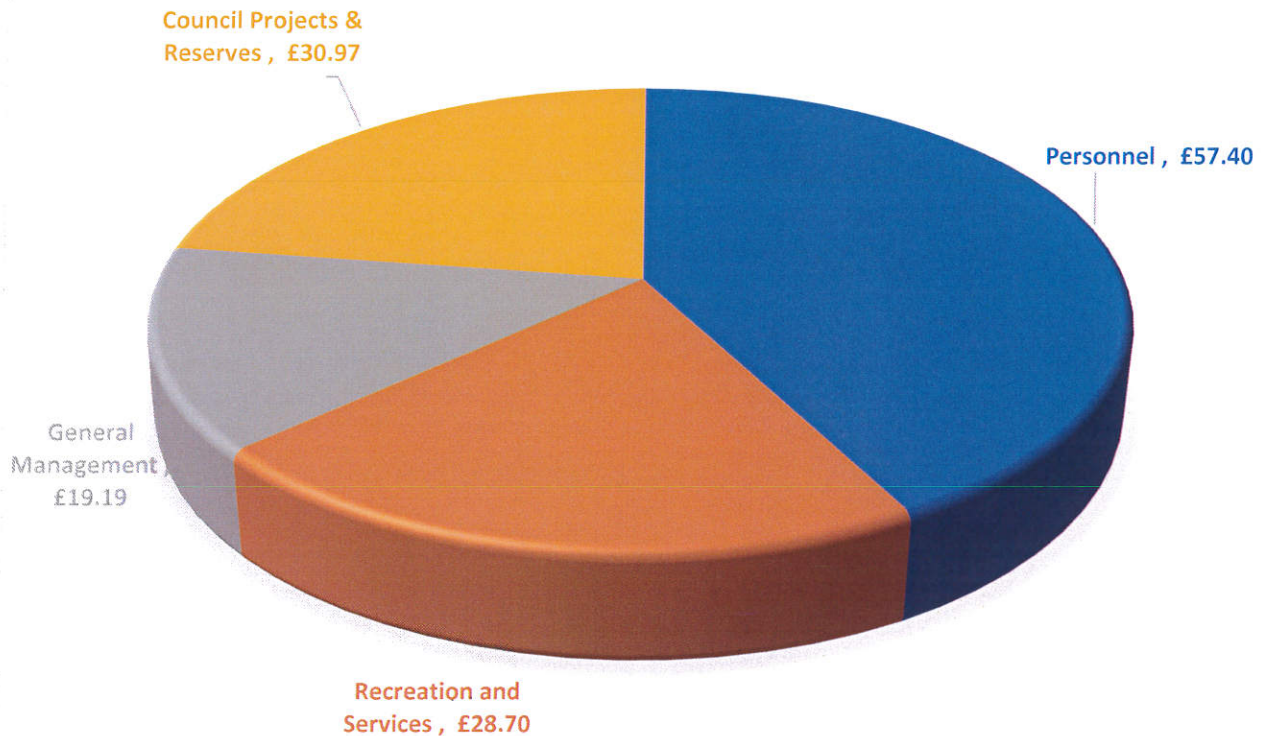
Below are the statistics for the attendance of Councillors at formal Council meetings for the 2016/17 municipal year



2017/18 BUDGET

The Council's precept for the financial year 2017/18 is £470,683, which is £154.48 per Band D equivalent household. An increase of £4.50 per Band D equivalent per annum or 3%.

WHAT IT COSTS YOU



Town Facilities £4.99 per year for:

Markets, Cemetery, Toilets, Hall Hire, Allotments, Swimming Pool, Parks, Play Areas and Street Cleaning

General Management £19.19 per year for:

Civic Costs, Legal and Professional fees, Books and Subscriptions, Insurance, Printing, Stationery, Postage, Office equipment including telephone and internet and Advertising

Council Projects and Reserves £34.97 per year for:

Street Furniture, some Grounds Equipment, Vehicles, Capital Expenditure for the Swimming Pool, New Allotments, Town Hall, CCTV and Replacement IT.

Grants £9.82 per year for:

Community Grant funding

Personnel £86.10 per year for:

Town Clerk, Officers, Grounds Staff and Swimming Pool staff

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

All meetings of the Council start at 7pm unless otherwise stated

MAY 2017

2 nd	General Management
16 th	Parish Meeting
23 rd	Annual Meeting
30 th	Planning & Highways

JUNE 2017

6 th	Recreation, Open Spaces & Environment
13 th	General Management
20 th	Mayor Making Ceremony
27 th	Full Council

JULY 2017

4 th	Planning & Highways
11 th	Recreation & Open Spaces
18 th	General Management

AUGUST 2017

18 th	Planning & Highways
------------------	---------------------

SEPTEMBER 2017

5 th	Full Council
12 th	Planning & Highways
19 th	Recreation, Open Spaces & Environment
26 th	General Management

OCTOBER 2017

3 rd	Parish and Budget Meeting
10 th	Full Council
17 th	Planning & Highways
24 th	Recreation, Open Spaces & Environment
31 st	General Management

NOVEMBER 2017

14 th	Full Council
21 st	Planning & Highways
28 th	Recreation, Open Spaces & Environment

DECEMBER 2017

12 th	Planning & Highways
------------------	---------------------

JANUARY 2018

2 nd	Planning & Highways (only if needed)
9 th	Recreation, Open Spaces & Environment
16 th	General Management
30 th	Full Council

FEBRUARY 2018

6 th	Planning & Highways
13 th	Recreation, Open Spaces & Environment
20 th	General Management

MARCH 2018

6 th	Full Council
13 th	Planning & Highways
20 th	Recreation, Open Spaces & Environment
27 th	General Management

APRIL 2018

10 th	Full Council
17 th	Parish Meeting
24 th	Planning & Highways

MAY 2018

1 st	Annual Meeting
-----------------	----------------

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Council and speak at the start of the meeting.

YOUR TOWN COUNCILLORS

<p>Cllr John Lewer Mayor and Chairman of the Council Shaftesbury West Ward johnlewer@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk 01747 852710 39 Layton Lane Shaftesbury SP7 8EY</p>			<p>Cllr Lester Taylor Deputy Mayor Shaftesbury East Ward lestertaylor@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk 07517 825897 Flat 1, Cann Lodge, Salisbury Road Shaftesbury SP7 8ER</p>
<p>Cllr Anthony Austin Shaftesbury West Ward anthonyaustin@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk 01305 260217 Gemma House, 6 North Street Charminster DT2 9QS</p>			<p>Cllr Piers Brown Shaftesbury West Ward piersbrown@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk 07511 156811 c/o Shaftesbury Town Council The Town Hall, High Street Shaftesbury SP7 8LY</p>
<p>Cllr Tim Cook Shaftesbury East Ward timcook@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk c/o 01747 852420 c/o Shaftesbury Town Council The Town Hall, High Street Shaftesbury SP7 8LY</p>			<p>Cllr George Hall Shaftesbury East Ward georgehall@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk 07713 100764 36 Yeatmans Close Shaftesbury SP7 8LU</p>
<p>Cllr Mark Jackson Shaftesbury East Ward markjackson@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk c/o 01747 852420 c/o Shaftesbury Town Council The Town Hall, High Street Shaftesbury SP7 8LY</p>			<p>Cllr Luke Kirton Shaftesbury East Ward lukekirton@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk c/o 01747 852420 16 Anstee Road Shaftesbury SP7 8GT</p>
<p>Cllr Jeanne Loader Shaftesbury West Ward jeanneloader@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk c/o 01747 852420 c/o Shaftesbury Town Council The Town Hall, High Street Shaftesbury SP7 8LY</p>			<p>Cllr Andy Perkins Shaftesbury West Ward andyperkins@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk 07768 876255 22 St James Street Shaftesbury SP7 8HE</p>
<p>Cllr Philip Proctor Shaftesbury West Ward philproctor@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk 01747 852628 Walled Garden, 15 Parsons Pool Shaftesbury SP7 8AL</p>			<p>Cllr Lauren Todd Shaftesbury East Ward laurentodd@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk 01747 853447 31 Blackmore Road Shaftesbury SP7 8RD</p>

<http://www.shaftesburytowncouncil.co.uk/who-we-are>