



DAPTC

Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils

ENABLING LOCAL COUNCILS IN DORSET TO ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE



Dorset Association of Parish
and Town Councils (DAPTC)

Enabling Local Councils to Achieve Excellence

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Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC)

Welcome

Welcome to the website of the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC). DAPTC is a not for profit membership organisation, representing, training and advising the 194 Local Councils (Town & Parish) and Parish Meetings in the Unitary Authority area of Dorset and the Unitary Authority of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. The Association is the first point of contact for the more than 1500 elected Town and Parish Councillors in Dorset who are working to improve their communities.

[CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK - ADVICE FOR PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS](#)

ANNUAL REPORT

2019 - 2020

Association Structure

President	John Parker
Vice Presidents	Cllr Janet Page Tony Gibb
Chairman	Cllr Alan Thacker
Vice Chairman	Cllr Jill Barry
Honorary Treasurer	Donna Yea
Auditor	Andrew Notley
Chief Executive	Hilary Trevorah
Executive Committee	
Central Area	Cllr Alan Thacker Cllr Jill Barry
Eastern Area	Cllr Penny Yeo Cllr Terry Cordery
Northern Area	Cllr Mike Jones
Purbeck Area	Cllr Peter Bowyer Cllr Sarah Jackson
Western Area	Cllr John Broom Cllr Peter Noel
Town & Larger Councils	Cllr Chris Turner Cllr Haydn White Cllr Lindsey Dedden Cllr Janet Page Cllr K D Johnson

Our Aim:

To support local councils in Dorset in achieving excellence.

In doing this, DAPTC provides advice, support, training and assistance to its member councils, many of whom employ only one official, the Clerk, usually on a part-time basis.

The advice and support offered by DAPTC is backed-up by the Association's links with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) to which it is affiliated.

Contents:

Joint Foreword from the President & Chairman
Chief Executive's Report
Treasurer's Report

Acknowledgements:

Our thanks go to all who have helped the Association during the year, particularly:

- Dorset Council
- Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group
- All members of the Executive Committee
- Councillors and Clerks of member councils who have contributed to the running of Area and Town and Larger Councils Committees.
- All Area Secretaries

Front Page Photograph: Screenshot of the DAPTC Website Home page.

Joint Foreword from the President and Chairman

Review of 2019/2020

To say this has been an eventful year for DAPTC would be a masterly understatement. Leaving aside the vast problems created by the Covid 19 pandemic and 'lockdown', we have lost one of our longest serving stalwarts in Alan Thacker, said goodbye to Hilary Trevorah, our Chief Executive of 5 years, and welcomed Neil Wedge as our new Chief Executive. All of this at a time when we are working to establish a good working relationship with our local government partners at the recently established new unitary councils.

Many of you will know Alan Thacker who, at the point of his untimely and sudden death, was our DAPTC Chair. Alan was a long-standing Parish and West Dorset District Councillor. He was Chair of Knightsford Parish Council (KPC) for approximately 22 years, long term member of the DAPTC Executive Committee as well as Chair of DAPTC Central Area Committee. He served as member for Broadmayne (later becoming Broadmayne and Crossways) ward on West Dorset District Council for 28 years. To quote one of his former colleagues from KPC Council – "What a lovely man so full of life and fun – much missed by us all"

Following the loss of Alan as our Chair, in accordance with our Constitution, his Vice-Chair, Cllr. Jill Crouch, took over as acting Chair. Jill is also a long-standing member of the DAPTC Executive Committee and has been Alan's Vice-Chair both at the Executive Committee and the DAPTC Central Area Committee. Jill is also co-author of this update.

At the end of March, our Chief Executive, Hilary Trevorah retired. Over the last two years of her service, Hilary had the unenviable task of steering us through the stormy waters of local government re-organisation. Our thanks go to Hilary for the excellent job she did of executing the Executive Committee's priorities of keeping the Association's profile high with the new principal councils and supporting the establishment of new parish and town councils. Her post retirement plans for a trip to China were scuppered by the Covid 19 pandemic but we wish her a long and happy retirement.

Hilary is replaced by Neil Wedge. Neil has a background in the commercial world but also has previous experience as a Town Clerk. We welcome Neil, hope he enjoys working with us and hope that together we can take DAPTC ever forwards.

The Covid 19 pandemic has changed the way we have to operate. It is quite clear that we and our councils will have to find new and innovative ways of conducting business. The word 'zoom' has taken on a whole new meaning - no longer associated with moving at speed or focussing in with a camera, but with virtual meetings. Neil and the DAPTC staff are working hard to help our councils cope with these inevitable changes.

As well as the changes to the way we communicate, our councils will be taking on additional responsibilities to help and support their communities. This, together with lack of income from council owned facilities, is likely to create some financial challenges in this coming year and possibly beyond.

During this past year, a major piece of work for DAPTC has been the start of the revision of our constitution. This is needed to bring it up to date and particularly to accommodate the changes in local government. This will be a lengthy process since changes to the constitution can only be made by the membership at the AGM. The plan is to amend the body of the constitution in the first phase, then review the role, definition and structure of our offices and committees in the second.

This year it has been decided to combine the Presidents Foreword with the Chair's report to give you less to read at a time when you are coming to terms with a lot of new issues.

In what will undoubtedly be a challenging year ahead we wish you good fortune and, as always, stand ready to advise, assist and enable you to achieve excellence.

John Parker

President

Jill Crouch (previously Barry)

Acting Chair

Chief Executive's Report

Introduction

2019-20 was a very busy year for the association, with local elections in May and the introduction of unitary councils in Dorset. We needed to be flexible to respond to new challenges while still delivering advice, support and training to the highest standards.

Increased Membership

All new town and parish councils created as a result of local government reorganisation were enthusiastically welcomed as members of DAPTC. This raised the association's membership to 163, including all town councils. In total, over 98% of local councils in Dorset are members.

Our new members are:

Weymouth Town Council
Christchurch Town Council
Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council

With the support of NALC, DAPTC staff gave practical support with the creation of these councils and worked closely with the new clerks, which helped build a relationship prior to 1 April 2019.

We arranged bespoke induction sessions for all these new councils and invited the Monitoring Officers from either BCP or Dorset Council to participate.

We also arranged for NALC's most senior staff members to give presentations to the new councils on the national picture and potential influence of local councils, with examples of their achievements.

In addition, the clerks of the new councils have been welcomed to DAPTC events, which reinforced the impression of the association as a county-wide organisation, co-ordinating communication between its members.

In accordance with the priority agreed by the DAPTC Executive Committee, I invested considerable time assisting with the creation of the new parish and town councils in Dorset. This work took a significant part of my time and had an impact generally on the staff team.

It is very pleasing that the importance of membership has been recognised by all three councils.

National Association of Local Councils

One of the great advantages of DAPTC membership is the association's affiliation to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). As well as providing specialist legal advice for our tier of local government, NALC also lobbies central government on our behalf and has direct access to government departments.

NALC has set up a Climate Change Task and Finish Group, with its first meeting on 12 March 2020. Councillor Josephine Parish from Corfe Castle Parish Council (a member of NALC's Smaller Councils Committee) has been asked to join the group. The project plan for the group includes combining case studies and create a best practice document. NALC are also investigating the possibility of funding grants for its work on climate change and for member councils.

With the outbreak of Coronavirus in March 2020, NALC provided legal advice and practical guidance to enable our member councils to continue operating safely. This information was immediately sent out via the DAPTC staff team, who worked closely with NALC officers by anticipating the type of information that parish and town clerks would need.

Chief Executive's Report

New Unitary Councils

Two new unitary councils were established on 1 April 2019; Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council covering the remainder of the county.

The association has progressed the wish of our members to be involved in creating the working relationship between the new unitary councils and the parish/town tier of local government.

Dorset Council

I have had regular meetings with Dorset Council's Executive Director for Place. He requested these meetings as his directorate's services have a huge impact on our members.

I have also had meetings with Dorset Council's Legal & Democratic Corporate Director Jonathan Mair, who is also the Monitoring Officer.

I have found contact with the two directors has helped with practical matters such as legal procedures following elections and general coordination of routine matters immediately following reorganisation. Due to the very short time allowed by the Government to establish Dorset Council, many parish and town clerks were unsure of new procedures for contacting the new Dorset Council services. I informed the two directors of these enquiries which enabled them to provide greater continuity of service to parish and town councils.

The Executive Director for Place attended a DAPTC Executive Committee and requested information on any matters outstanding from work with the former councils which had not been picked up and carried forward. We asked all our members the same question via their clerks. This information was given to the Director for Place to assist with coordination of Dorset Council services plus improved liaison with town and parish councils.

The list of outstanding work included completion of legal work on transfer of some assets, former district council practice with decision making on planning applications plus various customer care matters. I also informed the Director of Place of other day to day issues which parish clerks have raised with the DAPTC office.

DAPTC invited very senior Dorset Council members to have a dialogue with town and parish councillors at DAPTC events. Much of my time was spent facilitating opportunities for our members to have face-to-face contact with senior Dorset Council members. This is in response to the constant concern expressed by our members at the lack of information available on the plans of Dorset Council regarding the parish and town tier of local government. I aimed to create opportunities for our members to express their concerns and ask questions directly to Dorset Council representatives.

Examples of this are:

- Dorset Council's Portfolio Holder for Customer, Community and Regulatory Services, Cllr Tony Alford was a speaker at the DAPTC Councillors Seminar on 10 October 2019
- Leader of Dorset Council Cllr Spencer Flower was the main speaker at the DAPTC AGM on 9 November 2019
- Cllr Tony Alford attended DAPTC area meetings and Town & Larger Parish Council meetings.
- Cllr Tony Alford attended DAPTC Executive Committee meetings.

Chief Executive's Report

Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council

BCP Council's Monitoring Officer was involved in designing the format of the DAPTC induction training for the three new parish and town councils in Christchurch area. Both BCP Council's and Dorset Council's Monitoring Officers wished to give consistent information on the Code of Conduct to new councillors via our induction training across the whole of the county.

BCP Council agreed to conduct a Community Governance Review in the Throop and Holdenhurst areas following receipt of a valid petition. The council invited a response from DAPTC to a consultation which ended on 1 September 2019. The association responded as follows:

"Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) is in favour of creating new parish councils in areas that do not have them at present. Parish councils are a vital link with local communities, providing a greater understanding of their residents' views and concerns."

"Our association together with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and with the encouragement of central government, very much encourages the establishment of new parish and town councils as the tier of local government that is closest to communities."

"Parish councils increase the potential for local control over local matters. They are an accountable voice for their communities, striving to improve quality of life for their residents."

"As principal authority services become more centralised to deliver greater efficiencies, the role of a parish council becomes more important."

The Chief Executive of BCP Council is a member of a group of Chief Officers of all Dorset public services that invited me to give a presentation on the work of parish and town councils. I did this on 20 November 2019 and I gave examples of how our members help the strategic aims of the public sector. (These examples had been given in response to the DAPTC Chairman's request to our members for information earlier that year).

DAPTC AGM 2019

The DAPTC AGM was held on 9 November and the proposals from member councils were debated. Eight motions agreed, with some amendments to the original proposals. Three motions requesting action by the unitary councils, have been referred to them. The remaining motions requested NALC to lobby on national issues. At the time of writing this report (31 March 2020), NALC has confirmed that it is already lobbying on these issues and will cite the Dorset experience. NALC asked for more specific information on the motion on rural housing.

New Website

The DAPTC Executive Committee decided to invest in a new website which could be easily accessed on mobile phones and tablets. It was an opportunity to have a fresher, more customer friendly site that was easier for our members to use.

Staffing

The DAPTC office is operated by a team of three part time staff, including me. Customer Relationship Manager Debbie Hollings deals with day to day information to parish and town clerks plus the website and attracting income through sponsorship of our events. Lisa Cooper coordinates the association's training and development as well as providing administrative support to the DAPTC Executive Committee and AGM.

We have achieved the priority goals of the Executive Committee by building relationships with the new unitary councils, encouraging new local councils, responding to immediate training needs and giving advice and guidance to our members.

Chief Executive's Report

Relationship with NHS Dorset CCG

DAPTC continues to provide the CCG with communication channels for consultation on future NHS services. This gives our members greater opportunity to comment on plans for changes as well as providing the CCG with the views of local communities, often in sparsely populated areas.

Training and Development 2019/20

Core training was delivered to 548 delegates through courses for: New Councillors, Chairmen, New Clerks, Planning, Finance and Website Accessibility. Two seminars – one for Clerks and one for Councillors also took place.

With local elections in May, demand was high for courses, especially New Councillor Induction courses which were delivered by DAPTC at various venues around the county and at individual Council's premises. A total of 227 councillors attended New Councillor Induction courses during 2019.

THANK YOU!

There are so many people who help us on a voluntary basis. Thank you to our volunteer area secretaries who support area meetings. Our Honorary Treasurer Donna Yea is also owed thanks for providing us with clear accounts and invaluable advice which she presents to the DAPTC Executive Committee and our team throughout the year. The association is very fortunate to have very hard-working Executive Committee members, Area Chairmen plus representatives that attend NALC meetings. Councillor Alan Thacker contributed hugely to the many events and meetings that he attended during his time as Chairman of the association and his support of the association staff was greatly appreciated.

Above all, the association is very fortunate to have representatives of our member councils that turn out so regularly to events, giving up precious time in busy lives to get involved and have their say on behalf of their communities. Thank you so much for your support to the association.

Conclusion

As part of my job, I aimed to raise the profile of the parish and town council tier of local government. In the many meetings that I attend with public organisations, I constantly stress that parish and town councils must be consulted on future changes and respected as the most local tier of government in Dorset.

Our very small, but capable team continues to give support, advice and training to our members in affiliation with our national association.

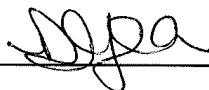
Hilary Trevorah

31st March 2020

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2020

DORSET ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2020

2018/19 £		2019/20 £	£
	CURRENT ASSETS		
	Deposits with		
35,418.34	National Savings Bank	35,701.69	
505.14	Scottish Widows	0.00	
54,589.06	Current Account (Unity)	<u>56,741.41</u>	92,443.10
0.00	Debtors		5,000.00 <i>see note 2 below</i>
510.00	Payments in Advance		0.00
	LESS		
	CURRENT LIABILITIES		
6,551.55	Sundry Creditors	1,045.43	<i>see note 1 below</i>
			<u>1,045.43</u>
<u>84,470.99</u>			<u>96,397.67</u>
	REPRESENTED BY RESERVES		
	DAPTC general reserve - opening balance	84,470.99	
	DAPTC Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year Training Partnership Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year	11,926.68	
84,470.99	DAPTC general reserve - closing balance		96,397.67
<u>84,470.99</u>			<u>96,397.67</u>



Honorary Treasurer



Honorary Auditor

Note 1

Creditors

Dorset Council	2800226761	159.35
Dorset Council	2800233423	380.08
SLCC Enterprises Ltd	130749	216.00
Website Accessibility Course	Training	290.00

Note 2

Debtors

CCG	Grant 2019-20	5,000.00
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Income and Expenditure 2019/2020

Actuals 2018/19	BUDGET 2019/20	DAPTC Income and Expenditure Account 2019/20	Actuals 2019/20	VARIANCE (adverse)/ favourable
		EXPENDITURE		
17,449	17,781	NALC Affiliation Fee	22,011	(4,230)
		Administration Costs :		
83,930	83,963	Salaries	90,363	(6,400)
0	0	Rents	0	0
3,171	4,200	Office service charge (facilities management)	3,416	784
508	500	Printing, Stationery, office expenses	218	282
3,035	1,000	Photocopier rental and charges	249	751
123	100	Postages	-18	118
272	650	Telephone	300	350
0	200	Equipment	35	165
371	700	Insurance	828	(128)
1,453	2,000	Staff travelling & Expenses	726	1,274
		Other Costs :		
1,893	2,500	Meeting & Member Expenses	1,583	917
704	2,000	Area Admin Costs / Clerks Honorarium	1,627	373
730	1,000	Treasurer's & Auditor's Honorarium	730	270
865	2,425	Miscellaneous (incl. website)	4,881	(2,456)
5,149	4,500	Venue Hire	4,133	367
1,955	3,000	Training Course Expenses	3,667	(667)
1,500		Transparency Fund	825	(825)
200	200	SW Local Council Association	400	(200)
196	200	SLCC affiliation membership subscription	200	0
1,343	2,150	Purchase of Publications	2,758	(608)
387	700	Conferences & expenses	719	(19)
125,233	129,769	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	139,652	-9,883
		INCOME		
61,223	61,772	Subscriptions	69,579	7,807
1,789	1,700	Sales - LCR	1,583	(117)
336	1,350	- Other Publications	264	(1,087)
255		Investment Income	283	283
30,000	30,000	Grant - Dorset Council	29,776	(224)
12,500	12,500	Project funding - CCG	12,500	0
1,500		Transparency Fund	825	825
19,280	15,000	Training Income	32,817	17,817
60		Other income	62	62
3,010	2,000	Commercial Sponsorship	3,890	1,890
129,952	124,322	TOTAL INCOME	151,579	27,257
4,719	(5,447)	SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	11,927	17,374

Treasurer's Report

The Income and Expenditure final position for 2019/2020

The budget for the year 2019/20 was agreed at the December 2018 Executive Committee. The budget was set with a deficit of £5,447 for the year.

The final position was £139,652 expenditure and £151,579 income, resulting in a surplus of £11,927.

The Balance Sheet

The Current Assets section of the DAPTC Balance Sheet is represented by the cash balances in the two active bank accounts, at £92,443.10, and Debtors of £5,000. Current Liabilities (amounts owed to others) stands at £1,045.43. A breakdown of the Creditors and Debtors is shown at the bottom of the Balance Sheet.

The reserves of the DAPTC now stand at £96,397.67.

Auditors recommendations

The accounts were audited by the DAPTC auditor Mr Notley.

No adjustments were required.

Conclusion

The year end surplus has strengthened the reserves which will help provide a degree of financial stability in the short term. The current climate is a very difficult one, with the challenges related to COVID-19, and so an increase to the surplus is positive.

Donna Yea

**Honorary Treasurer
April 2020**