



## **Bridport Town Council 5 Year Plan 2019-2024**

### **Background**

*Bridport Town Council works for the benefit of Bridport & West Bay. All references to the town should be taken to include West Bay unless qualified.*

Bridport Town Council is the most local tier of local government in Dorset, separate from but alongside Dorset Council, the Unitary Authority. We are a town council with a long and illustrious history of working within a considered, democratic, framework which is prudent, transparent and respectful of the local community.

The role of the Town Council is to ensure Bridport is a thriving community and a healthy, vibrant and attractive place in which to work, live and visit. The Town Council does this by working collaboratively, not only as an ambitious and committed team of councillors and officers, but also with a range of external strategic partners.

The Town Council is committed to providing excellence in the services and facilities which it delivers, aiming to be responsive, innovative, visible, accessible and straightforward in our approach.

### **Governance**

We have 18 Councillors representing Bridport North and South who are normally elected every four years – although the next two Council terms will be for five years to bring them into line across the Dorset Council area. The Council appoints three main committees and one sub-committee, which are decision making bodies. Full Council and committee meetings are open to the public with a public forum at the start of each meeting, when the public can raise issues and ask questions. These meetings are usually held at Mountfield (for committees) and the Town Hall (for Full Council).

During May each year at the Annual Council Meeting, a Mayor is elected. The Mayor is the town's First Citizen and its ambassador at public, civic and ceremonial events. At the same meeting the Council elects a Leader, Deputy Mayor, decides on the committee memberships and appoints councillors as representatives to other bodies.

#### **The decision making committees and sub-committee are:**

- Finance & General Purposes Committee
- Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee
- Planning Committee
- Best Value Sub-Committee

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### **What We Do**

Councillors and staff strive to ensure that all Council operations are delivered in the most effective and efficient manner and comply with regulation and best practice.

This 5 year plan focuses on new projects or major pieces of work requiring new or significant resource allocation. Readers should note that in the background, the day-to-day operations of the council continue to include:

- Efficient operation and governance of the Council's business – council meetings, elections, policies, finance and budgeting, staff recruitment and management, administration, customer service, etc.
- Legal compliance.
- Communication with the community – hosting the Town Council websites and social media feeds, responding to requests for information, consultations, promoting events, etc.
- Management of the Council's assets – land, buildings, plant and equipment.

### **Operationally the main services areas we are involved in are:**

- Allotments – we provide and manage 220 allotment plots across Bridport.
- Capital Projects – we deliver and support projects for community benefit. Recent examples include public WiFi in West Bay, and support for the refurbishment of the Literary and Scientific Institute, West Bay Discovery Centre and Bridport Youth & Community Centre.
- Community Representation and Leadership – although the smallest of the councils that provide services in Bridport, our position as a statutory public body gives us a strong voice in representing the community to other local and national public sector bodies. We also take a lead on issues of importance to the community, including recently establishing Bridport as a 'Rights Respecting' town.
- Cemetery – The Town Council manages Bridport Cemetery, which is such an important and highly regarded asset for the town.
- Civic and Ceremonial – the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected from Bridport's Town Councillors, and they attend a wide range of events and functions as the town's representatives.

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- Community Bus – we launched a round-Bridport bus service in 2018 to enable residents to access the town centre and other parts of the town following withdrawal of support for similar services by the then County Council.
- Environmental – we look after all public highway verges and various other green and open spaces in Bridport (including Asker Meadows, and Bucky Doo Square), manage sites and a range of footpaths, and hold events to promote environmental, health and wellbeing issues. Our grounds maintenance work is expanding quickly, as we take on work on behalf of Dorset Council, parishes surrounding Bridport and other local organisations. Our environmental work includes community leadership in areas such as climate change.
- Events – The Town Council is represented at the Food Festival, Melplash Show, Charter Fair and the Community Fair, as well as providing logistical support for a host of local events each year. These include the Jurassic Fields, Christmas Cheer, Sunflower Project and Hat Festivals. We also organise the Remembrance Parade in November.
- Grants – the Town Council awards over £50,000 a year in grant support to community organisations.
- Hire/Lease of Facilities – we have conference, meeting and events venues at Mountfield, the Salt House and the Town Hall, which are available for private hire. We also offer long leases at Council-owned properties for office, commercial and community uses.
- Markets – We manage Bridport Market, West Bay Summer Market, and West Bay Car Boot Sale.
- Partnership Working – we work with a range of local organisations to make the most of resources in the Bridport area. These include parish councils and charitable and voluntary organisations. We are a member of, and provide administrative support to, the Bridport Local Area Partnership, which brings together over 200 local groups and individuals to benefit the community in areas such as health and wellbeing and homelessness.
- Planning – the Town Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications, and a partner with other local councils in developing the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan.
- Play Areas – The Town Council maintains a number of play areas, including the fully accessible West Bay Play Area.
- Sitting Out Licences and A-Boards – we manage these on behalf of Dorset Council.
- Tourist Information Centre (TIC) – Dorset’s Visitor Information Service of the Year in 2018. As well as its tourism information services, the TIC also now manages the Town Hall, Bucky Doo Square, the Bridport and West Bay web site and the production of the Town Guide. It provides a Box Office Service to a range of local organisations and events including the Electric Palace and the BridLit Festival.

22 members of staff deliver these services on behalf of councillors.

## Bridport Town Council 5 Year Plan 2019-2024

### Why a 5 year Plan for Bridport Town Council?

The Town Council agreed to produce a 5 year plan in order to:

- Promote transparency – being clear what the Town Council priorities are and what actions will be delivered over the plan period 2019 to 2024,
- Set the functions of the Town Council in a strategic context – area/county/national/international,
- Provide a basis for securing funding – whether through the local precept, revenue generation or funding bids,
- Co-ordinate the Town Council’s work with others, and generate productive collaboration with partners,
- Provide the basis for oversight by councillors and others, and
- Ensure best value.

### Town Council Mission Statement

To ensure Bridport remains a thriving community and a healthy, attractive and resilient place in which to work, live and visit. A Rights-Respecting Town and strategic centre for the West Dorset area with a vibrant retail, arts and cultural offer, set within a special and distinctive environment recognised as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the Dorset AONB).

### Listening to our community

A community consultation exercise was undertaken at the Melplash Show and at the Charter Fair encouraging residents to prioritise areas of the Town Council’s work and put forward project ideas. 80% of those responding to the consultation were in favour of increasing the Council Tax to support initiatives. 85% of responders were over 60.

The top three priorities as voted for by those who responded were:

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Helping our environment	60
Improving public and community transport	57
Providing more for young people	46

*See appendix for full set of responses to the public consultation on the Town Plan Review 2019*

## **Bridport Town Council 5 Year Plan 2019-2024**

We believe in listening to and engaging with our community. We will continue to improve our level of engagement, communication and consultation, providing the best opportunities for local people to give their views about the future direction of the town and the services we provide.

- This 5 Year plan will be open for community comment for 8 weeks. All responses received will be presented along with any proposed amendments in a consultation report to be published on the Town Council website, and considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee for incorporation into a final version of this plan.
- All major projects led by the Town Council will include a community engagement phase, drawing in representatives residents and voluntary groups impacted by any project to ensure local awareness is raised and local know-how mobilised.

Our Community Engagement Strategy will be reviewed and published as part of the first review of this 5 Year plan.

### **Values for our residents**

We will continue to be an effective council by:

- Engaging with our community
- Delivering quality and value for money services
- Helping the vulnerable members of our community
- Being open and accountable
- Delivering improvements across the town

### **Monitoring & Review of this Plan**

The Town Council will deliver the projects/actions identified in this plan. Inevitably new and unplanned demands will be made on the Town Council during the plan period. The list of projects will be monitored at each meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Plan will be reviewed in full each year. The requirement to respond to new demands will need to be balanced with available resources and approval of new projects will inevitably require the displacement of agreed actions unless resources are increased.

## Bridport Town Council 5 Year Plan 2019-2024

### Strategic Priorities of Bridport Town Council

For the Town	For the Community	For the Environment	For a Well Run Council
Responding to the Climate Emergency and need for transformative actions			
Delivering the ambitions of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan	Supporting older, vulnerable and less advantaged people	Ensuring that the town's green spaces are managed sustainably and deliver ecosystem services for all	Devolution of non-statutory services from Dorset Council
Supporting a vibrant Town Centre including managing and developing Bridport's market offer	Supporting education, employment and leisure opportunities for young people	Safeguarding the special landscape qualities of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Consider a community governance review to better reflect who uses town services
Promoting Bridport as 'Dorset's Eventful Town'	Securing the development of cultural and recreational facilities available in the town	Safeguarding heritage assets for future generations to enjoy	Using innovation, technology and new ways of working to improve value for money and efficiency in Council services
Helping build a sustainable local economy	Being a Rights Respecting Council, promoting Rights Respecting within the community, and actively engaging citizens in the running of the Town		

## **Bridport Town Council 5 Year Plan 2019-2024**

### **During the lifetime of the 5 year plan (2019-2024), the Town Council will ensure that:**

1. It works with other councils, organisations and agencies, to ensure that actions to address the Climate Emergency are prioritised and effectively resourced.
2. Its decision making and activities are rights respecting, fully inclusive and that all opportunities are taken to increase community engagement, particularly with young people.
3. Improvements to the access and management of green spaces are delivered through revised management plans and changes to maintenance and investment in access.
4. Publicly owned assets are safeguarded and that those assets transferred to the Town Council are efficiently managed to provide demonstrable community benefit and support for the local economy.
5. Development proposals for key sites across the town effectively engage local people in decision making, provide demonstrable community benefit and support the local economy. During this plan period sites are likely to include: the Bus Station, Old Dairy, Flood Lane/Fisherman's Arms Care Development, St Michael's and Vearse Farm.
6. Studies are commissioned to drive the development of the Town Centre by addressing traffic and people movement issues and reimagining signage and interpretation.



## Bridport Town Council 5 Year Plan 2019-2024

### Cross Cutting Priority

Bridport Town Council declared a climate emergency in May 2019. The declaration included a commitment to produce a Climate Action Plan **based on a commitment to achieve a Net Zero Carbon Bridport by 2030.**

*Tough targets do not themselves reduce emissions. Action plans must be drawn up to deliver them. The climate crisis demands bigger solutions than we initially thought. We need to see the climate crisis not as a stand-alone issue floating separately from everything else. The plan is a pressing and central response to promoting health, wellbeing and equality.*

*The council expects that there will be ongoing discussion and review of the Climate Emergency Action Plan. This will take the form of a series of public ‘conversations’ around the key objectives of this Action Plan. The Council, working with local community groups and businesses, will undertake structured local discussions to explore the ‘Why’ and ‘How’ of low carbon transition and agree priorities for local actions. These ‘conversations’ will draw on principles of deliberative democracy (see: <https://climateassemblies.org/on-the-city-level/>) and will help test the viability of this Action Plan and hopefully generate new ideas and the momentum to achieve outcomes.*

Priority Responding to the Climate Emergency			
Action	Funding sources	Measure Deliver by date	Responsible
Deliver the Town Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan	BTC External funding	Action plan review Nov 20/1/2/3	All Staff E&SW Committee One Planet Living WG

## Bridport Town Council 5 Year Plan 2019-2024

### For the Town

*Bridport manages to retain strong connections to its rich historic roots in trading and rope making. A historic market town that has emerged in the twenty first century as a noted centre for cultural and artistic activity and events. Our community is creative and resourceful and supporting local wealth building initiatives will ensure that the economic future of the town is sustainable, resilient and serves everyone.*

<b>For the Town - Action Plan 2019-2024</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Funding sources</b>	<b>Measure of success Deliver by date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer/ Committee</b>
<b>Priority 1 - Delivering the ambitions of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan</b>			
BANP policies used in responses to planning applications	Town & Parish Councils	Number of BANP references in planning responses + positive outcomes achieved April 2020/21/22/23	Project Manager Planning
Raise the Roof Project exploring innovation in affordable housing	Town & Parish Councils	Report produced and impact on Vearse Farm Development March 2020	Project Manager Planning
Deliver BANP projects & actions	Community Infrastructure Levy Grant bids	Number of projects funded/ delivered Nov 20/1/2/3	Project Manager Planning
Support JCC meetings	Town & Parish Councils	4 meetings a year	Project Manager Planning
Deliver annual monitoring / review of BANP	Town & Parish Councils	Review report May 2020/21/22/23	Project Manager Planning
<b>Priority 2 - Town Centre &amp; Market Development &amp; Management</b>			
Manage and promote market days	Market Income	Market takings grow by 3% pa Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Surveyor
Commission Town Centre studies of traffic and access. Implement recommendations	BANP Project	Reports Published Nov 2020 Nov 2021/2/3	Project Manager Town Centre WG
Commission and publish Town Centre Health Check reports	BANP Project	Report published Nov 2020/2022	Project Manager Town Centre WG

## Bridport Town Council 5 Year Plan 2019-2024

Action	Funding sources	Measure of success Deliver by date	Responsible Officer/ Committee
Commission Town Centre Heritage interpretation and signage plan and implement actions	BANP Project	Report published Nov 2020 Nov 2021/2/3	Project Manager Town Centre WG
Undertake a feasibility study for Town centre WiFi network	BTC	Study completed Nov 2020	Town Clerk Town Centre WG
<b>Priority 3 - Promoting Bridport as Dorset's 'Eventful' Town</b>			
Manage and deliver TIC operation	BTC	Ticket sales/footfall Nov 20/1/2/3	TIC Manager
Town Events Programme	BTC	Publish annual events programme and promote through Bridport & West Bay website May 2020/1/2/3	TIC Manager
Provide resources and technical support to selected events in the Town – road closures, marshalling, equipment	BTC	Number of events supported Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Surveyor
<b>Priority 4 – Helping build a sustainable local economy</b>			
Work in partnership with Dorset Council on a development proposal for Bridport Bus Station to secure community needs for transport and creative hub	BTC External funding	Plans agreed and permissions secured Oct 2020	Town Surveyor
Convene St Michaels Working Group to support a high quality re development that delivers community needs	BTC	Number of Working Group meetings Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Clerk
Acquire the Old Dairy Site from Dorset Council and develop a proposal to provide a range of community uses	BTC External funding	Site acquired – plans developed with community input and building constructed April 2021	Town Surveyor
Work with Wessex Community Assets to support proposals for a Timber Fabrication workspace	BTC External funding	Site identified/ Plans developed 2021	Project Manager
Work with Coastal Communities Team on Round 6 bid to support sustainable economic development	BTC	Round 6 bid submitted July 2020/21	Project Manager

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### For the Community

*Bridport has developed a rich and distinct cultural offer. Maintaining and developing the community facilities is central to the future health of the town. The town's changing demography requires consideration to ensure that the support and services better respond to the needs of older, vulnerable residents as well as ensuring that young people can look forward to a worthwhile and rewarding future in the town.*

<b>Community Needs Action Plan 2019-2024</b>			
<b>Priority Supporting older, more vulnerable and less advantaged people in our community</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Funding sources</b>	<b>Measure Deliver by date</b>	<b>Responsible</b>
Assist voluntary organisations to provide additional facilities, services and activities for older people in need	Community Grant Scheme	Total grants awarded Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Clerk
Support BLAP as a sounding board for liaison with surrounding parishes and to campaign for resources to address issues of rural deprivation	BTC	Number of Parishes attending BLAP meetings Number of projects developed by BLAP Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Clerk
Continue to support community transport services.	BTC	Services supported Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Clerk
Continue to provide workspace for Community Groups and support their activities	BTC External funding	Number of Groups supported Volunteer workdays delivered Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Surveyor
Work with Public Health and Local Surgeries on social prescribing initiatives	BTC	Number of initiatives Nov 20/1/2/3	Project Manager
<b>Priority Supporting education, employment and leisure opportunities for young people</b>			
Safeguard and promote Bridport Youth Centre operation	BTC	Growth in BYC income Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Clerk
Help secure premises for the Indoor Skate Park	BTC	Premises secured April 2021	Town Surveyor
Support and help secure premises for a Creative/Music Hub	BTC	Premises secured April 2021	Town Surveyor

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Action	Funding sources	Measure Deliver by date	Responsible
Investigate development of a new outdoor skate park at Plottingham and delivery if demonstrated as feasible.	External funding with possible BTC match funding	Feasibility study June 2020	Town Surveyor
<b>Priority - Securing the ongoing development of cultural and recreational facilities available in the town</b>			
Deliver improvement programmes for all Play Areas	BTC External funding	Completion of improvement works Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Surveyor
Working with local community organisations to ensure opportunities for community re use of publicly owned and empty high street premises are assessed and prioritised.	BTC	Number of organisations supported Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Clerk
<b>Priority: Being a Rights Respecting Council actively engaging citizens in the running of the Town</b>			
Rights Respecting Project Phase 2	Global Dialogue Grant	Phase 2 implemented July 2020	Rights Respecting Steering Group/Town Clerk
Review BTC community engagement strategy to ensure wide and meaningful initiatives are pursued to make BTC a transparent and inclusive council.	BTC	Strategy published Oct 2020	Town Clerk

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### For the Environment

*Bridport benefits from the unique and attractive landscape setting of the town, recognised through designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Brit and Asker river corridors and distinctive hilltop skyline offers provide green spaces important for community health and wellbeing. The Town Council, alongside many other partners, needs to take urgent action to respond to the climate and extinction emergencies facing the living world.*

<b>Environment Action Plan 2019-2024</b>			
<b>Priority: Ensuring green space are managed sustainably and deliver ecosystem services for all</b>			
Review management plans for green spaces	BTC	Number of revised plans Nov 20/1/2/3	Project Manager Open Spaces WG
Provide advice and resources to community groups established to manage green spaces, including verge adoptions	BTC	Number of Groups supported Nov 2020/1/2/3	Town Surveyor
Work with local communities to acquire and manage open spaces for tree planting and recreation	BTC	New areas of open space acquired and managed Nov 20/1/2/3	Town Surveyor
Develop and promote the new Bridport Green Route	Dorset AONB SDF Grant Awards for All Grant	Green route launch April 2020	Project Manager Open Spaces WG
Update and re publish the Bridport Active Travel Map	Dorset Council BTC funds	Online & print update April 2020	Project Manager
<b>Priority: Safeguarding the special landscape qualities of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>			
Draw on the Landscape Policies in the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan in responses to planning applications	BTC		Town Clerk
Work in partnership with the Dorset AONB team to prepare and submit a Lottery funding proposal that has Bridport as a 'gateway' to the AONB Area,	BTC Dorset AONB	Bid submitted December 2020	Project Manager
<b>Priority: Safeguarding heritage assets for future generations to enjoy</b>			
Review and maintain a list of heritage assets in the town for use in responses to planning applications			Town Clerk

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### For a Well Run Council (Best Value)

*The operation of the town council will continue to achieve high standards of performance and accountability. Moving toward becoming a digital by default council is important whilst being mindful to provide for those in the community not able to access digital output.*

Best Value Action Plan 2019-2024			
Action	Funding sources	Measure Deliver by date	Responsible
Priority: Using innovation, technology and new ways of working to improve value for money and efficiency in Council services			
Review of Town Council social media channel(s) including investment in improved website	BTC	Review complete April 2021	Town Clerk
Become a digital council with all relevant services being available online, whilst maintaining ready access to traditional channels	BTC	Progress with online Nov 2020/1/2/3	Town Clerk
Support and increase the range of information available to residents about community based projects, activities and services available to them for the purposes of both wellbeing and civic pride	BTC	Increase in information provided Nov 2020/1/2/3	Town Clerk
Review BTC procurement policies in light of Climate Action Plan and ensure community wealth building is prioritised	BTC	Procurement policy reviewed Nov 2020	Finance Officer
Updating of Bridport Emergency Plan	BTC	Plan updated Nov 2020	Town Clerk
Adoption of new NALC model of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	BTC	New Standard adopted April 2021	Financial Officer
Priority: Consider a community governance review to better reflect use of town services			
Request Dorset Council to support a review of community governance	BTC	Governance review actioned April 2021	Town Clerk

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Action	Funding sources	Measure Deliver by date	Responsible
Priority: Devolution of assets & non-statutory services from Dorset Council			
Work with Dorset Council to transfer public asset and services including; the Old Dairy site / Bus Station buildings, South Mill and public toilets	BTC External funding	Assets transferred Nov 2020/1/2/3	Town Surveyor
Take on operation of East Street Car Park toilet when the development is complete	BTC	Toilets operating April 2021	Town Surveyor
Review of staffing required to manage assets and services transferred from Dorset Council	BTC	Staffing review complete Nov 2020	Town Surveyor



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### References:

- [Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan projects and actions](#)
- Climate Emergency Action Plan (to be published November 2019)
- Rights Respecting Action Plan (in development by the Bridport Rights Respecting Steering Group at the time of )
- Coastal Communities Team Economic Plan (under review at the time of publication of this plan)

Appendix – Results of Town Plan Review Consultations 2019

<u>Top Priorities for the Area</u>	<u>No of Responses</u>
Our Environment	62
Improving our town centre	37
Providing more for young people	46
Redevelopment of the Bus Station	22
Improving our parks and open spaces	24
Helping local community groups	18
Projects that help the local economy	14
Improving public and community transport	58
Health initiatives	16
Preserving our heritage	11
Do less and reduce my Council Tax	1

**Appendix – Results of Town Plan Review Consultations 2019**

<b>Other:</b>
More public toilets
Provide rehearsal space for a Bridport Morris group
Reinstate X51 and X53 buses on Sundays please during the winter
More disabled parking spaces
Remove pinch point outside the Market House to keep traffic flowing better and reduce pollution
Drinking fountain in Bucky Doo Square, can also re-fill own containers
Victoria Grove - too much fast traffic. Traffic directed into Victoria Grove to avoid town centre is not suitable for any extra traffic
Concerned about the skate park proposal, for an indoor sound studio. Do not believe is needed as Council paid for a sound studio in the Bridport Youth and Community Centre 15 years ago. Still used today. Propose Council gives funds to the Bridport Youth and Community Centre to upgrade current sound studio. Rather than pay out of council tax payers money for a new one!
Support and help already existing facilities instead of spending money on new projects. There is already a sound studio at Bridport Youth and Community Centre so please do not spend money on a new one at the bus station redevelopment. But held upgrade the existing one. Do town really need another one?
The council is spending money on a sound studio in the new indoor skate park. The Community already has an under used sound studio. Therefore money should be used to support existing facilities.
Closing the top part of South Street to traffic! At present it is dangerous and polluting Bucky Doo Square.
Please stop tarmacking public footpaths. As a walker this is far harder to walk on. Ruined the walk on old rail line from Burton Road to West Bay.
Employ a dog warden to pursue people who allow their dogs to foul the pavements and those who dump the deposits in bags and leave them around.
Affordable social housing.
A by-pass! Bridport is the only (Dorset) town on the A31/35 trunk road route without a By-Pass. Fact.
Canopy over a part of West Bay Park
Improvement of Barrack Street as discussed by the Town Council in 2018 and which we understand was included by the transport group in the Neighbourhood Plan. This improvement will not only enhance the safety and appearance of Barrack Street but across the road from the East Street car park, will attract visitors to this part of town and ensure the continued viability of our local economy.

Appendix – Results of Town Plan Review Consultations 2019

<b>Do you think we should increase Council Tax by, say, £10 a year, if it means we can deliver your priorities?</b>	
Yes	25
No	6
No answer	1