

Your Ref:
Our Ref: SH/EG

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Date: 11 July 2007

Letter to Town Clerk
Blandford Forum, Gillingham, Shaftesbury, Stalbridge, Sturminster Newton Town Councils

Dear Town Clerk

Further to my letter dated 19 June 2007 (which included the District Council's financial and service information to Town/Parish Councils and community partnerships across the district) and the Local Delivery Phase II Working Group on 3 July 2007, it is clear that Town Councils may be interested in understanding the District Council's budget information in greater detail. The Local Delivery project has reached the stage where Town Councils (in particular) recognise the need to establish their own costs of providing services at the chosen level of service. This will enable the service providers to decide whether or not to make a commitment in principle, by end September, to provide or fund discretionary services post April 2008.

Town Councils have asked to be provided with a greater understanding of District Council budgets (eg an explanation of what is included within the expenditure items, build up of salary costs). It has been made clear that the information should not be relied upon to evaluate future business models; that the format in which the Council has to present budgets may not align to future service providers' business needs; and that service providers will still have to prepare their own evaluations.

This is what had to be done for the TICs, Shaftesbury Pool and Gillingham Leisure Centre; Local Delivery is following a similar path for public conveniences, street cleansing and others.

To better understand budgets, Town representatives (probably Clerks) are likely to need to consult the Finance team and budget holders between now and end September. The relevant District Council officers are aware of this and will be available to assist.

Yours sincerely

STEPHEN HILL
GENERAL MANAGER (DEVELOPMENT & RESOURCES)

c.c. Vic Smith
Stuart Caundle
Joyce Guest
Cllr David Milsted
Cllr Peter Webb
Cllr Joe Hickish
Cllr Michael Roake