

Dorset County Council

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	28 March 2019
Officer	Chief Executive
Subject of Report	130 Years of Dorset County Council
Executive Summary	A short summary of the foundation, history and achievements of Dorset County Council.
Impact Assessment:	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment: Not applicable</p> <p>Use of Evidence: Referenced where appropriate</p> <p>Budget: Not applicable</p> <p>Risk Assessment: Not applicable</p>
	<p>Outcomes: The Council has made wide-ranging contributions to the safety, health and independence of the people and communities of Dorset and to the local economy and prosperity throughout its 130 years.</p>
	<p>Other Implications: None</p>
Recommendation	The contribution of Dorset County Council is recorded and councillors may wish to share some personal memories.
Reason for Recommendation	To mark the last formal meeting of Dorset County Council and to highlight its history since the first meeting of the Council in 1889.
Appendices	<p>Appendix One: Royal Grant of Arms to Dorset County Council, 1950</p> <p>Appendix Two: Present day logo of Dorset County Council</p> <p>Appendix Three: Aerial photograph of County Hall, c. 1961</p> <p>Appendix Four: Chairmen of Dorset County Council 1888-2019</p> <p>Appendix Five: Leaders of Dorset County Council 1987-2019</p> <p>Appendix Six: Clerks to and CEOs of Dorset County Council 1899-2019</p>
Background Papers	<i>50 Years of Progress: A history of Dorset County Council 1889-1939</i> available at Dorset History Centre.
Officer Contact	<p>Name: Sam Johnston, County Archivist</p> <p>Tel: 01305-228929 Email: s.johnston@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>

1. Dorset County Council - origins and inception

- 1.1 Dorset County Council (DCC) came into existence through the Local Government Act of 1888. The new County Council took on the administrative functions of the Quarter Sessions courts which had to this point performed this role. The first elections to DCC took place in January 1889. 24 of the 57 new members of the new Council were returned unopposed and a total of 35,100 voters participated. With Lord Stalbridge elected as Chairman, the provisional Council's first two meetings were held at Shire Hall, Dorchester.
- 1.2 The first statutory meeting of DCC took place on 1 April 1889 in Dorchester's town hall with the election of 19 aldermen. A protest was registered on behalf of Portland expressing the view that the island should have its own designated aldermanic representative. After postponing approval of the budget due to a dearth of available information, the first substantive decision of the new authority was to take direct control of Dorset's main roads. In addition, it was agreed that the 'three lions passant' were adopted as the seal of the new county authority.
- 1.3 The budget for the first year of the Authority's operations was £1.166 million. By way of contrast, the last County Council net budget (2018/19) was £283.3 million. The first clerk to Dorset County Council, E A Fooks was paid a salary of £2,000, a large sum at the time. However, from within this figure he had to furnish offices and staff with which to administer DCC's business.

2. Early change and innovation

- 2.1 DCC assumed oversight and budgetary responsibility for the police, coroner, weights and measures, electoral registration and reformatory schools. One of the most notable and immediate impacts of the new county authority was upon educational provision. DCC assumed responsibility for a total of 270 elementary schools and supported educational endeavours such as scholarships for prospective university students and the funding of education for children dependent upon the Poor Law. In a related development, DCC established the county library services in 1921 with assistance from the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. By 1939 DCC had taken on responsibility for almost the entire county road network which measured nearly 1900 miles. DCC also assumed responsibility for the licensing of drivers and vehicles. By 1938, there were over 41,000 vehicles on the register. That year, DCC had a staff of some 200, compared to the c. 4000 it currently employs. The council also administered a sizeable portfolio of 46 farms and smallholdings amounting to over 2,600 hectares.

3. Development of the Council and the war years

- 3.1 During the First World War, DCC prioritised an increase in food production and the maintenance of civil defence. The County Council elections of 1919 witnessed the return of the first two women councillors. There was an increase in responsibilities for the County Council in the post-war period most notably through the Local Government Act of 1929 under which the total number of councillors and aldermen rose to 89.
- 3.2 DCC acquired Stratton Manor in 1910 and many of the distributed functions of the County Council were brought together for the first time in one place. The County Council decided to amalgamate the six buildings it occupied in Dorchester by acquiring Colliton House and Park for its new headquarters. The foundation stone was laid by Lord Shaftesbury in 1938. County Hall's construction, delayed by the

outbreak of war, was finally completed in 1955, and formally opened by the Lord Bishop of Sherborne on 11 May 1956. The building was subsequently extended in to accommodate growing numbers of staff, and at one time boasted two tennis courts. The county's archive service, the Dorset Record Office (now the Dorset History Centre) was established in the basement of County Hall in 1955.

- 3.3 DCC took a lead role in organising and directing civil defence and support services during the Second World War. The council organised Air Raid Precaution activities, coordinated food supplies and transportation and liaised closely with the military command as it developed plans for the invasion of occupied Europe in 1944. County Hall served as the headquarters of the Women's Land Army in Dorset during the conflict.

4. Post-war change and the development of social care

- 4.1 DCC assumed responsibility for the Dorset Fire Brigade in 1948, later sharing that responsibility with Bournemouth and Poole, overseeing the merger with Wiltshire in 2016. The County Council's close relationship with the Dorset Constabulary was founded on its clerkship of the Police Authority through to the abolition of that body in 2012. DCC received its royal grant of arms with the crest and 'Who's Afear'd' motto in 1950. The Council, supported the development of many of the county's key success stories. Notable were the 1959 designation of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the 2001 UNESCO World Heritage designation for the Jurassic Coast. DCC has also facilitated the establishment of the Arts Development Company and was a key partner in the delivery of the 2012 Olympic Games venue in Weymouth and Portland. The Council has also been closely engaged in supporting economic development within the county with examples such as Winfrith and Wytch Farm.

- 4.2 With the abolition of the Poor Law and under the terms of the 1946 and 1948 National Assistance Acts, the Council was charged with the care of older persons 'in need of care and attention which is not otherwise available to them'. From this starting point, social care both for adults and children has become the biggest function of the Council and an activity in terms of resourcing that remains a huge and growing challenge in the present day.

5. Boundary changes past and present

- 5.1 Dorset County Council maintained its original territorial limits until in 1931 when Kinson was transferred to Bournemouth County Borough. Local government reorganisation in 1974 enlarged Dorset with the inclusion of Bournemouth and Christchurch, both formerly part of Hampshire. In 1997, another reorganisation saw the creation of two unitary councils in Bournemouth and Poole. With the inception of Dorset Council on 1 April, local government boundaries will once again change.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Dorset County Council has brought about much in its 130 year history and has made many contributions to the lives of residents and communities. This above report can only offer a tiny sample of its activities and achievements but county councillors past and present will have their own memories of these achievements.

Mike Harries
Chief Executive
March 2019

Appendix One: Royal Grant of Arms to Dorset County Council, 1950

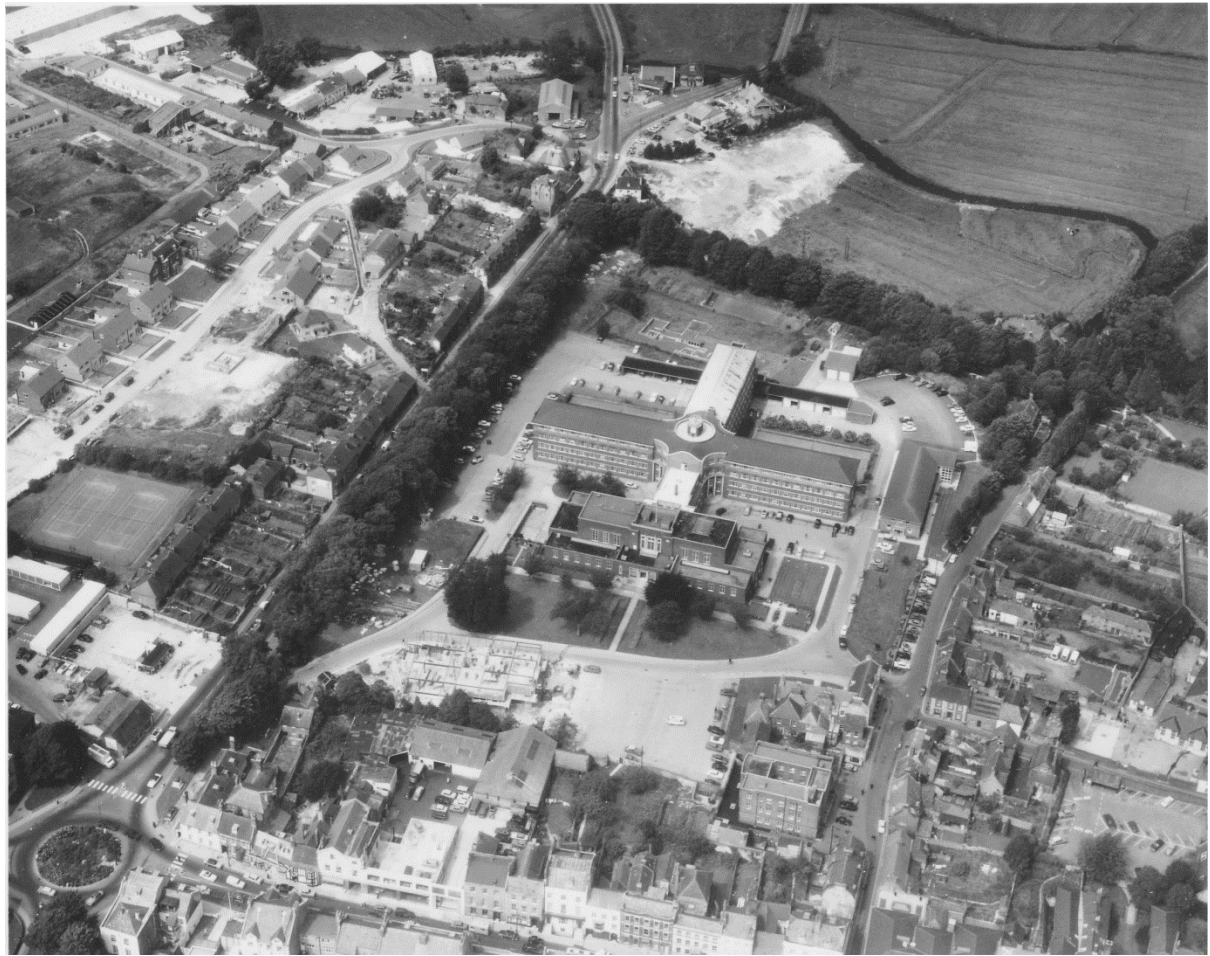


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Appendix Two: Present day logo of Dorset County Council



Appendix Three: Aerial photograph of County Hall, c. 1961



Appendix Four: Chairmen of Dorset County Council 1888-2019

Chairmen of Dorset County

17th February 1889/18th February 1889

Lord Stalbridge was appointed **Chairman of the Provisional County Council**, which held two meetings. At the meeting on the 18th February 1889, the **Viscount Portman** was elected Chairman, and the **Earl of Eldon**, Vice Chairman, of the County Council which came into being on the 1st April 1889.

1 April 1889 - 13 March 1917

The Right Hon. William Henry Berkeley,
The Viscount Portman.

13 March 1917 - 29 November 1922

Colonel John Robert Phelps Goodden

29 November 1922 - 21 May 1924

Colonel Robert Henville Simonds, OBE

21 May 1924 - 15 March 1946

The Right Hon. The Earl of Shaftesbury, PC, KP,
GCVO, CBE

15 March 1946 - 22 April 1955

Alfred Douglas Pass, OBE, DL

22 April 1955 – 11 May 1962

The Right Hon. Lord Digby, KG, DSO, MC, VMH11th

May, 1962 – 5 May 1967

Commander Henry Kelsall Beckford Mitchell, DL, RN
(Ret'd.)

5 May 1967 – 5 May 1977

Lt.-Col George William Mansell, CBE, DL

5 May 1977 - 7 May 1981

Deric Sidney Scott DL

7 May 1981 – 28 April 1988

Air Commodore Kenneth John McIntyre CB, CBE, DL

28 April 1988 – 27 May 1993

Sir Stephen George Hammick Bt, DL

27 May 1993 – 21 June 2001

Mrs Patricia Ann Hymers, DL

21 June 2001 – 18 June 2009

John Copson Peake, MBE

18 June 2009 – 21 April 2016

John Leslie Wilson

21 April 2016 – 18 May 2017

Andrew R Cattaway

18 May 2017 – 31 March 2019

Hilary Ann Cox

Leaders of Dorset County Council – 1987-2019

The Rev Colin Hodge – 1987-1993

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Dr Geoffrey Tapper – 1993-1997

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Trevor Jones – 1997-2001

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David J Fox – 2001-2002

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Tim Palmer – 2002-2006

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Angus Campbell – 2006-2013

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Spencer Flower – 2013-2014

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Robert Gould – 2014-2017

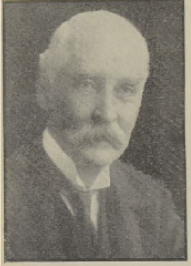



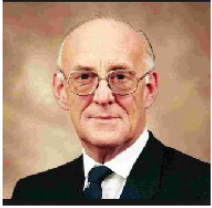




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Rebecca Knox – 2017-2019

Note: Before 1987 there was no Leader of Dorset County Council.

Appendix Six: Clerks to and CEOs of Dorset County Council 1899-2019

Clerks to and Chief Executives of the County Council

 <small>Mr. E. Archdall Ffooks, the first Clerk of the Dorset County Council.</small> Edward Archdall Ffooks 1899-1925	 <small>Mr. J. Leslie Torr, the second Clerk of the Dorset County Council.</small> John Leslie Torr 1925-1935	 Charles Phipps Brutton CBE 1935-1961	 A C Templeman 1961 - 1967	 Kenneth Abel 1967 - 1991
 Peter Kent Harvey 1991 - 1998	 David Hugh Jenkins 1998 - 2013	 Debbie Ward 2013-2017	 Mike J Harries 2018- present	