

Minister for Housing and Construction
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Sport and Recreation
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Leader of the House



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NOTICE TO ALL DORSET COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Dear community members,

As you may know, I have established a Board of Inquiry into aspects of the operation of the Dorset Council. I have also decided to suspend all councillors for the duration of the inquiry and Andrew Wardlaw has been appointed as Commissioner to administer the Council.

I have not made this decision lightly as I appreciate the impacts that this will have on the staff and the Dorset community and the operations of the council. The concerns that have been raised with me are, however, serious, and need to be considered fully.

The establishment of the Board of Inquiry and the suspension of councillors should not be taken as a finding that anyone has done anything wrong. This will be assessed through an objective, fair and transparent process where everyone will have an opportunity to have their say.

So what does this mean for the services of Dorset Council?

The Board of Inquiry and suspension of councillors will have no impact on the services delivered by the Dorset Council. The business of the Council will continue as normal. Any decisions or actions required from the Mayor or Councillors will be directed to the Commissioner, Andrew Wardlaw. While in place, the Commissioner has all of the functions and powers of the Council.

Council meetings will continue to be held and there will continue to be opportunities for the community to ask questions about Council operations.

I am confident that Andrew will work closely with both the Council and the community to ensure that services of the Council are not affected and that the views of the community will continue to be represented in his decisions.

I understand that Andrew will be onsite at the Council chambers as early as tomorrow, 3 August 2023 to start engaging with the General Manager and employees of the Council.

I have asked the Board of Inquiry to report to me no later than 28 February 2024. Every effort will be made to complete the Board of Inquiry process as quickly as possible to minimise the disruption to the operation of the Dorset Council and community.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Street".

Hon Nic Street MP
Minister Local Government

02 August 2023