

Cabinet

Dorset County Council



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| Date of Meeting | 18 January 2017 |
| <p><u>Cabinet Member(s)</u> Colin Jamieson - Cabinet Member for Economy and Growth</p> <p><u>Lead Director(s)</u> Mike Harries - Director for Environment and Economy</p> | |
| Subject of Report | Dorset County Council European Strategy 2017-2020 |
| Executive Summary | <p>This Strategy replaces the European Framework 2007-13 and the European Strategy 2000-2006.</p> <p>It outlines how Dorset County Council aims to make the best use of European Union (EU) policy, programmes and associated funding to support corporate priorities, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Obtaining EU funding for projects and programmes that contribute to the County Council's Corporate Plan outcomes and priorities, in order to benefit Dorset residents and businesses, and (ii) Influencing the shaping of future competences, laws, policies and funds reassigned from the EU in the interests of the Council and the residents and businesses it serves. <p>It is a strategic overview, not a detailed work plan, and is drafted to ensure support is linked to current and future priorities without the need for further amendment. Working with partners from public, private, and third sectors is key to successful delivery of the strategy. The Strategy does not discuss potential implications of Brexit in any depth, as this will be considered by the Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team separately. It is clear though that the government is committed to Britain leaving the EU and the question is when and on what terms this will happen. This is likely to mean that there will come a point when our focus will need to shift away from influencing the EU policy and bidding for EU funding to instead pursuing our own government to invest more in a strong and successful Dorset.</p> |
| Impact Assessment: | Equalities Impact Assessment: Screening identified no equalities impacts issues for individuals with protected characteristics relating to the subject of this report. |

Dorset County Council European Strategy 2017-2020

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| | <p>Delivery and development of the actions in the European Strategy will involve further equality impact screening and assessments as required.</p> <p>Use of Evidence: The Strategy has been developed based on previous DCC European Strategies and the current DCC Policy Framework with particular reference to the Corporate Plan and the Enabling Economic Growth Strategy 2015-2020.</p> <p>Budget: The work of the strategy is within current budgets. Individual project proposals supported by the Strategy will require approval via the usual mechanisms for external funding and/or Accountable Body status as appropriate. There are no VAT implications.</p> <p>Risk Assessment: Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council's approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current Risk: MEDIUM Residual Risk: LOW</p> <p>The current risk is predominantly related to the financial and reputational risks associated with the potential for opportunities to be missed without an up to date strategy.</p> <p>Other Implications: Delivery of strategy actions offers opportunities for Sustainability, Property and Assets, Voluntary Organisations, and Public Health.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation</p> | <p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>(i) Considers the Strategy and proposes any amendments. (ii) Approves, with any agreed amendments, the European Strategy 2017-2020.</p> |
| <p>Reason for Recommendation</p> | <p>The strategy supports and aligns European work with the Council's corporate priorities</p> |
| <p>Appendices</p> | <p>Appendix 1: Service priorities 2016/17 Appendix 2: EU funds to DCC 2006-2016 Appendix 3: Southern England Local Partners</p> |
| <p>Background Papers</p> | <p>Dorset County Council, Enabling Growth 2015-2020 Dorset County Council Corporate Plan 2015-2018 House of Commons Library Briefing papers, in particular: Brexit: Impact Across Policy Areas (26 August 2016) Brexit and Local Government (20 July 2016) Local Government Association Brexit Bulletins</p> |
| <p>Officer Contact</p> | <p>Name: Jon Bird, European Policy and Funding Officer Tel: 01305 221895 Email: j.bird@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p> |

1. Context: Dorset County Council European Strategy 2017-2020

1.1 A strong and successful Dorset, with high levels of health, wellbeing and safety depends on a vibrant economy. Dorset County Council is committed to enabling local enterprises to thrive by providing the physical and social infrastructure necessary for their success.

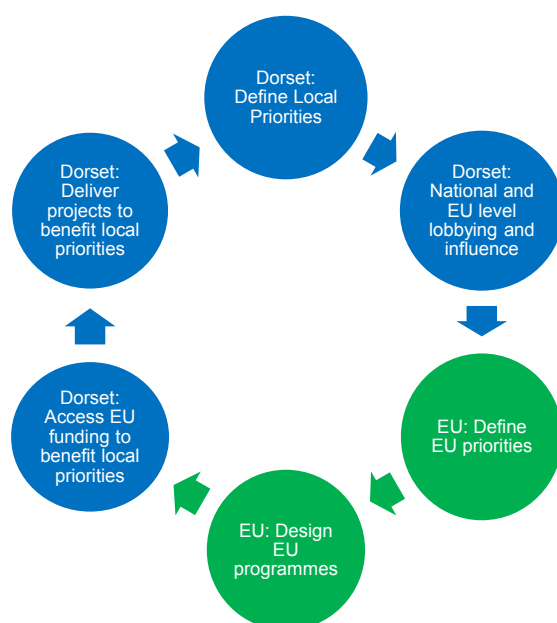
1.2 Influencing EU policy (and therefore funding programmes) to benefit Dorset residents and businesses and - more visibly - using EU funding to help deliver local priorities have been effective ways of delivering our ambitions for economic growth and high standards of health and wellbeing.

Following the announcement of the result of the referendum on whether the UK should remain part of or leave the European Union the context has changed and is expected to change significantly and rapidly in the coming months and years.

Dorset can still benefit from allocated and competitive EU funding and associated HM Treasury guarantees until 2020.

1.3 While there is much to be gained from influencing policy and accessing EU funding, resources need to be committed to European work to make the most of the County Council's relationship with the EU, to ensure the Council has the capacity to keep up to date on opportunities available, develop bids, source match funding for potential projects, find suitable project partners, manage and administer projects using sometimes unfamiliar tools and accounting conventions of the EU, and influence post-Brexit policy effectively.

1.4 The policy-funding relationship: Dorset's interactions with EU institutions:



1.5 Dorset County Council:

- has secured over £8 million of EU funding over the past decade to deliver a diverse range of projects, including improving rural enterprise, social care, tourism, the coastal landscape, and business innovation;
- has successfully petitioned to be included in EU funding programmes;

- is leading bids for some of the c.£40 million of 2015-2020 European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) allocated to Dorset;
 - is managing the €4 million Northern Dorset and Southern Dorset LEADER programmes;
 - is eligible to apply for project funds from a variety of EU programmes with budgets totalling billions of Euros in the 2014-2020 period;
 - is affected by EU policy and programmes in many policy areas;
 - has the opportunity to learn from others' experiences through funded projects;
 - has the opportunity to share and build on its exemplar practice through funded projects.
- 1.6 This strategy outlines how Dorset County Council aims to make the best use of EU policy, programmes and associated funding to support the Council's corporate priorities.
- 1.7 This Strategy replaces the European Framework 2007-13 and the European Strategy 2000-2006.

2. **Aim, objectives, and priority areas**

2.1 **Aim:** Ensure Dorset County Council European policy and funding activity maximises opportunities to support corporate priorities.

2.2 **Objectives:**

- (i) Obtain EU funding for projects and programmes that contribute to the County Council's Corporate Plan, outcomes and priorities, in order to benefit Dorset residents and businesses.
- (ii) Influence the shaping of future competences, laws, policies and funds reassigned from the EU in the interests of the Council and the residents and businesses it serves.

2.3 **Priorities:** Dorset County Council's vision is stated in the 2015-18 Corporate Plan:

- **Working together for a strong and successful Dorset**

And this is to be achieved through two "areas of focus":

- **Enabling economic growth** - Having a healthy, vibrant and growing economy has a positive impact on everyone, and;
- **Promoting health, wellbeing and safeguarding** - Everyone wants to be healthy and safe and to enjoy a good quality of life. We will promote healthy lifestyles, help people to be independent, giving them choice and control, and help everyone to be safe, particularly those who are vulnerable.

2.4 This is distilled in the *Cross-Council Outcomes Framework* to work to ensure:

- People in Dorset are **Healthy**
- People in Dorset are **Safe**
- People in Dorset are **Independent**
- Dorset's economy is **Prosperous**

2.5 Dorset County Council works with Dorset residents and organisations to achieve these goals. This EU strategy supports the council's efforts to do so.

- 2.6 Current priorities likely to be relevant to EU programmes and funding opportunities are listed in Appendix 1, alongside key contacts. This list will be updated regularly.
- 2.7 The County Council has ensured that Dorset is actively and beneficially included in the Rural Development Programme for England 2014-20, with the establishment of an EU funded LEADER programme across all of rural Dorset. This is being delivered through two Local Action Groups (Southern Dorset and Northern Dorset LAGs) for which the Council is the accountable body.
- 2.8 There is no longer a need to influence future EU policy. The focus of policy influence can now be usefully directed at the path the UK takes to leaving the EU, particularly in relation to powers returned to Local Authorities, how laws and regulations relevant to Local Authorities currently decided by the EU will change as the UK leaves the EU, and decisions of particular interest to Dorset's key industries, unique environment, and demographic characteristics.

3. Actions

- 3.1 Obtain EU funding for projects and programmes that contribute to DCC priorities, in order to benefit Dorset residents and businesses by:
- exploring the potential of the 2014-20 funding programmes;
 - identifying funding opportunities and ensuring DCC and other organisations in the County can make the most of them;
 - communicating and disseminating opportunities;
 - developing bids for funding in priority areas;
 - delivering funded projects;
 - participating as partners in projects contributing to corporate priorities;
 - raising Dorset's profile and participating in relevant networks;
 - working with land supporting local partners including Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership, Dorset Local Nature Partnership, and local authorities whenever this is likely to benefit Dorset;
 - maximising the benefits of membership of Southern England Local Partners (SELP) and their Brussels office, including funding guidance, partner searches, and project proposals received from other organisations through their networks.
- 3.2 Influence the shaping of future competences, laws, policies and funds reassigned from the EU in the interests of the Council and the residents and businesses it serves by:
- maximising the benefits of membership of SELP and their Brussels office, including using SELP to raise Dorset's profile, using intelligence gathered in Brussels, particularly from UK government representation, and work with other members with similar interests;
 - working with the LGA and other bodies on matters of common interest and concern;
 - developing and maintaining networks of contacts able to influence the shape of the policy and regulatory landscape post-Brexit;
 - taking every opportunity to promote Dorset's interests and raise the County's profile.

4. Complementary policy and strategies

- 4.1 The European Strategy is designed to serve corporate aims and priorities - at the time of publication these are set out in the 2015-2018 Corporate Plan and supporting policy and strategy, including the Forward Together 2020 programme

and its associated Outcomes-Based Accountability Delivery Plan - as corporate policy and priorities evolve, the European Policy will help support delivery of the relevant corporate plan and related policy and strategy. There is no need for the European Strategy to be updated when there is a new corporate plan, although service priorities will be updated accordingly.

- 4.2 In the context of Dorset's Policy Framework, The European Strategy is an element of the Council's *Enabling Economic Growth Strategy*.

5. Mechanism

- 5.1 The County Council has a well-established mechanism and approval process for accessing all types of external funding and ensuring projects that do not support Council aims are not progressed. No separate mechanism is necessary for accessing EU funding.

6. Resources

- 6.1 The institutions of the EU can be considered remote and difficult to understand, due to the often complex structures, technical arrangements, and language used. Specialist, up to date knowledge of the institutions, programmes, and relevant people is key to ensuring Dorset makes the most of its relationship with the EU. At present, the Council commits a small dedicated budget and a European Policy and Funding Officer to this function. A significant share of the budget covers our membership of South East Local Partners (SELP), which gives access to a range of facilities that would be uneconomical and impractical for the County Council to deliver in-house. A summary of the benefits of SELP are given in Appendix 2.

7. Working together

- 7.1 Most opportunities to work with EU funding require or benefit from working with other organisations: Almost all EU funding requires some degree of match funding, and many EU funding programmes are based on the principle of organisations from different sectors and member states working together. Working with the Local Enterprise Partnership, other Local Authorities, Partnerships hosted by Dorset County Council (such as the Jurassic Coast World Heritage team, the Dorset Coast Forum, Partnership for Older People's Project, and the Areas for Outstanding Natural Beauty), local businesses, third sector organisation and educational establishments can all bring expertise, resources to develop projects, and match funding.
- 7.2 Dorset Community Action also has a key role to play in enabling and equipping third sector and social enterprises to benefit directly from European funding.

8. Timescale

- 8.1 This strategy is designed to support the goals of DCC for the period 2017-2020, and is designed to accommodate developments in local priorities.

Mike Harries
Director for Environment and Economy
January 2017

Appendix 1: Service Priorities 2016/17:

| Priority | Lead contact |
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| Area of focus: Enabling economic growth | |
| Development and delivery of the Western Growth Strategy | Dave Walsh, Economy and Enterprise Team Leader |
| Key business sector support (food and drink, care and health, creative industries, tourism, advanced manufacturing) | Dave Walsh Economy and Enterprise Team Leader |
| Increasing speed, coverage, and takeup of broadband | Dugald Lockhart, Project Lead, Superfast Dorset |
| Improving the competitiveness of Dorset business | Dave Walsh, Economy and Enterprise Team Leader |
| Sustainable Asset Management and Resource Efficiency | Peter Scarlett - Estate and Assets Service Manager |
| Cultural Tourism activities to extend tourist season | Paul Leivers, Head of Early Help and Community Service |
| Innovations in outcomes based commissioning and accountability | John Alexander - Performance Manager, Corporate Development, Andy Gill - Performance Manager, Corporate Development |
| Area of focus: Promoting health, wellbeing and safeguarding | |
| Support projects outlined in the Public Health Dorset Research Strategy | Rachel Partridge - Deputy Director of Public Health |
| Social Capital Development - how to help people live, work , and be supported by their communities | Paul Leivers - Head of Early Help and Community Service |
| Use of media and technology to support people in their own homes | Paul Leivers - Head of Early Help and Community Service |
| Improving quality of provision of social care, including training and Personal Assistant models of registration pilot(s) | Debbie Reiffer - Commissioning Manager - Economic and Workforce Development, David Millen - Lead Commissioner (Health, Older People, Physical Disability and Carers) |
| Improving attractiveness of social care profession, including improved training and qualifications | Debbie Reiffer - Commissioning Manager - Economic and Workforce Development, David Millen - Lead Commissioner (Health, Older People, Physical Disability and Carers) |
| Active Ageing | Sue Warr - Service Manager - Early Help Programme Manager - Dorset POPP |
| Share Dorset exemplars, eg Safe and Independent Living, Wayfinders | Sue Warr - Service Manager - Early Help Programme Manager - Dorset POPP |
| Environment, Economy, and Health: Contribution of the natural environment to health; developing a Natural Health Service | Phil Sterling - Coast and Countryside Service Manager |
| Access to natural recreation space | Phil Sterling - Coast and Countryside Service Manager |

Appendix 2: EU funds to DCC 2006-2016

| FYE Bid Made | Project Name/Brief details | Funding Programme | Source | Grant Value (£) |
|---------------------|---|---|---------------|------------------------|
| 2006 | Providing recycling bins to Districts | European Metals Recycling | EU | 20,000 |
| 2006 | Wessex Ridgeway Project | Leader + | EU | 168,000 |
| 2008 | Sowing Seeds (Cranborne Chase and West Wilts AONB and Community Partnership for North Dorset): | RDPE LARC LEADER + | EU | 2,850,000 |
| 2008 | Chalk and Cheese: | RDPE LARC LEADER + | EU | 3,100,000 |
| 2009 | Sherborne Douzelage - Gryphon School and Grifino Poland study links | Comenius | EU | 2,000 |
| 2009 | Marine Planning Legacy 2012 | Interreg | EU | 1,400,000 |
| 2010 | CYCLE Project: developing a network of French-English cycle roads and greenways, promoting the Channel regions as eco-aware tourist destinations | Interreg | EU | 405,009 |
| 2012 | CORDIALE; producing a common methodology for understanding, recording and celebrating landscape value and the impacts of climate change on our future landscapes: £1.4m secured for all partners, Dorset may benefit with up to £42,100 | InterregIVa | EU | 42,100 |
| 2012 | Energy crops: ROKWOOD Project led by German partner looking to develop woody biomass schemes. Local partnership includes Kingston Maurward College | FP7 | EU | 60,000 |
| 2012 | Valmer (Valuing Marine Ecosystems Services) European Project | Interreg IVA | EU | 86,000 |
| 2012 | Sustainable Energy Across the Common Space (SEACS) - joint bid with Devon County Council, Wiltshire County Council, Energy Saving Trust and 3 French Partners. 30 Dorset Schools will be involved in energy saving activities. | Interreg IVA | EU | 130,000 |
| 2014 | LoToNo: Carbon reduction programme across sub region | Enterprise and Industry Grant Programme | EU | 270,000 |
| | TOTAL | | | 8,533,109 |

Appendix 3: Southern England Local Partners

Dorset County Council's membership of Southern England Local Partners (SELP), hosted by Hampshire County Council, gives the Council access to regular updates on relevant EU policy and funding opportunities, the ability to send a Brussels-based SELP delegate to European meetings and events, access to a host of contacts in the "Brussels Bubble", regular meetings in the UK on relevant EU matters, and access to an award-winning EU funding guide relevant to Southern England local authorities. Pooling resources with other organisations in the South of England effectively increases the capacity and competency of the County Council while reducing costs by eliminating the need to produce bespoke resources in-house, and offering a presence and influence in Brussels that would not be economically justifiable for the council acting on its own.

The SELP funding guide, Brussels Bulletins, and other resources are available from the members-only section of the SELP website at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/selp-securearea>. email j.bird@dorsetcc.gov.uk for password access.