

Dorset County Council

Minutes of a meeting held at County Hall,
Colliton Park, Dorchester on 14 November 2013.

Present:

John Wilson (Chairman)
Andrew Cattaway (Vice-Chairman)

Michael Bevan, Richard Biggs, Dan Brember, Steve Butler, Mike Byatt, Andy Canning, Ronald Coatsworth, Robin Cook, Toni Coombs, Barrie Cooper, Hilary Cox, Deborah Croney, Lesley Dedman, Janet Dover, Fred Drane, Beryl Ezzard, Peter Finney, Spencer Flower, Ian Gardner, Robert Gould, Peter Hall, David Harris, Jill Haynes, Colin Jamieson, Susan Jefferies, Mervyn Jeffery, Trevor Jones, Ros Kayes, Paul Kimber, Rebecca Knox, Mike Lovell, David Mannings, Margaret Phipps, Peter Richardson, Ian Smith, Mark Tewkesbury, William Trite, Daryl Turner, David Walsh, Peter Wharf and Kate Wheller.

Officers attending:

Debbie Ward (Chief Executive), Miles Butler (Director for Environment), Catherine Driscoll (Director for Adult and Community Services), David Phillips (Director of Public Health), Les Gardner (Head of Early Intervention), Mike Harries (Deputy Director for Environment), Paul Kent (Director for Corporate Resources), Jonathan Mair (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Lee Gallagher (Democratic Services Manager), Helen Whitby (Principal Democratic Services Officer) and David Northover (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

(Note: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the County Council to be held on **13 February 2014**.)

Apologies for Absence

81. Apologies for absence were received from Pauline Batstone and David Jones.

Code of Conduct

82. There were no declarations by members of any disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

Minutes

83. The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2013 were confirmed and signed.

Chairman's Announcements

84. The Chairman reported the following events since the last meeting:-

(i) New Council Meeting Format

Following the Local Government Association's Peer Review in July there were recommendations to reform the format of Council meetings later on the agenda. The intended outcomes were to improve communication and involvement with communities and members whilst reducing unnecessary process.

(ii) Royal letter

The Chairman referred to his letter reported at the last Council meeting regarding the birth of the royal baby. He had received a response from HRH

The Duke of Cambridge's Private Secretary on 31 July 2013, which was read out at the meeting.

(iii) Two Royal Visits

The Chairman represented the County Council on 22 July 2013 at an event organised by the Dorset Youth Association in Moreton Gardens to celebrate the Association's 70th Anniversary, which was attended by the HRH The Earl of Wessex.

It was also reported that on 1 November 2013 HRH The Prince of Wales visited the Dorset History Centre and took a tour of the Archives' offices and depository.

(iv) Sir Tony Robinson visits Dorset History Centre

On 30 October 2013 the Archives Service enjoyed a visit from Sir Tony Robinson, who came to address a selected audience on how to research family history.

(v) High Sheriff's Celebrating Children in Dorset

The Chairman, together with other elected members, represented the Council when the High Sheriff hosted an event called Celebrating Children in Dorset at Queen Elizabeth's School, Wimborne on 25 July 2013. The event was supported by the Lord-Lieutenant and the keynote speech was by the Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Families.

(vi) Awards for Cadets and Reservists

The Chairman attended a ceremony with the Chief Executive at the National Sailing Academy on 17 October 2013 held by the Lord-Lieutenant to present awards to those members of Reserve Forces and Cadets whose achievements were deemed to warrant community recognition.

(vii) Remembrance Services

On Sunday 10 November 2013 the Vice Chairman represented the County Council at the Remembrance Service in Sherborne Abbey and in the afternoon the Chairman did likewise at Wimborne Minster. A remembrance Service was also held at County Hall on 11 November 2013 which was well attended by staff and members and by the Lord-Lieutenant.

(viii) Retirements and Appointments

The Chairman paid tribute to three retirements. The first was that of Mrs Anthony Pitt-Rivers from the post of Lord-Lieutenant, who was due to retire in January 2014 after nearly eight years. She had been a tireless supporter of Dorset events for young and old, civilian and military, and for Royal visits.

The second related to the Director for Environment, Miles Butler who would retire before the next Council meeting. Mr Butler joined the Council in 2001 and had led on many significant developments which included the designation of our Jurassic Coast as a World Heritage Site, the construction of the Weymouth Relief Road and the Olympics transport arrangements. Members wished him every happiness and success in his retirement.

The third retirement related to the Acting Director for Children's Services, Jackie Last who had recently retired. She had held senior roles in the former Social Services Directorate and then in Children's Services where she

became Deputy Director and Acting Director. Members wished her happiness in her retirement.

It was also noted that the new Director for Children's Services, Sara Tough would start in January 2014.

(ix) Other Events Attended

The Chairman informed members that he and the Vice-Chairman had also attended the Castavaria Guides camp in Dorchester, three AGMs of local organisations, two visits to Royal Navy ships, two concerts by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, five Citizenship ceremonies and five Civic Days.

Leader's Announcements

85. The Leader of the Council reported on the following issues facing the Council, and invited questions from all members:

(i) Innovation and Leadership Exchange

The Leader explained that the event had been organised by the Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise (iESE) to cover leadership across Commercial, Community, Collaboration and Culture. He reported that he had attended this event on 17 October 2013 as a keynote speaker in relation to community leadership.

The County Council Member for Weymouth Town asked how growth and prosperity would be achieved through iESE. The Leader highlighted growth as one of the key drivers for the Council which fed into the economy and job opportunities, which in turn would lead to prosperity.

The County Council Member for Egdon Heath drew attention to cultural change throughout the Council and the need for all members to be actively involved and engaged as a member led organisation. The Leader confirmed that there was a need to develop a culture of innovation and members' involvement would be key to the changes.

The County Council Member for Bridport supported the use of social enterprises in future service modelling and highlighted the need for member consideration of how the working relationships could be developed to ensure maximum value in terms of the contribution to partnership working from both sides.

(ii) Meetings with Dorset Members of Parliament (MP)

It was noted that the Leader had met individually with each Dorset MP to discuss national and local issues and that he had constructively relayed matters that affected Dorset which would hopefully feed into Government thinking. The meetings were considered to be positive and would be held again in the future.

The County Council Member for Portland Tophill asked if the Leader planned to meet with Members of the European Parliament, to which the Leader confirmed that he would make an effort to arrange a meeting as Europe did affect Dorset.

(iii) Government Lobbying

The Leader outlined the lobbying activity that he had undertaken regarding concerns for the Council, which would hopefully be reflected in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement due on 5 December 2013, and more detail in the budget settlement later in December.

Motion – Making Dorset a Living Wage County Council

86.1 The Council considered a motion submitted by the County Council Members for Portland Tophill, Weymouth Town, Portland Harbour and Rodwell in relation to action to make Dorset a Living Wage Council. A briefing paper by the Director for Corporate Resources was also considered alongside the motion to provide background information regarding the impact of the living wage on the Council.

86.2 The County Council Member for Portland Tophill presented the motion, which was seconded by the County Council Member for Weymouth Town, and expressed his view that the Council should support people who were paid the minimum wage and low pay and therefore uplift wages from £6.31 per hour by £1 per hour.

86.3 He reported that the living wage generally affected 28k people across Dorset, and highlighted the Living Wage Campaign which had been holding public meetings across Dorset in Bridport, Dorchester and Bournemouth. He then informed members that over 100 councils nationwide had adopted the living wage.

86.4 The Leader of the Council raised concern that the content of the motion related directly to the terms of reference of the Staffing Committee and felt that this issue would be more appropriately considered by the Committee at its next meeting on 28 November 2013. Recognition of the recent publication on the national negotiation on public sector pay would also need to form part of the discussion and consideration of this item at the Staffing Committee.

86.5 He therefore moved a motion that the item be referred to the Staffing Committee so that it could be considered in greater detail, which was seconded by the County Council Member for Bride Valley.

86.6 A number of members expressed concern that the item would be referred to the Staffing Committee without a full debate at the County Council meeting, and drew attention to the need for members to be able to raise local matters in Council meetings, especially in the light of increased member engagement. The Chairman confirmed that the process was included in the Constitution for this to happen in relation to urgent motions or those that did not relate to the terms of reference of Committees. It was noted that this issue was likely to be considered by the County Council in February 2014 following the Staffing Committee's consideration.

86.7 Some members explained that they supported the referral as this would ensure that the matter would be considered in more detail, and as this matter was sensitive it was important that this should be done by the Staffing Committee, which would also take account of the national picture on this issue.

86.8 The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group commented that she felt that the motion to refer the item to the Staffing Committee was appropriate but had been moved too quickly during the meeting, which caused members to be disappointed not to be able to at least debate the merits of the motion through a limited discussion.

86.9 It was confirmed that the Staffing Committee would consider the item at a public meeting, and therefore all members were welcome to attend and express any views that they had at the meeting.

86.10 On being put to the vote, the referral motion by the Leader of the Council was agreed.

Resolved

87. That the motion in relation to Dorset becoming a Living Wage County Council be referred to the Staffing Committee for consideration on 28 November 2013.

Reports of the Cabinet

88.1 The reports of the Cabinet meetings held on 17 July, 18 September and 2 October 2013 were presented and their adoption duly moved and seconded.

88.2 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2013:-

Supported Local Bus Services

88.3 In relation to minute 376, the County Council Member for Lytchett provided the Leader with information about the recent success of Trans in providing a comprehensive bus service, including evenings and Sunday services, at a cost of £700k. He asked why the County Council could not provide a similar service. The Leader stated that even after reductions non-commercial bus services would still require £2m in subsidy. He agreed to consider the information provided and any lessons learned from this.

88.4 The County Council Member for Bridport was concerned about the subsidising of community transport and asked whether there would be a separate report to Cabinet on affordability and funding. The Leader explained that this formed part of the review of bus provision and the Council was working with Town and Parish Councils and using the experience of the Partnership for Older People Programme to inform this. The Council had agreed to enhance current provision and was exploring better ways of doing this whilst addressing rural isolation. The matter was to be considered by the Cabinet in due course.

88.5 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2013:-

Transformation Team Budget

88.6 In relation to minute 396, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group asked whether the Transformation Team budget of £350,000 would include the cost of the new badges provided for elected members. She also reported that she had already been asked for identification as the new badge had not been recognised by a member of staff. The Cabinet Member for Education and Communications explained that the cost of the badges had been met from the Member Development budget. One of the outcomes of the recent Peer Review had been for the Council to become more member-led. The new badges would mean that members could be identified more easily by staff and would raise their profile.

88.7 In relation to minute 396, the County Council Member for Egdon Heath referred to the Transformation Budget and asked for confirmation that any suggestions for service changes would be welcomed from members and staff and that all suggestions should be followed up. The Leader confirmed that this was embedded in the culture of the Council and open-mindedness should be the norm.

Meeting Future Challenges Progress Report

88.8 In relation to minute 386, the County Council Member for Weymouth Town, who was also a Director of a voluntary organisation who provided accommodation, asked why there had been slippage of £500,000 in the savings identified for Learning Disability Services and drew attention to the additional pressure this would place on voluntary organisations, who were already stretched. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care explained that more time had been needed to allocate accommodation to service users. The intention was to save £1m, with £500,000 being found during the current year. All service users involved now had a residence plan and it was hoped that they would all move by April 2014. Discussions with voluntary organisations were ongoing and she looked forward to working with them in future. She offered to discuss this further outside of the meeting.

88.9 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2013:-

Quarterly Asset Management Update

88.10 In relation to minute 425, the County Council Member for Blandford referred to the funding shortfall for the provision of a synthetic turf pitch at The Blandford School. He knew that a bid had been made to the Football Association and that this involved the sale of the Milldown School playing field site. He asked why there had been a funding shortfall and why he had not been informed of this as local member. The Deputy Director for Environment explained that the shortfall related to the difference between the County Council allocation, including Optimism Bias, and the likely cost of the project. The Cabinet had agreed to proceed with the application and development of the design and review the situation once the true costs were known. The County Council Member for Blandford added that there had been a stipulation that funding arising from the sale of the playing field would be used to provide other sports facilities. The Deputy Director confirmed that this requirement was clearly noted in the Section 77 agreement. He apologised for the lack of consultation.

Resolved

89. That the reports of the Cabinet be received.

Reports of Overview Committees

90.1 The reports of the following meetings held on the dates stated were presented:-

Environment	1 October 2013
Adult and Community Services	7 October 2013
Public Health	8 October 2013

90.2 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview Committee held on 1 October 2013:-

Policy Development Panels

90.3 On minute 147.1, the County Council Member for Weymouth Town asked about progress in setting up a Policy Development Panel on Private Sector Business Development. The Director for Environment explained that it was unclear at the time of the meeting what the purpose of the Panel would be, but he would ensure that this issue was raised at the next meeting to establish the Panel when the terms of reference were clear.

90.4 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Adult and Community Services Overview Committee held on 7 October 2013:-

Pathways to Independence

90.5 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care informed members that due to the need for pace in decision making and being a member led authority it was necessary to have an additional meeting of the Adult and Community Services Overview Committee on 2 December 2013 to consider an item in relation to 'Pathways to Independence' in advance of the Cabinet budget setting meeting on 18 December 2013. The item would look to introduce radical changes to service provision for the future.

Resolved

91. That the reports be received.

Reports of Scrutiny Committees

92.1 The reports of the following meetings held on the dates stated were presented:-

Audit and Scrutiny	23 July 2013
Audit and Scrutiny	17 September 2013
Audit and Scrutiny	17 October 2013
Dorset Health Scrutiny	13 September 2013

92.2 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 October 2013:-

Policy Development Panel on Engaging and Consulting Members

92.3 On recommendation 219, one of the County Council Members for Dorchester (Trevor Jones), as Chairman of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the recommendation. The Protocol had been produced jointly by a group of cross-party members and senior officers. If adopted, the Protocol would increase elected members' profiles but would also increase their workloads, and enable members to make a more effective contribution to the work of the Council. However, it was recognised that this would take time to achieve. A seminar would be held after the Council meeting in February 2014 to explain the protocol and implications for members.

92.4 Members recognised that they would be expected to follow the Protocol it was necessary for members and officers to understand the implications which involved significant cultural change.

92.5 The Panel would monitor the implementation of the Protocol to ensure the necessary cultural change had taken place. The Policy Development Panel would be able to address any fears or suggested amendments. He thanked the Chief Executive for the way in which she had shown no hesitation in signing up to the cultural change this policy would necessitate. The Chairman of the Council reported that the Protocol had been supported by the Standards and Governance Committee with a few minor changes.

92.6 The Cabinet Member for Education and Communications explained that she had been monitoring all press releases over the last six months to ensure that they were consistent and reflected well on the Council. She was happy for any change to the wording of a press release or quotation to be agreed with the appropriate Cabinet Member and she drew attention to the fact that on some occasions press releases were needed at short notice. This was in response to concerns raised in relation to the involvement of the Cabinet Member having approval authority for press releases. She was more than happy to agree press releases with other people but this would need to be timely.

92.7 The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group was pleased with the work on member engagement. She had a small reservation about press releases although she had been assured by other comments. She referred to the Local Government Association's Code of Recommended Practice for Publicity and that this was being followed.

92.8 She also made reference to the Protocol linking with the outcomes of the recent Peer Review being more member-led applied to all members in the plural rather than a singular body, which set a new precedent which had great merit.

92.9 The County Council Member for Westham asked whether any measures were put in place for when the Cabinet Member for Education and Communications was on holiday or during illness. The Cabinet Member for Education and Communications explained that she had access to emails even when she was on holiday. She was happy for the appropriate Cabinet Member to be given delegated authority in such instances. The Chairman of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee added that the same could be said of local members and that the protocol might need to be adjusted as time progressed and suggested that any changes be considered collectively. He was happy that the Cabinet Member for Education and Communications to arrange cover when it was needed.

92.10 The County Council Member for Bridport was concerned about local member involvement and cited the Bridport Integrated Waste Management Centre as an example where she, as local member, had not been informed of the objections from the Highways Agency and Natural England, and whether they had been addressed or resolved.

92.11 The County Council Member for Bride Valley referred to the Bridport Integrated Waste Management Centre and the working party which had previously been set up to look at possible sites. Local members had been promised a regular bulletin on progress when the working party was wound up but he had not received any such bulletins other than when he had asked for an update. He said that although the identified site was in the Marshwood Vale electoral division, he and the County Council Members for Bridport and Beaminster were also local members and he asked that local member boundaries be applied sensibly. The Cabinet Member for Environment was well aware that the planning application for the Waste Management Centre was in another division and regretted that he had not been informed as he would have liked. She said that there had been little to report since last spring other than to try to get the Highways Agency to withdraw their holding denial. This had taken some time to achieve and the planning application had now been submitted.

92.12 The County Council Member for Portland Tophill welcomed the changes and referred to minerals and quarrying issues on Portland.

92.13 The County Council Member for Egdon Heath thought that the Panel members had worked well together and illustrated how much could be achieved by members working together, taking responsibility and being part of the solution. He thought it was important for the Council to be able to respond quickly to press enquiries and that more than one person should be able to do this especially if an immediate response was required. The protocol would not achieve the necessary change in culture, people would.

92.14 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee held on 13 September 2013:-

92.15 The County Council Member for Bride Valley paid tribute to the work of the Health Partnerships Officer and her work on the Committee for the last six years, and reported that she had moved into a new post. A replacement support officer for the Committee was due to be appointed in January 2014. He also summarised developments in

relation to the consideration of evidence and scrutiny by the Committee, and highlighted examples of recent difficult scrutiny exercises.

Dorset CCG Strategy and Annual Operating Plan

92.16 In relation to minute 45.2, the County Council Member for Highcliffe and Walkford asked about arrangements for locality meetings and how local members could get involved. It was noted that there was no system setup yet but this was being reviewed to maximise member participation.

Urgent Care Services Review Presentation

92.17 In relation to minute 46.6, the County Council Member for Highcliffe and Walkford raised concern about elderly patients being left on wards for too long and the adequate provision of appropriate accommodation, especially when areas like Bournemouth Hospital had no bus service or transport available for relatives or visitors. The Chairman of the Committee confirmed that this issue would be considered alongside wider issues regarding community hospital provision.

Learning for Health Scrutiny Practice in Dorset from the Francis Enquiry - Action Plan

92.18 In relation to minute 53, the County Council Member for Weymouth Town raised concern in respect of the need for advocacy and care planning and the need for services to be focused around service users and patients to promote fundamental advocacy independence, and asked how good practice would be applied and embedded. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care drew attention to the need for active participation in the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board by members and partner organisations. However, she also drew attention to the size and operation of the Board as it was believed to be too large and not able to consider issues and concerns in detail.

Adult Mental Health Urgent Care Services - Update

92.19 In relation to minute 48, the County Council Member for Bridport referred to the large number of public speakers who attended the meeting and that the Chief Executive of Dorset Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust had complained about the number of people who had been allowed to speak at the meeting, especially as this related to one of the recommendations made in the Francis Report. She expressed concern about the independence of the Dorset Mental Health Forum Chief Executive who, due to a constitutional change, was now employed by Dorset Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust which meant the independence between the two organisations was compromised.

92.20 She also referred to the review of the implementation of the new service by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and drew attention to the fact that the officer undertaking the review had previously worked for the CCG and had commissioned the mental health service review. She asked how this would be handled. The Chief Executive stated that the Chief Executive of Dorset Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust had recently resigned. The Chairman of the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee explained that the matter of the Chief Executive of Dorset Mental Health Forum's pay was being investigated. He added that public speaking at meetings was under review and a report would be considered in March 2013. He agreed that the person undertaking the service review should be independent and he would make this point to the Chairman of the CCG.

Resolved

93. That the reports be received, and recommendation 219 of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee as set out below, as supported by the Standards and Governance Committee on 22 October 2013, be adopted:-

Policy Development Panel on Engaging and Consulting Members

219. That the County Council be asked to approve the new protocol on engaging and consulting with local members, as amended, and the proposed arrangements to embed and monitor the protocol and bring about cultural change.

Reports of Quasi/Legal Committees

94.1 The reports of the following meetings held on the dates stated were presented:-

Planning	26 July 2013
Planning	6 September 2013
Planning	10 October 2013
Roads and Rights of Way	2 September 2013
Roads and Rights of Way	10 October 2013
Children's and Adult Services Appeals	29 July 2013
Children's and Adult Services Appeals	12 August 2013
Children's and Adult Services Appeals	16 September 2013
Children's and Adult Services Appeals	14 October 2013
Personnel Appeals	22 July 2013
Personnel Appeals	19 August 2013
Personnel Appeals	23 September 2013

94.2 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 10 October 2013:-

Navitus Bay Wind Park Consultation

94.3 In relation to minute 96, the County Council Member for Swanage asked if the huge threat and vast imposition of the proposed Navitus Bay wind park in respect of Swanage and the Jurassic Coast would be recognised. He also asked if maximum participation would be encouraged to comment in objection to the Government's planning application from April 2014. The Leader of the Council confirmed support in opposition of the application.

94.4 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Roads and Rights of Way Committee held on 10 October 2013:-

Procedure for Petitions - Sandy Lane, Upton

94.5 In relation to minute 117.8, the County Council Member for Lytchett raised concern that the vibration noise from the road was a major contributory factor in relation to the petition, and was concerned that the assessment had not been done due to the associated expense. The Vice-Chairman of the Committee confirmed that the petition made no mention of vibration issues and indicated that he would notify the Chairman to see if the issue needed to be addressed. It was also clarified that in relation to speed bumps not being installed on bus routes, this was a relatively recent policy change when considering traffic calming on routes.

Resolved

95. That the reports be received.

Reports of other Committees

96.1 The reports of the following committees held on the dates stated were presented:-

Ad Hoc Accounts	29 September
Staffing	29 July 2013
Staffing	6 September 2013
Staffing	11 September 2013
Staffing	3 October 2013
Pension Fund	9 September 2013
Standards and Governance	22 October 2013

96.2 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Pension Fund Committee held on 9 September 2013:-

Report of the Pension Fund Administrator

96.3 In relation to minute 49.17, one of the County Council Members for Dorchester (Richard Biggs) expressed concern that the pension fund still invested in hedge funds which had only performed positively in one fund in five years. The Director for Corporate Resources, as the Fund Administrator, explained that a report would be considered by the Committee in February 2014 and a review of all alternative asset allocation would be undertaken by June.

96.4 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Standards and Governance Committee held on 22 October 2013:-

Constitutional Changes

96.5 On recommendation 69, the County Council Member for Bridport felt that the arrangements for public participation in meetings should take account of video recording of meetings. The Chief Executive reported that recording including webcasting would be reviewed in due course.

96.6 She also asked about the retention of deputations as she had used this mechanism to good use in the past. The Chairman clarified that the proposed arrangements for public participation would allow easier access to speak and ask questions at public meetings and that timescales were open to chairmen to alter at their discretion.

96.7 The County Council Member for Weymouth Town drew attention to the need for motions to be submitted by members on matters of local interest. The Chairman confirmed that the arrangements would remain unchanged in the current proposals and that there was the ability to do this under the current standing orders.

96.8 The Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Families suggested that reference to 'three days' on page 81 of the minutes in relation to questions to the Fire Authority be shown as 'three working days'. The amendment was agreed.

Resolved

97. That the reports be received and the following recommendations of the Staffing Committee (Recommendation 113) and the Standards and Governance Committee (Recommendations 63 and 69) set out below be adopted:-

Localism Act: Secretary of State Guidance

113. That the County Council approve the continuation of the current arrangements in regards to:- (a) salary packages of new appointments in excess of £100,000; (b) severance packages in excess of £100,000.

Review of the Scheme of Delegation and Contract Procedure Rules

63. That the proposed new scheme of delegation and contract procedure rules as amended by CMT and members of the Standards and Governance Committee be adopted.

Constitutional Changes

69.1 That the Rules of Procedure in relation to County Council meetings, as amended, be approved.

69.2 That the Rules of Procedure in relation to Public Participation, as amended, be approved.

(Note: Recommendation 66 of the Standards and Governance Committee held on 22 October 2013 was also considered by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 October 2013. The recommendation in relation to the Protocol on Engaging and Consulting Local Members was agreed at minute 93 above.)

Reports of Joint Committees

98.1 The reports of the following committees held on the dates stated were presented:-

Dorset Police and Crime Panel	3 September 2013
Dorset Waste Partnership	30 July 2013
Dorset Waste Partnership	26 September 2013
Dorset Waste Partnership	24 October 2013
Dorset Health and Well-being Board	11 September 2013
Joint Public Health Board	24 July 2013

98.2 In relation to the minutes of the Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 3 September 2013, the County Council Member for Weymouth Town raised concern that the Panel did not appear to be holding the Police and Crime Commissioner to account. It was clarified that the minutes of the meeting related to a meeting held for the purpose of the appointment of the Chief Executive to the PCC's office and that scrutiny took place in other meetings of the Panel. Other members raised concern that they similarly felt that the Panel was not adequately scrutinising the PCC in relation to crime and disorder in Dorset and asked the County Council members on the Panel to take the message back to the next meeting.

98.3 The County Council Member for Lytchett sought clarification of the membership of the Panel as meetings seemed to be dominated in attendance and substance regarding Bournemouth Borough Council. It was noted that membership was allocated on a proportional basis according to the electorate of each authority.

98.4 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Dorset Waste Partnership held on 30 July 2013:-

Difficult Access Areas - Provision of Service

98.5 On minute 114, the County Council Member for Shaftesbury asked about food waste being sent to landfill. The Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed that less than 5% of residents' properties could not easily be accessed in order to process this waste

and reluctantly this was sent to landfill as it was not an economically viable option to introduce other arrangements.

98.6 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Dorset Health and Well-being Board held on 11 September 2013:-

A Proposal for a Joint Health and Wellbeing Olympic Legacy for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole, and Locality Updates

98.7 On minutes 41 and 44, the County Council Member for Weymouth Town asked for detail in relation to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Olympic Legacy, and also asked about the engagement of each locality forum with local members. It was confirmed that the detail would be made available and that the governance arrangements surrounding the Health and Wellbeing Board were still under review to ensure that it was proportionate and accountable, but the importance of engagement was recognised. The Leader reported that the current membership size of 30 was too large and the structure needed to be reduced to enable the Board to work effectively and be outcome driven.

98.8 One of the County Council Members for Dorchester (Trevor Jones) asked if progress could be reported to the Council at every meeting until the aims of the Leader had been achieved. The Leader of the Council agreed that this would be reported as requested.

Resolved

99. That the reports be received.

Dorset Fire Authority

100.1 The report of the meeting of the Dorset Fire Authority held on 25 September 2013 was received.

100.2 The Chairman of the Fire Authority confirmed that as a result of improved engagement with local members there would be the introduction of a number of documents by the Fire and Rescue Service which would focus on individual areas and across electoral divisions.

Questions

101.1 A question from one of the County Council Members for Dorchester (Trevor Jones) to the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Environment in relation to signage on the Dorchester bypass was presented under Standing Order 20.

101.2 A question from the County Council Member for Weymouth Town to the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources in relation to decision making by the Cabinet and County Council was presented under Standing Order 20.

101.3 The questions and written answers provided to each member are attached as Annexure 1 to these minutes.

Meeting Duration: 10.00am to 12:35pm

Annexure 1Questions Under Standing Order 20

Question from Trevor Jones to the Leader of the Council
and the Cabinet member for Environment

Question - Signs on Dorchester Bypass

In the Summer of 2012 I noticed that some signs on the Dorchester bypass indicating the distance to Bridport were incorrect and pointed out to the Highways Agency that they needed amending. Can't now remember all the details of the exchanges but have in my possession a note to a County Council officer from the Agency on 7 September stating "we will make arrangements to effect a change".

Over a year later nothing has yet been done and no explanation has been provided as to why not.

In Summer this year I further drew the attention of the Agency to confusing and misleading direction signage at a number of junctions on the bypass installed as part of the improvement works for the Olympics.

County Officers have assisted over many months in trying to get a response and finally on 24 October achieved an acknowledgement that "the actual sign face layout is incorrect".

But it is immediately followed by a declaration that "we do not propose to amend the signs".

Along the way I offered to meet with Highways Agency staff on site to discuss the issues only to be told in writing "I am not sure that a meeting on site would be appropriate".

In view of these completely unacceptable, dismissive responses to a democratically elected member of this Authority (and it could have been any member with a Highways Agency road in their division), showing a contempt for the electoral process would the Leader please write to the appropriate Minister asking him to hold his officials to account for their arrogant behaviour.

After all, they are public officials paid with public money.

Answer

Following concerns about traffic signing on the A35 Dorchester Bypass that you first raised with the Highways Agency in the summer of 2012, Dorset County Council's Traffic Manager has belatedly received a response with regard to two issues.

First, they have undertaken to amend the incorrect mileage to Bridport that is given at both the Stadium and Monkey's Jump roundabouts.

Secondly, whilst acknowledging that Advance Direction Signs (ADS's) on the Trunk Road approaches to Stadium roundabout are incorrectly laid out, they state; "As this is not an urgent safety issue any amendments will only be carried out when funding priorities allow or when the sign needs to be changed for other (maintenance) reasons".

While responses have now been given, the process has taken too long and it is agreed that I will write to Robert Goodwill, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State responsible for the Highways Agency. I will ask that he investigates the behaviour of the Highways Agency staff concerned with this matter and reinforces the need for them to more positively engage with elected members of the County Council when issues on the Trunk Road arise.

Question from Mike Byatt to the Leader of the Council
and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources

Question - Decision making at the County Council and Cabinet

Does the cabinet and full council use evidence based analysis as essential criteria in its prioritisation, decision making process, budget allocation, including capital programmes external contracting commissioning, partnerships.

What is the evidence for this in the DCC corporate plan, economic strategy, economic impact assessments, and equality impact assessments.

How does the cabinet utilise evidence based analysis including demographic, social indices/needs analysis on a locality comparative and prioritisation basis.

Answer

Yes.

The State of Dorset 2013 report on the dorsetforyou web-site provides a wealth of evidence on demographic trends, environmental facts, economy and labour market information, skills and learning, information on rural neighbourhoods, deprivation statistics, health and well-being and a whole lot more.

All reports to the Cabinet, County Council and all decision making Committees include a section in the summary report setting out the use of evidence as part of an impact assessment of the report's recommendations. This is also the case for economic or equality impact assessments.

The Council's Corporate Plan has a separate section setting out the key facts that underpin the plan and each corporate aim has a set of evidence-based targets and performance indicators to help monitor the achievement of desired outcomes. Quarterly monitoring reports are brought to the Cabinet and Overview Committees and are scrutinised by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan uses a range of evidence, including sources of finance and demographic forecasts, to feed into a Resource Allocation Model (RAM) which is reviewed annually by the Cabinet and the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, as part of the process for setting the council's rolling three year revenue and capital budgets.

From time to time, the council uses surveys, both internally and externally, to consult residents, service users, staff and other stakeholders, including partner organisations when developing new policy or reviewing the effectiveness of existing service provision.

One of the recommendations of the recent Peer Challenge was for the council to engage and consult more meaningfully to enable customers and partners to feel more included in decision-making. This is a key cornerstone of the new Forward Together Transformation Programme.