

Dorset County Council

Minutes of a meeting held at County Hall,
Colliton Park, Dorchester on 13 November 2014.

Present:

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

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

Officers attending:

Debbie Ward (Chief Executive), Nicky Cleave (Assistant Director of Public Health), Catherine Driscoll (Director for Adult and Community Services), Mike Harries (Director for Environment and the Economy), Jonathan Mair (Acting Director for Corporate Resources), Sara Tough (Director for Children's Services), Lee Gallagher (Democratic Services Manager), Rebecca Guest (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Helen Whitby (Principal 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 **12 February 2015**.)

Apologies for Absence

66. Apologies for absence were received from Barrie Cooper, Deborah Croney, Ian Gardner, Susan Jefferies, Margaret Phipps and Mark Tewkesbury.

Code of Conduct

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

Minutes

68. The minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2014 were confirmed and signed.

Public Participation

Public Speaking

69.1 A question was presented by John Grantham, resident of Burton Bradstock, to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources in relation to Unitary Government for Dorset, in accordance with Standing Order 21(1). The question and answer is attached to these minutes as Annexure 1.

69.2 There were no public statements received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(2).

Petitions

69.3 There were no petitions received in accordance with the County Council's petition scheme at this meeting.

Chairman's Announcements

70. The Chairman reported the following events since the last meeting:
- (i) WW1 Centenary Events The Chairman hosted a County Council Centenary service on 27 July 2014 in Sherborne Abbey, which was led by the Vicar. The Chairman also attended a Centenary event on 4 August 2014 at the Bovington Tank Museum.
 - (ii) Royal Visit The Chairman attended the opening ceremony by HRH the Earl of Wessex of the West Dorset District Council offices at South Walks House on 29 September 2014, which included the Dorchester Library and Learning Centre.
 - (iii) Presentation of D Day Medals The Chairman attended a ceremony in Swanage to present D Day medals to war veterans. The veterans were presented with medal shaped glass containers, each containing some Normandy beach sand.
 - (iv) Challenge Weymouth Triathlon Prize-giving In September 2014, the Chairman presented the prizes to all of the successful athletes in sections for professionals and amateurs, young and old.
 - (v) Best Kept Dorset Villages Award The Chairman presented plaques to the best kept Dorset villages for 2014. They were Martinstown as the best large village and Loders as the best small village.
 - (vi) Staff Pride Awards The Chairman attended the annual staff pride awards ceremony which once again comprised of a very impressive list of winners and runners-up, all of whose extra efforts were recognised by the event.
 - (vii) Remembrance Services It was reported that the Vice-Chairman represented the County Council at the Remembrance Service in Sherborne Abbey on 9 November 2014, and that Chairman did likewise in Wimborne Minster on the same day. On Armistice Day itself, the County Council's held an annual short service at the County Hall memorial.
 - (viii) Other Events It was noted that the following events had also been attended by either the Chairman or Vice-Chairman since the last meeting:
 - a. Lord Lieutenant's awards ceremony for Cadets and Reservists
 - b. Two Annual General Meetings of local organisations
 - c. Two visits to Royal Navy ships
 - d. A concert by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra
 - e. Three Citizenship ceremonies
 - f. Five civic days
 - g. Hall and Woodhouse's Community Awards
 - h. Remembrance Variety Concert
 - (ix) Staff Changes It was reported that Patrick Ellis would join the Council on 5 January 2014 as the Assistant Chief Executive.

Leader's Announcements

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

Ask Dorset

71.2 The Leader of the Council referred to the recent Ask Dorset consultation exercise. This comprised 36 roadshows which had visited 19 towns, involved elected members and over 6,800 members of the public had participated. There had also been 1,200 responses on line, 370 facebook contributions and 2,800 responses from the Citizens' Panel. The public's response had exceeded expectations.

71.3 One member asked how the views of the public expressed through Ask Dorset would be used. It was explained that all the information gathered would inform the new three year Corporate Plan, the financial plan and how services would be delivered in future.

71.4 Attention was drawn to the fact that the results of Ask Dorset had highlighted the importance of bus services to members of the public as the fifth highest priority. Reference was then made to the two motions on different aspects of bus services which had been submitted for consideration at two County Council meetings, both of which had been referred to the Environment Overview Committee. A question was asked as to whether the public's concern about bus services would be recognised in the new Corporate Plan and whether extra support would be provided.

71.5 In response, the Leader explained that the two motions had been dealt with appropriately and in accordance with the Council's Constitution, although this procedure might change in future. He had not been surprised at the prioritisation of bus services by the public and he reminded members that the County Council continued to support non-commercial subsidised routes at a cost of approximately £2m per year. Bus companies had latterly deregistered services because of their lack of use. A review of the current contractual arrangements would be undertaken by 2016 and this would include changes introduced last year in co-operation with bus companies.

71.6 With regard to how the information obtained would be used to inform decision-making, whether the consultation exercise had led to a greater understanding of the needs of communities, particularly in deprived areas, and whether this would influence the allocation of resources and prioritisation, the Leader repeated that the results of Ask Dorset would be used to inform the Corporate Plan. Information about social deprivation was collected regularly and would be used to plan and shape the Corporate Plan in future.

71.7 Attention was drawn to the fact that even though the Lytchett electoral division was the second largest division in Dorset, the local member felt that it was often overlooked, particularly with regard to roadshows. However, the local member thanked the Chief Executive for visiting the division with the Ask Dorset roadshow.

Gypsy and Traveller Site

71.8 The Leader of the Council drew attention to the temporary Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site which had opened at Piddlehinton in July and August 2014. He commended all involved as everyone in Dorset would benefit from its opening.

71.9 One member did not agree that having an identified Gypsy and Traveller Site would be effective and asked what effect this would have on nearby residents and their ability to enjoy their rest and quietness. The Leader explained that the site had been identified in response to primary legislation. It was temporary and had been identified in

response to the issue of illegal encampment. The site now provided the Police with the ability to move gypsies and travellers on illegal camps. Over the two month period the site was opened, ten such cases had arisen, two had moved to Piddlehinton and eight had chosen to leave the County. It was felt that the use of the transit site had proved very effective.

71.10 Attention was drawn to the recent Cabinet decision to support a temporary Gypsy and Traveller transit site at Wyke Regis, the lack of consultation with local members, the access difficulties with this particular site and the impact on local schools. A local member for Weymouth and Portland hoped that if the matter was considered by Cabinet again, that use would be made of her local knowledge. The Leader explained that the Cabinet had responded to a local planning authority consultation.

Dorset Waste Partnership

71.11 The Leader of the Council referred to the need to meet challenging budget pressures and the Dorset Waste Partnership's rollout of the "Recycle for Dorset" campaign across Dorset. There had been issues with its rollout in Weymouth and Portland but this was no different to other areas in the County. However, there was a question as to whether the Partnership was operating on a sound business case and providing value for money. The Partnership was monitored by a Joint Committee comprising members of the partner councils, all of whom were under continuing budget pressure. The Joint Committee needed to review the business case to ensure the delivery of quality services for Dorset.

71.12 One member referred to the need to review the financial impact of the Dorset Waste Partnership and its performance. It was felt that in Weymouth and Portland there had been a complete failure in the roll out and this had affected residents, companies and tourism. As well as the review of finance and performance, it was suggested that the governance model also be reviewed, particularly with regard to accountability, to ensure that they were fit for purpose. The Leader explained that these would be included in the review process and partner councils would have opportunities to be involved in the review for the benefit of their communities.

71.13 A local member for Weymouth and Portland felt that the Partnership seemed to be very reactive rather than proactive given the current difficulties. The Leader reminded members that in the areas where the roll out had been completed a 95% user satisfaction rate had been reported and the roll out had resulted in increased levels of recycling which compared well with other parts of the Country.

Financial Matters

71.14 With regard to how the continuing budget pressures in Adult Social Care and Children's Services would be dealt with in the next budget, the Leader explained that the budget process had started. Some pressures were predictable and these formed part of the Forward Together programme which would deliver savings. The only certainty was that the County Council's budget would be reducing. There would not be any top slicing of budgets but services would need to be delivered within the reduced budget.

Jurassica

71.15 One member spoke in support of Jurassica, a local regeneration project, and the potential benefits it had for the local economy. He urged members to ask for a formal presentation on the project. The Leader reported that a meeting of interested parties had been arranged.

Questions from Members of the Council

72. Two questions were asked under standing order 20 by the County Council Member for Portland Tophill to the Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Families in relation to Children Living Below the Breadline, and to the Cabinet Member for Environment and the Economy in relation to the Portland Household Recycling Centre. The questions and answers are attached to these minutes as Annexure 2.

Reports of the Cabinet

73.1 The reports of the Cabinet meetings held on 3 September 2014, 1 October 2014 and 22 October 2014 were presented and their adoption duly moved and seconded.

73.2 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2014:

Panels and Boards

73.3 In relation to minute 304.2, concern was expressed in relation to the Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee by a number of members, specifically in relation to the recent rollout of new recycling arrangements in Weymouth and Portland. The Cabinet Member for Resources highlighted that there had been issues in all areas where the rollout had taken place, but Weymouth and Portland had experienced significant teething problems, and assured members that particular issues would be addressed by the Director of the Waste Partnership.

73.4 A question was asked in relation to provision of assisted collections across Dorset, noting that letters had been sent to residents indicating that the arrangements would be reviewed. The Cabinet Member for Environment and the Economy confirmed that the Joint Committee would pay particular attention to this issue to enable the elderly and infirm to be able to manage their own waste.

73.5 In relation to the forthcoming consultation regarding service provision, the Cabinet Member for Environment and the Economy explained that although concerns had been expressed about the possible future provision of Household Recycling Centres, and resultant unexpected consequences such as fly tipping, the consultation on the future had not yet started, and the full range of options would be included in the process.

Better Care Fund Re-Submission

73.6 In relation to minute 306, recognition was given to the potential way to save money and provide coordinated care, but concern was expressed towards the circumstances facing Dorset and whether the Council would be at a risk of losing funding by not being able to meet the target to reduce the number of hospital admissions to accident and emergency as Dorset did not suffer from particularly high admission levels. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care summarised her approach to the Minister at a recent conference but was told that there would be no special cases. However, it was explained by the Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Families, as the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), that through conditions the Council would receive the equivalent of funding depending on how much of the target was achieved, which was an incentive to reach as much of the 3.5% reduction target as possible.

73.7 A further issue was raised regarding the strategic synergy between Adult Social Care programmes, Children's Services programmes, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the HWB and Public Health in order to work together effectively. The Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Families confirmed that the strategic direction and partnership was through the HWB and working groups that fed into the Board, which now included the Safeguarding Children's Board and the Adult Safeguarding Board. It was

noted that a members' seminar on the arrangements would be useful, together with allowing members' access to view the secure information online in relation to joint safeguarding bodies.

73.8 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2014:

Navitus Bay Wind Park Local Impact Report

73.9 In relation to minute 338, a question was asked about potential mitigation compensation being considered by the County Council from the developers of the Wind Park, which had been accepted by other authorities. It was confirmed that the Council's position was not to support the development, and as such no commitment had been made in respect of any compensation offer, which was also the case for the Leaders' Growth Board.

73.10 One member asked about consideration of jobs and skills as a key economic driver if the wind park application was approved, as the development would bring jobs to the local economy. The Cabinet Member for Environment and the Economy indicated that consideration would be given by the Overview Committee at the appropriate time, but as yet there was no indication of what jobs would be created or where they would be located. The Leader of the Council also commented that the forecasted economic growth to be created by the Wind Park may not materialise.

Emergency Local Assistance Scheme from 2015

73.11 In relation to minute 358, a request was made for a report to be presented to the Adult and Community Services Overview Committee in relation to the application of criteria to serve vulnerable people regarding the range of services provided through the scheme and the mechanism by which vulnerable people were assessed before being accepted or refused. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care committed to reporting to the Overview Committee, which would include the additional provision and funding of £700k now included in the scheme by Public Health in relation to housing. A further request was made for information to be included in the report in respect of food packages and the needs of the users of food banks. It was agreed that the detail would be included in the report to the Overview Committee.

73.12 A question was asked about the progress regarding a £700k project, secured through Public Health England funding, to address drug and alcohol reduction in Weymouth and Portland. It was reported that the funding would provide a facility in the area and a business case was being developed, which would be shared in due course.

73.13 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2014:

Local Government Boundary Commission for England – Stage 1 Consultation Response

73.14 In relation to recommendation 393, the Leader of the Council, as the Chairman of the Executive Advisory Panel on Periodic Electoral Review summarised the review undertaken to date, which included a number of consultation meetings with County Council Members from each of the district and borough council areas across Dorset. He explained that the consultation was undertaken in order to review the electoral division boundaries in accordance with the Boundary Commission's primary criteria to achieve electoral equality (within 10% of the average electorate) based on forecasted electorate in 2020, and then to take account of local connectivity between communities. It was noted that the County Council was a consultee and individual members were able to express alternative views separately to the Boundary Commission if they wished. He also thanked officers for their work on the review.

73.15 On proposing the recommendation, the Leader also proposed an amendment to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, or her designate, after consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any minor amends to the wording of the report. The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group requested that Group Leaders should be consulted on any minor amendments to the wording. The wording was accepted into the amended recommendation.

73.16 A number of members raised concerns in relation to the proposals for individual divisions throughout the report, which had been raised throughout the consultation meetings, and were detailed within the proposed consultation submission. Other concerns had been raised through the Cabinet consideration of the consultation response and were detailed within the minute of the meeting.

73.17 Concerns were expressed that the consultation response was not supported by all members and that a response which could achieve unanimous support would have greater weight with the Boundary Commission. However, it was recognised that it was not a necessity, and could be agreed on a majority vote.

73.18 A request was made in relation to the Purbeck electoral divisions to take account of a local Town Council's information in relation to projected electorate figures. The Leader indicated that the information relied on within the report was sufficient, and that the Town Council was entitled to respond to the consultation with their own proposals.

73.19 A particular issue was raised, which had not been raised through the consultation meeting in relation to North Dorset. It was suggested that the electoral division serving Shaftesbury would have a much higher population in the next few years, to which the Vice-Chairman of the Council confirmed that forecasted electorate figures were based on electorate in 2020 and building within the area had been taken account of.

73.20 A number of views were expressed that although there were a mixture of reactions to the proposed electoral divisions, the process had been undertaken transparently and had taken account of all views expressed by members.

73.21 A separate request was also made by ten members for a recorded vote to be taken. On being put to the vote the amended recommendation was agreed and the votes were as follows:

For

Pauline Batstone
Michael Bevan
Dan Brember
Steve Butler
Mike Byatt
Andrew Cattaway
Ronald Coatsworth
Robin Cook
Toni Coombs
Hilary Cox

Total: 28

Lesley Dedman
Peter Finney
Spencer Flower
Robert Gould
Peter Hall
Jill Haynes
Colin Jamieson
David Jones
Paul Kimber
Rebecca Knox

Mike Lovell
Peter Richardson
William Trite
Daryl Turner
David Walsh
Peter Wharf
John Wilson
Kate Wheller

Against

Richard Biggs
Andy Canning
Janet Dover
Fred Drane

Total: 11

Beryl Ezzard
David Harris
Mervyn Jeffery
Trevor Jones

Ros Kayes
David Mannings
Ian Smith

Formation of a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) for Adult Provider Services

73.22 In relation to minute 398.4, a number of members asked questions about the decision making authority in respect of the LATC, and the future governance arrangements when it had been established. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care explained that the governance arrangements were a key consideration in the formation of the LATC Board, and that the involvement of service users and staff would feed into the arrangements, but it was unlikely to be at Board level. She also highlighted that an Executive Advisory Panel on Pathways to Independence had been established to consider the formation of the LATC and that members were welcome to attend the meetings. Members were also informed by the Chief Executive that constitutionally the Cabinet was the appropriate body to make the decision to establish an LATC, and it would not be considered by the County Council. A further report on LATC arrangements was scheduled to be considered by the Cabinet on 17 December 2014.

73.23 In relation to on-going accountability for service users receiving services of the LATC, it was noted that the County Council would retain the statutory duty to provide care and to safeguard vulnerable adults.

73.24 It was noted that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 16 September 2014 had considered the formation of the LATC and a message from the meeting was that the ambition of the programme could be more radical. The Cabinet Member confirmed that there needed to be a sound base for the LATC, with the right governance, before it could be radical. She also indicated that the Cabinet minutes of 22 October 2014 would be amended to reflect the discussion on the same issue.

73.25 Opposing views regarding support or otherwise by members at the Adult and Community Services Overview Committee were given. A question was also asked about consideration of the Transatlantic Trade Deal which sought to remove regulatory differences between the US and Europe. The Cabinet Member confirmed that this would be taken into account.

Dorset Wide Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Joint Development Plan Document – Additional Sites Consultation 2014

73.26 In relation to minute 404, concern was raised that additional sites to be added to the Development Plan Document were all in West Dorset and Weymouth and that contact had been with an officer from East Dorset. The Cabinet Member for Environment and the Economy confirmed that the sites were not just in West Dorset and Weymouth and that the work being undertaken was a joint arrangement across all district and borough councils as the relevant planning authorities.

73.27 A further concern was raised that a site had not been included even though it had been identified with officers at an early stage, which was on the West Dorset and Weymouth border. The Cabinet Member indicated that the site may have been rejected, but he would investigate the concern.

Integrated Digital Care Fund Bid

73.28 In relation to minute 402.5, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care was asked if the bid had been successful, to which she replied that there was no update yet, but this would be shared when it was received.

Recommendation 120 – Extra Care Housing

73.29 In relation to minute 417, a request was made for an update in respect of engagement with district and borough councils to take into account extra care housing. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care indicated that more needed to be done with districts

and boroughs in relation to local plans and to encourage appropriate housing in Dorset. A further update would be provided outside of the meeting.

Audit and Scrutiny Committee – Call to Account – Universal Free School Meals Service

73.30 In relation to minute 431.4, a question was asked in relation to the option available to schools to withdraw from the contract for school meals, and whether there was a date by which this could be done. The Cabinet Member for Education and Communications explained that out of 171 schools in Dorset, 70 were part of the contract for four years. It was also explained that the contract required a certain level of buy in from schools to be viable. The Cabinet Member undertook to share information about the dates outside of the meeting, but also highlighted that schools would need to be aware of their own legal position if they wished to proceed with withdrawal from the contract.

73.31 A request was received in relation to the publication and availability of the report by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Universal Free School Meals Service. It was confirmed that the report would be available as part of the minutes of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 October 2014.

Resolved

74. That the reports of the Cabinet on 3 September, 1 October and 22 October 2014, and the following recommendation from 22 October 2014 as set out below be adopted:

Local Government Boundary Commission for England – Stage 1 Consultation Response

393.1 *That subject to changes outlined in the Cabinet minute, as incorporated into the Annexure to these minutes, the County Council be recommended to adopt the recommendations contained within the consultation response report for submission by 1 December 2014.*

393.2 *That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, or her designate, after consultation with the Leader of the Council, and other Group Leaders, to make any minor amendments to the wording of the report.*

Reason for Recommendation

394. *To align with the Aims of the Corporate Plan in relation to Enabling Economic Growth and Health, Wellbeing and Safeguarding.*

Reports of Overview and Scrutiny Committees

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

Overview Committees

Adult and Community	6 October 2014
Children's Services	14 October 2014
Environment	9 October 2014

Scrutiny Committees

Audit and Scrutiny	22 July 2014
Audit and Scrutiny	16 September 2014
Audit and Scrutiny	16 October 2014
Dorset Health Scrutiny	10 September 2014

75.2 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Adult and Community Services Overview Committee held on 6 October 2014:

Pathways to Independence Programme - Update

75.3 In relation to minute 117.4, the Chairman of the Adult and Community Services Overview Committee presented the minutes for adoption, but stated that he intended to amend the minute to read:

'The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care pointed out that the Executive Advisory Panel on Pathways to Independence had been established by the Cabinet to inform Cabinet members on how to progress the programme. The Panel could provide options for particular areas or make firm recommendations for the Cabinet to consider. To make the meetings transparent, all members of the Overview Committee were invited to observe future meetings if they so wished.'

75.4 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview Committee held on 9 October 2014:

Public Bus Services In Dorset

75.5 In relation to minute 152, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group indicated that she was glad that her motion had been discussed by the Environment Overview Committee, but had expected the motion to be reported back to the Council for discussion. The Monitoring Officer clarified that the Overview Committee had considered the motion and had not supported it, which meant that a recommendation as the result of the original motion back to the Council was not necessary.

75.6 The County Council Member for Bridport mentioned that a motion submitted to the Council had not been accepted and had been referred to the Environment Overview Committee, which related to the rate of concessionary bus fares across Dorset in comparison to other authorities such as Devon and Somerset. The Chairman of the Environment Overview Committee explained that there was a process in place to review holistic transport across Dorset for re-provision of bus contracts in 2016.

Proposed Revision of Scheduled Highway Gully Cleaning

75.7 In relation to minute 140, a number of members raised concern in relation to the new arrangements for reporting the need for gully cleaning by the public. The Chairman of the Environment Overview Committee explained that there was a structured approach to the key road network (the same as the salting network) and that a common sense approach of reporting issues would be needed for the roads not included in the network, which would improve on the previous ad-hoc approach to gully cleaning. In relation to recent flooding of the Roman Town House, the Cabinet Member for Environment and the Economy indicated that funding had been secured to resolve the issue.

75.8 Concerned members provided examples of where reporting problems had not resulted in the desired outcome. The Chairman of the Environment Overview Committee, and the Director for Environment and the Economy outlined the approach to be followed by logging issues on www.dorsetforyou.com or through the dedicated telephone number (as a result of a review of the Highways Team), and to quote the allocated reference number if the problem was not resolved within a reasonable amount of time. Examples were provided where the dedicated officers within local areas were very helpful and resolved issues on request. The Director also indicated that it was likely that the number of community officers would increase improving further working and liaison with local councils, members, and the public.

75.9 The Cabinet Member for Environment and the Economy recognised that there were issues in many areas of Dorset, and explained that within the limitations of the budget the service would do its very best to improve, but the priority would be the strategic network

of roads which dealt with 80% of traffic. The Cabinet Member also undertook to deal with any exceptions or problems experienced by local members in order to find the best solution.

Corporate Performance Monitoring Report: First Quarter 2014/15 (1 April – 30 June 2014)

75.10 In relation to minute 156, concern was raised that although there were specific indicators and targets which related to the environment, there was no clear performance measure for economic growth even though it was a priority within the Corporate Plan. It was also stated that there was no clear measure of the development of skills. The Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources agreed that economic growth should be explicit in the performance report as a key priority, and refer to the actions of the Leaders' Growth Board.

75.11 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 September 2014:

Review of Community Transport

75.12 In relation to minute 165, the Chairman of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee confirmed that the review of community transport would take place on 25 November 2014. The review had been initiated by the Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Families, and would look to find the best way forward in developing community transport for Dorset as an alternative to conventional transport. He invited all interested members to attend the meeting to participate and contribute ideas and views.

75.13 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee held on 10 September 2014:

Draft Revised Terms of Reference for the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee

75.14 In relation to minute 63, clarity was sought in respect of the role of the Committee to scrutinise matters pertaining to the planning, commissioning, provision and operation of health services, specifically regarding scrutiny of the emerging National Health Service five year plan, which included patient care. It was also asked if there was a strategic fit between the Committee and other agendas such as Pathways to Independence.

75.15 The Chairman of the Committee confirmed that the plan would be scrutinised, and also highlighted the need to integrate with other partners such as the Clinical Commissioning Group and other bodies.

Resolved

76. That the reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be received.

Recommendations of Quasi/Legal Committees, Joint Committees and Other Committees

77. The recommendations of the Standards and Governance Committee were presented and their adoption duly moved and seconded.

Resolved

78. That the following recommendations of the Standards and Governance Committee (Recommendations 81 and 84) set out below be adopted:-

Standards and Governance Committee Independent Members

81. That the County Council agree:

(i) that the membership of Mrs Judith Anstice, Mrs Elizabeth Bird and Mr Ronald Manley as independent members of the Standards and Governance Committee be extended for a further three years from 28 April 2015 to 28 April 2018;

(ii) *that the Standards and Governance Committee remains at 10 members to comprise of six elected members and 4 independent members and that the fourth place for an independent member on the Standards and Governance Committee remains vacant.*

Reason for Recommendations

82. *Independent members help the Standards and Governance Committee with their role to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the County Council.*

Draft Revised Terms of Reference for the Dorset Heath Scrutiny Committee

84. *That the County Council approve the draft revised Terms of Reference.*

Reason for Recommendations

85. *The work of the Committee contributed to the County Council's aim to protect and enrich the health and wellbeing of Dorset's most vulnerable adults and children.*

Independent Remuneration Panel – Review of Members' Allowances Scheme 2015/16

79.1 The Council considered a report by the Independent Remuneration Panel which recommended a members' allowances scheme for 2015/16 following a review of the current scheme which would take effect from April 2015.

79.2 Members sought clarification in relation to the removal of taxation on home to duty mileage. In relation to the taxation of allowances, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that the HMRC had reversed its earlier decision to tax home to duty mileage and the requirement had therefore be removed from the scheme.

Resolved

80.1 That the Members Allowances Scheme for 2015/16 be approved.

80.2 That the Independent Remuneration Panel review of all allowances and expenses on an annual basis and encouragement to all elected members to converse with the Panel, usually during October of each year, be noted.

Dorset Fire Authority

81. The report of the meeting of the Dorset Fire Authority held on 24 September 2014 was received. The Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Families, as the Chairman of the Fire Authority informed members that the Dorset Fire Authority and the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority both agreed unanimously to move to combine the authorities. It was now for Government to consider the proposal and the Council would be updated in due course.

Resolved

82. That the report of the Dorset Fire Authority be received.

Appointments to Committees 2014/15

83. No changes to membership of Committees were reported to the meeting by Group Leaders.

ANNEXURE 1

Public Questions

Question from Mr John Grantham, resident of Burton Bradstock to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources in relation to Unitary Government for Dorset.

Question

Ernst/Young projects Leicestershire savings £31.4m pa. Shropshire £20m. Wiltshire £14m. Durham £22m. Northumberland £28m....all pa.

Three-tiered local government gone. Duplication of councillors, staff, offices reduced.

We can't just assume 'The Government' will decide.

I'd welcome please positive, leading, proactive steps the Leader might suggest for actively investigating 'Unitary' for Dorset. Lobbying Government/MPs? Lobbying Whitehall? Undertaking public-debate throughout Dorset? Identifying in well-publicised reports how 'Unitary' can cost-save *and* serve Dorset customers better – as Wiltshire.

With greatest respect do we not perhaps have a DUTY to urgently investigate?

Your advice / any time-table for investigation would be very much welcomed.

Answer

When the coalition government came into office in 2010, it did so with a clear objective to halt what it described as “wasteful and unnecessary restructuring plans for Exeter, Norwich and Suffolk Councils”. Stopping these changes was said to have:

- saved the taxpayer £40 million in restructuring costs;
- removed the risk of further pressure on local council tax bills; and
- avoided a costly distraction from the priority of delivering local services and genuine efficiency gains.

Whatever views we may have in Dorset about restructuring local government, this is not within our control and will only come about as a result of a change in government policy. We could have spent the last three years spending money with Ernst & Young on developing Business Cases for changes to the structure of local government in Dorset, but this would not have got us anywhere and would not have been a good use of public money. Instead, we have concentrated upon transforming the way we deliver services to make the best use of public money.

Consultants may well be able to identify savings through restructuring local government in counties like Leicestershire. The Leicestershire Business Case includes significant savings from a reduction in senior management posts, back office and property reductions, other staff savings and integrating and redesigning services. These are all steps that Dorset Councils have taken and are taking on an ongoing basis. The County Council's own transformation change programme has already realised savings of over £60 million since 2010. By working together and sharing staffing structures, East Dorset District Council and Christchurch Borough Council have made savings of over £6 million since 2011. West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council working together have made savings of £9 million in the same period, and this partnership has now been extended to include North Dorset District Council, which will save an additional £1-1.5 million per year. This has all happened without the need to invest significant sums in restructuring local government.

ANNEXURE 2

Questions Under Standing Order 20

Question from Paul Kimber to the Cabinet Member for Environment and the Economy

Question

Many Portlanders are concerned about the future of the Portland household recycling centre at Easton Lane, Can I be informed whether there are any plans to close the centre.

Answer

The DWP is about to launch a public consultation seeking residents' views on possible changes to Dorset's 11 household recycling centres (HRCs) and how they might affect residents. The consultation, set to run from late November to February, will give residents an opportunity to have their say before any decisions are made by the DWP Joint Committee later in 2015.

Due to on-going government funding reductions and rising waste management costs, the DWP needs to make a significant further contribution to the savings of its seven partners on top of those already made by joining together and sharing services. The partnership is looking carefully at all areas of the services it provides on behalf of its partners.

Dorset's network of 11 HRCs costs around £3.3 million a year, or 11% of the total waste budget. The consultation will present a range of options to make the HRC service more cost-effective while still being easy and convenient for local people to use.

The consultation does include the possible option of closing up to three HRCs alongside other options including reducing weekday opening and introducing some charges for certain sites or materials. However, no decisions have yet been made on any of the options within the consultation and no proposals have been put forward in relation to specific sites. Full account will be taken of responses to the consultation before any such decisions are taken.

Questions Under Standing Order 20

Question from Paul Kimber to the Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Families

Question

A recent report in the Dorset Evening Echo reported 3343 children in the Borough of Weymouth & Portland are living below the breadline.

Does the Dorset County Council have any plans to address the problem?

Answer

The Child Poverty Act (2010) requires every top tier local authority to have a child poverty strategy. In Dorset the Health and Wellbeing Board has endorsed the strategy, which can be found on Dorset for you.

An action plan has been developed around 6 key themes:

- Increasing income potential for low income families
- Raising aspiration in low income families
- Improving access to information and support services
- Reduce unhealthy lifestyles associated with poverty
- Reduce housing issues associated with poverty
- Targeted work in locations or with groups of most concern

We collect data locally to inform our understanding of need for children in Dorset against the different measures of child poverty. This helps us allocate the right resources to a local area as is the case for Weymouth and Portland.

The county level data and the specific actions to support children and families in Weymouth and Portland is contained within the strategy in conjunction with our children and young peoples plan.