

Dorset County Council

Minutes of a meeting held at County Hall,
Colliton Park, Dorchester on 12 November 2015.

Present:

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

Pauline Batstone, Michael Bevan, Richard Biggs, Steve Butler, Mike Byatt, Andy Canning, Ronald Coatsworth, Robin Cook, Toni Coombs, Hilary Cox, Lesley Dedman, Janet Dover, Fred Drane, Peter Finney, Spencer Flower, Ian Gardner, Robert Gould, Peter Hall, David Harris, Jill Haynes, Susan Jefferies, Mervyn Jeffery, David Jones, Trevor Jones, Ros Kayes, Paul Kimber, Rebecca Knox, Mike Lovell, David Mannings, Margaret Phipps, Peter Richardson, Ian Smith, Mark Tewkesbury, William Trite, Daryl Turner, 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), Patrick Ellis (Assistant Chief Executive), Sara Tough (Director for Children's Services), Matthew Piles (Head of Economy, for Director for Environment and the Economy), Jonathan Mair (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Richard Bates (Chief Financial Officer), Helen Whitby (Principal Democratic Services Officer) and David Northover (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

Public Participation

Mr Collingwood, Lead Petitioner, for minutes 49 and 50.
Ms R Hutton, supporter of the petition, for minutes 49 and 50.
Ms S Earwicker, Governor of Woodroffe School, for minutes 49 and 50.
A parent of a child attending Woodroffe School, for minutes 49 and 50

(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 **11 February 2016**.)

Apologies for Absence

44. Apologies for absence were received from Barrie Cooper, Deborah Croney, Beryl Ezzard, Colin Jamieson and David Walsh.

Code of Conduct

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

Minutes

46. The Chairman highlighted that the dates of Cabinet meetings recorded in minutes 52 and 53 had been amended for accuracy. The amended minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2015 were confirmed and signed.

Public Participation

Public Speaking

47.1 There were no public questions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(1).

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

Petitions

48. A petition was received in accordance with the County Council's petition scheme asking for the X31/X53 Bus Service in West Dorset to be maintained. This is considered at minutes 49 and 50 below.

Petition asking for the X31/X53 Bus Service in West Dorset to be maintained

49.1 The Council considered a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Director for Environment and the Economy which set out the current petitions scheme, details of the petition received and options for how the matter could be progressed. The petition comprised over 1000 signatures from people living, working or studying in Dorset and requested the County Council to intervene to maintain and extend evening and Sunday bus services on the X31 and X53 routes between Dorchester, Weymouth, Bridport, Lyme Regis and Axminster.

49.2 Mr John Collingwood, Lead Petitioner, referred to the Council's cuts in funding, the probability that Department for Transport funding would be further reduced over the next five years and the impact that any further reductions in bus services would have on the elderly, the young, the disabled and those living in rural areas, and their ability to access amenities or services. He thought the Council should promote bus services and highlighted that Real Time Passenger Information which had cost £5m, had not been successful and that this sum would have supported rural bus routes over a long period. In particular the X31 route provided access to health services for many and provided a transport link which was a social necessity. Although this route was commercially operated, he thought the Council had a responsibility to ensure that there was adequate sustainable passenger transport to enable residents to access education, health services and employment opportunities whilst at the same time reducing congestion and the effect on climate change. He asked the Council to reconsider management of passenger transport and develop innovative solutions to increase usage. He urged the Council and its members to work towards a solution.

49.3 Ms Rebecca Hilton, who supported the petition, expressed concern that the bus service on which she relied to visit a close relative in a nursing home had been severely reduced. As she was unable to drive, this restricted her ability to maintain regular contact. She also drew attention to the fact that relatives of other residents and staff also experienced difficulties in travelling to the same home to the extent that staff recruitment at the home had been affected. She also highlighted that the route to the home was unsafe in that there were no pavements, cars travelled at speed and there was little shelter in poor weather. The bus was well used by many elderly people.

49.4 Ms Sarah Earwicker, a Governor at Woodroffe School, drew attention to overcrowded buses, the unpredictability of the service and that the lack of a service meant there was no alternative than for students and others to walk on the road which was a safety concern. She also reported that there had been an instance of a child being stranded at 7.00pm. First Group had responded to some of these concerns but they felt that there was no local management of the use of the service by students. She highlighted that many students were fare paying customers and were not treated well.

49.5 A parent of a child at Woodroffe School explained that she had spoken to First Group about the service reductions and they said they were unable to run unprofitable off peak services without more support from the Council. Other parents thought that the evening and weekend services should not be lost, especially as the price of monthly tickets had recently increased. The current service did not encourage young people's independence and meant that their journeys involved changing buses and additional

travelling time. The current service was impracticable and inadequate and had been reduced even though ticket prices had been increased. She asked the Council to address the issues.

49.6 A member expressed sympathy with the petitioners and the concerns they had raised as the current service was inadequate and asked for the matter to be referred to the Holistic Transport Review, with the outcomes being referred to the Environment and the Economy Overview Committee.

49.7 It was further suggested that a meeting be held between the petitioners and First Group to see whether a solution could be reached which would meet the needs of bus users. It was also requested that when bus services contracts were re-commissioned for 2017, consideration be given to the use of quality contracts in order to better regulate services.

49.8 Whilst recognising that many people across Dorset relied on passenger transport, members were reminded that if funding was allocated to maintain these services, this would be at a cost to other Council services. The Holistic Transport Review could help identify how local communities could play a part in finding innovative solutions and not necessarily through direct funding.

Resolved

50. That petition be referred to the Holistic Transport Review with a report on the outcomes being considered at a future meeting of the Environment and the Economy Overview Committee.

Reason for Decision

51. In order to comply with the County Council's published scheme for responding to petitions and so as to enable local people to connect with local elected decision makers.

Chairman's Announcements

52.1 The Chairman reported on the death of the following former members of the Council:-

- Mr Don Mildenhall MBE on 25 August 2015 who served on the County Council from 1997 to 2009 representing the Sherborne division.
- Mr Ron Whittaker on 10 September 2015 who served on the County Council from 1973 to 1997 representing the Bournemouth Moordown North division from 1973 to 1985 and the Muscliff division from 1985 to 1997.

52.2 Members paid tribute to the dedication and commitment of the former members to Dorset and within their divisions. The County Council then stood in silent tribute.

52.3 The Chairman reported the following events since the last meeting:-

- (i) Royal Visit – 23 September 2015 – The Vice-Chairman had welcomed HRH the Countess of Wessex to Dorset when she performed the opening ceremony for the Sandford St Martins Primary School.
- (ii) Children in Care Awards – The tenth annual Children in Care Awards ceremony was held at Bryanston School. This year it had been split into two events with the Chairman attending the second ceremony.

- (iii) Gallery of Ancient Archaeology – The Chairman had represented the Council at the inaugural event marking the creation of the new Gallery of Ancient Archaeology at the County Museum.
- (iv) Remembrance Services – In August the Chairman had represented the Council at the Mayor of Wimborne’s Service to mark the 70th anniversary of VJ Day.
On 8 November 2015 the Vice-Chairman represented the Council at the Remembrance Service in Sherborne Abbey. That same afternoon the Chairman had attended a similar service in Wimborne Minster.
On Armistice Day, the Council held its annual service around the County Hall memorial.
- (v) Miscellaneous – The Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman had attended the Lord Lieutenant’s awards ceremony for cadets and reservists, the High Sheriff’s service in Sherborne Abbey for High Court Judges, two Annual General Meetings of local organisations, one concert by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, three Citizenship ceremonies and the Best Kept Dorset village Awards ceremony.
- (vi) Ill health – The Chairman reported that he had been in poor health through most of the past quarter, which had limited his attendance at functions. He thanked the Vice-Chairman for representing the Council on many occasions when he had been unable to do so. He anticipated that the Vice-Chairman might need to attend other events whilst he recovered and thanked him in advance.

Leader’s Announcements

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

53.2 The Leader drew attention to the unprecedented demands on Local Government as a result of the current financial climate and the need to support communities and provide services with fewer resources available to deliver these. The Local Government Financial Settlement would be announced soon and there had already been an indication that there would be a reduction of 30%, so there would be even greater emphasis on maximising the use of resources. The Forward Together Programme was critical in promoting independence and empowering people and reshaping a smaller and smarter organisation. He drew particular attention to the Special Educational Needs transport budget which had been overspent over a number of years and how imagination and creative thinking had resulted in no overspend and needs being better met and better outcomes achieved.

53.3 He then referred to the future of Local Government and described three options for future consideration (a combined authority, unitary status and devolution), how these were being progressed and the possibilities these opened up for the Council. All of these would bring a significant change to the way the Council worked. However, whatever mechanism provided public services in future it needed to be a solution for the entire County and in the best interests of residents. The focus should be on outcomes, not on the processes involved.

53.4 The Leader referred to strong evidence which showed that Dorset was a functional local economic area, but he recognised that the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) had a role to play in enabling the Council to develop and improve economic growth and achieve sustainable prosperity. He highlighted the many examples of how pan-Dorset partnership working was already operating successfully, particularly Tricuro, Public Health and the Dorset Waste Partnership and the Council’s role in facilitating this. Whatever the

future of local government there was a need to maximise the use of resources and take advantage of the opportunities for the medium and longer term. He looked forward to working with other local authorities, partners, public sector providers and residents on the way forward.

53.5 Councillors then expressed individual comments about the future of Local Government in Dorset. Some thought that the decision about Combined Authority should have been made by the Council, thus giving it total buy-in, whilst others thought it and other options should be considered by the Council at a single item meeting. Some members who supported a combined authority recognised that the current submission was somewhat less than the original. Thus running the risk that the Government might not accept it leaving Dorset unable to take advantage of future devolution opportunities. Other members thought unitary status should be pursued on a pan-Dorset basis. Some suggested that a better explanation should be provided for the public to increase their understanding of the options. Other views expressed included, the importance of working with other local authorities, partners and others for the benefit of Dorset residents; that local members would have a stronger role to play in communities in future; that more decisions should be made at a local level in future; that the experience of other councils should be used to inform decisions within Dorset; and that enterprise and economic growth should be encouraged to create revenue to support the delivery of services and support communities.

53.6 The Leader welcomed the discussion and the apparent appetite for change, even if the format this would take was unclear. He confirmed that any future decisions would be made by the Council with supporting documentation. He recognised that the Council needed to be well prepared for public service reform in order to continue to deliver services which provided the best outcomes for Dorset residents.

Resolved

54. That the content of the Leader's announcements be noted and that the Council be provided with an opportunity to debate future local government options at an appropriate time.

Reason for decision

55. To enable the commitment to the democratic process to be fulfilled.

Questions from Members of the Council

56.1 The following questions were asked under Standing Order 20:

56.2 Councillor Paul Kimber asked the Cabinet Member for Environment a question in relation to future rail plans for routes and connections to Bristol and London.

56.3 Councillor Paul Kimber also asked the Cabinet Member for Environment a question in relation to future plans for the Western Growth Corridor which ran North from Portland to Weymouth, Dorchester and Yeovil. The questions and answers are attached to these minutes as Annexure 1.

Motions

Navitus Bay

57.1 The Council considered a motion submitted by the Councillor Paul Kimber asking for the Council to call on the Government to reconsider its decision regarding Navitus Bay. The motion had been seconded by Councillor Mike Byatt.

57.2 Councillor Kimber presented his motion, and expressed his view that the County Council should take the opportunity to lead in supporting renewable energy targets in

an effort to reduce the impact of climate change. He thought the benefits of the Navitus Bay Wind Park should be reassessed to determine how this could contribute to targets and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. He also emphasised the economic and employment benefits this venture would provide. He, therefore, asked the Council to support the motion being taken to the Environment and the Economy Overview Committee for its consideration.

Resolved

58. That the motion regarding Navitus Bay be referred to the Environment and the Economy Overview Committee for consideration at the meeting on 19 January 2016.

Trade Union Bill

59.1 The Council considered a motion submitted by Councillor Ros Kayes seeking the Council's support to continue its own locally agreed industrial relations strategy and take every measure possible to maintain its autonomy with regard to facility time and the continuing use of check-off. The motion had been seconded by Councillor Janet Dover.

59.2 Councillor Kayes presented her motion and expressed her view that Trade Unions brought considerable benefits to the Council's management of its industrial relations. The relationship that the Trade Unions had with management should be commended and contributed significantly to how the Council ran its operations and to productivity. She considered their input to be invaluable in ensuring that the Forward Together Programme was managed successfully and that any dilution of its effectiveness as a result of national legislation would be detrimental to that process. She thought Dorset should resist the provisions of the Trade Union Bill and consider opting out so that this mutually co-operative relationship might be maintained. Consequently, she asked that the Council support the motion being considered by the Staffing Committee.

59.3 In response to a question, the Chairman confirmed that the Labour Group had submitted the identical motion initially but the Council's constitution only allowed a Group to submit one motion to any one Council meeting. So the second motion had not been accepted. The Leader of the Liberal Democrats confirmed that she had been unaware of the submission by the Labour Group at the time her Group's motion was submitted.

Resolved

60. That the motion regarding the Trade Union Bill be considered by the Staffing Committee on 28 January 2016.

Reports of the Cabinet

61.1 The reports of the Cabinet meetings held on 2 September, 30 September and 28 October 2015 were presented and their adoption duly moved and seconded.

61.2 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2015:-

Forward Together Update

61.3 In relation to minute 328.3, Councillor Janet Dover asked to be updated on remodelling of areas within County Hall. The Leader would provide an update outside of the meeting.

61.4 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2015:-

Proposal for a Combined Authority for Dorset

61.5 In relation to minute 356.4, concern was raised about the decision being taken without any reference to Council and the lack of a scrutiny mechanism. The Leader confirmed that the decision had been taken in accordance with the Constitution and that a scrutiny function was included within the Combined Authority arrangements.

Resolved

62. That the reports of the Cabinet on 2 September, 30 September and 28 October 2015 be adopted.

Reports of Overview and Scrutiny Committees

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

Overview Committees

Adult and Community Services	7 October 2015
Children's Services	13 October 2015
Environment and the Economy	20 October 2015

Scrutiny Committees

Audit and Scrutiny	21 July 2015
Audit and Scrutiny	15 September 2015
Audit and Scrutiny	15 October 2015
Dorset Health Scrutiny	8 September 2015

63.2 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Adult and Community Services Overview Committee held on 7 October 2015:-

63.3 The Chairman of the Overview Committee highlighted two recommendations to Cabinet relating to the adoption of the Dorset Cultural Strategy 2016-2012 and the merger of the Executive Advisory Panels on Pathways to Independence and the Care Act and Future Social Care Policy.

Proposals for changes in relation to budgets for sports and physical activity

63.4 In relation to minute 104.7, and whether officers' attendance at meetings where their future was being considered would be discussed at the Staffing Committee, the Chairman of the Committee explained that following receipt of the request for them to attend, the Monitoring Officer had advised that this was appropriate. The Monitoring Officer explained how this decision had been taken but that, on reflection, the advice might be different in future. It was suggested that perhaps the Staffing Committee should produce a policy regarding officer attendance at meetings where their future was to be discussed.

63.5 In relation to minute 104.9, in response to questions as to when a decision about changes to the budgets for sports and physical activity would be made, the Director for Adult and Community Services confirmed that this issue was still under consideration.

63.6 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview Committee held on 13 October 2015:-

Forward Together for Children – Update/Youth Services in Dorset

63.7 In relation to minute 123, attention was drawn to the late notice of the briefing on Youth Services which was to be held on 16 November 2015. The Director explained that this date had been referred to at the briefing held on 15 September 2015 when the intention to hold a six week engagement period had been explained and a timeline was provided.

Joint working across NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group and Dorset County Council to improve health outcomes for Children and Young People

63.8 In relation to minute 125, concern was expressed at the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group's vision for changes to maternity and paediatric services at Dorset County Hospital which would result in some patients being referred to Poole and Bournemouth Hospitals. This would have implications for transport and child well-being. Councillor Rebecca Knox, as Chairman of the Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board, reported that this formed part of the Clinical Services Review. No decisions about this had been reached but there would be a public consultation exercise next year.

63.9 The following matters were raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Economy Overview Committee held on 20 October 2015:-

Enabling Economic Growth 2015-2020

63.10 In relation to minute 108, Councillor Richard Biggs asked whether the report he had asked for on the implications of the UK leaving the EU was being progressed. The Chairman explained that this had been noted in the list of items to be taken into account within the Strategy.

Holistic Transport Review – Update, including Weymouth Park and Ride and Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)

63.11 In relation to minute 116, Councillor Trevor Jones reminded members of their ability to invoke a Councillor Call for Action when they were dissatisfied with action taken on a matter within their division. Two years ago the Audit and Scrutiny Committee had investigated RTPI displays and had been dissatisfied with the way they had been procured, that they did not work then and still did not work now, and at the cost of installation on the Portland Weymouth Dorchester corridor. He asked for a Councillor Call for Action to disable the equipment in order to reduce maintenance costs.

Progress and Update – Dorset Highways Fleet Services

63.12 In relation to minute 136, Councillor Janet Dover, as a local member, asked for the HGV situation in Colehill to be taken into account when the Policy Development Panel on HGV Management was considering how HGVs might best be managed in south east Dorset.

63.13 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meetings of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 July 2015:-

63.14 The Committee's Chairman referred to the work of the Policy Development Panel on Involving Local Members and the monthly questionnaire that was sent to members seeking information about them being informed of actions being undertaken within their electoral divisions. The system had never worked well and the Panel had suggested that this action be ceased with any incidents being reported to either Director's Personal Assistants or Members' Secretaries. It was confirmed that Group Leaders and the Chairman of the Council had agreed to this suggestion at a recent meeting.

63.15 The following matter was raised under the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 15 September 2015:-

63.16 In relation to minute 180, an update was requested with regard to pan-Dorset scrutiny following the Joint Scrutiny Sub-Committee being disbanded. The Chairman explained that, in view of the increasing amount of joint working, there was an urgent need for effective scrutiny arrangements to be put in place, especially given the possibility of

changes to future governance arrangements. The Leader agreed that this was a serious and complex matter and reported that Pricewaterhouse Coopers had been commissioned to undertake some work on accountability and transparency which would be reported to the Leaders and Chief Executives' Group.

Resolved

64.1 That the Terms of Reference of the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee be amended to include "Liaise and co-operate with the Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board as set out under the Memorandum of Understanding agreed by both parties in September 2015.

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

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

65.1 The recommendation of the Standards and Governance Committee was presented and its adoption duly moved and seconded.

Standards and Governance: 26 October 2015

Recommendation 88 - Scrutiny Review 2015

65.2 In relation to recommendation 88, the Chairman of the Committee explained that the outcomes of the scrutiny review had been considered by the Standards and Governance Committee on 26 October and received by the Cabinet on 28 October 2015. Although ten questions had been identified for consideration by the Committee, it had recommended that a politically proportional Task and Finish Group be established to make recommendations to the Council's February 2016 meeting with a view to any changes being implemented in April 2016. The Committee had also asked that joint scrutiny arrangements be considered as part of this.

Resolved

66.1 That the County Council considers the key questions, noting the support for option 2 (as indicated from the consultation) for the future of audit, overview and scrutiny arrangements for the County Council.

66.2 That a Task and Finish Group is formed, in the light of work to date and an assessment of the effectiveness of the Council's current scrutiny arrangements and its current overview arrangements, to develop a recommended model of overview and scrutiny to be considered by the Standards and Governance Committee prior to recommendations being made to the County Council in February 2016, taking account of the following factors:

- The mechanisms and working practices of effective scrutiny in the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules.
- The terms of reference, composition and chairmanship arrangements of a new model.
- Culture change and training of members and officers.

66.3 That the Group is comprised of Mike Byatt, Andrew Cattaway, Hilary Cox, David Harris, Trevor Jones, Daryl Turner and Peter Wharf.

66.4 That an implementation timescale of April 2016 be agreed.

Reason for Recommendations

67. To align with the vision of the Corporate Plan to "working together for a strong and successful Dorset".

68. The report of the meeting of the Dorset Fire Authority held on 23 September 2015 was received.

Resolved

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

Review of Members' Allowances Scheme 2016/17

70. The Council considered a report prepared by the Independent Remuneration Panel which set out changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme 2016/17 which would come into effect on 1 April 2016.

Resolved

71. That the proposed changes to the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2016/17, as set out in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, be adopted.

Appointments to Committees of the County Council, Joint Committees, Dorset Fire Authority and Member Champions for 2015/16

72.1 The Council noted that, following the resignation of Councillor Dan Brember, Committee representation had been altered as set out in minutes 73.1 and 73.2 below.

72.2 The Council noted that Peter Wharf was to replace Colin Jamieson on the Pension Fund Committee and that Spencer Flower was to replace John Wilson on the Adult and Community Services Overview Committee.

Resolved

73.1 That Paul Kimber be appointed as a member of the Children's Services Overview Committee and a reserve member for the Corporate Parenting Board.

73.2 That Kate Wheller be appointed as a member of the Children's and Adults Services Appeals Committee.

73.3 That Peter Wharf be appointed as a member of the Pension Fund Committee to replace Colin Jamieson.

73.4 That Spencer Flower be appointed as a member of the Adult and Community Services Overview Committee to replace John Wilson.

Meeting Duration: 10.00am to 12.50pm

ANNEXURE 1Questions Under Standing Order 20

Question from Paul Kimber to the Cabinet Member for Environment
in relation to the Rail Network.

Questions

I'm requesting an update regarding any future rail plans and what we are doing to press all authorities regarding routes and connections to Bristol and London.

Further can you give any update or are there any on-going discussions about improving our links in the South West?

As you know from our records, I have received emails calling for faster journey times in both directions.

Answer

The Peninsula Rail Task Force (PRTF) has been set up by LAs in the far west to press for capacity and resilience improvements to the west of Exeter and for additional capacity on the West of England mainline (Salisbury to Exeter) that will enable it effectively to function as a diversionary route for mainlines to Paddington. Government is clearly listening and has asked that PRTF engages with LAs on the West of England route to ensure a common view of what is needed. To that end the West of England Line Group has been established to feed into PRTF. This group includes representation from the Dorset LEP and the county council. There is a clear view that the specific improvements that will enable improved services to Dorset, additional capacity between Wilton Junction and Tisbury and reinstatement of the Yeovil South Chord, will be included in this group's suggestions/proposals.

The Heart of Wessex Community Rail Partnership continues to press the case for an hourly service between Bristol and Weymouth and will seek to achieve this through the Great Western Franchise renewal. DCC is a member of the partnership and officers are fully engaged.

The question of faster journey times to and from London has been raised on a number of occasions, including twice recently by Richard Drax MP. This appears to have sparked the interest of DfT, Network Rail and South West Trains (SWT). The response, provided by SWT, has been that journey time improvement via Bournemouth is not practicable, but that it may be possible to operate a faster service between Weymouth and Waterloo via Yeovil, subject to the improvements identified above.

Coincidentally, South West Trains is already planning a pilot service between Waterloo – Weymouth via Yeovil for summer Saturdays in 2016/17. DCC has been instrumental in delivering this and will contribute funding for this through our LTP integrated transport allocation to meet initial revenue shortfall.

The franchise renewal process will provide opportunities for the county council to make the case for improved services. Key dates are:

- Great Western Franchise renewal – OJEU Aug 2017, ITT Jan 2018, Award Nov 2018, End/Start Mar 2019.
- South West Trains Franchise renewal – OJEU Nov 2015, ITT Apr 2016, Award Feb 2017, End/Start June 2017.

Questions Under Standing Order 20

Question from Paul Kimber to the Cabinet Member for Environment
in relation to the Road Network.

Question

Clearly the Western Growth Corridor that goes North from Portland, Weymouth, Dorchester, Gillingham and Yeovil clearly needs urgent improvements as local authorities begin to work closer in partnership.

Can you give any future plans on the above?

Answer

County Council officers are working with the Tri Council Partnership officers to commission a Dorset LEP funded Transport Study for the Western Dorset Growth Corridor from Portland - Weymouth - Dorchester. The aim of the study will be to identify deliverable transport improvement schemes to help facilitate development and economic growth along the corridor and beyond. Schemes and improvements resulting from this work will be developed and progressed for future funding bid applications.

Discussions have also taken place with neighbouring county councils and LEPs so that the corridor proposal is seen in the context of the wider infrastructure links all the way to Bristol.