



## Cabinet

Minutes of a meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park,  
Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ on Wednesday, 24 February 2016

### Present:

Robert Gould (Chairman)

Robin Cook, Toni Coombs, Peter Finney, Colin Jamieson, Jill Haynes and Rebecca Knox.

### Members Attending

John Wilson, as Chairman of the Council under Standing Order 54

Deborah Croney, County Councillor for Hambledon

Beryl Ezzard, County Councillor for Wareham

Spencer Flower, County Councillor for Verwood and Three Legged Cross

David Harris, County Councillor for Westham

Ros Kayes, County Councillor for Bridport

Paul Kimber, County Councillor for Portland Tophill

William Trite, County Councillor for Swanage

Officers Attending: Debbie Ward (Chief Executive), Catherine Driscoll (Director for Adult and Community Services), Patrick Ellis (Assistant Chief Executive), Mike Harries (Director for Environment and the Economy), Phillip Minns (Head of Learning and Inclusion) and Lee Gallagher (Democratic Services Manager).

### For certain items, as appropriate

Emma Baker (Project Engineer), Matthew Piles (Head of Economy), Kelly Rand (Sustainable Transport Officer) and Andrew Shaw (Dorset Travel Team Service Manager).

(Notes:(1) In accordance with Rule 16(b) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules the decisions set out in these minutes will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of five working days after the publication date.  
Publication Date: **Tuesday, 1 March 2016.**

(2) 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 Cabinet to be held on **Wednesday, 16 March 2016.**)

### **Apology for Absence**

29 An apology was received from Sara Tough (Director for Children's Services). Phil Minns (Head of Learning and Inclusion) attended for Sara Tough.

### **Code of Conduct**

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

With reference to minute 37, a general interest was declared by Mike Harries (Director for Environment and the Economy) as he lived within the area of the scheme, and was the Director responsible for the scheme from the County Council. During the debate on this item he withdrew from the meeting.

### **Minutes**

31 The minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2016 were confirmed and signed.

## **Public Participation**

### **32 Public Speaking**

There was 1 set of public questions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(1) regarding Minute 35 'Rural Bus Service Review'. The questions and answers are attached to these minutes.

There were 4 public statements received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(2) regarding Minute 35 'Rural Bus Service Review' and Minute 36 'The Future of Wareham Foot Level Crossing'. The statements are attached to these minutes.

### **Petitions**

There were no petitions received at the meeting in accordance with the County Council's Petition Scheme.

## **Cabinet Forward Plan**

33 The Cabinet considered the draft Forward Plan, which identified key decisions to be taken by the Cabinet on or after the next meeting.

### **Noted**

## **Approach to Support Services**

34 The Cabinet considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Development in relation to the current position of the Support Services Transformation programme and options for the future of support services.

It was recognised that although the Cabinet had previously agreed to investigate an in-house option combined with joining or forming a Local Authority shared service and recruiting an incremental partner to work with the Council on the transformation of the support services, given the current budget pressures on the Council, it was not appropriate to continue with the recruitment of an incremental partner

It was recognised that the Council had to be flexible in order to drive efficiencies and deliver savings, and that this would be detailed in a further report to the Cabinet in March 2016 which would present clear targets and timescales.

Members also noted that oversight of the transformation and engagement with communities would be a key role of the new Budget Strategy Task and Finish Group.

### **Resolved**

That the approach of developing a programme of change for support services to save a minimum of £1.5m in 2017/18 be endorsed.

### **Reasons for Decision**

1. As part of the programme, the Council would consider the further steps required to deliver additional savings which would ensure value for money, modern and valued support services.
2. In order to set a strategic direction for the Support Services.

## **Rural Bus Services Review**

35 The Cabinet considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Environment on the review of public transport in Dorset.

In accordance with the Council's procedures for public speaking, the Cabinet received 1 set of public questions and 1 public statement at the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders 21(1) and 21(2). The questions and answers, and statements are attached to these minutes. The public questions and statements raised the following issues and concerns:

- The financial position of the Council in being able to provide subsidised bus services.
- The creation of rural isolation for people with no way of accessing work, market town shopping, medical appointments and to other public transport networks.
- Economic impact of reduced routes.
- The plans for alternative provision.
- Not enough time taken to consult the public during the 4 week consultation period and that longer should be spent on consultation.

A number of members addressed the Cabinet (including formal questions submitted by Cllr Beryl Ezzard – questions and answers are attached to these minutes) in turn to make comments and raise concerns which included rural and urban isolation; access to employment, education, medical appointments and shopping; the independence of the elderly including the need for social inclusion and for them to remain in their own homes for as long as possible; review of rural travel by North Dorset District Council; need to find alternatives to traditional provision; time needed for communities to create alternatives; the length of consultation undertaken; the quality of the Equalities Impact Assessment and consideration of protected characteristics (which was confirmed by the Monitoring Officer to be sufficient for a decision to be made); perceived inaccuracies of detail within the report; scale of the consultation with only 1000 paper copies of consultation being available; and not enough detail in relation to the why the risk assessment was 'high'.

The Cabinet Member for Environment summarised the strategic impact of subsidising bus routes across the County and explained that the current arrangements were not financially sustainable or fit for purpose and it was therefore necessary to have a strategic passenger transport network in partnership with communities. The Cabinet Member for Communities, Health and Wellbeing then provided a comprehensive overview of developments to date on community transport initiatives through a local workshop approach to solutions with residents, partner organisations, and local councils based on data from the review and consultation. It was suggested that the model be rolled out to communities shortly as a blueprint to facilitate local community transport schemes.

The Cabinet discussed the issues and concerns raised together with the approach for the future to be led by local members to develop initiatives across localities with the input of communities. Further clarification was provided regarding the cost of concessionary travel for free bus passes, managing surplus seats, and school bus integration for all travellers (with appropriate safeguarding).

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Growth reported that he was approaching MPs to secure their support for changes to the operation of the Concessionary Fares scheme to ensure a better outcome for public transport in the future.

### **Resolved**

1. That withdrawal of funding support for public transport routes as described in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet Member's report be approved.
2. That the flexible approach in relation to the development of community transport initiatives be implemented.

### **Reason for Decisions**

Improving efficiency in the delivery of passenger transport services would help support the Council's Corporate Aims – of Enabling Economic Growth and Health, Wellbeing and Safeguarding through providing or supporting a more extensive community transport network.

### **The Future of Wareham Foot Level Crossing**

36 The Cabinet considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Environment regarding the Wareham Foot Level Crossing.

In accordance with the Council's procedures for public speaking, the Cabinet received 3 public statements, including 2 from Network Rail, at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(2). The statements are attached to these minutes. The statements raised the following issues and concerns:

- The risk to the public if the crossing remained open.
- Safety risks of alternative solutions, including the use of an attendant.
- Financial impact of any alternatives to closing the crossing.
- Previous planning considerations by Purbeck District Council.
- The ambitions of the Swanage Railway to reconnect at Wareham but not whilst the crossing remained open.

Formal questions were submitted by Cllr Beryl Ezzard who urged the Cabinet to keep the crossing open and prevent Wareham being split in half with no feasible alternative crossing, but with a preference for an automatic system or lifts. The questions and answers are attached to these minutes.

As the local member for Swanage, Cllr William Trite, addressed the Cabinet to empathise with local concerns and to highlight the need for the reinstatement of the Swanage Railway with Wareham which had huge public support. He also advocated the use of lifts as the best solution.

The Cabinet Member for Environment acknowledged the need for further consideration to be given to the foot level crossing and announced that the report would return to Cabinet in two months.

#### **Resolved**

That the report be deferred for further consideration before being resubmitted to the Cabinet in two months.

### **Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP): Implications of West Dorset District Council Decisions**

37 The Cabinet considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Environment on the future Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP) as a result of consideration by West Dorset District Council.

#### **Resolved**

1. That the design and construction of all DTEP elements be progressed except the Maumbury Cross/Fairfield link to an amended timetable and spend profile (Table 2) such that all of these elements are funded through the direct DCC, WDDC and DTC capital expenditure, already approved.
2. In addition, it is agreed to construct a partial improvement at Maumbury Cross to provide a much needed safer pedestrian link to the town centre from the south.
3. That full improvement at Maumbury Cross be postponed, including an improved link across Fairfield, until sufficient developer funding is available and West Dorset District Council support is achieved.

#### **Reason for Decisions**

To develop a scheme that achieved the best balance between meeting project objectives and being acceptable to the people of Dorchester and partner councils.

## **Work experience and access to Apprenticeships for all Year 11 Looked After Young People**

38 The Cabinet considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People regarding apprenticeships for year 11 Looked After Children as part of the Council's corporate parenting duty.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young people strongly supported the need for the Council to provide apprenticeship opportunities from year 11 for Looked After Children (LAC) in its duty as a corporate parent in order to lead by example and encourage other partners and organisations to do the same in the future. This would help to reduce the number of LAC that would end up not in employment, education or training which was currently 49% compared with mainstream children at 4%. It was acknowledged that there was further work required in relation to funding and human resources, but Cabinet was urged to agree the principle of the scheme which had also been agreed by the Virtual School Governing Body.

Members took the opportunity to support the recommendations, together with further support from Cllr Deborah Croney as Leader of North Dorset District Council who informed the Cabinet about apprenticeships being considered across North, West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland Councils and the possibility of discussing how the councils could be involved with the scheme.

### **Resolved**

1. That the Cabinet sign up to the commitment of offering all Year 11 LAC students work experience opportunities and access to apprenticeships within DCC and beyond.
2. That the Action Plan for delivering this commitment be approved.
3. That the policies as mentioned in the Cabinet Member's report be implemented.
4. That the pilot outlined in the report be trialled to ensure that the work experiences/apprenticeships are supported during the whole process; that successful outcomes are achieved by the individuals involved; and the trial becomes embedded for future apprenticeships.

### **Reason for Decisions**

Higher duty of care that Corporate Parents have towards Looked After Children.

## **Regional Adoption Agency (RAA)**

39 The Cabinet considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People on the development of a Regional Adoption Agency to improve the adoption process by matching adoptive parents quicker by having a larger pool available, which would have a greater chance of avoiding adoption breakdowns.

### **Resolved**

1. That officers be requested to proceed with development of a proposal to develop a Regional Adoption Agency in an outline business case and high level implementation plan. The proposed Regional Adoption Agency would combine the adoption services of Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council, The Borough of Poole and Families for Children, a voluntary adoption agency;
2. That authority be delegated to the Director for Children's Services after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People to review and approve the proposal prior to submission to the DfE.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

1. Councils had a statutory duty to provide adoption services to all those affected by adoption living in their area. Services to meet those responsibilities were required to meet legislative requirements and Minimum Standards for

Adoption Services and were inspected regularly by OFSED to ensure they did so.

2. The move towards a proposed Regional Adoption Agency would not discharge the Council of its statutory responsibilities but would effect far reaching changes in how those functions were organised and managed: While Bournemouth continued to be a high performing service, central government expected that Regional Adoption Agencies would be better able to target the recruitment of prospective adopters, speed up the matching and placement of children, improve adoption support services and could create efficiency savings.
3. The Education and Children Bill was moving through Parliament and could give the Secretary of State the power to order local authority adoption agencies to combine services if they did not voluntarily do so.

### **Recommendations from Committees**

40 The Cabinet considered the following recommendations.

#### Recommendation 7 - Proposed Dorchester Parking Review

41 **Resolved**

- 1 That the proposed waiting restrictions for the Dorchester Parking Review, on Queens Avenue/Treves Road/Clarence Road, on South Court Avenue and on Alfred Road/Cromwell Road, as originally advertised, be approved and that there be a commitment to these being enforced effectively.
2. That the advertised proposals for Coburg Road/Edward Road be abandoned; and that parking proposals for Coburg Road/Edward Road be revisited, re-evaluated and a new design drawn up to go out to public consultation early in 2016.

#### Reasons for Recommendations

1. The proposals should improve the movement of vehicles along Queens Avenue/Treves Road/Clarence Road and help prevent indiscriminate parking causing problems to residents and visitors. The proposal in South Court Avenue would also improve the movement of vehicles and stop indiscriminate parking. The proposals in Alfred Road/Cromwell Road were needed to help alleviate the continued problems of the all-day parking by employees in the town centre, people who park and use the train or those visiting the nearby Brewery Square development. This had caused significant problems to the residents and had also prevented the refuse lorry from accessing the area on a number of occasions.
2. Feedback from the Local Members and Dorchester Town Council following the advertisement of the proposals indicated that the proposals for Coburg Road/Edward Road needed to be reconsidered and the revised proposals consulted upon.

#### Recommendation 10 - Proposed Waiting Restrictions, Chiltern Drive & Pennine Way, Verwood

42 **Resolved**

That the proposed waiting restrictions on Chiltern Drive and Pennie Way, Verwood be approved with a minor amendment to relax the restrictions to allow limited waiting on a length of Chiltern Drive.

#### Reason for Decision

The proposals should allow the free the movement of vehicles at the new entrance to the super store off of Chiltern Drive.

**Questions from County Councillors**

- 43 Two sets of questions were received from Councillor Beryl Ezzard regarding Minute 35 'Rural Bus Service Review' and Minute 36 'The Future of Wareham Foot Level Crossing' under Standing Order 20.

The questions and answers are attached to these minutes under the items referred to above.

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 12.20 pm