

Date of committee: 6 October 2020

Date published: 9 October 2020

Date of implementation: 16 October 2020

DECISIONS OF THE DORSET COUNCIL - CABINET 6 OCTOBER 2020

The following decisions were made by the Cabinet on 6 October 2020 and will come into force and may be implemented on 19 October 2020 unless the decision is called in for scrutiny.

In accordance with the council's constitution, any six members of the same relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee may request the Monitoring Officer to 'call-in' a decision for scrutiny. The Monitoring Officer will be provided with written notice that will identify the decision to be called-in and the ground for the call-in when the request is made. If satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the proposed call-in, the Monitoring Officer will notify the decision-maker of the call-in within 5 clear working days. The deadline for this request is **16 October 2020**.

The full call-in procedure is set out in the Constitution or for further information and advice please telephone Kate Critchel on 01305 252234

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

6 INITIAL, HIGH-LEVEL, DRAFT BUDGET INFORMATION FOR 2021/22 AND MTFP FOR 2023-2026

Decision

- (a) That the updated cost pressures set out in the paper of 6 October 2020 and the validation work that has been carried out on these, be noted;
- (b) That the amendments to the planning assumptions used in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), be noted;
- (c) That the financial gap arising from (i) and (ii) above, be noted;
- (d) Cabinet notes the tactical and transformation savings set out in the paper to start to close the financial gap, recognising that these are work in progress;
- (f) That the Portfolio Holders work with officers to continue to identify and develop savings opportunities through tactical or transformational means;
- (h) Cabinet continues to make the case to Government for additional funding given the unprecedented financial consequences of Covid-19;
- (i) That Cabinet agrees the next steps leading up to the 2021/22 Budget being presented to full Council in February 2021.

Reason for Decision

Councils are required to set a balanced budget. Essentially this means that expenditure is balanced by income without unsustainable use of one-off, or short-term sources of finance.

This paper is coming to Cabinet to provide an update on the budget gap for 2021-22 and subsequent years and progress on action/savings to date. The paper proposes an approach to close the remaining gap.

7 THE DORSET WORKPLACE

Decision

- (a) That the implementation of the Dorset Workplace be approved;
- (b) That a budget of £1,060,000 be allocated to support this.

Reason for the Decision

The objective of the Dorset Workplace is to establish a set of principles that will allow employees to work from the place or more likely the places where they can best serve residents, customers and clients in the most effective way.

8 APPROACH TO VALUE FOR MONEY

Decision

That Cabinet develop a value for money framework and timeline setting out how it will implement value for money benchmarking of all services to feed into a prioritisation

exercise for conducting fundamental value for money reviews of the all the council's services.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the council is delivering value for money in all its services.

9 DINAH'S HOLLOW, SLOPE STABILISATION

Decision

- (a) That the acquisition of the land and the drainage works on the east side of Dinah's Hollow, Melbury Abbas be progressed immediately at a total cost of £130k.
- (b) That Cabinet notes the scale of additional resource required to stabilise slopes throughout the hollow and that the affordability of the scheme should be considered alongside other priorities as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process and MTFP.

Reason for Decision

The impact of a major slope failure would be high in respect of health and safety and financial implications. Possible consequences are loss of life or major injury and legal action. There would also be reputational damage, impact on service delivery and disruption to the highway network affecting a key north-south route.

10 WEYMOUTH HARBOUR AND ESPLANADE FLOOD AND COASTAL EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Decision

- (a) That the flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for the next 100 years for Weymouth, be agreed;
- (b) That officers be authorised to develop the business case towards deliverable schemes for inclusion in Dorset Council's future capital programme.
- (c) That authority be delegated to the two relevant portfolio holders, in consultation with the Director for Place, to agree the governance structures to oversee the project.

Reason for Decision

Weymouth floods and is impacted by coastal erosion. With a prediction of an acceleration in sea level rise and more intense weather events as a result of climate change, the problems facing Weymouth will increase significantly.

Without investment in managing this flood and erosion risk, Weymouth faces increasing direct losses through flooded assets and infrastructure and indirect impacts such as a failing property market due to blight and increasing social deprivation.

11 DORSET COUNCIL CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN

Decision

- (a) That the scale of additional resource requirements to deliver the climate emergency strategy 2040 and 2050 targets be noted, and that affordability should be considered as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process and MTFP.
- (b) That the Summary Climate Action Plan (set out at appendix A) be approved for public consultation along with the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy
- (c) That the Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Executive Director of Place to agree the final wording of the final document.

12 DOG-RELATED PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER

Decision

- (a) That the Dog-related Public Spaces Protection Order 2020, be approved;
- (b) That West Beach, Charmouth be included as an exclusion area between 1 May and 30 September with dog's exercised off-lead at other times. East Beach at Charmouth to have no restrictions.

Reason for Decision

To protect public health, safety and animal welfare.

To consolidate existing Dog-related Public Spaces Protection Orders and provisions into a single Order to give greater consistency and clarity for residents and visitors to Dorset.

To assist with the efficient use of enforcement resources.

13 FINANCIAL PROVISION TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR

Decision

Cabinet agreed:-

- (a) The continued provision of the 'information, advice and guidance' service for residents at the current financial rate for a 5-year term to offer stability.. Extension of the current grant for a further 6 months 1st April – 30th September 2021 to enable a procurement exercise to be undertaken. The new contract to begin on 1st October 2021
- (b) The continued provision of an arts and culture support service at the current financial rate for a 5-year term. Extension of the current grant for a further 6 months 1st April – 30th September 2021 to enable a procurement exercise to be undertaken. The new contract to begin on 1st October 2021.
- (c) The continued provision of support services to the social voluntary community sector at the current financial rate for a 5-year term. This will be tendered as one contract for bidding organisations to work in partnership to deliver the support for the rest of the social voluntary community sector. Extension of the current grant recipients for a further 6 months 1st April – 30th September 2021 to enable a procurement exercise to be undertaken. The new contract to begin on 1st October 2021.
- (d) The continued commissioned support of the museums and community centres in which Dorset Council have a reversionary interest at the current financial rate for a

period of 1 year from 1st April 2021 to be considered within the wider council buildings and assets review.

- (f) A discretionary outcome-based fund to be introduced to replace all historical grant programmes offered by Dorset Council. Criteria to be modified in accordance to the comments made in the consultation and agreed with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder.

Reason for Decision

1. The consultation has evidenced the value and very strong level of support for the information, advice and guidance service for residents. Due to the value of the contract, there is a requirement to procure the service. The timescales involved in undertaking an open and transparent procurement exercise will necessitate the need to extend the existing contract to allow sufficient time for this to be completed.
2. The consultation has evidenced the value and very strong level of support for the arts support service. Due to the value of the contract, there is a requirement to procure the service. The timescales involved in undertaking an open and transparent procurement exercise will necessitate the need to extend the existing contract to allow sufficient time for this to be completed.
3. The consultation has evidenced the value and very strong level of support for the social VCS support service. Due to the value of the contract, there is a requirement to procure the service. The timescales involved in undertaking an open and transparent procurement exercise will necessitate the need to extend the existing contract to allow sufficient time for this to be completed. It is acknowledged that the current organisations worked incredibly effectively together before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, achieving joint outcomes.
4. The consultation has evidenced a strong level of support for the museums and community centres in which the council has a reversionary interest. However, given that the council is currently undertaking a full review of its assets and buildings, it would be prudent to agree an initial 1-year extension to allow for these to form part of the wider review.
5. The consultation has evidenced a strong level of support for flexible funding to enable community organisations to identify and resolve local community needs. The discretionary outcome-based grants will continue to provide vital support to organisations that provide outcome-based evidence for delivery of Council Plan priorities. These will be made available by 31st December to give current grant recipients the opportunity to secure funding before the financial year end.

14 'PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE' WHITE PAPER: CONSULTATION RESPONSE

That a response be sent to Government, setting out the following as the views of Dorset Council on the White Paper, as well as the more detailed points made in section 9 of this report:

- (a) That delays in house building nationally are not all due to the planning system – local planning authorities do not build houses - but to other factors including market absorption, the homogenous nature of large developments, and reliance on the private sector for infrastructure provision, as identified in the Letwin review. In the last decade, 2.5 million homes were granted planning permission but only 1.5 million were delivered; similarly in 2019, 371,000 homes were given permission but only 241,000 were delivered;

- (b) That binding national housing targets and removal of the opportunity for people to comment at outline planning application stage on sites allocated for growth in plans will reduce the ability of communities to have input into proposals affecting their local areas, and reduce local democracy;
- (c) That greater detail is required on how the national housing targets would be derived, including how environmental constraints will be taken into account, and that this must include an element of national planning strategy setting out the aims for how places will grow and the infrastructure needed to support them;
- (d) That the proposed timescale for the adoption of new style plans is very ambitious bearing in mind the need for the introduction of new primary legislation, the proposed 'front loading' of community engagement and the greater level of technical work necessary if growth areas will receive automatic outline planning permission;
- (e) That there is significant risk to the progress of currently emerging local plans due to the uncertainty around, and scale of, these changes;
- (f) That if national policies are not to be repeated in local plans, they need to carry the same weight in decision making as development plan policies. Some local 'development management policies' will still be necessary to set out local mechanisms and approaches to addressing national policy issues – for example local solutions to addressing indirect effects of development on protected habitats;
- (g) That there is no reference to what if any effect these changes are intended to have on minerals and waste local plans, how policies and site allocations for minerals and waste would be applied under the zoning system and how minerals safeguarding can be achieved;
- (h) That while the support for good design and the publication of a national design code are welcomed, it is important that these focus not only on what places look like, but how they work for those living and working in them. Masterplanning also needs to consider infrastructure provision and mitigation of impacts on habitats, flood risk, heritage and landscape.
- (i) That the replacement of the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 planning agreements with a single levy is not likely to generate sufficient funding for the infrastructure and affordable housing that is needed, particularly bearing in mind the exemptions proposed. We would support the ring fencing of funding for affordable housing to ensure that this is not reduced;
- (j) That while an increased reliance on digital methods of engagement and involvement may well attract a wider audience to comment on planning proposals, it will potentially disadvantage older people and

those in more deprived areas who may have less access to digital means of communication.

Reason for Decision

The White Paper proposes radical changes to the current planning system of England, which will have significant impacts on Dorset, its communities and the council. It is important therefore to respond to the consultation in order to influence the outcome and ensure that the proposals do not adversely affect our area, in particular as a consequence of the binding housing targets and reduction in democratic and community involvement in decisions.

18 URGENT ITEMS

The following items of business were considered by the Chairman as urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The item was considered to be urgent to allow enable the Council to act quickly for the Provision of Dorset Children.

The report was considered in exempt business under paragraph 3 of part 2 schedule 12A of the 1972 Act.

19 EXEMPT BUSINESS

Decision

The press and the public were excluded for the following item(s) in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 and 4 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

20 PROVISION FOR DORSET CHILDREN

Decision

That authority be delegated to the Leader of the Council to engage with the appropriate Executive and Corporate Directors to carry out the recommendations set out with the in urgent exempt report to Cabinet of 6 October 2020.

21 DORSET SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE (SENDIASS)

Decision

That the recommendations set out in the exempt report to Cabinet of 6 October 2020 be agreed.

22 LEISURE SERVICES REVIEW

Decision

That the recommendations set out in the exempt report of 6 October 2020 be agreed.