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DORSET COUNCIL - CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2020

Present: Cllrs Spencer Flower (Chairman), Peter Wharf (Vice-Chairman), Ray Bryan, Graham Carr-Jones, Tony Ferrari, Laura Miller, Andrew Parry, Gary Suttle, Jill Haynes and David Walsh

Apologies: none

Also present: Cllr Cherry Brooks, Cllr Piers Brown, Cllr Simon Gibson, Cllr Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Cllr Byron Quayle, Cllr Beryl Ezzard, Cllr Rod Adkins, Cllr Tony Alford, Cllr Jon Andrews, Cllr Pete Barrow, Cllr Shane Bartlett, Cllr Dave Bolwell, Cllr Kelvin Clayton, Cllr Robin Cook, Cllr Jean Dunseith, Cllr John Worth, Cllr Barry Goringe, Cllr David Gray, Cllr Matthew Hall, Cllr Ryan Holloway, Cllr Rob Hughes, Cllr Nick Ireland, Cllr Sherry Jespersen, Cllr Carole Jones, Cllr Stella Jones, Cllr Paul Kimber, Cllr Rebecca Knox, Cllr Mike Parkes, Cllr Mary Penfold, Cllr Bill Pipe, Cllr Val Potheary, Cllr Mark Roberts, Cllr Maria Roe, Cllr David Shortell, Cllr Andrew Starr, Cllr Clare Sutton, Cllr Roland Tarr, Cllr David Tooke, Cllr Sarah Williams, Cllr Jane Somper and Cllr Kate Wheller

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Matt Prosser (Chief Executive), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Karyn Punchard (Corporate Director for Place Services), Sarah Cairns (Assistant Head of Assets and Infrastructure), Laura Cornette (Corporate Policy & Performance Officer), Bridget Downton (Head of Business Insight and Corporate Communications), Graham Duggan (Head of Community & Public Protection), Denise Hunt (Democratic Services Officer), Hilary Jordan (Service Manager for Spatial Planning), David McIntosh (Corporate Director (HR & OD)), Stuart Riddle (Senior Manager) and Vivienne Broadhurst (Interim Corporate Director - Adult Care Operations)

17. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman as soon as it was practical.

18. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to report.

19. Public Participation

There were sixteen questions from the public. These questions were read out by Matt Prosser, Chief Executive and Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director, Legal and Democratic Services) and responded to by the appropriate Portfolio Holder. A

copy of the full questions and the detailed responses are set out in Appendix 1 these minutes.

20. Questions from Members

There were three questions from Councillors S Jespersen, Nick Ireland and J Somper; these along with the responses are set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes.

21. Forward Plan

The Cabinet Forward Plan for November 2020 to February 2021 was received and noted.

22. Initial, high-level, draft budget information for 2021/22 and MTFP for 2023-2026

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy set out the report that provided a framework for the budget for 2021/2022 and the MTFP for 2021-2026. He also outlined the work that would be undertaken during the autumn and winter in order that the budget could be finalised at Council in February 2021.

Dorset Council was facing a budget shortfall of more than £60m before grants and reliefs from Government reduce the net impact of this to around £35m. At this stage, the continuing impact of Covid-19 on council services and finances was unclear, but officers were working with the best assumptions and information available.

Without further funding from Government, the Council would use significant quantities of its own reserves this year; this would place additional strain on the future resilience and potentially leave the Council unable to fund changes in demand-led services in future. The Leader of the Council would continue to raise these concerns with central government.

In response to a question regarding fully funding the action plan of the Climate and Ecology Emergency Strategy, the Portfolio Holder advised that assurance could not be given at this stage that all project could be fully funded in their entirety . However, the council was committed to responding to climate change and many actions were already in progress as the council worked towards reducing its carbon footprint.

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.

23. The Dorset Workplace

In proposing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Change set out the objectives of the Dorset Workplace which was to establish a set of principles that would allow employees to work from the place or more likely the places where they could best serve residents and customers in the most effective way.

Cabinet was advised that the report recommended rationalisation of offices, more flexible working and reducing the cost of services wherever possible.

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.

24. Approach to Value for Money

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Change presented a report seeking support for the development of a value for money framework and timeline setting out how the council would implement value for money benchmarking. This would feed into a prioritisation exercise for conducting fundamental value for money reviews of council services. Members were advised the Audit & Governance and People & Resources Committees had both considered and supported the proposals.

In response to a request from the Chairman of Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that the report should go back to both committees every 6 months and if required, before that date.

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.

25. Dinah's Hollow, Slope Stabilisation

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment set out a report in respect of Dinah's Hollow slop stabilisation. He advised that 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.

The Portfolio Holder reported that he had received a number of emails from local residents in recent days and advised that all those comments would be logged and form part of discussions going forward. He expressed his concerns about the site and understood the issues involved. Previous works would need to be revisited and the latest financial position in respect of the Local Enterprise Partnership was reported including the need to secure future funding.

In response to a question from the local ward member, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that he would respond direct to all of the recent emails and comments sent to him, including those of the Parish Council.

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.

26. Weymouth Harbour and Esplanade flood and coastal erosion risk

management strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Assets & Property set out the report for the investment in managing flood and erosion risk at Weymouth harbour and the esplanade. It was one of the largest projects in the area in recent times and would bring a number of jobs to the area. He also took the opportunity to thank the Environment Agency for their technical and financial support for the project.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment supported the proposal and thanked officers for their detailed report.

In response to a question from the Chairman of the Harbours Committee regarding the implications of the planning white paper, the Leader of the Council suggested that clarification would be sought and shared with members outside of the meeting at a later date.

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.

27. Dorset Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy Delivery plan

The Portfolio Holder presented the report to Cabinet. The draft costs had been identified for all 187 actions, of which 100 could be achieved through business as usual. However additional funding was required to deliver the strategy and the overall figure was estimated in the region of £127 million.

The plan was ready for public consultation but would be considered by the EAP prior to the consultation process. The Portfolio Holder proposed that an additional recommendation be added (c) That the Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Executive Director of Place to agree the wording of the final document. This was seconded by Cllr S Flower.

In response to questions regarding smart targets, the Sustainability Team Manager confirmed that each detailed action plan would contain timescales, costs and initial target(s).

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 wording of the final document.

28. **Dog-related Public Space Protection Order**

The Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services presented the report and advised that it had been considered and supported by the Place & Resources Overview Committee at its meeting on 21 September 2020.

She advised that a submission has been received from Charmouth Parish Council requesting a change to the recommendation for Charmouth beaches.

Officers supported this proposed change as an error had been made in drafting the Order. In effect the change will move the proposed restriction from East Beach to West Beach.

The following amendment was proposed ‘ to include West Beach as an exclusion area between 1 May and 30 September with dog’s exercised off-lead at other times. East Beach to have no restrictions.’ This was seconded by Cllr L Miller.

The Chairman of Place & Resources Overview Committee advised that the committee felt the consultation results should be adhered to and the recommendations were supported.

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.

29. Financial provision to the voluntary and community sector

Cabinet considered a report setting the results of the consultation regarding Dorset Council's proposals for allocating funding to the voluntary community sector. The proposals would ensure that the overall levels of funding were maintained, and the new harmonised and equitable approach to allocations would enable the voluntary community sector to support Dorset Council to meet community priorities for the period 2021-2026.

It was noted that the recommendations had been supported by People and Health Overview Committee on 22 September 2020.

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.

30. **'Planning for the Future' White Paper: consultation response**

Cabinet was informed of two consultation papers that were published by the government in August; a White Paper "Planning for the Future" that proposed radical changes to the planning system in England and a second paper that outlined changes to the current planning system that would take effect in the interim before any changes came out of the White Paper.

In presenting the report the Portfolio Holder proposed an additional recommendation (k) "That any minor changes to the White Paper consultation response be made under delegated powers by the Portfolio Holder for Planning in consultation with the Service Manager for Spatial Planning". This was seconded by Cllr R Bryan.

The Portfolio Holder responded to a number of detailed questions regarding planning law, the development of the local plan, the delivery of housing in Dorset and the council's response to the "White Paper".

The Portfolio Holder also expressed the importance of and urged all councillors to comment and respond to the consultation document direct.

Decision

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.
- (k) That any minor changes to the White Paper consultation response be made under delegated powers by the Portfolio Holder for Planning in consultation with the Service Manager for Spatial Planning.

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.

31. Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2020 - 2023

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented a report seeking Cabinet support to recommend the Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2020-23 to Council for adoption.

Recommended to Full Council

That the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2020-23 be adopted.

32. **Cabinet Member Update on policy development matters referred to an Overview Committee (s) for consideration**

The Chairman report that this was a new standing item and an opportunity for Portfolio Holders to report on forthcoming policy items coming forward via the new Overview Committees.

Listed below was the items reported to be coming forward in the next few months.

Cultural Policy/Strategy -People & Health Overview Committee

Communities Strategy - People & Health Overview Committee

Recovery & Reset EAP's - Overview Chairmen to agree the appropriate committee path.

ICT EAP - Place & Resources Overview Committee

Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy, Housing Allocations Policy , Housing Standards Enforcement Policy all reporting to People & Health Overview Committee

33. **Climate & Ecological Emergency Executive Advisory Panel Update**

There was nothing further to report.

34. **Urgent items**

The following item 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 for Dorset children.

Item: **Provision for Dorset Children**

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

35. **Exempt Business**

It was proposed by Cllr P Wharf

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following 3 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).

36. Provision for Dorset Children

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented a urgent exempt report.

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.

37. Dorset Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented the report to cabinet.

Decision

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

38. Leisure Services Review

The Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services presented the report to Cabinet.

Decision

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

Public Participation Q&A's
Councillor Q&A's

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 1.19 pm

Chairman

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Cabinet 6 October 2020

Public Questions and Statements

1. Question from Catriona Ross

What are Dorset council doing to encourage less car use around the main towns? The safe streets map was very helpful to let the public identify issues but I have not seen any updates or signs of change around Bridport. In the last few weeks two cyclists have been injured after being hit by vehicle drivers in Bridport. Vehicle use has to be reduced to combat climate change but the only way to do that is to make people feel safe cycling or walking. Why can't all town centres speed limits be reduced from 30mph to 20mph, a simple and cheap way to make roads safer.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

The thousands of individuals' contributions to the Dorset Safe Streets website have been useful in helping Dorset Council to understand residents' concerns and to identify potential schemes to support walking and cycling. Not all of the ideas submitted will be able to be funded in the short term, and many will be impossible to deliver due to other constraints, but in some cases these will help inform future funding bids and longer term strategies. Dorset Council is working with Bridport Town Council to identify priority schemes to improve conditions for people walking and cycling in the town. There has been substantial recent investment in provision for people on foot and bike in the town, including access to West Bay from the East Road Roundabout,

Any changes to speed limits requires careful consideration of Department for Transport guidance. Changing a speed limit is not a simple or cheap process, although I do appreciate why it may be seen this way. There are 'unseen' costs associated with speed limit setting. A lengthy and costly legal process is required for speed limits to be changed and costs associated with signing for speed limits is often not insignificant, particularly if considering area wide schemes in towns and villages across Dorset.

I am aware of a growing number of requests for 20mph limits/zones across Dorset and indeed nationally.

Department for Transport guidance encourages local highway authorities to install more 20mph limits/zones. There is evidence that 20mph limits/zones can help encourage active travel in urban communities and in turn improve emissions. However it is recognised that a reduced limit of 20mph may not be appropriate in all locations requested. Colleagues in Highways are carefully considering what could be feasible whilst being mindful of Department for Transport criteria for 20mph limits and zones; any decision will be evidence led.

2. Question from Caz Dennett

In a recent article in the Dorset Echo (14th September 2020), local residents and marine conservationists raised concerns about air pollution from cruise ships idling in Weymouth Bay. Emissions from ships' funnels (exhausts) are easily visible to on-lookers and smog is now a regular sight over the bay. Air pollution from cruise ship emissions are amongst the most deadly, due to the poor grade 'dirty' heavy-fuel oil the ships burn. This contains high levels of sulphur oxide (a known cause of acid rain and lung cancer), nitrogen dioxide and Particulate Matter (PM). Greenhouse gas emissions from cruise ships, even when idling or manoeuvring in port or anchorage are also extremely high.

The need to control air pollution at ports is a widely acknowledged concern, and Weymouth Bay currently has the characteristics of a busy port (with 5-8 cruise ships present most days).

In the same article on 14th September an unnamed spokesperson for Dorset Council dismissed concerns about air pollution from the cruise ships and stated the smog was caused by temperature inversions trapping pollutants from local sources in Weymouth ("vehicles, fires, industrial activities"), not due to air pollution from ships' emissions.

www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/18717749.dorset-council-claims-cruise-ships-weymouth-bay-not-causing-smog/

Q. What evidence does Dorset Council have to state publicly that the air quality in Weymouth Bay is unchanged by the presence of the cruise ships between March–September 2020 and that residents are unfounded in their concerns over cruise ships emissions?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Thank you for your question. There are international conventions in place to help prevent pollution of the marine environment by ships during their operation. These set limits on certain emissions from ship exhausts and provide mandatory measures for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

We continue to monitor for nitrogen dioxide at many locations throughout the Dorset Council area. The only anomaly identified since the ships commenced their lay up within Weymouth Bay was a significant reduction in levels of nitrogen dioxide largely due to reduced traffic.

During March and April, Defra reported moderate to high pollution across most of the South West England, including rural areas. The cause has been attributed to dust and other particulates from continental Europe carried over by prevailing winds then lingering in the calm conditions. The same conditions also limit the dispersion of local emissions, most notably, particulates.

Southampton City Council has not identified any concerns with regards to sulphur dioxide emissions breaching the Air Quality Objective when their port is fully operational. They advise that concentrations drop rapidly once emitted from the flue of the ships and are likely to be negligible should the wind direction be towards the land. They found that there is no correlation between peaks in pollutant

concentrations and a high number of berthed vessels. This is thought to be a result of energy usage per ship being far lower in berth than when under power at sea.

Q. Assuming that the unnamed Dorset Council spokesperson is correct, and the smog in the bay is caused by temperature inversions trapping air pollution from vehicles, fires and industrial activities and not from cruise ship emissions, what measures are Dorset Council taking to reduce the acknowledged air pollution in Weymouth?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

The Council monitors air quality in accordance with Government requirements and works with a variety of agencies to protect and improve air quality in Dorset.

Nitrogen dioxide is monitored at congested or heavily trafficked locations throughout the area and currently, there is one area, Chideock, where air quality objectives are not being met. Overall, monitoring demonstrates that Dorset has very good air quality.

Certain factories and other processes which emit emissions to air, land or water will have an Environmental Permit issued by the Environment Agency or this Council and inspections are carried out to ensure compliance.

Domestic burning of solid fuels is a growing issue as it is a significant source of particulate emissions in the United Kingdom. Many households are using open fires and stoves to heat their homes, and we encourage people to shift from burning more polluting fuels such as house coal and wet wood towards less polluting fuels such as low sulphur smokeless fuels and dry woods.

3. Question from Cleo Evans

The Climate Emergency

- When presented with stats and facts it is sometimes too overwhelming to get one's head around it, so it is important to focus on how to get people to engage with aspects of climate change, which in turn can help behaviour change.
- We therefore suggest a county wide rolling arts programme of site-specific work, that engages people in a different ways and includes outreach projects that utilise the talents and teamwork of communities. The work would be specific to that community, so for eg where there is a threat of more flooding we would work with those communities on that subject. And likewise, for other elements, such as air pollution. We want this work to be truly collaborative, utilising our environmental partners' expertise and resources, to include events, such as talks, seminars, practical workshops and popups. This is not about lecturing people and telling them what to do; but sparking

conversations, provide information, and inspire community action – and we want people to have fun!

For the whole programme, and to make an impact – we'll be looking for work with a WOW factor. And we don't want to just reach out to people already concerned about climate change – we want to work directly with communities and reach people who aren't yet thinking about it.

Please can you ask the Counsellors, what the Council can do to achieve this with us ,The Arts Development Company? And what timeline are we looking at?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

Following approval of the Strategy and Action Plan by the Council there are a number of actions to be delivered in order to raise awareness within the Dorset area - The Council will have a number of options of how to deliver these actions and will look to work in partnership with other organisations where appropriate.

4. Question from Julie-Ann Booker (on behalf of Extinction Rebellion Dorset)

Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy Delivery Plan

Good to see the draft Action Plan (Delivery Plan) coming before Cabinet in preparation for going out to public consultation.

We note the plan is still only a Summary Action Plan. So at this stage Appendix A represents more of a 'wish list' of 187 actions. We understand that when it goes out for consultation there will be a detailed delivery plan for each of the 10 themes listed. Appendix B being an example of a delivery plan for the theme of 'Buildings'.

It's a shame Cabinet aren't receiving a full draft of the delivery plan. The 'devil' as the saying goes, is in the detail.

At this stage it is actually impossible to get a real grip on the detail, or the shape of the final detail that will be presented for consultation, for a number of reasons, including, but not exclusively that:

- Neither the summary plan (Appendix A), or the example detailed action plan (Appendix B), include any explanations and definitions on the metric's and measures being used
- The metrics and measures used are different between the two documents, so very difficult to 'read across'
- Visual graphics are always helpful in visualising priorities and progress. So a red, amber, green, colour code is helpful. But is meaningless without an explanation of what the colours stand for. There are a lot of green boxes and generally we all feel happy with green and think it is good. But that might not be the case and we can't work out what the colours mean in this summary plan
- Value for Money disappears in appendix B. But there is a 'cost' metric, symbolised with £ signs. But no 'value' for the one, two or three pound signs.

Without knowing this, no judgement or comment can be made on whether the carbon saving (the footprint signs) and any other co-benefits are worth the cost and the priority given to the action

- In the Buildings example there are no green leaf signs indicating that none of the actions improve ecology. We would like to think that this is surely not the case. But without having a clear definition of the green leaf 'measure' it is impossible to know or comment

It's likely there will be a two year gap between Dorset declaring an emergency, and the production of its strategy and delivery plan. It's important the public consultation is meaningful, transparent, accessible and productive. Cabinet should expect nothing less. This cannot happen without clear metrics and measures being included in the documentation.

Question:

When exactly will the metrics and measures be published and available so they can be included in the communications plan for the public consultation?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

The appendix B that has been attached to the Cabinet report is only an example of what will be published as part of the public consultation. The full consultation documents that will be published will include a key interpreting the info graphics and providing metrics and ranges.

5. Question from David Warren

1. It appears that one of the Indirect Actions listed in the published version of the Climate Emergency Strategy paper has not been included in the action log that will be presented to the public.

The action, listed under the Waste section of the report, aims to "Establish appropriate infrastructure to support the circular economy as part of Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Dorset 2008 – 33" . This tacitly refers to the Council's identification of Direct Energy From Waste (EfW) as it's number one sustainable choice for managing its residual waste and acts as a catalyst for the Council to identify a number of possible sites for the development of an EFW Incineration plant.

EfW activities are notoriously CO2 intensive, please could someone outline why this item has not been included in the action log?, as the public should be given the opportunity to discuss this subject.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

Decisions regarding the Councils preferred method of waste disposal are dealt with by the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy and not the draft Climate Emergency Strategy. An electronic link will be included in the draft Climate Strategy to make this clear. The joint Municipal Waste Strategy is due to be reviewed in 2022.

2. Other than the above mentioned tacit support in the Climate Emergency Strategy paper for EfW activities, how does the Council justify its failure to mention EfW or EfW activities in its report, while others, possibly the contributors to this paper,

have, for years, discussed this subject, assessed its sustainability, and even selected it as the preferred method of managing the County's waste? It appears that representatives from within the Council have, for several months, been evaluating the monetary value of offsetting EfW CO2 emission levels with a potential developer that are so significant that the developer may have to pay £100,000 pa to atone for their carbon sins? (this information was disclosed during BBC Solent's interview with Steven McNab a Director of Powerfuel Portland). Perhaps it's time to stop filibustering and clearly document the Council's position on the environmental impact of EfW activities in the Climate Emergency Strategy document. The Public deserves to be properly informed.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

The Council's waste disposal strategy is the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy and not the draft Climate Emergency Strategy. A link has been included in the draft Climate Strategy to ensure that this is made clear and all the facts are available.

6. Question from Jane Fuhrmann

Prior to Covid, I had actively been working to promote responsible dog ownership and the beneficial effect dog walkers have on our environment. I am also a committee member of 'Dog Friendly Weymouth'.

I had attended meeting with Tara Williams from the Parks Department looking at ways to encourage dog owners to bag and bin and help keep our open spaces free of mess. We had discussed the use of Poo Bag dispensers in certain areas and it had been agreed for the go-a-head to install them in various locations.

Meetings with Friends of the Rodwell Trail, Radipole Gardens and Castle Cove beach had been attended to look at how we could work together to promote responsible dog ownership. As well as a meeting with 'Dorset Dogs'.

Meetings had also been attended with local Beaver Scout groups to encourage children to become involved. This had been warmly greeted by the pack leaders and a start date for projects to begin was given.

My Facebook group 'Paws on Weymouth Beach & Open Spaces,' represents 320 members of like minded dog owners who are concerned with and act on environmental issues locally and nationally. This is evidenced within the group as members visit beaches and open spaces daily with their dogs, cleaning and clearing rubbish from our streets and parks and plastics washed up on our shores. Our dog walking members alert the appropriate department when there are bins requiring emptying, report occurring problems to the authorities and pinpoint issues of concern.

I had also been in talks with 'Litter Free Coast & Sea' and organised for the Nurdle 'Trommel' Machine to come to Weymouth to be operated by members of this dog walking group.

My question is-

As there are many dog owners and representatives already willing and actively working with the authorities and groups on issues affecting the public where dogs are a concern. Will the dog warden department and DCC take this into account in their decision and in future include, advise and consult where appropriate, to promote a good working relationship to benefit the general population?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Thank you for your question and the good work that you do around responsible dog ownership in Weymouth. The public consultation to help inform the draft Order was widely distributed and received a very high response. The Council including the Dog Warden service, is committed to working with communities and groups to support responsible dog ownership. I will ensure that our officers liaise with groups such as your own to help achieve our shared ambitions.

7. Question from Linda Stevenson

Can you please ask these question here"s a backstory to my questions I applied for this FOI 42786 request from the Dog Warden Department who I have been in contact with since 2016.

As a concerned dog owner I wanted to understand why the problem remains with people reporting dog fouling

Over this time I've met with Jane Williams and Kevin Good trying to find an answer to this problem, to be able to see what action the Dog Warden Department were taking to resolve this I needed these figures.

I have requested an updated Freedom of information request as you can see this covered the period from 2016 till January 2019. Unfortunately I have been unable to provide this to date.

The dog warden for the Weymouth and Portland has been regularly contacted by me, Ian Lewis and I attended a information day held at Littlemoor community centre, to try and help resolve the problems and share ideas.

He kindly gave me a range of stickers I could place in the area where I live, as these are often placed in a position where, to high above head height, in locations where no problems have been reported.

I decided I would take ownership of the area I live in Lodmoor Hill Weymouth, and as mentioned by one respondent to the consultation, as I cleared an area, I popped up empty biodegradable bags carrying a message to bag and bin it. Which proved successful until someone began to take them down again, and a rumour went around the area I was tying full poo bags up.

Increasing the fine to £1000 in my experience would make little difference, I belong to worldwide group of dog owners who litter pick every time they walk their dogs, many 3 times a day, I asked a question on the group (18000) they all agreed having regular patrols where dog owners will be fined is the only answer to stopping this,

Does Dorset Council have updated figures for dog fouling, and fines issue and will they be employing dog wardens to enforce this and work with local groups of dog owners who are trying their best to raise awareness in all areas?

	Enforcing authority	Issued	cancelled	prosecuted	complaints received	complaints upheld
dog fouling	W&PBC	5	1	0	1	0

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Thank you for your question which touches on a really important aspect of responsible dog ownership, the removal of fouling. The draft Order is very clear about this and will require removal of dog fouling. However, the Council has limited enforcement resources and we have to target these to hotspot areas. We rely on working with dog owners and groups to spread raise awareness and explain the public health dangers from fouling.

I have asked officers to reply to you about dog fouling statistics and the number of warnings and fixed penalty notices issued. However, I know that in the previous district and borough councils, there was concern about the relatively low numbers. It is often difficult for dog wardens to witness an incident of fouling and we have sought to improve local intelligence to help with this, and will continue to review this aspect of the service to see if there is more that we can do.

8. Question from the Dog Friendly Weymouth and Portland Group

Dog Friendly (Weymouth and Portland) would like to say that while we are glad that the results are now being discussed, that we remain disappointed in the narrow date options put forward in the consultation and the lack of a question on early access to beaches during restricted times. We note that there was a large number of comments relating to this.

We have reviewed the draft PSPO and note that the dogs on leads section has a specific section for Studland and for Lyme Regis. There are no dates for Studland and a dogs on leads instruction for Lyme Regis. The National trust site for Studland states that dogs are welcome at all times with dogs on leads during the summer months (May to September). The PSPO should reflect this.

The overall view the council gave was that they wanted to have one PSPO for the council area. The fact that Lyme Regis beach stands out as the only area with a dogs on leads instruction goes against this aim. Considering that the results across Dorset was NOT in favour of dogs on leads outside the summer restrictions (including Lyme Regis by a small margin), we feel it would be more consistent to include Lyme Regis with the other named beaches.

Having one beach with that restriction could easily lead to visitors to Lyme falling foul of a rule that they believed applied across Dorset.

It applies equally to studland and lyme regis.

Will the council respect the consultation results and allow dogs off leads outside the restricted times, and will the council undertake to provide a wider range of time and date options on any future consultation?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Thank you for your question. The results of the consultation have helped to inform the proposals but are not the only factor. We have looked to achieve consistency with the proposals where we can but also appreciate the need to take account of local circumstances for example where there are nearby unrestricted beaches such as at Lyme Regis. Some of the issues raised in the consultation including the timing of beach restrictions will feature in the next consultation as part of a review which must be undertaken within 3 years.

9. Question from the "Paws on Plastic & Rubbish Lyme Regis Beaches" and "Lyme Regis's Loving Dog Owners & Friends" Groups.

Question One

As representative of the Facebook Groups "Paws on Plastic & Rubbish Lyme Regis Beaches" and "Lyme Regis's Loving Dog Owners & Friends" I wish to challenge the comments published in the Dogs on Beaches Consultation by asking for evidence that the Lyme Regis Sandy Beach is "covered in dog poo".

We have documented daily evidence for the period Oct 2019 to March 2020 (up until the pandemic hit) in the form of both videos and photographs to show the beach isn't "covered in dog poo" but sadly as featured on both the Paws on Plastic & Rubbish Lyme Regis Beaches and the Lyme Regis's Loving Dog Owners & Friends Facebook Groups, we can prove there is a huge issue with littering and human antisocial behaviour, in the form of taking Nitrous Gas, vandalism, breaking glass bottles, and general hazardous littering (smashed glass bottles, cigarette butts each one polluting 7.5 litres of water, plastic / nylon rope / bio beads and Nurdles which cause harm to marine life and other litter items as documented) which until the pandemic were being cleared away each daily by caring dog owners from the Lyme Regis Front Beach to keep both marine life, animals and humans safe from harm.

Therefore without solid evidence that the Lyme Regis Beaches are "covered in dog poo" could we please request that this unsupported statement is removed from the consultation?

For reference the groups are:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/PawsOnLymeRegis>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/lymeregisdogowners>

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Thank you for your question and your valued work in the community. The comments included in the report were carefully chosen to represent views on all sides. The appendix is a total list of all comments. Comments are not deemed to be facts or true, merely a consultation response. It would not be appropriate to remove any comment on the basis that somebody disagrees with it.

Question Two

As representative of the Facebook Groups “Paws on Plastic & Rubbish Lyme Regis Beaches” and “Lyme Regis’s Loving Dog Owners & Friends” we would also like to ask how many fines were issued for dog fouling on Lyme Regis Front Beach for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 April 2020?

For reference the groups are:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/PawsOnLymeRegis>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/lymeregisdogowners>

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

There have been no fines issued for dog fouling in this location during the period that you mention. It is often difficult for dog wardens to witness an incident of fouling and we have sought to improve local intelligence to help with this. As mentioned in a previous reply, we may look to review this aspect of the service to see that we are doing all that we can with the limited resources available. Lyme Regis Town Council has authorised officers who also carry out patrols in this area and give advice and guidance on responsible dog ownership.

10. Question from Debbie Conibere

Question 1

Given that the recent Dogs on Beach Consultation resulted in a higher percentage of 49.2% for those specifically responding to Lyme Regis, in which they stated, “No - I think dogs **should not be** required to be kept on a lead” referring to the out of season Winter period, and given that Dorset Council wished to have the same restrictions for all of the beaches listed in the consultation, why is consideration being given to not allowing dogs off leads on the Lyme Regis Front Beach when dogs are allowed off lead on the other beaches listed in the consultation?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Thank you for your question. The consultation results were relatively close on this issue and regard was had to the views of the Town Council and the other factors mentioned in the report that have shaped the draft Order being presented at today’s meeting.

Question 2

Could the Cabinet please inform of a safe accessible beach / dedicated dog exercise area in Lyme Regis Town that can be used by dog owners to exercise their dogs off lead during the permitted period that dogs are allowed on the front Lyme Regis Beaches (1 Oct - 30 April), given that Monmonth Beach and Black Venn Beach are away from the main town and the town's facilities, Monmonth Beach is uneven with large rocks leading to known falls by members of the public, a Town Council Worker and a Lyme Regis Town Councillor, Church Beach and Black Venn Beach are only accessible by steep steps, have large boulders to contend with and are tidal therefore these beaches get cut off at different times of the day making them unusable by the public plus Black Venn has warnings of rock falls, and Back Beach again is cut off at high tide, has uneven surfaces and slippery rocks therefore the alternative dogs off lead beaches are unsuitable for the vulnerable, elderly, pregnant women and those with mobility and sight issues? Please bear in mind most dog walkers stick to set walking times, mainly early mornings when most visitors are not up and children are being taken to or are in school, therefore tidal beaches cannot be used at e.g. 8.30am every day of the week.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Lyme Regis and its surroundings is rich with unique natural and man-made features for people to enjoy. Whilst it is appreciated that the on lead restrictions are an issue to some dog owners, there are people who find these restrictions beneficial, a view also expressed by local residents. There is a wonderful parade and sea defence path that allows for long dog walks and beaches either side of the exclusion area are unrestricted.

11. Question submitted by Sarah Locke-Lavell

I would like to put forward my questions to the council regarding the above order.

1. I was shocked to hear the statement from Lyme Regis town council stating their view that the town would like dogs to be banned year round on the front beach. I also noted that all the other councils were happy to continue the current position of dogs either excluded or on leads in the summer whilst larger numbers are using the beaches and dogs allowed off leads during the winter off season months, to encourage tourism for dog owners throughout the quieter winter months. I would like to ask the question why has Lyme Regis taken the view that dogs are to be excluded from the only family and disabled accessible beach during quiet months when the towns business's rely on this tourism income to survive. This is incredibly relevant during the current pandemic and I also believed that having a unitary council, would mean the majority view would win over. Please can you clarify the councils overall position on this ?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Thank you for your question. The draft Order does not exclude dogs from the Front Beach during the 'quieter winter months'. Dogs are welcome, albeit they must be on a lead.

2. Should each individual town council have held some sort of widely known referendum to find out the public's views, as I did not hear anything about this in Lyme Regis. I was only aware of the 10,000 Signatures on the petition that the public signed in favour of allowing dogs on the front beach of the lead to continue during the winter months. I would like to ask, will the petition in Lyme Regis be taken into account when Dorset Council make their final decision?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

The consultation was well publicised including through local press and on social media. There were 1,175 respondents to questions related specifically to Lyme Regis Front Beach so many people took the opportunity to respond. The petition mentioned was concerned with Lyme Regis Town Council and so was not considered as part of the consultation.

12. Question from Helen Freeman

The anti 'share policy 'some people seem to have re dogs and beaches.

I am reg disabled Over 60 years old ,and look forward to being able to walk on a safe beach in the winter . I feel we all need a safe place to free run our dogs off lead. I cannot walk very well I use a stick for balance and have tripped and fallen , on all the other beaches due to uneven surfaces

I often study the web cams at Lyme Regis , and quite frankly in the winter off season time very few use the beaches apart from the dog people . The Day visitors , holiday makers and locals . Over the 13 years we have lived on the Lyme Road, I have spoken to lots of people visiting the Dorset Beaches. Most dog visitors do time holidays to visit the area when the beaches are open for dogs . Also the wonderful local pubs, cafes and shops are nearly all dog friendly . In fact many a time only with dog folk in them during the Winter mornings.

In fact our visits to Lyme Regis in the winter months , is one of my years hi lights . The beaches have been badly effected by a huge amount of visitors this year . I believe dogs are being blamed for poo littering when it has been human . I can tell the difference .For over 9 years I have been documenting Facts re dog poo at Burton Bradstock asPooo pin . We are in process of a re brand Currently to help More when we come past cv19 and it is safe. So I have in that time gained experience on this subject . I feel that this year we have seen far more human litter of all sorts . During

this summer I have been visiting all the coastal areas at sunrise to exercise our dogs .

So please do consider those like me who are older and unable to walk . We need our turn on the beaches with our dogs . I believe off lead time is needed by dogs to , on walk ways yes need To be on leads leads . but we all need to share this world , sadly some folk don't want to do this .

Finally during this year many of us suffered , it is not the right time to alter any arrangements as many have not been able to come out . If like me have been staying away due to cv19 , we need time to heal before things change .

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Thank you for your question and I appreciate the point made about littering on our beaches especially after some of the scenes seen this summer. We do appreciate that mobility issues can have an impact on people's ability to walk their dog and the draft Order does facilitate a range of on-lead and off-lead locations for dog owners to use at Lyme Regis. There are also other beaches in our area where dogs can be exercised off lead. However, dogs can also get sufficient exercise even when on a lead.

With regard to the pandemic, our dog wardens have been mindful of the current circumstances and will continue an appropriate approach to enforcement.

13. Question from John Calvert

Given the shortfall in the budget, could the Council Cabinet confirm that it will recommend that the Council minimises the use of consultants and, more important still, minimize the creation of bespoke IT systems and instead use current software that works for lots of other councils.

Response from the Leader of the Council

Thank you Mr Calvert for this question and suggestions of where we can look for savings.

Dorset Council's workforce is diverse with a broad base of skills, knowledge and expertise. There are however, occasions where specialist skills or expertise from outside of the Council need to be brought in. Often this will be for specific projects or programmes of work. I can confirm that the Council seeks to minimise such spend and only buys in Consultancy support when it needs to.

In response to the point about bespoke IT systems I can confirm that Dorset Council operates very few of these and the vast majority of our software applications are bought 'off the shelf'. However it should be noted that most 'off the shelf' systems require some form of configuration to allow them to support Dorset Councils businesses processes.

I can confirm that part of our approach to savings for this year and next is to reduce the number of software applications that the organisation uses.

14. Question from Linda Nunn, Director, Cranborne Chase AONB, Rushmore Farm

Dinah's Hollow is in the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where the purposes of designation are conserving and enhancing natural beauty. The Dorset Council scheme to stabilise the banks would entail converting extensive tree and fern covered habitats into exposed areas of geotextile and 'soil nails' [similar to the photograph in Appendix A para 2.4 of your report]. How is the Dorset Council Cabinet seeking to fulfil its obligations under section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 when it has not consulted or engaged with the Cranborne Chase AONB Partnership on Dinah's Hollow since the formation of Dorset Council?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

The former Dorset County Council cabinet suspended work on the project in December 2015 and no work has been done on the stabilisation project for nearly 5 years. Dorset Council was formed more recently in April 2019. It is acknowledged in the report to cabinet (Appendix A para 7.1) that, due to the time elapsed since the suspension of the project, reports and consents would need to be reviewed and updated. This includes consultation that runs alongside the ecological studies, the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and tree surveys. The previous consent to fell trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order has expired and a new application will be required.

15. Question from Richard Burden

Dinah's Hollow and Melbury Abbas are on a C class road within an nationally designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where tranquillity is a key characteristic. Why is Dorset Council actively routing HGVs onto this C class road through the AONB when there are obvious bottlenecks in the village, the vibrations from HGVs could increase the risks of landslides in Dinah's Hollow, and HGVs disturb an extensive area of the AONB?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

The council's HGV policy for the A350/C13 route strategy between Blandford Forum and Shaftesbury was agreed at the Cabinet meeting of the former Dorset County Council on 6th December 2017. The advisory routing works by directing northbound HGV's along the A350 and southbound on the C13 through Melbury Abbas. Mitigation measures have been put in place including the installation of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) in Blandford and Shaftesbury to direct HGV's, along with an additional VAS being installed in Melbury Abbas to complement the existing HGV warning signs. In addition, the traffic signals through the barriered section of Dinah's

Hollow have been made permanent to slow vehicles in the 20mph ensuring a smooth flow of vehicles through this narrow section within the village

16. Question from Peter Bowyer

1 Can the Council please answer question 7 that was asked at the Cabinet meeting of 08.09.20? A directly relevant and meaningful reply is requested in the interests of maintaining confidence in the exercise of the planning function by the Council. The full question and the earlier response from the Council are contained in the minutes of the Cabinet meeting of 08.09.20 (contained within the papers for the Cabinet meeting of 06.10.,20).

2 Given that houses are financial assets, and that building more houses in Dorset shows no evidence of falling prices, how does the Council consider that proposals in the Planning White Paper (if adopted) will ensure that local housing need is the driver for the Dorset Local Plan?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning

Part 1:

At the Cabinet meeting of 08/09/20 question 7 Mr Bowyer asked how and when the residents of Dorset and their communities will be able to assist in the creation of a vision for the "Dorset People's Local Plan" other than responding to any consultation in late 2020/early2021. The follow-up question now seeks a directly relevant and meaningful reply.

The response I gave at that meeting is minuted and I believe answers the question, so I do not propose to repeat my reply. As a point of clarification, the emerging plan is called the Dorset Local Plan, not the "Dorset People's Local Plan". It will be a plan for Dorset and its communities and is subject to statutory processes for engagement, consultation and public examination. The people of Dorset are therefore able to comment, engage and help shape the final plan.

Part 2:

At present, housing needs are assessed based upon a national methodology. The Government is proposing revisions to the standard method for calculating housing numbers which, if confirmed, may set binding figures for local authorities. The White Paper also proposes that local plans should identify growth areas, renewal areas and protected areas, and so housing requirements (whether through the existing standard methodology or binding targets) would then be directed to suitable areas via local plans. In addition, it is proposed that a single infrastructure levy would replace the current Community Infrastructure Levy and financial contributions via Section 106 planning obligations (including affordable housing). There is still uncertainty over whether these proposals will carry forward or indeed how they would work in practice, and Dorset Council is considering its response to the Government's White Paper at this meeting. Having said this, it is anticipated that local affordability needs will continue to be a key priority for local plans and Dorset Council is committed to securing high quality affordable homes for its communities. At

present work is continuing on the emerging local plan and consultation will take place in the New Year on the proposals in the plan, including its approach to delivering affordable housing across Dorset.

Cabinet 6 October 2020

Questions and Statements from Councillors

Statement from Councillor S Jespersen

The proposal for the Dinah's Hollow Slope Stabilisation includes the requirement to close the C13 for seven months.

You may recall, as I most certainly do, that during the previous work on Dinah's Hollow the road was closed from April 2014 to July 2015. I also recall the impact this had on the lives of the residents in the villages in the area, which bore the burden of the displaced traffic.

So bad was this damage and disruption that DCC eventually suggested, in 2015, that the risk associated with the continued road closure was greater than the risk of the slopes collapsing.

The Report to DCC Cabinet in May 2015, on *The Risk Comparison Analysis of the Decision to Close the C13*, stated:

"The closure of the C13 at Melbury Abbas ...has had significant ramifications on the community and the local road network in terms of both the size and the number of vehicles now using unsuitable roads to circumnavigate the road closure and also the subsequent impact this increase in traffic is having on the roads themselves.

...a number of neighbouring hamlets and villages are now experiencing an increase in traffic volumes. This is having a dramatic effect on residents' quality of life and has led to considerable disquiet from those living in these communities.

It has been suggested that the damage and disruption caused by the road closure outweighs the perceived damage of the slopes collapsing"

The Report further refers to increase in collisions, damage to vehicles and property and serious damage to the highway itself resulting from the road closure, and describes how vehicles, including HGV, avoiding the diversion route are having a disproportionately high impact on those living alongside these roads.

The residents in these same villages are now to be asked to endure this disruption and serious impact on the quality of their lives once again.

Could I ask, therefore that the lessons learned during the previous closure of the C13 are used to

- i. Provide all possible mitigation measures to reduce the impact of the road closure on the neighbouring communities
- ii. Introduce, in good time, a wide and full communications plan to keep the local communities informed of plans and progress

- iii. Plan and budget for the inevitable repair work to the surrounding road network
- iv. And, above all, make it a priority to keep the length of the road closure as brief as possible.

Question from Councillor Jane Somper

I have read both the cabinet report and previous reports from 2013/14 in relation to the works to the slopes at Dinah's Hollow where a geotechnical engineer identified potential complete failure due to the instability of the slopes. The report delivered by Brody Forbes did state the chance of this is rare with no significant slippage where the slopes have existed for hundreds of years.

However the report also states that there is chance that changes due to climate change with extreme weather becoming more frequent and the impact on the vegetation conditions, damage caused by intense periods of rainfall could trigger a major collapse of the slopes and the concrete barriers currently in place would not be sufficient to hold back the tonnes of soil that could fall.

The decision to put on hold the original scheme to provide the required stability of soil nails and mesh in 2015 was due to a discussion on funding bids in relation to the North South corridor of the M4 and ports of Poole and Portland. This has of yet not moved forward although at the last cabinet meeting approval was given for DC to join the Western Gateway Partnership where this and other potential routes are to be looked at in a Government funded strategic transport report.

I recognise and fully accept that this Council must take all measures to protect all road users who drive through the hollow and cannot allow any risk to life.

My question to the Portfolio Holder is:

This is an extremely sensitive and protracted issue for all residents living in Dinah's Hollow, Melbury Abbas and as a result of this, and in order for me to fulfil the commitment that I have made to my residents I expect to be kept fully informed of all developments leading to the decision as to how the council intends to proceed with Dinah's Hollow. My engagement with officers must enable me to report to residents on the progress being made at every stage. Can you kindly confirm that this will be in place.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

To reassure you on our proposed application to join the Western Gateway Powerhouse – this is mainly to align the geographies of our transport and economic partnerships. While of course we hope this strengthens our ability to attract funding, this does not fundamentally change anything with regards to Dinah's Hollow at this stage.

It's obviously important that residents are given clear, accurate and timely information on this extremely sensitive and protracted issue. This is the case whether we are talking about managing the situation on the ground, or the rather

more removed strategic discussions which may not directly impact residents right now but could have significant implications in the longer term.

A communications plan will be prepared for the project. Officers will be proactive in seeking comment and providing progress reports to members and other with an interest in the project. A member of the project team will always be available to answer questions.

Question from Councillor Nick Ireland

The recent comments by a Dorset Councillor at the Police and Crime Panel have highlighted the need for at least some councillors to receive Equality & Diversity training.

Will this council's leader organise an appropriate course for those in need of such training?

Response from the Leader of the Council

The recent comments made by Cllr Pipe in the Police and Crime Panel were unacceptable and disappointing. Cllr Pipe has rightly apologised unreservedly for what he said. I can also confirm that Cllr Pipe has requested Equality and Diversity training, and has been removed from the Police and Crime Panel.

Equality and diversity training is provided annually for all members of the council as part of the member development programme and is classed as 'required' training for councillors. This area of training is given high importance. Councillors were invited to an equalities session as part of their induction last year and further discussion events were held in May and June of this year for councillors to discuss the Covid-19 Vulnerable Groups Equality Impact assessment. The next training session will be delivered this autumn.

As councillors, we have a responsibility to educate ourselves about the issues and injustices faced by all members of our communities so we can properly represent them. I shall be strongly encouraging all members to attend this training.

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