

Public Document Pack



DORSET COUNCIL - CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2020

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

Apologies: none

Also present: Cllr Jon Andrews, Cllr Kelvin Clayton, Cllr Susan Cocking, Cllr Jean Dunseith, Cllr Les Fry, Cllr Simon Gibson, Cllr David Gray, Cllr Matthew Hall, Cllr Brian Heatley, Cllr Rob Hughes, Cllr Nick Ireland, Cllr Stella Jones, Cllr Paul Kimber, Cllr Rebecca Knox, Cllr Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Cllr Jon Orrell, Cllr Byron Quayle, Cllr Molly Rennie, Cllr Maria Roe, Cllr Jane Somper, Cllr Andrew Starr, Cllr David Taylor, Cllr David Tooke, Cllr Daryl Turner, Cllr Kate Wheller and Cllr John Worth

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

Vivienne Broadhurst (Interim Executive Director - People Adults), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer), Matt Prosser (Chief Executive), John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place) and Deborah Smart (Corporate Director – Digital & Change)

39. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and would be signed at a date in the future.

40. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

41. Public Participation

There were eight questions/statement received from the public. These 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 to these minutes.

42. Forward Plan

The Cabinet Forward Plan was received and noted.

43. Questions from Members

There were three questions from Councillors Orrell and Hall, these along with the responses are set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes.

44. **Quarter 2 financial management report**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy reminded members that the Q1 forecast a budget gap of 44 million. Since then this gap had now been reduced to 27 million. The Council continued to work hard to get the budget in the best possible position for the end of the year.

The Portfolio Holder also reported that since the budget paper had been prepared a further 1.3 million of funding had been received from central government to support council services. With other additional further savings the current prediction of the budget gap had been reduced by a further 4 million pounds.

He further advised that the forthcoming COVID-19 lockdown did cause concern, but members would continue to be updated on the council's financial position.

In response to a question regarding climate change and its implications, the Portfolio Holder advised that he was committed to the climate change strategy, however due to the current budget pressures he could not at the present time commit to what figure of funding would be included in next year's budget for climate change.

In response to a questions regarding agency staff and their costs, the Portfolio Holder advised that this area was being targeted and he was working closely with other members of the Cabinet to achieve savings.

Decision

- (a) That the Senior Leadership Team's forecast for Dorset Council's revenue budget position at the end of quarter 2 and the improvement since quarter 1 be noted;
- (b) That Cabinet note the continuing impact that these changes could mean for the development of the 2021/22 budget strategy;
- (c) That Cabinet note the proposals to improve the position during the year and consider further action to address the budget gap;
- (d) That the latest position on the capital programme and the impact that this was having on capital financing in the revenue budget set out in appendix 1, be noted;
- (e) That the current positions on collection funds and collection rates and the impact that the council tax position in particular might have on local preceptors be noted;
- (f)
 - (i) That the grant allocation of £2.3m from the Department for Education (DfE) for the Priority Schools Building Programme 2 (PSPB2) project at The Woodroffe School, Lyme Regis be accepted and the Executive Director for People – Children with the Executive Director for Corporate Development be authorised to sign the grant agreement form;
 - (ii) That subject to signature of the grant agreement, for Dorset Council to Commit to Construct, authority be delegated to the Executive Director People - Children's in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Peoples

Children Education Skills and Early Help and the Executive Director for Corporate Development to enter into contract(s) on best terms achievable, provided the project was within budget.

Reason for the Decision

The Council has responsibilities to deliver against its 2020/21 revenue budget and capital programme whilst maintaining adequate reserves. Cabinet wishes to understand clearly the financial impact and consequences of the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Understanding the current year's position and performance is also key to developing the medium-term financial plan (MTFP) and budget strategy.

45. Property Strategy & Asset Management Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Assets & Property presented a report on the Council's property portfolio which was extremely diverse and multi-faceted comprising a wide variety of assets.

The Property Strategy & Asset Management Plan was a key component of the Council's transformation strategy in order to help services meet their changing service needs and assisting the council in meeting its statutory obligations, its social and economic aspirations whilst at the same making a significant contribution to overcoming the financial challenges that it faced.

In response to a question the Portfolio Holder confirmed that a geographical map would be made available to all ward members as appropriate. He further confirmed that Scrutiny would be involved in the process and Town and Parish Councils would be also consulted.

Decision

- (a) That the Property Strategy & Asset Management Plan, as set out in appendix 3 to the report, be agreed;
- (b) That the Action Plan, as set out in appendix 4 to the report, be agreed;
- (c) That a budget of £250k be allocated and funded from Capital Receipts for feasibility studies and other exploratory works; the cost of which would be apportioned to individual schemes and recovered should the project be developed out or asset sold with planning permission.

Reason for the Decision

The Property Strategy & Asset Management Plan is a key component of the Council's transformation strategy in order to help services meet their changing service needs and assisting the council in meeting its statutory obligations, its social and economic aspirations whilst at the same making a significant contribution to overcoming the financial challenges that it faces.

46. Transformation Programme Annual Report

Cabinet received a detailed presentation from the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Change regarding the Transformation Programme and invited Portfolio Holders to update members on the progress of transformation made to date.

In March 2020 the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic halted that work as the council reprioritised activities in order to support residents during the pandemic. Since March 2020 the financial impact of COVID-19 had been significant and as the council moved to recovery it was important to restart transformation in order to make savings and support the council to achieve a balanced budget.

The revised transformation plan and governance arrangements built on the learning from COVID-19 as well as from implementation of the current transformation plan and provides a framework to accelerate and move forward.

Decision

- (a) That the draft revised Transformation plan, as set out in appendix A to the report, be approved;
- (b) That the progress and allocations from the £5 million transformation fund made in the last year, be noted;
- (c) That authority be delegated to the Performance Leadership group (comprising Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team) with responsibility for:-
 - a. Oversight of the amended transformation plan
 - b. Allocation of the transformation fund according to the criteria and gateway process
- (d) That the amended governance arrangements particularly for the transformation fund and its accountability to Cabinet, be approved;
- (f) That the importance of Digital and technology to underpin all our transformational activity be recognised and that Place and Resources Overview Committee add a review of the output from the EAP for ICT and Digital and the draft digital vision to their forward plan.

Reason for the Decision

In order to achieve further savings due to the ongoing financial challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, the council needs to change how it prioritises and delivers transformation. An agile, theme-based approach will enable projects to focus on designing solutions at pace and with a relentless customer focus and ensure appropriate oversight and management of the amended transformation plan and allocation and tracking of the transformation fund.

47. **Dorset Council Housing Allocations Policy 2021 - 2026**

Cabinet considered a report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Safety which highlighted the need for the Council to adopt a Housing Allocations Policy by 2022 and the consultation undertaken. The new Policy had been drafted

with the assistance of the Executive Advisory Panel and would replace those of the previous sovereign Councils.

The Policy was established to ensure the allocation of tenancies is carried out fairly and in accordance with the law. It aimed to ensure fair and efficient management of the stock and a scheme that was accessible to those households in housing need. The Portfolio Holder further reported that the People & Health Overview Committee had reviewed the policy and endorsed its recommendation. The Portfolio Holder advised that there was a small error in the EAP membership listed within the report and should be amended to also include Cllr S Bartlett.

Recommendation to Full Council

- (a) That the Housing Allocation Policy be adopted;
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder Housing and Community Safety to make minor amendments to the Policy and any amendments necessary to reflect legislative change.

48. Housing Standards Enforcement Policy and Statement of Principles for determining Financial Penalties 2020-2025

Cabinet considered a report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Safety, who advised members that the Housing Act 2004, associated regulations and statutory guidance provided Dorset Council with a wide range of duties and powers to take enforcement action to tackle the worst housing conditions. The policy enabled officers to be guided in their housing enforcement decisions, to ensure a consistent and proportionate approach to regulation as required by the Regulators Code. The document also contained the Council's policy in relation to setting penalties for certain criminal and other offences under the Housing Act 2004 and associated regulations; and how the Council would regulate and take enforcement action in relation to houses in multiple occupation (HMO's), long term empty homes and Mobile Home sites.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the policy had also been considered and supported by People & Health Overview Committee at its meeting on 27 October 2020.

Decision

That the adoption of the Housing Standards Enforcement Policy and Statement of Principles for determining Financial Penalties 2020-2025, be approved.

Reason for the Decision

In April 2019 all existing Housing Enforcement Policies novated to the new Dorset Council. These policies remain in force until 31st March 2021 or until a new policy supersedes them. The formation of Dorset Council on the 1 April 2019 required that the Council adopt one new Enforcement Policy and Statement of Principles for determining Financial Penalties across the new council area. The new policy is not significantly

different from those of the original sovereign councils. They have been amalgamated and updated to reflect changes in legislation and good practice.

49. Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy

In presenting the report, the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Safety advised that the Council was required by law to adopt and publish a policy detailing any assistance it wished to offer to improve private residential property. He further advised that the People & Health Overview Committee had considered the policy at its meeting on 27 October 2020 and supported its adoption; subject to a minor amendment in relation to support for foster carers and their housing requirements. This could be made under officer delegation.

Decision

- (a) That the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy be adopted;
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director for Housing and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Safety to:
 - (i) Make minor amendments to the policy to comply with legislation and guidance.
 - (ii) Suspend the approval of any discretionary housing assistance offered in this policy.
 - (iii) Introduce new assistance to help private residential property should funding become available.

Reason for the Decision

The Council is required by law to adopt and publish a policy detailing any assistance it wishes to offer to improve private residential property.

The formation of Dorset Council requires that a new Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy is adopted. On the 1 April 2019 policies from the original sovereign councils novated to Dorset Council. Generally these policies are similar but not identical and therefore there are inconsistencies in some areas of assistance offered.

Note: Cllr R Bryan lost internet connection at this point in the meeting.

50. A new way of securing developer contributions for NHS infrastructure

As new housing was developed in Dorset, and the population grows, so the demand on health services increases. Along with other publicly funded services, improvements to health infrastructure are needed to ensure services are sustainable.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning advised that Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group and the hospital trusts in Dorset currently request contributions from larger development on a site by site basis. These approaches have been used with varying degrees of success.

The Dorset Integrated Care System Senior Leadership Team to set up a task and finish group to explore the potential for new housing development to contribute

towards healthcare infrastructure. Planning teams from Dorset Council and BCP Council have worked together on this strategy to ensure coverage across the county.

The proposed strategy identifies the extensive capital requirements in relation to future health infrastructure requirements in Dorset. As such the identified contributions recovered would flow to the relevant organisation following an annual reconciliation exercise facilitated by the relevant local authority team.

The approach as set out in Appendix A was considered and approved by the Dorset ICS System Leadership Team on the 24th September 2020. BCP Council will consider this approach separately in due course. However the implementation of this approach by Dorset Council was not dependent on that approval.

Decision

- (a) That the document titled 'Exploring Developer Contributions for NHS Infrastructure', as set out in appendix A, be approved;
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning to make any consequential changes to the approved document and finalise its implementation.

Reason for the Decision

To provide a framework for securing developer contributions for dealing with the impact of new housing development on NHS healthcare across Dorset.

51. **Aspire Annual Adoption Report for the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020**

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented the Aspire Annual Adoption report for the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. This report summarised the PAN Dorset work of the agency, which included ensuring that the statutory guidance are met.

Aspire Adoption works in partnership with Families for Children, a Voluntary Adoption Agency based in Devon but with an office in Dorset.

The report also details the adoption and special guardianship activity undertaken to secure permanence for Dorset Council's children.

Cabinet noted the report and welcomed that 40 children had been adopted during this period.

Decision

- (a) That the activity undertaken by Aspire Adoption to secure adoption and special guardianship families for children, be noted;

- (b) That Cabinet notes that the Interagency Agreement (appendix 2 of the report) was under review to reflect that there were two Councils involved rather than three.

Reason for the Decision

In accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, all local authorities have a duty to establish and maintain an adoption service in their area, to meet the needs in relation to adoption, of children who have or may be adopted, of adults who have been adopted, parents and guardians of such children and persons who have or may adopt a child.

Note: Cllr R Bryan returned to the meeting

52. **Cabinet member update on policy development matters referred to an Overview Committee(s) for consideration**

There were no referrals to report.

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

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment reported that the six-week consultation on the Dorset Councils Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Strategy and action plan had now been launched. The consultation would run from 29 October through to 6 December. He invited all councillors to encourage residents to go onto the council's website and comment on the consultation.

He further reported that work was on going to ensure the council obtained substantial money from grants recently made available for use on Council owned buildings. The council had also recently received a Green Homes grant of £580k.

54. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

55. **Exempt Business**

There were no exempt items on business to report.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.39 am

Chairman

.....

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet 3 November 2020

Public Questions and Statements

1. Question from John Calvert

The financial management report for Quarter 2 has a section on Forecast overspend on Place.

It states that most is due to a shortfall on income from car parks, commercial assets etc.

As a resident of Dorchester for 10 years now the Market on the Fairfield site has been a delight. It has coped with the Virus and the coaches were back last week. It is important to Dorchester.

Can the Cabinet please avoid a knee jerk reaction such as seems imminent on car parking income, and look at ways to develop/support the market now. Serious thinking needs to start now so that the situation does not drift through.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

We are in support of the market at the Fairfield site and we are not actively looking at any form of parking strategy that would adversely affect holding the market.

2. Question from Alistair Chisholm, Town Councillor (Dorchester Town Council)

"At a time when the natural and man-made heritage of the county is likely to play an even greater role Dorset's future economic prosperity, how will a massive development, such as that proposed north of Dorchester, assist in promoting the Dorset "brand" whether that be as an essentially rural county with a World Heritage designated coastline and/or Thomas Hardy Country?"

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning

Dorset's environment and heritage are important for its economy – but Dorset also needs housing if its economy is to thrive. The availability and affordability of housing are important to enable businesses to attract workers.

The Dorset Local Plan needs to provide for the economic, social and environmental needs of the area – allocating land for new homes and for businesses to grow, while protecting and enhancing the area's environmental assets. Previous housing growth has not harmed the local economy or the Dorset brand, and the local plan provides for environmental protection and enhancement alongside development.

3. Question from Ken Huggins, Parish Councillor (Hazelbury Bryan Parish Council)

Question regarding the Public Consultation on the draft Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy & Action Plan

A period of only 6 weeks has been set for the Public Consultation on the Council's draft Strategy and Action Plan to address the Climate and Ecological Emergency.

The Climate and Ecological Emergency is THE most pressing and defining issue of our era, with potentially catastrophic consequences for every single one of us unless urgent action is taken NOW to avoid it. The effectiveness of any actions taken will depend to a significant extent upon the understanding and cooperation of the general public. It is therefore vital that as many members of the public as possible are encouraged to engage with the Council's Public Consultation on its draft Strategy and Action Plan.

Given the relatively short period allowed for the Consultation, how does the Council intend to publicise the Consultation, and will it include an information document sent to every residential property with individual copies for every member of each household?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

The Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy Consultation period has been decided upon so the results and subsequent analysis of the consultation will be complete in time for the 2021/2022 budget setting process in order to ensure that work to progress the actions identified in the strategy can be delivered as quickly as possible.

The Consultation is accompanied by a comprehensive communications plan which aims to ensure that during the period of consultation as many people as possible are made aware of the surveys and encouraged to take part. We gave residents advance notice of the consultation through our Dorset Council News magazine, which is delivered to all households in our area. We have already sent links to the strategy and consultation to over 30,000 residents via e-mail, have issued a news release to all local media outlets, and will continue to publicise the survey via various channels throughout the course of the consultation period.

Responses to the survey and response levels will be monitored throughout and appropriate targeted additional communication efforts will be made to address any particular areas of concern.

4. Question from Caz Dennett

The C&EE Action Plan consultation period is set for 6 weeks. The local government association website suggests 12 weeks is best practice for consultations on

substantial issues. (<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/comms-hub-communications-support/resident-communications-4>).

1. Will Dorset Council please extend the consultation period to e.g. 8-10 weeks in order for people to really have a considered say in what is the most important issue of our lifetime, if not our human history, and to enable more people to engage, especially in structured community-based / Town Council supported consultation events such as People's Assemblies?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

In the case of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy Consultation there is no minimum legal requirement for the length of consultation. Best practice suggests between 6 – 12 weeks. There is a comprehensive communication plan associated with the consultation which aims to ensure maximum coverage is given to the opportunity to comment and Dorset Council will be actively engaging with residents, Councillors and Town and Parish Councils via hosted webinars.

2. What reasons would justify this request being declined, given Dorset Council say they would like a high volume of responses?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment

Due to the need to progress work on the actions contained within the strategy it has been decided that a 6 week period is most suitable as it will allow the results and subsequent analysis of the questionnaire to be included in the 2021/2022 budget setting process. The 6 week consultation does not cover any holiday periods and there has been substantial effort made prior to the consultation being published to raise awareness of the forthcoming opportunity to comment.

5. Question from Penny Quilter

Thank you for providing an update on the future of the former Council Building at North Quay to #WeymouthTogether network of community organisations.

We are working on a project charter for Dorset Councils consideration and would like to have a look at the building.

1. How do we get access to the building to assess its suitability for short term use by the community?
2. What is the total current monthly cost of maintaining these premises and what is the breakdown of the costs?

Response from Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Assets & Property

Unfortunately, the building is not in a suitable state of repair at the present time to allow for short term use by the community. It is the intention to engage with the community early 2021 with regard to the future of North Quay.

The total annual cost at present for maintaining this building is £102,636 broken down as follows:

Rates: £95,760
Security: £ 2,555
R&M: £ 474
Utilities: £ 3,847

6. Question from Tricia Mitchell

All the indications point to there being a proposal in the Local Plan for a huge housing development beyond the water meadows of the river Frome immediately north of Dorchester.

If this development goes ahead:

- a. How will Dorset Council ensure that 30% of the 4,000+ houses proposed for this site will be affordable?
- b. how will the Council ensure that these properties remain affordable in perpetuity?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning

A draft consultation document will be coming to the next meeting of Cabinet, in December. This will include a range of proposals across all of the Dorset Council area, to meet the identified needs for housing and employment development. We need to meet the housing requirements of the area, but at this stage, proposals for where they should be built will not be 'set in stone' – they will be published for consultation, and all the responses will be considered before members make any final decisions.

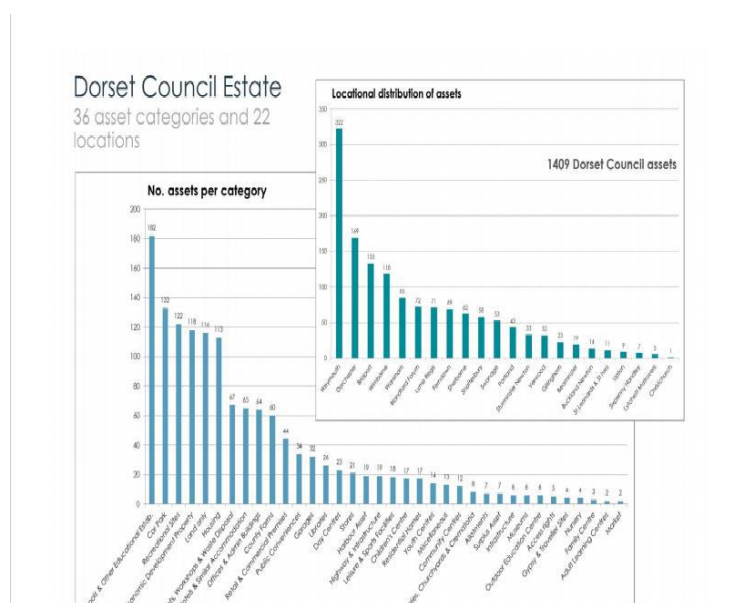
Within the local plan, there will be policies setting out how much affordable housing should be provided on development sites. These policies have to be tested to make sure that they are not going to make development unviable, but we will be commissioning up to date evidence on development viability as part of work on the local plan, to make sure that our position is robust and can be defended.

We would enter into legal agreements with any developers to make sure that the housing is secured. There would be a range of tenures of affordable housing, as we need to follow the national definitions and policies on affordable housing. But rented and shared ownership housing will normally be managed in the long term by registered housing providers.

7. Statement from Andy Matthews

The following request refers to Portland specifically but is intended to propose a general approach.

I have always supported the move to a Unitary Council as a strategic body but equally endorsed an improved role for Towns and Parish Councils and related delivery organisations which are publicly accountable either via officers or members. The report on the Property Strategy and Asset Management Plan sets out a rationale for the management of the public estate over the next few years with the intention with other local organisations under the 'One Dorset' banner to deliver on the objectives within the Dorset Plan.



When considering Agenda item 8 therefore I seek the Cabinet's support for this manner of working.

The Property Strategy & Asset Management not only considers the number of sites within an area but the potential commercial and social value that these sites can deliver.

The Council wish to bring forward the development and repurposing of sites as quickly as possible where this is viable and practicable to do so.

In order to do so and as stated within the Property Strategy & Asset Management Plan the Council will consider a variety of delivery models including where applicable working in collaboration with other parties/bodies.

The first action for the Council is to identify and evaluate its assets to determine whether they are to be retained, retained and developed or disposed of and thereafter to determine its approach and priorities.

8. Statement from the Board of Portland Community Land Trust

Portland Community Land Trust (PCLT) is a community benefit society which has as its objectives to deliver regeneration on Portland and in particular address the issue of Local Housing for Local People.

We receive support from officers at Dorset Council and Wessex Community Assets. The trust has a number of projects on Portland which it wishes to progress as a priority within these is derelict property at the High St on Portland (pictures below) which is currently owned by Dorset Council.



This property has been in this condition for many years and the CLT has been trying to progress its demolition and development for a number of years for which we have received community support.

The CLT also has a number of potential projects which may interwork with this site improving viability.

Notwithstanding approval for the Property and Asset Management Plan by Cabinet can we seek your support for an early determination of this site so the CLT can move forward appropriately?

Response from Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Assets & Property

As mentioned in the response to the previous statement the first action for the Council after it has identified its assets is to undertake an evaluation exercise to

determine whether they are to be retained, retained and developed or disposed of. This particular property will be considered as part of that programme from which a decision will be made as to the best approach in dealing with this particular asset and an assessment made of the timescales in which this can be achieved.

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet 3 November 2020

Councillor Questions

1. Question from Cllr Jon Orrell

Would the cabinet agree to a new management policy for all the county farms to ban hunting of wild animals with dogs (including trail hunts that can then use a loophole and legally kill live wild animals)?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Assets and Property

The Hunting Act 2004 is law and as such bans the hunting of wild mammals with dogs in England & Wales and to do so is illegal.

The Council will not allow any illegal or unlawful activity to take place on its land and will only condone legal activities to take place and at this moment in time trail hunting is considered a legal activity.

The Council Farms Estate is the only area of land owned by the Council where trail hunting takes place. Council Farms are leased to tenants and it is for those individuals who manage the land to decide whether to allow legal activities to take place on the land.

A prohibition on trail hunting which manifestly interferes with lawful freedom of those who take part in sport can only be justified if the Council reasonably concludes that prohibition is the best means of managing the land which under the lease arrangements currently in place is the responsibility of the tenants.

2. Question from Cllr Jon Orrell

Would the Council use the lockdown to push for reform of the track and trace, so it is local? And what other local measures are intended?

Response from the leader of the Council

In short, yes. There was a clear announcement of additional funding of £8 per head to support localising the test and trace system, along with the lockdown announcement on Saturday. Directors of Public Health are meeting at regional level with Public Health England to establish a new model for test and trace. In addition to this, Dorset Council has signed up with the Dept. of Health and Social Care to pilot the new rapid tests that are being made available. These will be helpful in being able to respond and test more quickly in our communities, and to support testing in high risk settings including schools and care homes.

As well as localised test and trace, there will be additional work on communications and social marketing campaigns targeting specific groups in which we have seen

barriers to complying with public health measures such as self-isolation. Enhanced support will also be stood up to protect the clinically extremely vulnerable.

This is set out in a new local Contain and Enable strategy which will strengthen our local interventions ready for when we emerge from lockdown.

3. Question from Cllr Matt Hall

In light of the recent conversations between Dorset Police and Dorset Council over the future of South Walks House could the Portfolio Holder explain the democratic and scrutiny process any sale of Council property would go through?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Assets and Property

As identified within the Property Strategy & Asset Management Plan Cabinet Report under paragraph 11.15 Dorchester Office Estate it is the intention to bring to cabinet a separate paper with regard to the Council's office needs within Dorchester (including South Walks House) and its future strategy. This paper will be subject to the normal processes with regard to Scrutiny.