

Cabinet

28 January 2020

Dorset Council Plan adoption

For Recommendation to Council

Portfolio Holder: Cllr P Wharf, Corporate Development and Change

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: Matt Prosser, Chief Executive

Report Author: Bridget Downton

Title: Head of Business Intelligence and Corporate Communications

Tel: 01929 557268

Email: bridget.downton@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

Cabinet recommends that the council adopts the Dorset Council Plan at its next meeting on 18 February.

Reason for Recommendation:

To provide clarity about the council's priorities for the next four years.

1. Executive Summary

At the beginning of September 2019, councillors took part in a workshop to shape Dorset Council's first draft plan to set out what the council's priorities will be for the next four years. Following cabinet approval of a draft plan at the beginning of October 2019, the council undertook a public conversation about the draft. This report summarises the responses from that engagement and sets out the resulting proposed changes to the plan. The council received more than 1,800 responses to the draft plan from residents, town and parish councils, partners, businesses and colleagues.

People generally supported the five overall priorities related to economic growth; the unique environment; suitable housing; strong, healthy communities; and staying safe and well and so no substantive changes are suggested to the high level priorities. However, changes have been made to reflect the fact that the climate and ecological emergency is a cross cutting theme that must be emphasised across the plan. A number of changes have been made to the detail under the priorities to reflect a range of feedback.

2. Financial Implications

The council's medium term financial plan and the budgets reflect the priorities set out in the Dorset Council Plan.

3. Climate implications

The council has declared a climate and ecological emergency. The Dorset Council Plan includes information about how this impacts on each of its priorities.

4. Other Implications

None

5. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

An equalities impact assessment (EqIA) has informed the Dorset Council Plan. It was started in August and signed off in January. The assessment is in appendix 4. Key points from the EqIA are:

- Seven neighbourhoods in Dorset fall into the top 20% nationally for income deprivation (up from five in 2010). They are all in Weymouth and Portland.
- The gap in life expectancy between the most deprived and least deprived areas in Dorset is 6 years for men, and 5.2 for women.
- 2,800 children in Dorset live in workless households.
- 66 areas are in the most deprived nationally for access to housing and services.
- Several comments were made during the conversation suggesting that the council focus its resources on Dorset's most deprived communities.

As a result of the EqIA and the feedback from the conversation, changes have been made to the Dorset Council Plan to be clear what the council will do to address inequalities where possible.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 Dorset Council Plan

Appendix 2 Dorset Council Plan on a page

Appendix 3 Dorset Council Plan conversation feedback analysis report

Appendix 4 Dorset Council Plan equality impact assessment

8. Background Papers

None

9. Dorset Council Plan - background

9.1 At the beginning of September 2019, councillors took part in a workshop to shape Dorset Council's first draft plan to set out what the

council's priorities will be for the next four years. Following cabinet approval of the draft plan at the beginning of October 2019, public engagement ran from October 24th until December 20th. Officers have analysed the feedback and produced a report set out in Appendix 3. A range of changes have been made to the plan resulting from this engagement and these are summarised in the next section of this report. The final proposed plan is in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 contains a plan on a page.

10. Dorset Council Plan – responses and proposed changes

10.1 Appendix 3 contains the feedback analysis report. The following tables summarise the key messages from the conversations along with the proposed changes to the plan. Some of the feedback was of a detailed nature that will not result in changes to the Dorset Council Plan but has been shared with relevant Heads of Service to feed into service planning. Some responses will also be provided to executive advisory panels working on specific issues such as climate change. In some instances, feedback will also be provided to those groups who contributed, to let them know what the council is doing in response to their comments.

Summary of key comments on the priorities

Comment	Recommendation
Broad support for the 5 priorities, although some comments that lack of clarity about what not a priority.	No change
The climate and ecological emergency needs higher profile in the plan and should run across all priorities	Changes made to each priority to increase profile of the climate and ecological emergency
High volume of comments that arts and culture wasn't mentioned in the draft council plan	Addressed under Strong, Healthy Communities
Range of comments on detailed wording issues	Amended plan to address detailed comments and sharpen wording
Lack of targets/ performance measures	Performance framework will be developed to enable measurement
Range of detailed service-specific comments and suggestions	Share with services to identify actions and feedback to groups
Invest more in deprived areas to reduce inequalities	Tackling inequalities is referred to in several priorities. Amended plan to include specific reference to the council's equality objectives which were not included in the draft version.

Summary of key comments on economic growth priority

Comment	Recommendation
Better public and rural transport	Amended plan to be more specific about what the council will do in relation to influencing government to improve public transport

Quality of roads	Amended plan to be clear about expectations
Improve the road network/infrastructure	
Support local highstreets and fill empty shops	No change. Within the context of the many competing demands on the council's limited resources, this is not considered to be a sufficiently high priority to be included in the plan.

Summary of key comments on unique environment priority

Comment	Recommendation
Protect and preserve Dorset's history	No changes needed - the plan contains actions related to this
Protect the countryside	
Robust flood protection plan	Updated plan to reflect the work the council does in relation to flood defence / management / mitigation work

Summary of key comments on suitable housing priority

Comment	Recommendation
Need more truly affordable homes	Agree – plan aims to deliver this.
Need to make sure infrastructure is in place before development starts	No change to the corporate plan– the Dorset Local Plan will need to address these issues.
Range of contradictory views suggesting both more and less housing	
Use brownfield sites for development	
Build more social rented homes	Updated plan to make specific reference to social rented homes.
Provide clarity / further information about other organisations / strategies referenced	Updated plan to provide clarity on these issues.

Summary of key comments on strong and healthy communities priority

Comment	Recommendation
Support arts and culture	Amended plan to add reference to this in this section including adding culture leaders to the section on who we will work with.
More community police officers/reduce crime	No change – the plan already includes reference to working with the police.

Summary of key comments on staying safe and well priority

Comment	Recommendation
More support for young people	Include reference in the plan to increasing number of youth workers through Blueprint for Children.
Concentrate on helping vulnerable residents	No change – already included.
More support for mental	No change to this priority as this is included

health issues	under strong, healthy communities priority.
Improve schools/education	Updated plan to be more specific.
More help and support for older people	Include specific reference to older people and disabled people.

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.