



Joint Overview Committee

Date: Thursday, 9 January 2025
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 5)

Jindy Atwal, Louise Bown, Piers Brown, Andy Canning, Will Chakawhata, Richard Crabb, Beryl Ezzard, Simon Gibson, Sherry Jespersen, Stella Jones, Cathy Lugg, Steve Murcer, David Northam, Jon Orrell, Mike Parkes, Julie Robinson, Andrew Starr, Roland Tarr, David Taylor and Andy Todd

Chief Executive: Matt Prosser, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services Meeting Contact george.dare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk - 01305 224185 / antony.nash@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk - 01305 224450

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda.

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Agenda

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| 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION | 3 - 4 |
| <p>Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit either 1 question or 1 statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting. The first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below.</p> | |

Further information read [Public Participation - Dorset Council](#)

All submissions must be emailed in full to george.dare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Monday, 6 January 2025.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

- You can submit 1 question or 1 statement.
- a question may include a short pre-amble to set the context.
- It must be a single question and any sub-divided questions will not be permitted.
- Each question will consist of no more than 450 words, and you will be given up to 3 minutes to present your question.
- when submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g., the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address, and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda.
- all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

Joint Overview Committee 9 January 2025 Public Participation

Question 1 – submitted by Becky Brookman on behalf of UNISON Dorset Branch

UNISON is concerned that the significant changes outlined in the "Our Future Council" transformation plan, will lead to massive workforce reductions, with potentially hundreds of job losses.

UNISON has been informed of the proposals, but there has been no meaningful consultation or discussions. There has also been a lack of transparency and consultation with DC employees, which does not fit with DC's values.

We note in the report that there it is proposed that most of the savings will come from vacancy freezes and staff cuts, yet no evidence has been provided to show exactly how much will be saved through vacancy freezes and if they will impact statutory services. There is also no evidence provided to show the correlation between the cuts proposed and automation. We do not know of any other local authority that has made such significant savings using AI and automation. There is no information to demonstrate how the savings will be made. We also have concerns about the tight timescales proposed, especially given the lack of resources within the Trade Unions and HR service.

We note that there is to be a saving of between £7.6m and £23.5m from council employees against a baseline of £150.6m. Yet there is only a 1.1m to £5.7m reduction proposed in commissioned spend against a baseline of £182.3m. We believe that commissioned services should be looked at in more detail.

We are concerned that an Eqia has not yet been produced and the committee is being asked to make decisions based on very limited information. 29% of Dorset's population is over the age of 65, compared to 19% in England and Wales. We also know that nearly a third of residents are digitally excluded. Automation may not be beneficial for those residents. The Dorset digital Vision Eqia states DC will 'design end to end services based on understanding people's needs and involving them throughout' yet no information has been provided on the impact the proposed automation may have on certain communities, which would put into doubt the statement that this will have a major positive impact on the community.

There has also been no Eqia on the impact these proposals will have on Dorset Council Employees. The changes are likely to impact low paid female staff, while the leadership of the Council keeps growing, including most recently an increase of Corporate Directors from 3 to 5 in Place.

Given that there is no detail on what impacts this proposal will have once delivered, how can the committee be assured that it can meet the targets that have been set here?