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Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: Wednesday, 18 November 2026
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Meeting Room 1, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 5)
Steve Robinson (Chair), Dean Spencer (Vice-Chair), Matt Bell, Gill Taylor, Mark Callaghan, Sam Crowe, Dawn Dawson, Paul Dempsey, Margaret Guy, Marc House, Julia Ingram, Martin Longley, Mike Murphy, Matthew Piles and Simone Yule

Chief Executive: Catherine Howe, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic & Governance Services
Meeting Contact 01305 224185 - george.dare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Agenda

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11.	**DORSET PLACE-BASED PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK** To discuss and support the Place-Based Partnership Framework implementation.	3 - 12

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Health and Wellbeing Board

Dorset Place-Based Partnership Framework

For Decision/Discussion

Cabinet Member:

Adult Social Care & Health with Members for Children, Families and Education and Public Health, Prevention and Communities

Senior Leadership Team:

Dean Spencer, Place Director – Dorset, NHS BSW, Dorset and Somerset ICBs
Sam Crowe, Executive Director, Housing, Prevention and Communities

Report Author:

Tanya Whittle, Deputy Place Director – Dorset, NHS BSW, Dorset and Somerset ICBs
Alice Deacon, Corporate Director All-Age Commissioning, Partnerships and Investment

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Dorset Health and Wellbeing Strategy is being refreshed around four life-course themes: Starting Well, Living Well, Ageing Well and Healthy Places. Alongside the refreshed strategy, there is a requirement to strengthen place-based partnership arrangements to support delivery of strategic priorities, improve service integration and enable effective joint decision-making across Dorset Place.

1.2 This report proposes a Dorset Place-Based Partnership Framework which establishes clear governance arrangements between:

- The Health and Wellbeing Board as the strategic partnership body;
- The four Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Groups;
- A new Dorset Place-Based Commissioning Forum

1.3 Place-based partnership working is a recognised component of Integrated Care Systems and provides the mechanism through which Dorset Council, NHS Dorset, Healthcare providers such as Dorset Healthcare, voluntary and community sector organisations and wider partners collaborate across the Dorset Council area to improve population health, reduce inequalities, align resources and integrate services around local needs. National policy increasingly emphasises decisions being taken as close as possible to communities, with greater integration between

health, care and local government services. The emerging Health Bill and Neighbourhood Health Service reforms further reinforce the importance of collaborative commissioning, prevention and neighbourhood-level delivery

1.4 The proposed Dorset Place-Based Commissioning Forum will provide a formal mechanism for joint commissioning, strategic commissioning alignment and collective leadership across the Dorset Council footprint. The forum will enable Dorset Council, NHS Dorset and partner organisations to develop shared commissioning intentions, oversee joint funding arrangements and coordinate delivery of agreed priorities while respecting the statutory responsibilities and governance arrangements of individual organisations.

1.5 The Partnership will provide a forum for:

- Development of joint commissioning intentions and recommendations;
- Oversight of delegated place-based responsibilities;
- Oversight of joint funding and pooled budget arrangements;
- Coordination of strategic investment priorities across partner organisations;
- Development and oversight of Section 75 and other partnership and joint funding agreements;
- Agreement of risk-sharing arrangements;
- Detailed oversight of the Better Care Fund (BCF);
- Strategic oversight and commissioning alignment for the Dorset Neighbourhood Health Programme, working alongside existing programme governance arrangements, including the Programme Board, Senior Responsible Owners and delivery structures;
- Collective management of strategic risks and opportunities.

1.6 Whilst statutory responsibilities and contractual accountabilities will remain with individual partner organisations, the Partnership will provide a mechanism through which collective recommendations can be developed and submitted to the Health and Wellbeing Board and constituent organisations for approval where required.

1.7 Draft Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix 1.

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2. Recommendations

2.1 To discuss and support the implementation of the Dorset Place-Based Partnership Framework set out within this report.

2.2 To establish the Dorset Place-Based Commissioning Forum as the principal joint commissioning and strategic commissioning alignment forum supporting Dorset

Council, NHS Dorset and partner organisations in delivering shared priorities across Dorset

2.3 To comment on the draft Terms of Reference attached at Appendix 1.

2.4 To delegate authority jointly to the Executive Director, Housing, Prevention and Communities, Dorset Council, and the NHS Dorset Place Director to finalise the membership, chairing arrangements, operational arrangements and terms of reference for the Dorset Place-Based Commissioning Forum.

2.5 To consider and discuss the following questions:

a) What are the most important decisions, programmes or system issues that you would expect to come through the Commissioning Forum before reaching the Health and Wellbeing Board?

b) What assurance, information or recommendations would the Health and Wellbeing Board want to receive routinely from the Commissioning Forum to give confidence that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities are being delivered?

3. Reason for the Recommendations

3.1 The proposed framework will strengthen partnership working and provide a clear governance structure linking strategic priorities, commissioning decisions and delivery arrangements.

3.2 The framework will enable organisations to work collaboratively whilst maintaining statutory responsibilities and organisational accountability.

3.3 The arrangements support delivery of the refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Better Care Fund programme and emerging Neighbourhood Health Programme.

3.4 The proposed framework aligns with national expectations regarding integration between health, care and local government. It supports collaborative commissioning, neighbourhood working, prevention and improved population health outcomes through stronger partnership arrangements between Dorset Council, NHS Dorset and wider system partners across the Dorset Council area foodprint. The direction of travel set out through current NHS reforms and the emerging Health Bill further strengthens the case for local collaborative commissioning and decision-making arrangements that can support neighbourhood health and integrated service delivery.

4. Report

Background

4.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board remains the statutory partnership body responsible for providing strategic leadership, setting priorities, overseeing delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and maintaining oversight of outcomes for Dorset residents.

4.2 The Board will be supported by four strategic Delivery Groups aligned to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

- Starting Well
- Living Well
- Ageing Well
- Healthy Places

4.3 These groups will oversee delivery of strategic priorities, provide assurance regarding progress against agreed outcomes and escalate recommendations, risks and issues through the Dorset Place-Based Commissioning Forum and, where appropriate, to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

National Context

4.4 Place-based partnerships are a key component of Integrated Care Systems and are recognised nationally as the level at which organisations come together to improve population health, tackle inequalities and coordinate local services around the needs of communities. NHS England's *Thriving Places* guidance identifies place as the level at which much of the practical work of integrating care, aligning resources and improving outcomes should occur.

4.5 National guidance describes place-based partnerships as collaborative arrangements formed by organisations responsible for arranging and delivering health and care services within a locality. While not statutory bodies, they provide a mechanism for collective leadership, shared decision-making and integrated approaches to meeting local needs.

4.6 National policy increasingly supports the delegation of functions and resources to place, enabling decisions to be made closer to communities and strengthening accountability for local outcomes. This includes joint commissioning, pooled budgets, integrated service development and collaborative delivery across organisational boundaries.

4.7 National policy also places increasing emphasis on neighbourhood health. Place-based partnerships provide the critical link between strategic system priorities

and neighbourhood delivery, ensuring that local plans, resources and services are aligned to improve outcomes for residents.

Proposed Place-Based Partnership Governance Framework

4.8 The Health and Wellbeing Board will remain the strategic partnership body, responsible for setting the overall direction of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, monitoring progress against agreed outcomes and providing system leadership for improving health and wellbeing across Dorset.

4.9 The proposed Dorset Place-Based Commissioning Forum will operate as the principal place-based leadership and decision-making forum, providing collective leadership and acting as the primary route through which recommendations relating to commissioning, Better Care Fund arrangements, neighbourhood health, Section 75 agreements, risk-share arrangements and delegated place responsibilities are developed and considered.

4.10 The Partnership will provide detailed oversight of Better Care Fund planning, performance, outcomes and financial arrangements. The Partnership will make recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board regarding Better Care Fund plans, priorities and performance, ensuring alignment with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

4.11 The four Delivery Groups will support implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy by bringing together relevant programmes, monitoring progress against agreed outcomes and escalating opportunities, risks and recommendations through the Dorset Place-Based Commissioning Forum and, where necessary, directly to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

4.12 The Commissioning Forum will sit beneath the Health and Wellbeing Board and alongside the four Delivery Groups. It will provide the mechanism through which place-based commissioning, delegated responsibilities and cross-organisational priorities can be coordinated and aligned.

4.13 While the Place-Based Commissioning Forum will provide a mechanism for joint decision-making, both organisations will retain their respective statutory responsibilities and organisational accountabilities, and any decisions or recommendations will remain subject to each organisation's own governance, delegation, and approval processes.

4.14 Dorset Council and NHS Dorset, acting through the Commissioning Forum and in accordance with their respective schemes of delegation, may exercise functions delegated to local arrangements. Any delegated responsibilities will be clearly documented and subject to review through the governance processes of the participating organisations. Contract ownership and accountability will remain with the responsible organisation.

4.15 The proposed arrangements do not create additional financial commitments. However, they provide a framework through which partners can jointly consider investment priorities, pooled budget opportunities, Better Care Fund arrangements and risk-sharing agreements

4.16 The governance framework reflects national expectations for place-based partnership working within Integrated Care Systems by creating a clear distinction between strategic oversight, place-based leadership and programme delivery. Place-based partnerships are recognised nationally as the level at which partners align resources, commissioning activity and service delivery to improve outcomes for local populations.

Appendix 1: Dorset Place-Based Commissioning Forum Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The Dorset Place-Based Commissioning Forum (the Partnership) is established as the principal **place-based leadership and decision-making forum** for Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Partnership brings together senior leaders from commissioning organisations to support collaborative commissioning, integrated planning and collective responsibility for delivering improved outcomes for Dorset residents.

The Partnership will develop recommendations for consideration by the Health and Wellbeing Board and constituent partner organisations and provide oversight of delegated place-based responsibilities.

2. Objectives

The Partnership will:

- Improve population health and wellbeing.
- Reduce health inequalities.
- Support integration of health, care and community services.
- Align commissioning intentions and investment decisions.
- Promote prevention and neighbourhood health approaches.
- Support collaborative use of resources.
- Strengthen partnership working and collective accountability.

3. Scope and Responsibilities

The Partnership will:

- Support delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Align place priorities with Dorset Integrated Care System priorities.
- Develop shared commissioning intentions.
- Oversee Better Care Fund planning and delivery.
- Review and recommend Section 75 agreements.
- Develop risk-sharing arrangements.
- Provide oversight of neighbourhood health plans.
- Consider delegated place responsibilities.
- Review strategic risks and opportunities.
- Make recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board and partner organisations.

4. Accountability

The Partnership is accountable to participating organisations through their respective governance arrangements.

The Partnership will:

- Provide assurance to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Make recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board requiring strategic endorsement or decision.
- Submit recommendations to constituent organisations where formal approval is required.
- Report annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board on achievements, risks and priorities.

The Partnership will provide the primary forum through which cross-organisational place-based decisions, recommendations and priorities are considered before escalation through formal governance routes where required.

5. Contractual Accountability

Contract ownership and contractual accountability remain with the responsible commissioning or host organisation.

The Partnership may provide recommendations and advice that inform contract-related decisions.

6. Membership

Membership shall comprise senior commissioning representatives from Dorset Council and NHS Dorset

Providers, voluntary and community sector organisations and other partners will primarily contribute through the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Groups and may be invited to attend the Commissioning Forum where discussion of specific programmes or commissioning priorities would benefit from their expertise

Additional attendees may be invited as required.

7. Chairing Arrangements

The Partnership will be jointly chaired by:

- Executive Director, Housing, Prevention and Communities, Dorset Council
- NHS Dorset Place Director

The Joint Chairs will:

- Provide strategic leadership for collaborative commissioning and partnership working across Dorset Council, NHS Dorset and partner organisations
- Set priorities and direction.
- Promote collaborative decision-making and consensus.
- Oversee recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Ensure alignment with Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities and neighbourhood health arrangements.
- Escalate significant risks and issues where appropriate.

8. Quorum

Meetings will be quorate when:

- Dorset Council is represented.
- NHS Dorset is represented.

9. Decision-Making

The Partnership will seek to operate through consensus wherever possible.

Where consensus cannot be achieved, recommendations may be referred through the appropriate governance arrangements of partner organisations or to the Health and Wellbeing Board as appropriate.

10. Conflicts of Interest

Members will declare actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest at each meeting.

A register of interests will be maintained and reviewed regularly.

11. Administrative Support

NHS Dorset will provide secretariat and administrative support.

12. Meeting Frequency

The Partnership will meet bi-monthly as a minimum.

Additional meetings may be convened as required.

13. Venue Arrangements

Meetings will be held at a range of venues across Dorset Council's area wherever practical to strengthen partnership working and maintain visibility of local priorities and communities.

14. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually and approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board.