

# Public Document Pack



## DORSET COUNCIL - CABINET

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 4 JUNE 2019

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

**Also present:** Cllr Shane Bartlett, Cllr Simon Christopher, Cllr Susan Cocking, Cllr Jean Dunseith, Cllr Les Fry, Cllr Brian Heatley, Cllr Rob Hughes, Cllr Stella Jones, Cllr Paul Kimber, Cllr Clare Sutton and Cllr Sarah Williams

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

Matt Prosser (Chief Executive Designate), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer), Sarah Parker (Executive Director of People - Children), John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place) and Lee Gallagher (Democratic Services Manager - Dorset County Council)

In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules of the Shadow Dorset Council, the decisions set out in these minutes will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of five working days after the publication date.

**1. Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Daryl Turner in his role as the Chairman of the Place Scrutiny Committee.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

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

**3. How we will work as a Cabinet**

Cllr Spencer Flower, as the Leader of the Council, took the opportunity to introduce and explain the Cabinet portfolios at the first meeting of Dorset Council's Cabinet, as listed below:

- [Councillor Spencer Flower](#) - Leader / Governance, Performance and Communications
- [Councillor Peter Wharf](#) - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Development and Change
- [Councillor Anthony Alford](#) – Cabinet Member for Customer, Community and Regulatory Services
- [Councillor Ray Bryan](#) – Cabinet Member for Highways, Travel and Environment
- [Councillor Graham Carr-Jones](#) – Cabinet Member for Housing
- [Councillor Tony Ferrari](#) – Cabinet Member for Finance, Commercial and Assets
- [Councillor Laura Miller](#) – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

- [Councillor Andrew Parry](#) – Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Early Help
- [Councillor Gary Suttle](#) – Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Skills
- [Councillor David Walsh](#) – Cabinet Member for Planning

He stressed the importance of each of the Cabinet portfolios and that members would put communities first and work for the good of all Dorset residents, provide effective communications, and work effectively with government as well as town and parish councils and other organisations. The importance of a constructive working relationship with scrutiny committees was emphasised, and that a strong voice of challenge was welcomed and essential to make sure the Cabinet made sound decisions.

Noted

#### 4. **Public Participation**

Questions from Tara Moggeridge and Toby Webber were asked at the meeting in relation to the academisation of Budmouth College. The questions and answers are attached to these minutes as an annexure.

The no public statements were made at the meeting.

#### 5. **Forward Plan**

The Cabinet considered the Forward Plan as a first draft of the key decisions required until June 2020. It was noted that the content would be reviewed to ensure that the content reflected the priorities of the Cabinet.

Noted

#### 6. **Procurement Forward Plan Report - over £500k (2019-20)**

The Cabinet considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Commercial and Assets on the planned procurement activities that constituted key decisions during 2019/20.

Cllr Tony Ferrari reflected on the list of procurements in the report and explained that the items were not a set list of decisions. He proposed that the procurement and awards of contracts valued under £5m be approved, and that all procurements over £5m would be brought back to the Cabinet for specific and detailed consideration. Members agreed to the proposal.

A request was made by Cllr Paul Kimber that careful consideration should be given in respect of all procurements to award contracts to local companies as a priority. Cllr Ferrari explained that this was a consideration as part of the procurement rules, and that it was appropriate to consider for all procurement decisions.

## Decisions

1. That the procurements and awards of contracts set out in Appendix A to a maximum value of £5m be approved, and those over £5m would be reported back to Cabinet for detailed consideration.
2. In giving this approval, Members are approving known / likely procurement set for implementation during 2019/20 (or as specifically noted otherwise) on terms to be agreed by the delegated officer, Corporate Director or Portfolio Holder for each arrangement.
3. That procurements exceeding the key decision threshold which are not yet identified will be subject to a separate report for approval by the Cabinet, at a later date.

## Reasons for Decisions

1. Cabinet was required to approve all key decisions with financial consequences of £500k or more. It was also good governance to provide Cabinet with a summary of all proposed procurements prior to them formally commencing.
2. Planning procurements effectively ensures: effective stakeholder management; efficient sourcing; compliance with regulations and contract procedure rules; and, best value for money.

## **7. Budmouth College Academy Conversion**

The Cabinet considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Early Help on the academisation of Budmouth College which was due to be completed on 1 September 2019. As part of the academisation a request was received to ask Dorset Council to contribute to the restructuring of staff at the School in addition to the budget debt being inherited by the Council as part of the academisation.

Cllr Andrew Parry introduced the report and explained the high risk profile of the request to fund restructuring at Budmouth College and explained that there was not enough detailed evidence to support the restructuring costs request as the financial picture was still emerging and more detail was needed.

Questions from Tara Moggeridge and Toby Webber were asked at the meeting in relation to the academisation of Budmouth College. The questions and answers are attached to these minutes as an annexure.

Members shared concerns regarding the request to fund the restructuring at the College including Cllr Clare Sutton who expressed thanks for the cross-party involvement and briefing outside of the meeting on this important matter; Cllr Jean Dunseith, as the local member; and Cllr Tony Ferrari, as a member within the local area, and as the Cabinet Member for Finance, Commercial and Assets due to the poorly evidenced financial request.

## Decision

That the request for up to £600k for pay restructuring costs be declined as there are alternative opportunities to access funding for the restructure that will not place pressure directly on the council budgets.

## Reason for Decision

Option 1 would incur additional cost to the council and put pressure on the budget as this cost was not budgeted for in 2018/19. Option 2 would result in restructure costs being identified from elsewhere and could potentially impact the Interim Executive Board (IEB) restructure timetable.

### **8. Climate Change Update**

Cllr Ray Bryan, as the Cabinet Member for Highways, Travel and Environment, provided a verbal update following decisions made at the Council meeting on 16 May 2019 in respect of a climate change emergency being declared and to establish a cross-party Executive Advisory Panel on Climate Change. He confirmed that Cllrs Ray Bryan, Peter Wharf, Daryl Turner, Maria Roe, Kevin Clayton, Rob Hughes and Kate Wheller had been appointed to serve on the Panel, with substitutions made when necessary.

The Panel would be initially comprised of 8 Council members which would firstly consider the background information on carbon reduction initiatives already delivered across the former Dorset Councils to establish the current position. Work would then focus on gathering evidence from experts to ensure the most up to date knowledge and information to inform the development of policies.

The first meeting of the Panel would be held soon, and updates would be regularly provided to Cabinet.

Members welcomed the update and a comment was made to ensure that there was a robust approach to communications to ensure that regular updates were provided to keep the public well informed, and also that action be taken in a staged way rather than wait for all actions to be taken at the end of the life of the Panel.

Cllr Clare Sutton, as the Green Party Group Leader, agreed that good communication needed to be in place and welcomed the proactive approach taken to establish the Panel.

## Noted

### **9. Fostering Update**

Cllr Andrew Parry, as the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Early Help, provided a verbal update in relation to Fostering and the role of members as corporate parents.

He explained that there were currently 428 children in care which included some with very complex needs, and that the recruitment of social workers had been

identified as a priority by the former Dorset County Council which had commissioned the recruitment of a further 70 social workers over a two-year period. In 2018/19 21 foster carers had been approved in addition to 19 connected persons.

A renewed Fostering Recruitment Strategy was being developed, together with continued publicity, to focus on the significant work to continue to recruit foster carers following the first year of the new arrangements and structure.

Noted

**10. Urgent items**

There were no matters of urgency considered at the meeting.

**11. Questions from Members**

One question from Cllr Brian Heatley on the Weymouth Museum Collection was received at the meeting in accordance with procedure rule 13. The question and answer are attached to these minutes as an annexure.

A supplementary statement was shared by Cllr Heatley to indicate that he would continue to show some scepticism about the solution being progressed, and that he would still like an assessment of options available for the future of the Weymouth Museum Collection. Cllr Suttle responded by confirming that the Council had every intention to rigorously ensure that the project was completed and that he would keep Cllr Heatley informed of progress.

Noted

**Duration of meeting:** 10.00 - 10.50 am

**Chairman**

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Public ParticipationQuestion from Mrs Tara Moggeridge, as a parent of children at Budmouth College, on Budmouth College Academy Conversion

Chairman and Members of the Cabinet. I am here today to express my serious concerns of my son's and daughter's education at Budmouth College.

My son has been attending the college since Year 7 and currently studying A levels there in the Sixth Form. He has a chronic health condition so is under Special Educational Needs and has an Educational Health Care Plan. My daughter who was offered a place just before there was any talk of a proposed takeover by Aspirations Academy is due to begin Year 7 this September. Like all parents I want the best education for my children. However, I have grave concerns about Aspirations Academy. Budmouth College is a unique school unlike the mould that Aspirations has created for their other Academies. I have worries about reduction in teaching and support staff that puts my children at risk. When my son started Budmouth College he was a high achiever. He was unfortunately diagnosed with a brain tumour 6 years ago and had surgery to remove it 3 years ago. The staff and support staff have been tremendously professional and helpful with his education throughout this difficult time. With the help he received combined with his determination he achieved 7 GCSES and is now coming up to his second year of A levels.

Do Aspirations Academy promote, support and understand inclusivity of children and young people with Special Educational Needs?

I believe with the new head, the leadership team and the current staff who have been there many years that Budmouth can be outstanding again. I understand the decision to choose Aspirations Academy was made by the RSC and the IEB. We as a group of parents have had many questions unanswered by them. We believe that there needs to be more transparency and that there has not been an official consultation process involving students and parents with the feeling of it being forced upon us. Can we ask that we see a breakdown of savings made or being made over the next 3 years by the laying off of Support staff?

Before I finish I would like to thank Councillor Parry for giving your time to meet with us straight after the full council meeting a few weeks ago and allowing us to voice our concerns, we are grateful for that. I am sure that you will understand that it is a rather stressful and exhausting task for everyone involved but we just want what is best for the children and the future children of Budmouth College. Thank you.

Answer

Thank you for taking the time to address Cabinet today.

It is important that Councillors hear from parents who wish to express their appreciation for the role Budmouth College has played in their child education and well-being to date, whilst also highlighting concerns regarding the future as a result of Academisation, especially in areas relating to inclusiveness and SEND.

In answering your first question, "Do Aspirations Academy promote, support and understand inclusivity of children and young people with Special Educational Needs?"

Dorset Council cannot speak directly on behalf of the Academy Trust. But we would like to point out that the funding agreement for the Academy Trust, would require them to work with Dorset Council on the provision for SEND children, something we hope they will do wholeheartedly.

In response to your second question "Can we ask that we see a breakdown of savings made or being made over the next 3 years by the laying off of Support staff?"

This is a matter for the Interim Executive Board. As Dorset Council is not the employer of the staff we would not be able to provide this information.

Having met with both the Colleges Principal and Chair of the Interim Executive Board recently, I feel confident they would wish to discuss questions of this nature with you directly.

My name is Toby, and I started Budmouth College in year 7 in 2013. When I first joined, the school was rated “Outstanding” by Ofsted, and the school was accredited with, and I quote, “GCSE results for students being typically well above average”. “Impeccable behaviour and mature attitudes towards learning” was also noted on the ofsted report. However, due to allegations coming to light, the then-principle was dismissed, and the position of an acting principle was established. After this, a new principle was brought on and failed to raise the standard from inadequate, and was therefore put on leave.

I understand that Budmouth needs to change. I do. But do you really think that letting corporations into our classrooms are going to fix that? Getting rid of tens of teachers and support staff who have helped people like me pass those all-important exams and giving them the support they need to make it through secondary school? Letting richer people make money off my education? That’s not what my parents or I signed up for when I applied for Budmouth all those years ago.

Answer

Budmouth College is subject to a Directive Academy Order, issued by the Secretary of State for Education, that requires the Council to facilitate the transfer of Budmouth College to an Academy Trust. The Council has been informed that Aspirations is the Trust chosen by the Regional School’s Commissioner for the College to join. Academy Trusts are legally determined to be “exempt charitable companies.”

In the areas of your statement which this Council is not the forum to provide you with the answers you are seeking, as they are beyond our remit, I would however, encourage you to make your representation to the College’s Interim Executive Board and Principal.

## **Member Questions**

### **Question from Cllr Brian Heatley to the Cabinet members for Economic Growth and Skills, and Finance, Commercial and Assets in relation to the Weymouth Museum Collection**

There is no item in the 4 June agenda, nor apparently in the Forward Plan (it could be buried in some other item I suppose), suggesting that a decision will come forward on Weymouth Museum within the forthcoming year. However

- most of the museum's artefacts are currently deteriorating in store in Brewer's Quay;
- these artefacts belong to Dorset Council and are assets the Council is effectively holding on behalf of the people of Weymouth;
- a solution as to how to display some of them in Weymouth would contribute to extending the scope and nature of Weymouth's offer to tourists;
- thus promoting economic development in Weymouth;
- while we have been waiting since 2010 for the possibility of a development scheme for Brewer's Quay to provide the Museum with a home.

Why cannot the Council set a fairly close date, say by the end of September 2019, when, if no firm plans for development at Brewers Quay are forthcoming, officers will, in consultation with the Museum's Trustees, set about identifying the options by say the end of 2019 for exploiting these valuable assets in support of Weymouth's tourist industry?

### **Answer**

A meeting was held on 16 May 2019 with representatives of Weymouth Museum and the developers which included council officers. At this meeting the developer provided reassurance about an imminent commencement of the scheme on site. This discussion indicated that it will not be necessary to relocate the museum collection in order to facilitate the development. Further discussions are taking place between the developer and the museum about this matter. A follow-up meeting to review progress on these discussions has been scheduled for 27 June 2019.

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